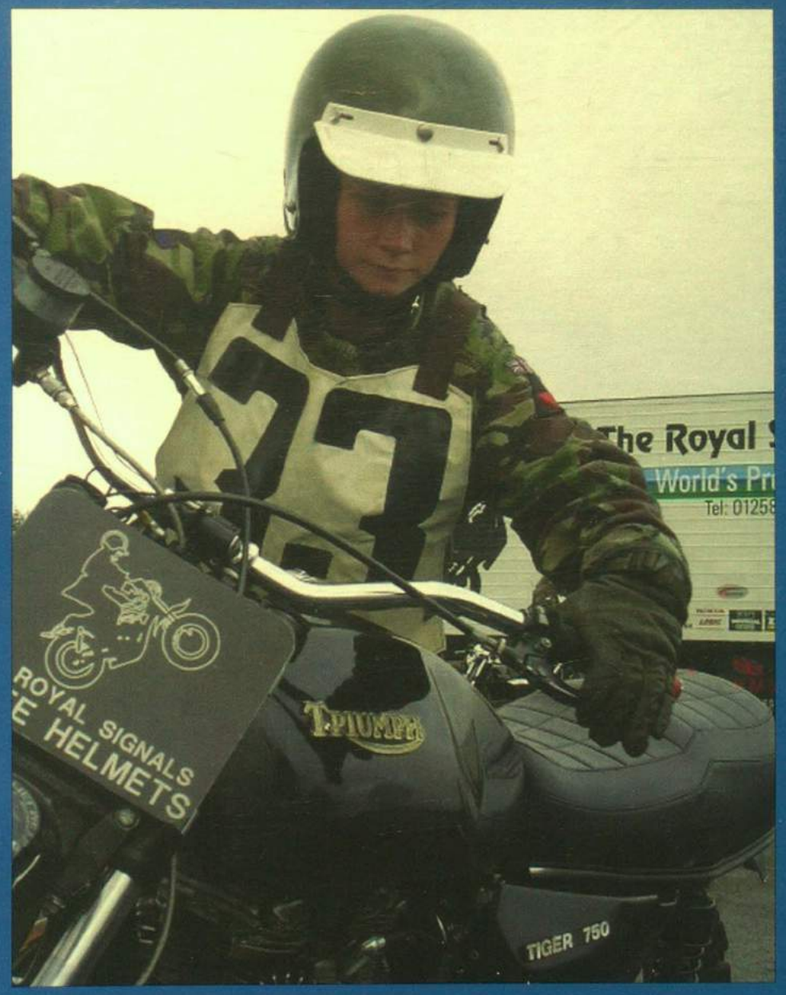
THE Wire

February 2005



The Royal Corps of Signals

THE PRINCESS ROYAL'S VISIT TO 44 SUPPORT SQUADRON

HRH The Princess Royal, also Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Logistic Corps, visited 44 Support Sqn RLC, based at RMA Sandhurst on Friday 5 November 2004. It marked the first occasion in the long and distinguished history of the Sqn that it had been honoured by such a prestigious visitor.

44 Support Sqn RLC comprises a mix of military and civilian drivers as well as chefs and radio operators from varying Corps and Regts in the Army. The role of the Sqn is to provide transport, catering and comms support to the Staff and Officer Cadets of the Academy.

Royal Door Opener, LCpl Luxford springs into action

During her visit, **Her Royal Highness** had the opportunity to see various displays that depicted all elements of Sqn life, before being received by all members of the Sqn and their guests for a buffet lunch.

Sgt Umney and his son Oliver chats with the Princess Royal, as everyone else looks on anxiously

A most memorable day for 44 Support Squadron and their families. For **Sgt Umney**, **LCpl Potts**, **LCpl Luxford**, **Sig Corry**, **Sig Stevens**, it was a marvellous opportunity to speak with a senior member of the Royal family, and **The Princess Royal** certainly seemed to enjoy hearing their views of life at RMAS and on the Army as a whole.

Sig Corry gets a warm smile from the Princess Royal

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The Wire

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FRONT COVER

For the first time in The White Helmet's history, the 2005 season will see the inclusion of two female members. Our picture shows **LCpl Julie Jones** getting her bike ready for the Arena.

BACK COVER

One of the many roles of the Regimental Secretary and Assistant Regimental Secretary is to support the Master of Signals. They do this in many ways, such as here, when they escorted him to the Blandford Officers' Mess recently.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

BOWMAN PASSES ANOTHER FIELD TRIAL

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) have put BOWMAN through a further operational field trial (OFT) during EX BOWMAN CHALLENGE III on Salisbury Plain. The ex gave good opportunities for Staff and Signallers alike to use the new system in a realistic setting, and the trial's success marks another step forward in BOWMAN going operational when the Sqn deploys on OP TELIC in April 05.

Read more in 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's report on page 62.

BOWMAN AND NEW HEADQUARTERS DEMONSTRATED

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt displayed an experimental HQ and BOWMAN det for the Comd and Control stand at a recent Staff College demonstration. Everyone in the Regt found themselves fully involved, from the newest Sig to the CO. After 3 days of demonstration and 60 repetitions of each brief, Staff Officers returned to the College overloaded with information, while the soldiers of the Regt received a pat on the back from the COS.

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt's account is on page 26.

COMMAND TASKS WITH A DIFFERENCE

In a new move to inform employers about the benefits of employing members of the TA, 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt ran a mini Executive Stretch ex recently in Glasgow. Teams drawn from local Junior Chamber of Commerce branches were invited to test their skills in a number of military activities, including negotiating their way through a Bosnian CP manned by Serbo-Croat speaking guards.

See how they got on in 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt's piece on page 44.

CORMORANT PROGRESS

2 Sig Regt has given CORMORANT its first deployment outside of the test environment. It was used on EX JOINT VENTURE, and provided just the learning and experience needed prior to the system being delivered to the Unit in January 2005.

Read more in 2 Sig Regt's brief report on it on page 24.

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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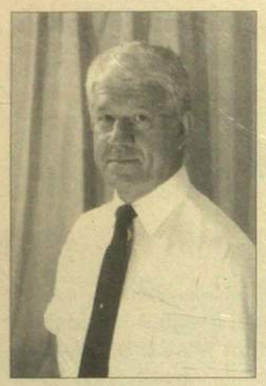


EDITORIAL

Reading through recent copies of *The WIRE* tells us lot about the soldiers in today's Corps. We read how, on operations, despite sometimes low numbers of personnel and problems with some equipment, soldiers at all levels are using their initiative, working all hours and delivering the comms solutions required of them – sometimes even more. They seem to thrive on such challenges and quietly get on with the job in hand. They are well-trained and highly competent not only in their own trades, but often in others as well.

In unit reports, we see constant references to fitness and endurance, with increasing participation in events such as the Lanyard Trophy, the Nijmegen Marches and Trailwalker, not to mention the Three Peaks Challenge. Adventurous Training sees expeditions ranging from long distance mountain trekking in South America to Trans-Atlantic yachting. Then there are battle camps, focussing on military skills, ranging from march and shoot competitions to FIBUA, survival, fieldcraft, and section and company attacks. It seems that in addition to their trade skills, most JNCOs are now capable of conducting a section attack, and some even a company attack.

On another level, more of our soldiers are learning about and from military events of the past, by going on battlefield tours, and we read of their deep thoughts and reflections on these. Add to this, the Corps' achievements in any sport you care to name, and we can see that today's signallers are highly trained, well-motivated, and committed people – more so than ever before. Increasingly, as we see in places like Iraq, it is this depth of all-round battlefield competence and experience that helps our soldiers survive in increasingly dangerous situations.

All of this not only helps us realise how competent and dedicated our soldiers now are, it also shows how Unit contributions to *The WIRE* are now focussing more on issues that are important to the Corps.

Whilst on the subject of Unit contributions, I am pleased that we are now seeing more interesting writing, and more pieces are being written by junior ranks. More are giving us interesting stories of the things they have achieved (be it on ops, on exs, on AT expeds or in sport) and are reflecting on what they have gained from these. Many appear to be leaving the in-house happenings and domestics for Regt and Sqn newsletters. In this issue, the articles by 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 14 Sig Regt (EW) and 34 Sig Regt are good examples of this, as is the story by **Sig Northam** on her experiences working on EX ARRCADE FUSION. It's writing like this that is now making *The WIRE* a much more interesting read to a wider range of readers. Please let us have more.

Col Paul Randall's light-hearted WW2 story, *A Military Disaster*, on page 77 also makes good reading. We get a few in like this, but there must be loads more out there among the retired Corps. Please let's have more of these, too.

Among my recent Unit visits, I spent some time with 14 Sig Regt (EW) in Brawdy. I had long wanted to find out about this Unit, as there seemed to be many myths about it. As many had told me, Brawdy is quite isolated – it took me 5 hrs to get there from Blandford. But, having not long been back from the Falklands, it wasn't the most isolated place I've been to. And it certainly isn't cut off from civilisation. The town of Haverfordwest and Pembroke are quite close (not to mention a number of very attractive small villages) and the countryside is quite stunning.

I received a very warm welcome the Regt, and as I moved from Sqn to Sqn, Tp to Tp, I gained a valuable insight into what they were all about, and the myths fell away, one by one. As you can read in my Special Feature on page 40, they are not as secretive as many believe. It's just the kit they use and some of their methods that are secret – not so very different from many other Units.

Indeed, they don't wish to be known as a secretive Unit. Rather, they want us all to understand the important role that they play on the battlefield. As it was put to me, 'the best way of understanding EW is to do it.' So the more of our soldiers who have postings to 14 Sig Regt (EW) during their careers, the more the Unit's role will be understood, and the more it will be used to good effect. If that sounds like a recruiting message, it is. 14 Sig Regt (EW) are actively looking for good people.

Whilst I was in the Brawdy area, I also visited the Adventure Training Centre that 14 Sig Regt (EW) runs at Castlemartin, about 20 miles to the south. I shall be doing a feature on Castlemartin later this year, but for the moment, I wish to make the point that its facilities are available to all units, not just 14 Sig Regt (EW). Overseen by **SSgt Roberts**, the Castlemartin Centre provides a large range of AT activities, including climbing, hill walking and all types of water sports. And most activities lead to a recognised qualification. Any Units looking for an AT centre should call **SSgt Roberts** on Mil: 94361 4284; Civ: 01646 662284 to discuss your needs.

Many readers, Units and RSA Branches will have been horrified to see on TV the terrible results of the Indian Ocean Tsunami. And many individuals will already have donated to the Tsunami Appeal. The Corps Benevolent Fund responded immediately by donating £10,000 to Save the Children (one of the charities the Corps contributes to) to be earmarked for the Charity's operations in the Tsunami area. It was recognised at RHQ that this amount could be a starter, to which individuals, Units and RSA Branches could add. There is an announcement to this effect on page 33.

In my last Editorial, you will have noticed my grave concern about **Cpls Mick Brennan** and **Neil Heritage**, the two Royal Signals soldiers who were seriously injured in Iraq in November. I'm relieved to report that not only are they doing well, but that they, and a third serious casualty, **Sig Dean Lunn**, have now been discharged from hospital as out-patients – just two months after the incident occurred. When I visited the three just before Christmas, it was a very humbling experience for me, as you will read in my piece on page 33. It was hard to believe that only a month after the incident, they were so active and in such high spirits.

Certainly, being so physically fit in the first place has helped in the rapid recovery, but there's also a lot of sheer courage there too. Yesterday, I visited **Cpl Heritage** and his partner at their home, and he proudly showed me a video his mother had taken of him that morning at a physiotherapy session. And there he was, walking un-aided on his new artificial legs.

HONOURS, AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

We congratulate the following Royal Signals personnel who received Honours in the New Year's Honours List:

Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Lt Col Mark Baines
CO 16 Sig Regt

Lt Col Scott Workman
MOD London

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Maj David O'Brien
MOD London

We also congratulate the following who received Commendations:

Maj (Retd) FS Payet,
12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, C in C Land's Commendation;

WO2 MR Bentley,
5 (Army Co-op) Sqn, RAF Waddington, C in C Strike Comd's Commendation;

WO2(FofS) Farrow,
1 Sig Sqn, GOC Th Tps' Commendation; and

SSgt J Fensom,
70 Sig Sqn, C in C Land's Commendation.

ROYAL SIGNALS INSTITUTION AWARDS

At their dinner in London on 27 November 04, the Royal Signals Institution made awards to **Maj NE Baugh** and **Sgt M Mann**.

Maj NE Baugh received the Royal Signals Institution Silver Medal for the enhancement of HQ ARRC's operational capability.

In 2001-02, during a particularly challenging period in its development, HQ ARRC was subjected to a rigorous series of tests by SHAPE to certify its suitability as a NATO High Readiness Force (Land) HQ. This required HQ ARRC to meet a series of demanding criteria, 75 of which involved the provision of CIS. Some of these criteria could not be met with current in-service equipt held by 1 Sig Bde.

Maj Baugh was therefore charged with developing alternative technical solutions to meet the criteria. He proposed a major enhancement to the ARRC Tactical Integrated CIS System (ATICS), incorporating dedicated deployable SATCOM terminals, multiple security domains and the development of the DCSA-owned Systems Control Point (Rheindahlen) as a central hub for the network. Once funding had been obtained, **Maj Baugh** undertook all the detailed network planning, sourcing of equipt and contractual negotiations with and on behalf of DPA. Against extremely tight deadlines, he worked tirelessly to deliver the equipt and capability on time, to budget and fit for purpose. As a result of his work, HQ ARRC passed HRF(L) certification with flying colours, becoming the first NATO HQ to achieve this status.

But **Maj Baugh** did not stop there. He immediately set to work to enhance ATICS further, increasing its robustness, removing single points of failure and integrating new technological developments. This too, was achieved faultlessly and against tight timelines, with **Maj Baugh** cajoling, exhorting and threatening as necessary to achieve his end.

Maj Baugh's outstanding work has been of national significance, not only in the ARRC context, but also as the basis for the development of the OSCA network, used so successfully by UK Forces during OP TELIC.

Maj Baugh receives his award from the Master of Signals

Sgt M Mann received the Royal Signals Institution Medal for Adventurous Endeavour.

Sgt Mann has been actively involved in Adventurous Training over the past 17 years. During this time he has completed 22 expeditions and has personally led or has acted as an instructor on most of them. These expeditions have covered 12 different countries on 5 different continents from Unit to Army level. Throughout this time, there have been three occasions of particular note that epitomises **Sgt Mann's** Adventurous Endeavour.

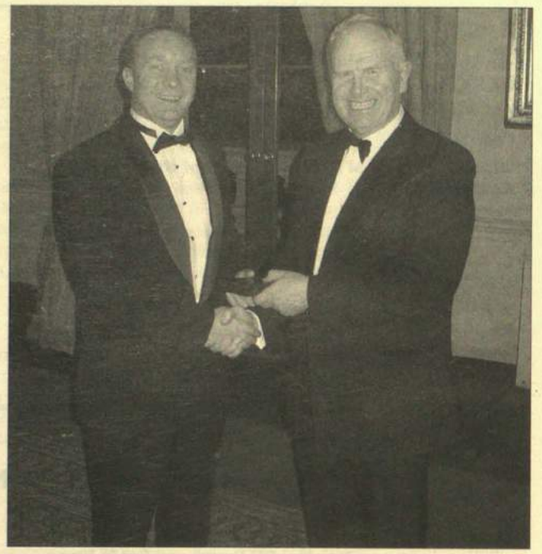
In 1996 **Sgt Mann** represented the Army as a leader on the Raleigh International Expedition to Chile, which involved navigating waterways and mountains in some of the most inhospitable areas of Patagonia. Here he was involved in an emergency, during which he resuscitated a young adventurer for three hours. Unfortunately, the victim did not survive. As a direct result of his efforts to save this person's life, **Sgt Mann** became very seriously ill himself, and was evacuated to hospital. He eventually had to have surgery to remove a lung, and spent 2 months in hospital. He is now permanently medically downgraded as a result of this event.

Despite this setback, in 1997 while serving with 35 Sig Regt (V), he led EX ANNAPURNA DRAGON, an expedition to Nepal and the first expedition the Regt had ever undertaken outside of Europe. He trained a team of novice TA soldiers to complete the Annapurna Circuit in a record 11 days, climbing to a height of 6,000m. He also ran a DERA Malvern sponsored project to trial solar panelled power supply units for INMARSAT. **Sgt Mann** managed all this while suffering with acute asthma as a result of lung damage he incurred during the expedition to Chile.

In 1998 while serving with 15 Sig Regt, he led EX ANDORRA FINN. This was an expedition to Andorra/Spain during which the team trialled Iridium Satellite Telephones and Individual Satellite Tracking devices for SCIAD Northern Ireland.

Despite his medical condition, **Sgt Mann** has continued to plan, execute and lead a further six adventurous training expeditions since then. He has continually demonstrated his ability to inspire soldiers in this environment by leading from the front. Each expedition has achieved its key goals of identifying leaders, enhancing team spirit and encouraging individual personal development through enterprising and imaginative activities.

Sgt Mann has dedicated much of his own personal time and effort over the past 17 years to the service of the Corps. Through adventurous training he has made a huge contribution and has played a pivotal role in the personal development of many soldiers during that time.



Sgt Mann receives his award from the Master of Signals

BUSINESS AWARD TO TERRITORIAL COMMANDING OFFICER

Lt Col Roddy Sutherland, CO of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V), has recently been awarded the title of UK Business Student of the Year from the Association of Business Schools. In civilian life, **Lt Col Sutherland** is the CE of a medical instrumentation company based at Denny in Stirlingshire. He received this Award for combining his studies for an MSc in New Venture Creation at the Glasgow Caledonian University with a full-time civilian job, and a very busy part-time job as CO of his TA unit. He remarked, 'I find the mix of work and studies quite a challenge,' he said. 'However the TA has given me the knowledge and skills to manage my time to maximum effect.'

His company, Dynamic Innovations Ltd, is currently developing an intelligent audiometry system that will provide a cost effective and flexible method for employers to conduct a hearing screening programme on their employees. Most importantly, the system can be operated by a relatively inexperienced operator, but at the same time, still provide a high level of system accuracy. **Lt Col Sutherland** came up with the idea for an intelligent audiometry system, 5 years ago, when he had his hearing tested at Chilwell, after returning from an op tour in Bosnia. As he said, 'At Chilwell, they used an automated system to test everyone's hearing. However, when I saw how their system worked, I knew that I could develop a much better device.' From this, he started a part-time PhD at the University of Glasgow, and since then has won a number of major business awards. Most importantly, the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise have actively supported his innovative research, to the extent that his company now has 5 employees.

Lt Col Sutherland credits the TA as providing the key management and work skills that he now uses in civilian life. As well as a tour in Bosnia, he also served as a Bde Staff Officer in Kosovo for a 6-month period in 2001. As he said, 'You wouldn't think business would have much in common with military operations abroad, but in both situations, you have to be used to change at short notice, and be prepared to work on your own initiative. They're more similar than you might realise.'

Jonathon Slack, CE of the Association of Business Schools, Lt Col Roddy Sutherland and Dawn Primarolo MP, The Paymaster General

MY TIME IN THE ROYAL SIGNALS MOBILE PRESENTATION TEAM - *by Cpl Kerry Smith*

From the moment I joined the Royal Signals Mobile Presentation Team, it was all systems go. I started at the beginning of the Army Exhibition for Schools. This consists of Army Recruiting Teams joining forces and taking part in shows and open days across the country, beginning at Scotland and finishing at RAF Fairford. It was a perfect time to learn the ropes and meet the rest of the Team, not only from Royal Signals, but also from other Units and Regts. I could not believe that standing outside on a hot summers day, chatting to different people about the Army and getting them to do our different comd tasks could be so much fun!

By August I was exhausted, and with the AES season finished, it was time for leave. The good thing about the Recruiting Team is that because you work long hours and weekends, you have leave throughout the whole of August!

Feeling refreshed and ready, September began with recruiting in schools. It was a little strange at first talking to a class of 100 plus students about Army life, but after a few presentations, I was full of confidence and cracking jokes at every opportunity! It felt very rewarding visiting schools, some of which had blinkered views on the Army, and it was especially satisfying to have changed their outlook.

After the RSMPT has visited a school, students often express further interest in the Army. They can then enrol on a 'Look At Life' course. This is a one week course with the RSMPT at Blandford Camp. During this course, students are taught drill, teamwork, survival, some of our trade skills - and they even spend a night in the field. This is demanding period for the Team, as the organisation and coordination has to be perfect for the week to run smoothly. We have four 'Look At Life' courses throughout the year, and although intense, they are very rewarding - especially when you see the changes in the students' team work and their whole attitude towards Army life.

For me, the best time working in the RSMPT is not only the recruiting, but also the fact that you meet so many different people. In the 16 months I have spent with the Team, I have travelled the whole of Britain and managed to go sailing in the Baltic around Denmark. It has been a real experience, and has definitely opened my eyes to a different side of the Army. It's when you work in recruiting, that realise how much hard work and time goes into it.

Cpl Kerry Smith

I have enjoyed my time with RSMPT and I think if you are an outgoing and confident person, then the recruiting team is a job to seriously consider.

DISPOSAL OF CORPS-OWNED MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Further to the list of Corps-owned musical band instruments for disposal that was published in the June 2004 issue of *The WIRE*, a further batch of instruments that are no longer required is now up for disposal. 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.

These instruments are as follows:-

Model	Serial No	Description	Res Price
R13	339725	Bb Clarinet	£312.50
B12	443370	Bb Clarinet	£56.25
1430P	62987	Bundy Bass Clarinet	£250.00
7A5855	2500	Yamaha Alto Saxophone	£625.00
JT562	26585	Yahama Tenor Saxophone	£812.50
Yanagisawa	161732	Baritone Saxophone	£1,250.00
20M	1291	Paxman French Horn	£250.00
20M	1701	Paxman French Horn	£375.00
20A	1657	Paxman French Horn Det Bell	£375.00
180MLJ7	311356	Bach Bb Trumpet	£125.00
180ML37	322349	Bach Bb Trumpet	£312.50
Korg	317	Electric Piano	£12.50
Peavey	547537	Digital Reverb Unit	£62.50
Unmarked	831010	Xylophone-Platform Type	£125.00
Unmarked		Flight Case Semi	£62.50
Unmarked		Flight Case Semi	£62.50
Poller	N02	Viola	£50.00
BE967-1	811960	Sovereign Euphonium	£312.00
BE98L-1	815161	Sovereign EEb Tuba	£937.50
850	EC9077	Getzen Bb Cornet	£250.00
184MLG	395704	Bach Bb Cornet	£250.00

Entitlement to Purchase Instruments may only 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; or

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 7 and 18 March 2005. Those interested in purchasing any items listed may make arrangements for viewing by telephoning the Bandmaster, **WO1 Wilman**, on Blandford Military 2778, Civilian 01258 482 778.

Bids Bids should be made in writing and must reach the Regimental Secretary at RHQ by no later than 1 April 2005. 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 25 April 2005.

Payment Successful bidders will be required to pay for their purchases by cheque (made payable to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund) by 6 May 2005. Instruments may be collected as soon as payments have been cleared through the Corps Accountant.

MANNING AND CAREERS MANAGEMENT DIVISION SOLDIER WING

RCMO GATHERING

- based on an idea by Col Jim Richardson, Col MCM Div

On 24 October 04, all 9 Royal Signals RCMOs gathered in Glasgow for an extraordinary week. Over the proceeding 6 months there had been a number of personnel changes in the RCMO fraternity and that of Soldier Wing in MCM Div, so it was an excellent opportunity for everyone to make or renew acquaintances.

As well as the planned RCMO Conference and FCR data collection, the week in Scotland presented an ideal opportunity for a 'getting to know you' AT exercise. With the cheapest 'economy' cans of food **Capts Vince McNaught** and **Dave Rook** could find, the Div Col, SO1 and SO2 Sldrs, OC Op Sect and all 9 RCMOs enthusiastically set off for Glencoe.

The no frills lodge meant that some individual personal bodily traits swiftly became well known to the rest of the group, and there was definitely a requirement for additional ventilation and Amplivox! Quite why we had chosen the end of October to go 'Munroe bagging' remains a mystery, but if 'it ain't raining, it ain't training.'

On arriving at the lodge the first job was the stowing of safety equipt in Bergens. Job done, the first day saw the team make an immediate steep climb through the boggy lowlands up the Buachaille Etivebeag feature. The Div Col and the 'A' Team led the way, with the 'B' Team following a tactical bound behind. The selection process had started!

Lunch provided sufficient respite from the relentless climb, and just enough time to don the waterproofs prior to a downpour. The Stobdubh peak was reached shortly after lunch, and the low cloud parted just long enough to take the traditional group photo. The team descended 500ft, only to ascend to our next Munroe, Stubcorie Raindach.

The descent to the finish line was to prove more amusing than anticipated. Sure-footedness was clearly not a prerequisite for these omnipotent career managers. A pirouette, scissor kick and half twist won the day with a top score of 9.5 points for **Lt Col Jamie Compston**, closely followed by **Capt Steve White** and a tumbling **Capt Dave Watson**. **Capt Vince McNaught** tried hard to outscore the SO1 with multiple tumbles, but his efforts lacked artistic impression.

The second day saw the 'B' Team assume pole position under the firm direction of the Div Col. The challenge was on as we raced up the first ascent in1½ hrs. Our third Munroe, Stobdearg, was bagged as it started to snow. A swift walk along the ridgeline took us up to Stobna Dore, and then on to our escape route off the mountain and a knee-jerking descent to the bottom.

After navigating the water obstacle and an arduous trek through some extremely boggy ground, the Div Col demonstrated that even he was vulnerable to a slip or two. A nonchalant scissor kick meant he eventually got his pyjama bottoms dirty! (Well, they looked liked jarmies to me!).

The new SO2 Sldrs, **Maj Ray Patrickson**, provided excellent administrative support, although the below par rations became the butt of many jokes. The ever frugal **Capt Mick Fleming** insisted **Capt Vince McNaught** should buy spaghetti bolognaise without any mince, and chicken curry without any chicken, to ensure the CILOR allocation was not overspent! However, despite this, the remaining rice and pasta mountains have been greatly received by the Sudan! The fruit cocktail and Carnation milk (yuk) surprisingly went untouched, and don't even mention the mango and orange fruit juice.

Those who know the Div Col, will be aware he has a passion for good food and quality wine. So it was that the meatless bolognaise swilled down by a tacky Hungarian red drew the quote, 'That was nice, Ray.'

The ex achieved its aim, and everyone seemed to learn something new from the experience - even if it was only to avoid getting into a veh when **Capt Dave Watson** is driving! A big thank you to **Capt Mick Fleming** for organising a very successful event; no doubt it will stand him in good stead! Top Student, (of course), went nominally to **Capt Ian Carter**.

On return to Glasgow, all the RCMOs got on with the important task of preparing soldiers' Files for FCRs (Formal Career Reviews), before the week was rounded off in excellent style with the Scottish Dinner at the Western Club. Thanks must go to **Maj (Retd) Brian Campbell** for once again organising a superb night, but the less said about the post-dinner visit to Club Madness, the better!

We thank 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt for providing the transport, and **Capt Dave Rook** for organising the Bergens and trendy waterproofs. As for next year, how will we surpass this year's effort?

FAREWELL TO COLONEL MCM DIV

Officer and Soldier Wings bid a fond farewell to **Col Jim Richardson**, **Paula** and family, as he took up the post of Col MS (B) in early December 04. Thank you for your clear direction and firm but fair leadership, and all the very best to you in your new appointment. You are, of course, very welcome to call back into the Div at any time, particularly with good news!

A warm welcome to the new Div Col, **Col Stuart McCrostie**, **Jenny** and family. We hope you enjoy your time in Glasgow.

Editor's Note: I'm sure that they made up those weird names for the places they 'conquered', and I have sneaking suspicion that they did it just to confuse me. This is one of many things on my list of things to check out when I visit MCM Div in March 05.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (FALKLAND ISLANDS) - AN APOLOGY

On page 504 of the December issue of The WIRE, we headed JSSU(FI)'s contribution as Joint Communications Unit Falkland Islands – their deadly rivals!

The Editor is deeply embarrassed, particularly since he was so well looked after by JSSU(FI) during his visit there in October.

Retribution has been made by him in the form of a contribution to JSSU(FI)'s Christmas celebrations.

MOVEMENTS

December 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col JE Richardson	MS (B) APC
Maj GE Bennett	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)

January 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col RJ Ellis	DEF Attache Kathmandu
Lt Col EA Davis	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col JM Gale	OCE HQ Land
Maj PR Barron	BDS(W) Command Control Comms
Maj AS McCole	OCE HQ Land
A/Maj G Pardew	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Capt PD Ashworth	JSSU Cheltenham
Capt SJ Bristow B SC	HQ RSA and Larkhill Garrison
Capt IJ Carter	11 Sig Regt Royal School of Signals
Capt HR Frost	1 Sqn JSSU (Cyp)
Capt MP Parke	ATR Lichfield
Capt A Sutherland	G6 HQ Land
Capt WP Taylor	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt FS Keith	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Lt H Richardson	ATR Pirbright

RETIREMENTS

FEBRUARY 2005

Name and Rank

Merrick - Col AW Merrick
Norris - Maj JM Norris
Parfitt - Col P Parfitt

MARCH 2005

Name and Rank

Knightly Brown - Capt R Knightly Brown
Stretch - Col MK Stretch

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC	**Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt	**Capt M Mallett**
Team SNCO	**Sgt R Sizeland**

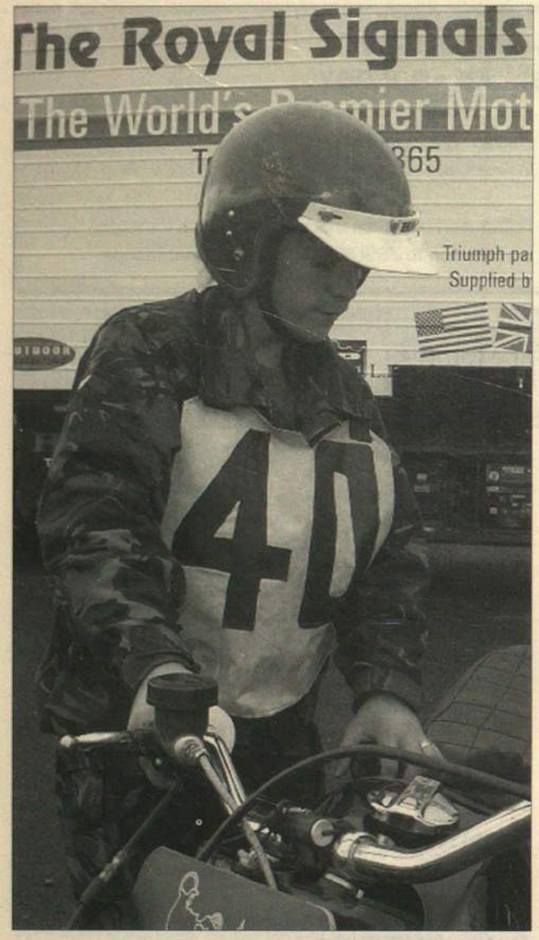
Since the close of the 2004 season in October, the Team has been busy with a number of activities, catching up on career courses, and of course, spending time with their families. We sadly say farewell to a number of individuals this season. Firstly, **Cpl 'Tonka' Richardson**, who leaves us after a staggering 21 years with the Team! We wish him the best of luck on Civvie Street; he will be sorely missed.

Cpl Duncan Marsh departs the team bound for Civvie Street and a new life in South Africa. We wish him the best of luck in the future and best wishes for his forthcoming wedding to **Sam**. **Capt Ali Youngman** departed the team and we wish him good fortune at his new post as 2IC of 2IC 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in NI. Taking over as the new Team Captain, we welcome **Capt Matthew Mallett**, posted in from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt.

INDUCTION COURSE 2004

The White Helmets annual selection course took place during 1 – 14 November 04, with the aim to select new members to undergo further trg to earn the coveted White Helmet. Instructing on the course this year were **Cpl Forster**, **Cpl Hooper** and **Cpl Chorlton**, who had the challenge of instructing the students, with 30% of them having had no previous riding experience.

The course consisted of two phases, the first being an off-road phase, conducted on Bovington Trg Area. The terrain and



LCpl McGinn preps her bike for the arena

condition of this trg area makes it ideally suited to the aim of this phase, which is to build individuals' confidence on the motorcycle. This culminated in a competitive skills confirmation day, with **Sig Kitchen** and **Sig Wareham** coming in joint first overall.

The second phase consisted of familiarisation with the Triumph Tiger 750cc Motorcycles, and of course riding them in an arena, and performing some of the tricks used in a regular display. For many, this brought out a new acrobatic side to them - which they didn't know they had! This phase culminated in a small display in front of the Regtl Col, **Col Ewbank** and invited guests.

All Seven successful students will join in January for further trg, and for the first time in the Team's history, 2005 will see the inclusion of the first two female team members **LCpl Stephanie McGinn** and newly promoted **LCpl Julie Jones**.

SOUTH AFRICA 2004

Whilst the remainder of the Team were busy carrying out vital maintenance and preparing the motorcycles for the start of the new year, 10 members deployed to South Africa, for 2 weeks, to participate in the long-standing charity outreach programme with **Forest Town School**.

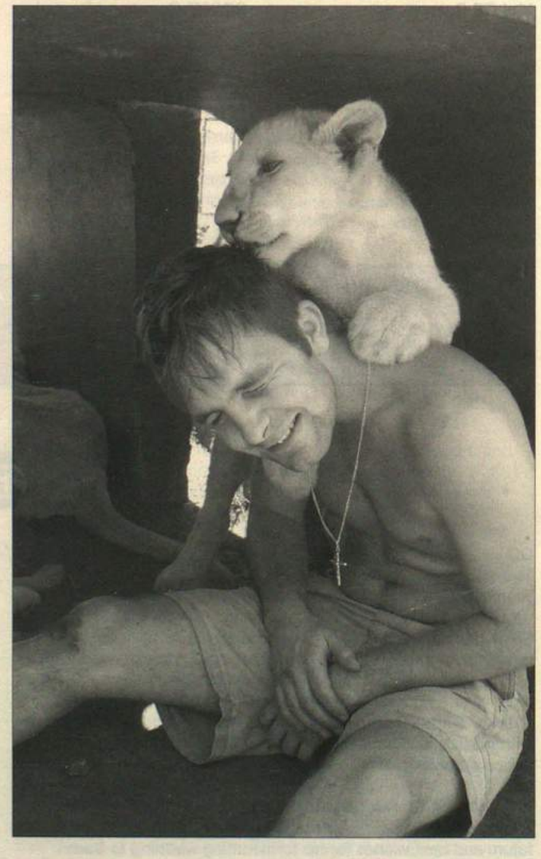
The school, located in a suburb of Johannesburg, provides schooling for those children who are disabled in some way, or have learning difficulties. **Mr Mike Higgins**, General Manager South Africa of Virgin Airways once again kindly provided the Team with flights, whilst accn was provided free of charge by **Mr Jim Harrison**, an ex Royal Signals lineman.

This was the fourth time the Team has visited the school, and they were made to feel most welcome upon their arrival. The Team carried out many tasks during this year's visit, including the painting of classrooms, construction of notice boards and re-conditioning of floors throughout the School.

Away from painting and decorating duties, the Team did have the opportunity to let their hair down and explore a little more of South Africa, absorbing some of the diverse culture. This included a visit to Alexandria Township – one of the poorer working class areas of Johannesburg, where many of the School's pupils reside.

There was also the chance to pay a visit to a Lion and Rhino Nature Reserve, where the Team had the opportunity to 'play' with lion and cheetah cubs, and to see some of the fascinating native wildlife native. It is certainly and experience that Team members won't forget in a hurry, and we can happily report that they all escaped the Reserve unscathed, except for **Sig Jono Johnston**, who sustained lion scratches on his arm! Overall, a successful and worthwhile trip, and both the School and the Team look forward to returning next year.

> If you think that a tour with the White Helmets would be a challenge you would like, then information can be found in SOinC(A) PD 204 (held in Unit Orderly Rooms) or contact the Team direct on 94371 2365 or 01258 482365.



Ready-to-eat Sig Jono Johnson playing with lion cubs

12 SIGNAL GROUP

Comd **Col Steve Potter**

12 Sig Gp was formed in April 2004 from within the assigned Units of 11 Sig Bde and is comprised of the three PTARMIGAN equipped TA Regts, 33, 34 and 35 Sig Regts.

Why is this all happening? Principally, since the move of the three PTARMIGAN Regts into the Regional Chain of Comd, there has been a subtle shift in the manner in which the Regts have combined to provide area network capability. In terms of collective and tech trg, the focus over recent years has become disparate, and as the three Regts report into different Regional Bdes, it seemed that it would be beneficial for there to be a centralised TA focus. Furthermore, as the TA element of 11 Sig Bde increasingly turns its attention to being ARRC centric - in support of 1 Sig Bde - a single point of contact and planning such as 12 Sig Gp was increasingly relevant. Therefore, 12 Sig Gp was proposed, and with the consent of all parties involved, including HQ SOinC(A), the respective Bde Comds (inc the Regional chain) and the participants, it formed in early 2004.

Assuming comd of the Gp, **Col Steve Potter** has turned his attention to producing a revised FOE, Trg Directive, liaison notes and procedures with the Regional Bdes, whilst overseeing the deployment of the Group to Germany in September 04 to take part in EX ARRCADE FALCON along with ARRC and 1 Sig Bde. He is supported by several TA Staff Officers, notably SO1(V) **Lt Col Chris Heaton**, and SO2s **Majs Gavin Miles**, **Bob Appleton**, **Jim Foulkes**, and **Piers Ashdown** (REME). This is an exciting and challenging period as the Gp establishes itself, whilst also taking part in its bi-annual main effort of EX ARRCADE FALCON at the same time. **Brig David Meyer**, Comd 11 Sig Bde, was one of the architects of 12 Sig Gp's formation, and is one of its most enthusiastic supporters. It is a logical and common sense method of harnessing the benefits of the Regional chain, whilst maintaining the core priorities of tech trg and collective exs. There are clear benefits for everyone concerned, and the performance of the Gp on EX ARRCADE FALCON was testament to the new arrangements.

Never slow to celebrate matters, one of the first acts of the new Gp was to hold a 12 Gp Dinner – now to be known as the 'Glorious Twelfth Dinner.' This was readily supported by previous and current staff officers, together with Comd 11 Signal Bde.

One of the other benefits of the Gp's focus is that whilst it may have only been formed for six months, there is a long term legacy of support and experience by a range of TA Staff Officers who have previously served in 11 Sig Bde and who can now add value to 12 Gp's efforts. This was no more obvious than in the recent deployment to Germany, when HQ 12 Sig Gp was reinforced by no fewer that three SO1s in the shape of **Lt Cols Allan Grindrod**, **Ian Puddy** and **Mark Smith**, all of whom added significant brain power and TA ethos to their roles as LOs in HQ 1 Sig Bde, ARRC Excon and 12 Gp itself. This allowed the Group's SO1, **Lt Col Chris Heaton** to focus on contributing to Netcen 16 in the field, ably supported by our own lawyer, **Maj Gavin Miles** - who satisfied himself with the facts, and only the facts - never a good plan with the uncertainties of Trunk Node movement!

EX ARRCADE FALCON was a roaring success, as 12 Gp took the role of delivering capability into theatre and for comd to be transferred to 1 Sig Bde for the duration of the ex - 9 days. Comd 12 Gp could then focus on ensuring that the ex fulfilled our aims, notably achieving a challenging and rewarding ex for the soldiers, whilst validating our UK trg and tech skills. Thereafter, 12 Gp would effect the recovery back to UK.

After the Hurst Point had delivered the Gp's veh assets to Emden, and the personnel from the Regts had completed their circuitous route from Teesport to Hull to Rotterdam (or Zeebrugge) and then up to Emden, the vehs and people got together for the preparation to deploy. 1 Sig Bde had already set up shop in the north, with connectivity coming in across their Trunk Nodes and DIGISANS, whilst HQ 12 Gp deployed to co-locate with BSG as part of the RSC build. A series of relief in place deployments by TA Trunk Nodes and SANs started to release classic regular SANs and Trunk Nodes south to extend the ex. Under the stewardship of Netcen 16, an ever-watchful DCOS and BSG in 1 Bde, and the cynical eye of **Col Steve Potter**, the ex started well and ended on a high - a commendable result for everyone involved.

Throughout, HQ 12 Gp was an amalgam of Regular and TA staff, with a number of influential Regular 11 Bde personnel supporting 12 Gp's efforts in the field. Elements from 2 Sig Regt supported the HQ directly, whilst SATCOM from 30 Sig Regt also deployed for the duration. 11 Bde's YofS, **WO1 Arthurs** was a willing participant, accompanied by **Capt Richard Byfield**. The Chief Clerk, **SSgt Jones** and **Cpl Douglas** both added their organisational skills to ensure that the admin ran smoothly, whilst **SSgt Hartley** actually volunteered for the night shift. Apparently, G4 was run almost single handedly by **Maj Gary Hailstone**, on loan from HQ 11 Bde. His previously hidden talents with Civvy

12 Group's inaugural dinner, The Glorious Twelfth, at Donnington

coach drivers, portaloos, vehicle marshals, and the movement chain were well utilised.

During the first week of the ex, 12 Sig Group received a visit from **Maj Gen the Duke of Westminster**, accompanied by **Brig Neil Baverstock DRFC**. The day started with a briefing at HQ 12 Group by **Col Steve Potter**, followed by various visits with different assets in their field locs, including visits to CO 33 Sig Regt, **Lt Col David Somerville** and CO 34 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Gary Hearn**. The General made a big impact on all those he met and as usual, the TA soldiers were hardly backward in coming forward with their views.

The recovery from Germany went smoothly, and all assets returned safely in good time. Attention now turns to the trg cycle for the next 23 months in lieu of ARRCADE FALCON 06 and any exs in between. As a result of the success of AF04, it is likely that we will see many more joined-up exs under the auspices of support to ARRC, with personnel from 1 Bde coming over to the UK for weekend exs, trg enhancements (GP3), and study days in the interim. The integration between the Regular and TA elements of the ex, at all levels, was a notable and welcome element of the deployment, and it is important that this significant step forward is maintained for the future.

Maj Gen The Duke of Westminster hearing the views of some of the soldiers

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

As has become custom, **Col Cliff Walters**, Director of the Royal Signals Museum, and his staff entertained the museum volunteers to dinner at The Crown Hotel on Friday, 5 November to mark the end of the 2004 weekend opening season. As in previous years, the Crown Hotel provided a wide and varied choice of food. The chefs and serving staff excelled themselves and excellent meals were enjoyed by all.

Lt Col Pat Soward, the Volunteer Coordinator, welcomed recently recruited staff member, **Andrea Makin** and **Lt Col Mike Butler** to their first dinner. He had a warm welcome for **David Walker**, who had recently retired as Assistant Curator. He then drew attention to the place which, symbolically, had been set for those who would have been with us but were detained in another place.

With great sadness he reported the death of **Maj Jim Ferguson** earlier in the week, and noted that he had sent condolences to **Louise Ferguson** and her family on our behalf.

He reported that 2004 had been a particularly hard year for the Museum staff due to sickness and the difficulty in recruiting a replacement for **David Walker**, but **Tom Ditch**, a weekday volunteer, had stepped into the breech on a part time basis. The Museum staff were therefore to be congratulated on not only keeping the ship afloat, but also being able to make some forward progress.

Maj Gen Chris Last, the retiring Chairman of Trustees, was unable to attend, but sent a message thanking the volunteers for '... the huge contribution you all make to the success of the museum. The Board and I, as I depart and **Brig Cedric Burton** takes over, are unanimous in our praise and thanks for the wonderful help you all give us.

'The Museum continues in sound financial shape, and will again this year, be able to add to our reserves as well as achieve our immediate objectives.' **Col Cliff Walters** reported on the work that had been achieved in 2004, and described projects planned for next year. He mentioned particularly the archive store which, when completed, had been thought to have capacity to last for twenty years but which, after only seven years was becoming cramped!

Against this eventual situation, the floor had been reinforced to take rolling racking, which was being installed during November. He also mentioned the continuing work to decide the fate of the masses of items in the reserve store and, indeed, the need to identify many items. In this **Tom Ditch** had assembled several batches of equipments to be considered by a 'Board of Officers' volunteers able to assist in this work.

He concluded by describing the creation of the Defence College of Communications and Information Systems allied to the Public Private Partnership (as described so succinctly by **Brig John Terrington** in the October 2004 edition of *The WIRE*) and its possible effect on the future of the Museum.

Adam Forty, the Museum Business Manager, reported on the Museum's excellent state of financial health, concluding with a statement that the Canteen, operated by a private contractor, was now making a significant financial contribution to the Museum.

The Museum always needs volunteers to work both during weekdays and at weekends. Four current weekend volunteers will be unable to continue in 2005, and replacements will be needed.

Weekend volunteers are asked to carry out six duties on weekends and public holidays during the period midFebruary to the end of October.

It is an exceptionally rewarding task, training is given, and Serving and Retired members of the Corps are equally welcome. For more details, contact **Lt Col Pat Soward** on 01258 860647.

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

EXERCISE ARRCADE DRAGON – *by Cpl Geordie Allen*

On Monday 18 October eight complete novice sailors departed from Blandford Camp for the Joint Services Adventure Sail Training Centre, Gosport, to collect our yacht to begin our journey to the Canary Islands.

At JSASTC we met the rest of our crew with whom we would spend the next three and a half weeks on board the 67ft Challenger yacht *Adventure*. An unexpected two days' delay while repairs were effected to the boat, gave us the opportunity to practise sailing on smaller 34ft yachts. This taught us all the basic sailing skills we would require over the next 3 weeks. Finally, after loading provisions and stores, we set sail on Monday 25 October. Morale was extremely high and everyone was in good spirits as the trip was finally underway.

A day and a half later, we berthed and secured to a floating pontoon in Camaret sur Mer in France. Here, high winds caused a further two days' delay. The winds were so strong that we even had difficulty keeping the boat safely moored.

Eventually, we set off towards Lexios in Portugal, via the dreaded Bay of Biscay, running parallel with the Spanish and Portuguese coasts. Again, foul weather played its part and we hit the tail end of a Force 9 storm. Our entire foul weather clothing system, provided by JSASTC, got completely drenched. Ah, the joys of putting on wet clothes at 04.00hrs, ready for another 4 hrs of waves, wind and rain.

After arriving at Lexios, and getting ourselves fed and the boat sorted, we had a very necessary good night's sleep. The next morning approached all too quickly, and we braced ourselves for the longest leg of our journey, setting off for Porto Santo, a small island north east of Madeira.

We headed southwest with the wind in our favour. Lots of sail changes, no sight of land for quite a few days and some exceptional meals prepared by the mother watch, (thanks to **LCpl Kerry Hopkinson**) keeping morale high and spirits going until land was in sight. Dolphins and flying fish were the order of the day, and seeing them in the wild was a highlight for most on board.

We had a brief opportunity to put the spinnaker up, and for a while, had some speed. But the weather soon turned bad again, and we had to get it down quickly. The effort required to get one of these huge sails down in a strong wind was, without doubt, one of the hardest things throughout the trip.

As soon as we had docked at Porto Santo, we were into sail folding, deck cleaning, and getting everything shipshape. Work proceeded into the early afternoon. Once this was all done, it was into the showers to freshen up. Later that evening the crew went to an amazing 'meat on a stick' themed restaurant, where we pigged out, while **Cpl Allen** suffered from land sickness to the delight of all others seated around him.

After another good night's sleep, we left early the next morning for Las Palmas, but having a day to spare, we detoured to Santa Cruz, Tenerife. Here, we experienced the fine cuisine of McDonalds, followed by a visit to a rather untraditional Indian bar. No seats, just fluffy pillows everywhere!

Up early yet again, we set off for Las Palmas, where our sailing saga was to end. After eight hours, we arrived, emotionally relieved, but also quite sad, realising we would be back to work 2 days later.

After completely gutting the boat and preparing it for the Atlantic Rally stage, we enjoyed our final crew meal and some partying, before retiring to the yacht, knowing that we would be going home the following day. The next day there were a few odd jobs to do before the taxi drive to the airport, where we were welcomed back to civilisation.

We would like to say a huge thank you to **Maj Roberts**, **SSgt Cattle** and JSASTC, and to the rest of the *Adventure* crew who made the whole experience so memorable and enjoyable. One thing we have taken away from this experience is that sailing is not as easy as it looks!

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

POWER SECTION

The Section is now entering a period of change, with the start of steady state trg on the FEPS generators and the introduction of the Lightweight Field Generator (LFG), with members of the Section attending a Train the Trainer course here in Blandford. The LFG will replace several generators, including the 300/500 Hopkins and the 1500W AC Plessey. We expect this multi-purpose generator to be introduced to the School by April 05, so over the next few months, the Section will be carrying out conversion trg.

Operators should be pleased with this generator, because there is no need to calculate charging rates, and the LFG has the capability of simultaneously producing 240 Volts for your kettles whilst charging your batteries!

EQUIPMENT SECTION

In general, the Section has had a quiet couple of months, the calm before the storm with BOWMAN pending. In the very near future, some of our lucky instructors will actually be going away to be BOWMANised. This will allow the Section to continue with its development of BOWMAN trg for techs, which is currently ongoing.

RADEX TROOP

The Tp has been involved in a lot of activities over the past couple of months, but the main effort has been the Tp Battle Camp week (EX REGAL WARRIOR II). The Battle Camp mainly consisted of range packages conducted by **SSgt John Batts**, **Sgt Jinty Morgan**, **Cpl Derek Clubb** and **Cpl Rory Milne**. The first day consisted of an APWT shoot and a 9mm pistol range on Bulford Ranges. There were some good scores achieved by **Cpl Woodrow**, **Cpl Shane Wakeling** and **Sig Matt Slater**.

Day Two was once again on the Bulford Range Complex, and consisted of moving target and LSW shoots. Overall, it was a good day gaining valuable experience for all concerned.

Day Three was a mil skills trg day, held on Blandford Camp, conducted mainly by **CSgt Johnny Matthews** RM, one of the sea soldiers permanently attached to RSG. Under his watchful

eye, we covered such things as how to break contact with the enemy, and a refresher on how to assault an enemy position. Overall, it was another good day's trg with lots of lessons learned. In the evening we moved to Bovington Trg Area and split into 2 Sections. 1 Section was commanded by **Cpl Tony Gallagher**, and 2 Section by **Cpl Dave Moore**.

The two sections assaulted and cleared a number of positions occupied by the enemy. Once the final re-org was complete, and the job was done we jumped back onto our minibuses and headed back to Piddlehinton Trg Camp for admin, before settling back and enjoying a nice filling meal, lovingly prepared by **Cpl Clay Austin** - greatly appreciated by all.

The final day of the battle camp involved one more LSW shoot on Bulford Range. Overall, the week was really enjoyable for the entire Tp, refreshing some infantry skills and learning a few memorable lessons.

Over the next few months, the Tp will be busy getting back to the job of assessing Phase 2 solders to be deployed out to the Field Army, as well as finding time to go away and complete our BOWMAN trg courses.

COMMAND SECTION

It's not such a busy time for all concerned on the courses front. FofS Course 74 has gone through as the last course of the year, with very few hitches, but you can all be thankful they will be Foremen and not Yeomen! However, like every well-oiled machine, the calm on the surface belies the frantic work below, as BOWMAN rears its ugly head.

Every man and his dog are on the courses to ensure Blandford and the Section is up to speed in the New Year. At present, we are all rewriting lessons, presentations and exercises like it's going out of fashion. But just in case we all get a little complacent, the OC has organised another office move for us all in the New Year.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col M Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SA Hadley**

The Regt bade farewell to **Lt Col Graham Complin** who, after 25 years loyal service, has departed for Civvy Street to spend more time with his family and to work in the lucrative market of comms. From all at 11 Sig Regt, we wish him and his wife **Catherine** all the very best for the future. **Maj Ian Walton** briefly assumed comd of the Regt until Lt Col Matt Fenson took up the reins on 1 January 05.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RCSigs
SSM **WO2 K Overton**

EXERCISE OUSTON WARRIOR 15-17 OCTOBER 04
- by Sig Ferguson

Upon arriving at SPTA, we tabbed into our first loc. After the initial safety briefings and pyrotechnic demonstration, we were associated with our chickens, which we had to feed, name and nurture. The next morning, after checking our chickens (of course), we entered our morning routine. The day consisted of a round robin of lessons covering anti-ambush drills, survival techniques, target indication and the operation of a basic patrol radio.

In the survival lesson we were shown how to kill our chickens and pluck and prepare them for a nice hearty meal. I was more than happy to let our fellow Fijians do this part, as their expertise was obvious. The chickens seemed to have very rubbery necks, and they refused to die. But one quick chop with a machete soon sorted that out.

My favourite part of the ex was the vehicle anti-ambush drills. We were driven along a dirt track and the enemy opened up on us. The adrenalin started pumping as we threw ourselves off the four-tonners and eliminated the enemy position without any loss of life. That evening we carried out night patrols, and managed to not get lost!

At the end of the ex, the padre gave back his weapon and held a field ceremony. A new experience for most of us, all in all it was an extremely enjoyable and worthwhile exercise.

HARROGATE CUP RUGBY 7'S COMPETITION 2004

The Harrogate Cup is an annual event held by 11 Sig Regt, and comprises a number of inter-sqn sporting events. 2004 has proven to be 1 (Ouston) Sqn's most fruitful year, with a total of four victories from the ten events, and a couple of runners-up. We have taken part in many events over the last few months, including rugby, boxing and football.

HARROGATE CUP RUGBY SEVENS *- by Sig Douglas*

The Rugby Sevens proved to be a victorious day for us, as ten Fijians and I made the line up. The first game was actually quite close, with Beaufighter Tp from 2 Sqn allowing us to score only 12 points to their 0, which was the wake up call we needed. From then on, we ran in about 130 points in three games, with 0 points scored against us.

It was a sublime display of running rugby, with crunching tackles, flowing passing, side-steps and blistering pace from all the team, who were deservedly crowned the 2004 Harrogate Cup Rugby Sevens Champions.

I would like to thank all members of 1 (Ouston) Sqn, and dedicate the victory to all those who stood in the freezing rain to encourage us to perform the way we did.

HARROGATE CUP BOXING *- by Sig Fertnig*

We started training about eight weeks before fight night, with morning runs and skills sessions in the evenings. It was very difficult, especially the morning sessions, as theybegan at 05.45hrs. It was cold, wet and quite foreboding, making it almost impossible to get out of bed. This had to the Sqn's team reducing from some 30 strong down to just 3 fighters on the night.

When fight night arrived, we were all very excited and nervous as 600 spectators were crammed into the gym to watch the bouts. The gym had undergone a complete makeover, with photographers, camera crews and floor to ceiling hessian.

Once the gym had filled up, the atmosphere was electric, and we received an amazing reception for the ring-walks. **Sig McMonigle** was the first to fight, and she completely walked over her oponent. Unfortunately, the bout was stopped early, as she was clearly out-classing her opponent. **Sig Tilak** was next, and he did his best to make the fight last by playing it very easy. However, the referee told him he had to fight, so with one clean punch the fight was over - an awesome display of what he had available.

I was the last to go up, and simply had to follow the 1 Sqn victories. I would like to thank my opponent for a good fight, and congratulate all those who got in the ring to box.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj SSM Youngson**
SSM **WO2 EC Williams**

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT/ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS SWIMMING *- by Cpl Coralie Stainthorp*

On 16 November 04 we took two teams, male and female, to 21 Sig Regt (AS) for the Royal Signals Swimming and Water Polo Championships.

The 11 Sig Regt/RSS Team was representing all of the training organisations, and succeeded in winning the Water Polo, and coming third in the Swimming events. Some swimmers were selected for the Corps team, and went on to train for the Inter-Corps Championships, held on 22 and 23 November at Aldershot.

The first day of the Inter-Corps Championships saw the heats for the Swimming Competition, and the qualifying rounds of the Water Polo Competition. The following day, the finals of the Water Polo Championships were held in the morning, followed by the finals of the Swimming events.

In the finals, Cpl Bev Thornton came 5th in the 50m Breastroke; LCpl Ollie Smith came in 3rd in the 50m Backstroke; Cpl Dan Hine came 5th in the 100m backstroke; and Capt Kerry Larsen came 4th in the 50m freestyle and 5th in the100m freestyle.

LCpl Ollie Smith and **Capt Pete Griffiths** were in the Royal Signals 'A' Team for Water Polo, and played incredibly well to win the closely-fought final against REME, with a score of 7-6. **Capt Kerry Larsen**, **Cpl Bev Thornton**, **Cpl Cora Stainthorp** and **Sig Terri Jackson** played for the victorious Royal Signals Female Water Polo Team.

In all, the Corps Teams took 5 of the 6 trophies going. Not a bad haul!

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj RM Jones**
SSM **WO2 TJ Ward**

HARROGATE CUP BOXING *- Sig King*

When I volunteered for the Sqn boxing team for the Harrogate Cup I didn't have a clue about the sport, or anything to do with it. Neither did most of the other 30+ Phase 2s who turned up to trg on the first night and found out it was a lot harder than they thought. Our team trained every night at 20.00hrs and three mornings a week at 06.00hrs.

The night sessions were all about skills and technique, and were quite hard to master. I found out the hard way by sparring with someone better. We started at the basics, e.g. footwork, jabs and guard, and moved onto more difficult things like combos, parries, bag work and sparring. Then we went back to basics. In the mornings, we would do fitness, working on sprints, long runs and circuits. At first, it was a bit of a laugh, but as it got closer to the finals night, everyone started getting into the mood and wanting to win.

On the morning of the prelims, our team was announced, and we were told the times that our fights were at. The prelims were all the quarter and semi-final fights. I found myself fighting twice because there were so many people in my weight group. There were some really hard fights, and you could tell that a lot of hard work had been put in by the coaches. The PT staff had done an excellent job turning our gym into a boxing arena.

When the team was in the dressing room, everyone was so nervous before the fights. But as we found out, it was nothing compared with finals night, which is the biggest sporting event of the year, and the Harrogate Cup is presented after this Tournament. Waiting outside the gym with the piper was the longest 60 seconds of my life. Waiting to go out and fight in front of 750 people, with everyone shouting and screaming, takes some effort. Everyone who got in the ring that night deserves a pat on the back.

With all the fights over, the Harrogate Cup Boxing Trophy was awarded to 3 Sqn for the 4th year running. Our thanks go to **Cpl Dave Worsfold** and the rest of the coaches, who had turned us in to something that looked half decent in such a short time. Having won my bout in quite a bloody fight, I didn't think the night could get any better, but I was given the Best Boxer Trophy at the end by the CO. I was in shock. It was one of the most memorable nights of my life, and I am sure everyone else who took part feels the same.

EXERCISE HARROGATE FOLLY *– by Sig Andrew Barr*

We deployed on EX HARROGATE FOLLY on Friday 26 November 04. For a week prior to it, we had been to various classes after our trade trg. These included survival, LAD recovery of a Landrover, first aid, NBC, and comd tasks. So we had a basic idea of what we had to do on the ex.

Nine sections deployed from Lightning Tp. Our section was 8 men strong, comprising **Sigs Keen**, **Creed**, **Berridge**, **Wyton-delisle**, **Bayley**, **Brown**, **Mitton** and myself. Our section comd was **Cpl Dan Bird** of 264 Sig Sqn.

When we arrived at Bovington Trg Area on the Friday night, we cammed up, collected our Bergens and rations, and tabbed up to the harbour area. Before getting our heads down for the night, the section nominated different ICs for the stands we were going to. So everything was well prepared.

Reveille was at 05.30hrs. We were the first to go to the survival stand, where we learned how to skin a chicken and remove the insides. On this stand we also constructed a dead-fall trap and a snake trap to test our survival skills. After skinning and washing the chickens, we decided to take one back with us and cook it after the work was done.

After the survival stand, we had first aid, NBC, comd tasks and an introduction to travelling in a 432. The section aced the first aid stand, where there was a battle scenario; and in the NBC stand, we also performed excellently.

The last stand we had was the log race. After tabbing from stand to stand, the section was pretty tired, but we gave it our hardest and best. When we had finished, we were pleased to hear that, although we were the last section to do the run, we came in in first place. Everyone was exhausted. All we looked forward to was having something to eat and doing the night nav part of the ex in the minibus, later on that night. When we got back from the night nav, we cooked our chicken on the fire, and headed to bed. The ex was over - or so we thought…

On the Sunday morning we were on the minibus to go back to Camp. But halfway there we were stopped and were briefed for a march and shoot. Everyone was exhausted, but we pulled together to get the job done. We came in second place, and were happy with the result.

All the teamwork we had put in to the ex had paid off. Everyone had learned a lot. The SSM and OC presented us with a Trophy, and congratulated everyone that took part, including the upgraders, and Tp Staff.

THE LIGHTNING TROPHY

The Lightning Trophy was presented to 3 (Harrogate) Sqn by 14 Sig Regt (EW) in 1997 to be awarded to any Sys Eng Tech (Radio) Basic (SRBR) student, who achieves outstanding results on completion of their course. With general agreement, this Trophy is now awarded to any Sys Eng Tech Basic (BSEM) student, who achieves an outstanding result on completion of their course. This year the Lightning Trophy has been awarded **Sig Bayley**.

Sig Bayley from Coulsdon, Surrey, joined the British Army on 15 October 2003, starting Phase 1 trg on 27 October at ATR Litchfield.

He joined 11 Sig Regt on 2 February 04, and was allocated a place on Potential Tech Course PTBR 03/010, which started on 8 March 04. He completed the Theory phase of the course on 3 August 04. On 16 August 04, he started the Equipment phase as a member of the Basic Sys Eng Tech Course BSEM 04/007, successfully finishing on 14 October 04.

Within the Tp, **Sig Bayley** as taken part in numerous activities: EX HARROGATE FOLLY a FIBUA ex in Copehill, SPTA. He has represented the Sqn in Harrogate Cup Hockey, Basketball and Boxing, and competed in the Gordon's Cup Log Race competition

Throughout his time in Blandford **Sig Bayley** has impressed all his instructors by his maturity, intelligence and hard work, achieving an outstanding set of results in both theory and practical assessments. The award of the Lightning Trophy is in recognition of his qualities as an outstanding student.

TROOP COMMANDERS COURSE

TROOP COMMANDERS VISIT THE FRENCH SCHOOL OF SIGNALS, ESAT - *by 2Lt Goldsmith*

At the end of October three Tp Comds from TC59 travelled to Rennes to visit the École Supérieure et D'Aplication des Transmissions (ESAT) to find out about the lives and training of the young French Subalterns. Our hosts for the week **Lt Eric Grund** and **Lt Sebastian Sanchez**, organised an excellent programme both militarily and socially. On our first day at the School we were introduced to the different equipment currently in use. Their system, RITA, is the equivalent to the British PTARMIGAN trunk network, and although all three of us had very limited French, the diagrams were very similar to those so familiar in the PTARMIGAN Main Building at Blandford.

The French are a good way ahead, with RITA 2 already in operation providing a combination of tactical and strategic comms to the highest level, equivalent to our CORMORANT and FALCON systems. CIS or SIC (this is a familiar trait in France - abbreviations in the wrong order!) currently utilised is also more advanced, and works from section level on the ground up to strategic HQ, comparable with the facilities provided by BOWMAN.

We were also given the chance to visit the Officer Training Centre, a far longer course of either two or three years, depending on previous qualifications. Although less intense, it made me grateful that the commissioning course at Sandhurst is only one year.

As interesting as the military and academic side may be, our hosts gave us an insight into the social sphere of the young French Subaltern, and worryingly this to proved to be very similar. Being ponded on a cold autumn day was not my idea of fun, especially as the point in question was before anyone had had a beer.

Competition between the French was also rife throughout the week. **2Lt Warmington** put in a marksmanship, performance scoring 82 out of a possible 100 on the pistol shoot. To the despair of all the French officers, I managed to win the first match of the bowling, and we all put in a sterling performance in the cross country, with both **2Lt Warmington** and **Lt Moody** finishing well into the top third in the men's race, and myself finishing 8th in the women's race. Unfortunately, our success did not hold out on the laser quest, and we were outnumbered 10 to 1 but still fought to the bitter end.

The week passed too quickly, but it proved to be a most enjoyable and interesting exchange. We were all incredibly surprised at the similarities between the capabilities of our armies. A special thanks must go out to **Lt Eric Grund**, **Lt Sebastian Sanchez** and the School ESAT for allowing us to visit and making us feel most welcome.

THE FRENCH SCHOOL OF SIGNALS – *by Lt Natacha Bécard*

Situated in Cesson-Sévigné on the outskirts of Rennes, the French Army Basic and Higher Level Signal School, known as École Supérieur et D'Application des Transmissions (ESAT) is at the heart of a high level industrial and scientific complex (University of Rennes, Research and Industrial bodies such as France Telecom, R and D sites etc.)

Heir to the magnificent traditions of the Engineer Telegraph Service, the Signal Corps, founded in 1942, is involved in all military engagements - inevitably first in, last out. This record lays on ESAT the responsibility to live up to the proud heritage left by our predecessors, and to train the masters of the information age, so vital to the Services.

ESAT was formed in 1994 by the amalgamation on one site of the existing Army College of Electronics from Cesson-Sévigné, the Army Signal Training School from Montgaris, and the NCO Signal Training School from Agen. The range of competences taught at ESAT can be summed up in the expression: 'Mastery of Information.'

ESAT is a Tri-Service School, whose mission is to provide initial and advanced training for MOD personnel in the domains of Communications and Information Systems (CIS) and Electronic Warfare (EW). ESAT also has a major role in the formation of doctrine for the use of CIS and EW systems.

Over the course of each training year, ESAT runs the following programmes:

Officers
Troop Commanders Courses for Young Officers;
Company Commanders courses for captains selected for command
Senior officers destined to be Regimental Training Officers
Specialist courses for officers (Crypto, Information Security etc..)
Future Chiefs of Staff and those destined for promotion beyond Colonel
Engineering Courses at post graduate level (Master of Military Telecommunications Networks, Diploma in Electronics and Information Technology, Diploma in Management of Information Systems etc.)

SNCOs
Basic and advanced technician training
Upgrading courses for various technical skills

Other Ranks
Information Technology training. Basic trade training for ORs, less IT Specialists, is carried out in the Signal Regiments.

As part of the framework for cooperation for Defence within Europe, ESAT is twinned with its sister schools in Blandford in the United Kingdom and at Feldafing in Germany. These partnerships include numerous student exchanges. Furthermore, ESAT enjoys special relationships with the Signal Schools in Italy, Spain and the United States. Each year, ESAT welcomes around 70 students from allied countries.

Since July 2000, the School has been responsible for defining and communicating the policy and traditions of the Signal Corps. In November 2004, the Signals Museum, Espace Ferrié (named in honour of the former **Gen Ferrié**, a pioneer in military communications), was established. The Museum offers a rich cultural, scientific and innovative view into the world of communications and Information Technology.

Finally, ESAT is the first military school to have taken on the task of gaining a Quality Assurance Certificate, and to have achieved the award of ISO 9001, Version 2000. To quote **Maj Gen Bagaria**, Commandant of ESAT: 'Having an ongoing relationship with the local community, scholastic, scientific and industrial; being a member of the Conference of Higher Education; and having strong ties with the Electronic Weapons Laboratories at Bruz; ESAT has become a centre of excellence within its domain; and the award of ISO 9000/1, gained in 2000, is the confirmation of this.'

In summary, ESAT is a Joint and Combined Services School for Military and Operational training, as well as being a major centre for scientific and technical vocational learning, which trains the future soldiers and leaders of the Services as specialists in Communications and Information Systems, equipping them to fulfil their roles in the operational world of the future.

POTENTIAL OFFICERS DEVELOPMENT COURSE - *by PO NP Jones*

Having joined the Army straight after university, I had never really given applying for a Commission a thought. I had just wanted to serve in the ranks and earn my spurs that way.

However, whilst serving at 608 Sig Tp, DSDC Ashchurch, my then OC, **Maj G Hegarty**, suggested that I actually give the Commission route some serious thought. After thinking it over and talking to my wife, I decided to give it a go. I had nothing to lose and everything to gain.

After numerous visits to different Corps to gain sponsorship, I attended RCB briefing and left with a Cat 1 pass. 6 months later, I tried my main board at RCB and failed. It was then I was approached by an AGC ETS officer, **Capt Cable**, about attending the Potential Officers' Development Course, something that I should have been entitled to before my first crack at RCB. So on 27 August 04, I walked my dogs for the last time, said goodbye to my wife and set of on the 460-mile journey from my base in Herford to Worthy Down.

I was a bit apprehensive of what to expect and how the course would pan out. It was soon explained to us that the course was mainly about increasing our cultural awareness and taking the soldier out of us, in order to prepare us for RCB. The first few weeks where taken up with orientating ourselves with our new surroundings, undertaking basic maths and general knowledge tests, and a week in Wales on AT. The course then soon progressed to cultural visits, which saw us visit museums, theatres and places of interest in Hampshire and London. This in itself was a unique experience, as it was both exciting and fun to visit some of Britain's greatest landmarks.

For me, there are two memorable experiences I will take with me from my time on the PODC course. The first was our visit to the Houses of Parliament, where I was very lucky to be selected to have lunch with the 3rd **Viscount Alanbrooke**, son of WW2 legend, **FM Alanbrooke**, **Winston Churchill's** right hand man during the War. The second was the sense of achievement that I felt after producing and performing a thirty-minute presentation in front of four 1-star officers. All in all, the Potential Officers' Development Course was a great experience, and one that has helped me develop my character and personality for the better.

So if you are ever asked by one of your Tp or Sqn Officers to apply for a Commission, or are considering applying for a Commission, I definitely urge you to apply for a place on the next PODC course. It gives you that little bit of an edge you need when attending RCB. As you read this article, I am preparing for Sandhurst, which is proof that if you want something bad enough you can achieve it.

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**

CORPS BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS

On 8 November 15 Sig Regt journeyed to York for the Corps Badminton Championships. Our team consisted of **Capt Newton**, **Cpls Abbott** and **Merrick**, **LCpls Brown**, **Cameron** and **Irwin,** and **Sigs Blakeley**, **Norwood** and **Williams**.

Shortly after our arrival in York, we got ourselves organised to go out for a few social drinks in York town centre. We soon discovered that on a Monday evening, the nightlife in York is the same as a Saturday night anywhere else.

The first group of matches was the Unit Competition category, comprising several doubles and several singles. To everyone's surprise, the team progressed to the finals, where we found our selves against the hosts, 2 Sig Regt. In what proved to be a finger-biting, hard fought match, we were out-gunned by 2 Sig Regt, losing 5 matches to 4, but picking up an unexpected runners up prize for the Unit Competition.

After a lively night on the Monday night, we decided to have a quiet night on the Tuesday. In another early start, the team met in

the gym for the Individual Singles and Doubles finals. Our champion doubles team of **Sig Bleakley** and **Cpl Abbott** progressed well, but narrowly lost out on a cup in the final of the Men's Doubles. Other successes came from **LCpl Brown**, who won the Women's Singles, and **LCpl Brown** and **Sig Williams** winning the Women's Doubles. **Capt Newton** performed extremely well, gaining Runner-up for the Plate Competition in a very exciting final.

All in all, it turned out to be a very successful competition for 15 Sig Regt, who left York with a number of plates and shiny new trophies for the cabinet. Well done to all involved.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Hanby**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) TJ Lappin**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP SWIMMING COMPETITION
– by Cpl Perry

This years CO's Cup Swimming Competition proved to be a very closely fought contest between 233 Sig Sqn, HQ Sqn, and 225 Sig Sqn. It was evident that all the teams had trained hard and prepared well for the competition. **Sgt Jeffs** really put the 233 Sqn team through their paces during trg. As a result, he managed to get a good team together and his coaching tips were greatly appreciated.

WO2 (YofS) TJ Talbot on a winning leg

On the day of the competition 233 Sig Sqn had high hopes of doing well, and everyone was eager to get into the pool. The opening event was the 50m freestyle, and **Sgt Angus** was up for 233 Sig Sqn. The first race was the closest race of the day, **Sgt Angus** winning by a fingernail. It was a great start for 233 Sig Sqn, and we got better, winning the next two events, with **Cpl Yapp** in the Backstroke and **Cpl Faithful** in the Butterfly. Unfortunately, **Cpl Perry** was unable to keep up the winning streak, but still finished a respectable second place in the Breaststroke. But it was not too long before 233 Sqn were back in their winning streak, with a great swim from **LCpl Burgmans** in the Women's 50m Freestyle. **Sgt Jeffs** went off like a rocket in the Individual Medley and looked certain to win, opening up a big lead. But unfortunately, he could not keep up his early fast pace, and had to settle for second place. The Relays were all close fought races, but it was all down to the last one to see which team would win the Competition. It proved a very close race, with HQ Sqn just touching a fraction before 233 Sig Sqn.

The presentation commenced shortly after the conclusion of the swimming. The CO, **Lt Col Smyth-Roberts**, presented the medals to the competitors. There were medals presented for both winners and runners up in the individual events. However the

The Winning Team, 233 Sig Sqn

overall victory was what the teams had really been working for. There could only be one winner. 233 Sig Sqn came first, closely followed by HQ Sqn, and then 225 Sig Sqn. All in all a good afternoon spent away from work.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AR Fawcett**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Wakeling**

THE MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION
– by LCpl Lacey

On the morning of the 16 November, an elite team of 225 Sig Sqn personnel undertook the annual Mercury Cup Challenge. The team consisted of **Capt Ben Norton**, **Sgt Stu Gray**, **Cpl Wayne Addison**, **Cpl Sam Rice**, **LCpl Ryan Lacey**, **LCpl Becky Powell**, **LCpl Johnny Morris** and **LCpl David Hendra**.

The first task, a 3-mile boot run, carrying full kit, was undertaken with a little hesitation by some of the team. But this was soon rectified by **Sgt Stu Gray**, as he set us off at break-neck speed. After a short distance, **Cpl Wayne Addison** encountered a wall, which stuck with him throughout the remainder of the march. We were just pipped to the post by 8 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, to come in with a well-deserved second place.

The team then went on to the IBSR Range, where our elite squad of killers showed their fighting prowess, with **Capt Ben Norton**, **Sgt Stu Grey**, **Cpl Wayne Addison** and **Cpl Sam Rice**, taking

The end of the March and the start of the Shoot

control of the task in hand and doing us proud. Our next challenge was the Medic Stand, where our team medic **Cpl Sam Rice** encountered some minor problems using the BFAM whilst dealing with a casualty, along with **LCpl Becky Powell**. But it all started to look up again when we conquered the four Comd tasks laid out by the DS. Being the only team to complete these tasks, and in a time of less than 25 minutes, this was our crowning glory. We were beaming with confidence once again.

After a short drive, we arrived at the final task, the MT Stand, where we encountered a few different scenarios. Whilst doing one of these tasks, **LCpl Ryan Lacey** managed to blow himself up by setting off an IED (that'll teach him).

The end eventually came; it was all over, and the relief was easy to see on everyone's faces. We made our way back to the cookhouse for the presentation. The anticipation was building, and each team was sure they had won it. But in the end, 8 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn received the glory. All in all, a good day was had, and even though we didn't win, we managed to beat 233.

The tired faces of 225 Sig Sqn Team

40 (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SD Hodges**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Henry**

With the end of OP TELIC 4, some of those mobilised from the Regt have returned. We welcome back **Maj Ian Kyle**, **Capt David Wilson**, **Lt Cara Girvan**, **Cpl Shane Matthews**, **Cpl Ricky Lindsay**, **Cpl Dave Coulter**, **Cpl Stephen Lynch**, **LCpl Alan Barton**, **LCpl Phil Albert**, **LCpl David Ritchie**, **LCpl Roy Johnston** and **Pte William Wilson**.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY - *by Capt McConnell*

The annual Remembrance Sunday parade took place 14 November 04. Support and 66 Sig Sqns joined with the RSA and the Clonaver ACF Det to parade in Clonaver TAC. They then all marched to Saint Mark's church, were the Regt joined with the local congregation in the Service and the Act of Remembrance. Then the Parade marched back to Clonaver TAC, where the March past and Salute were taken by **Col Henderson OBE TD**.

Lunch was provided for all attending, ably supplied and prepared by QM (V) **Maj Maurice Stanley** and RAO **Capt Christine Woodrow**. **Mrs Hodges** and the Supporters' Club ran a very successful raffle, which raised £153.00 for the Earl Haig Fund and their own work. There was an excellent turnout from families and friends of the Regt, with a lot of old faces and ex-members attending what proved to be a very successful day.

DINING OUT OF WO2 LYNDA WHITLEY AND SSGT JIM HAGAN

Sixty-three years of combined service was congratulated and celebrated with the dining out of **WO2 (RQMS) Linda Whitley** (now **Mrs Bremner**) and **SSgt Jim Hagan**. The dinner night was a great success with 108 Mess and ex-Mess members in attendance. An excellent menu, good wine and first class bon homie prevailed. **WO1(RSM) Henry** presiding, thanked both members for their long years of loyal service and dedication. The RSM wished them every success in the future and presented each with a gift from the Sgts' Mess. **WO2 Whitley** replied, as did **SSgt Jim Hagan**, who stole the show by distributing gifts of one sort or another to virtually everyone in attendance.

THE IRAQI PEOPLE'S ROAD TO DEMOCRACY
- by Maj I Kyle

'Stealing a March hare' is not an expression you would expect an Arab to understand. But this is exactly what the 250,000 citizens of the port town of Az Zubayr have achieved in demanding immediate local elections.

The intention of the Provisional Authority was for national elections to be held in January 2005, with local elections to follow. But the citizens of Az Zubayr, and four other towns in South Basrah Province didn't want to wait that long.

There is a popular and spontaneous movement, and the people of Az Zubayr wanted to go ahead, regardless of the Authoritiy's wishes. When they want to achieve something for themselves, we must not underestimate them. As part of the Governance Support Team, my job was to advise the local population, who have never been involved in a democratic election process before.

Local Councils do not enjoy local support and are not really trusted. On occasions, the Councillors themselves feel vulnerable, because they've not been elected. There's a ground swell that wants to see the democratic process started. The ability is there, and the brains are there. But the people are very realistic, and they realise they might get it wrong. But even if they're only 20% successful, it will still be a success for them.

Applications to hold elections are to be submitted to the Basrah Provincial Council, which has recently established a Supreme Committee that has formulated the rules and procedures for local elections. This Committee is also considering the applications of the 150 candidates proposed by the people of Az Zubayr.

So how will these elected representatives fit in and work with the sheiks and the tribal systems which have existed for centuries? We're waiting to see. Some tribes fall out with each other, and the political parties are in their infancy. But, as time goes by, they'll get better organised.

This was all a far cry form being the RAO(V) and my past work in the retail banking sector with the Northern Bank, but I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of Iraq.

BOXING AND 40 SIGNAL REGIMENT

When considering boxing, 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt would, most probably, not be the first unit in the British Army to spring to mind. After all, there are no known records detailing triumphant battles of the past. However, the noble sport of amateur boxing in Northern Ireland would not be the same without input from a number of officers from the Regt.

The PSAOs of both Sp Sqn and 66 (City of Belfast) Sig Sqn are both involved, along with the 2IC of 85 (Ulster and Antrim Artillery) Sig Sqn. Prospective geriatrics with close to 90 years' service between them, hardly potential gladiators… But they all continue to provide the nucleus of boxing officials both within the Province and across the United Kingdom.

Capt Dee Orwin, 2IC, 85 Sig Sqn, is the Secretary of Army Boxing in NI, and **Capt 'K-B' Kirkham-Brown**, PSAO, Sp Sqn, is the Secretary of Army Boxing Official in-Theatre. Both have been qualified as Judges Timekeepers and Referees for close to twenty years, and are Army Major Panel Officials, having provided technical expertise to both the World Senior Amateur Championships and Commonwealth Games. They are extremely active within the sport, assisting local boxing clubs as well as officiating at Army, National and International level. In addition, their initiative to run boxing skills and officials trg has paid dividends, having trained 16 new Judge/Timekeepers over the last 12 months. One of these is **Capt Keith Dowell**, PSAO, 66 Sqn, who is demonstrating the ability and promise of a future Referee. At the time of writing, **Capt K-B** is representing the Army in Swansea at a Wales Select Vs Army, and **Capt Orwin** has recently returned from a similar Army representational appointment during October.

Notwithstanding this commitment, they have ensured the smooth running of six inter-Coy type competitions, the Army NI Championships, an RAF Vs Army Select event, and a Charity Boxing Dinner Night already this season. And there is much more to come, with both officers scheduled to be involved in National Championships. So there is life in the old dogs yet…

BASKETBALL - *by LCpl McCallum*

The XL Trophy was within a winning grasp for either 66 Sig Sqn or 69 Sig Sqn.

The first match was between Sp Sqn and 85 Sig Sqn. It was a close match, but with some eyebrow-raising refereeing, 85 Sig Sqn won by a single basket. Next up were 66 Sig Sqn and 69 Sig Sqn. It promised to be a good, fair match, as it could have been for the Trophy. But it all went wrong on the fairness side, thanks to the **SSgt Sean Sweeney**, who just tried to charge down as many players as he could. Despite all his efforts, 66 Sig Sqn still came out the losers. Now Sp Sqn and 69 Sig Sqn were up. After their defeat, Sp Sqn were sure to up their efforts and start a winning run. They did just that, returning 69 Sig Sqn to the outback.

Capts K-B and Orwin

Now came a turn for two rival SSMs from 66 and 85 Sig Sqns, but after all of **SSM Jonty Johnston's** efforts, 85 Sig Sqn came out second to **SSM Clasper** and 66 Sig Sqn. Then a tired 85 Sig Sqn had to play and try to win the event. But 69 Sig Sqn overpowered their opponents to get their second win of the day.

As usual, the best is always saved till last, with Sp Sqn and 66 Sig Sqn playing in the final showdown. It could not end fast enough for 66 Sig Sqn, as they managed only 1 basket against the pile scored by a rampant Sp Sqn.

The competition was eventually decided on points difference, and it was Sp Sqn who were the winners. A big well-done also to 85 Sig Sqn for running a challenging event.

CROSS COUNTRY - *by LCpl McCallum*

The day started well. Once given the route, and some serious stretching by 69 (NIH) Sig Sqn, we were off. A good start was made by all, even the over 40s. The ladies had only 2 miles to do, so they came in first, with **Sgt Jane Simmons** leading the way, before getting directions by the famous markers, ended up lost and coming second behind **Cpl Jackie McKeown**.

The men had the longer run of 4 miles. There were many leaders throughout the course, but **LCpl McCormack** came in first for 85 (U and AA) Sig Sqn, who also took second place. **Sgt Tom Earl** tried his best, but could only secure third place. **Cfn McKeown** did well after eating his mountain of a lunch, and only stopped to walk 7 times over the 4-mile course. A big well-done to 69 (NIH) Sig Sqn for a well-organised event.

8th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KJ O'Neill**

EXERCISE YOSEMITE FINN - *by Cpl Best*

EX YOSEMITE FINN was led and organised by **Lt James Landreth** of 218 Sig Sqn. The aim of Stage 1 of the exped was to lead a six-day exped to the summit of Mt Whitney, in the Sierra Nevadas in California. This is the highest peak in mainland America, standing at an impressive 14,496 ft. This is over three times the height of Ben Nevis or, 2.75 miles high. Stage 2 was four days AT in Yosemite National Park, and Stage 3 was the R and R package in Las Vegas.

It all started on a cold and wet September's morning in Ballykelly. The ten travellers were ready to take on the world. The team was made up of two clerks (me being one of them) and 8 members of 218 Sig Sqn. Before we set off, the OC, **Maj Parsons** gave us some words of wisdom and also told us how much he would like to join us. Oh well, maybe next year, Sir!

We began by travelling to Belfast City Airport, from where we departed for London Heathrow. This was just the start of our epic journey, which would see us travel on planes, trains and automobiles. After the short flight, we made our way to a TAC in London, which **WO1(RSM) O'Neill** had set up through his old boys' network.

Early next day, we set off on the 10-hr flight to Los Angeles. With hundreds of programmes and films to choose from on your personal entertainment system, and free food and alcohol for the entire flight, many of us were happy enough to stay on the plane when we arrived in LA.

At the airport, we met **Dave**, our guide from Trek America, a friendly young American, who took us to our hotel for the night. We all had high ambitions of a night on the town in LA, but jet lag saw the majority of us settle for a nice meal and an early night. The next day we started the 6-hr drive to the Sierra Nevadas, where we would be starting our six-day hike to the summit of Mt Whitney. On the way to our first campsite, **Dave** showed us some giant Sequoia trees. Although not as tall as the well-known Giant Redwood trees, they were bigger in diameter and can live up to an impressive 2,000 yrs.

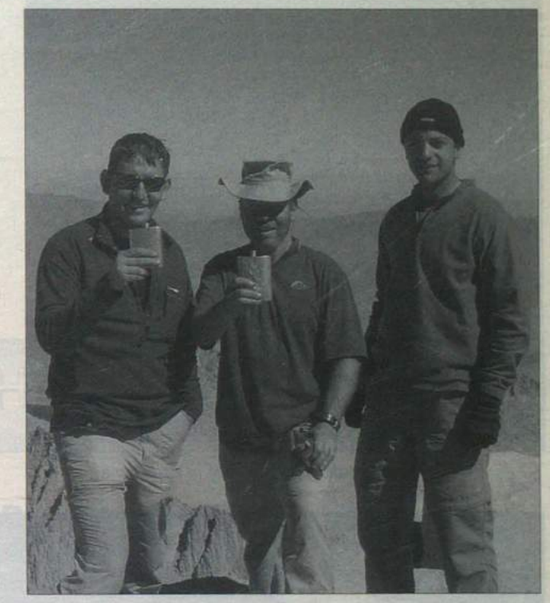
That evening we spent our first night out on the trail, all excited but apprehensive at what lay ahead. The following morning we set out on the John Muir trail, which started at around 6,000 ft.

Over the next six days, we covered 70 miles and climbed around 12,000 ft in total. This was because the trail took us up and down several peaks before we reached the summit of Mt Whitney. Along the trail we experienced fatigue, cold, sleepless nights and bouts of altitude sickness. We think the RSM suffered the most, as he kept telling us his awful jokes, which were not funny. But we all laughed, and kept an eye on his condition!

The one thing we did not encounter were the bears or cougars, which we had all been briefed about. Even so, some brave souls still took the precaution of going to the toilet at night in pairs!

We reached the summit at midday on Day 5. The climb was hard going, but we made good time. On the way up, a few of us were suffering from altitude sickness, and unfortunately, one had to stop at 14,000 ft. However, he made a full recovery once we descended.

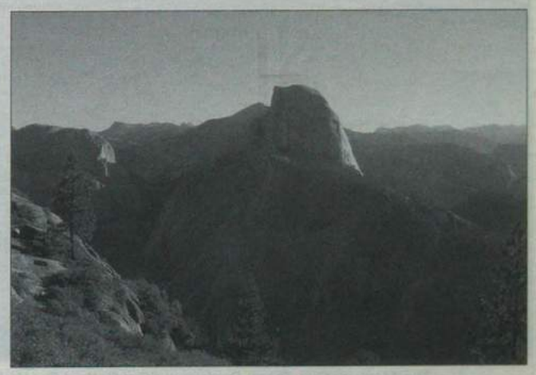
After we'd had a few celebratory drinks at the top and taken some spectacular photos, we began our trek back down. On the way, we encountered a part of the trail covered in thick ice. While some chose the RSM's method of sliding down on their backsides, most of us decided to climb down slowly on our feet on the side of the path!



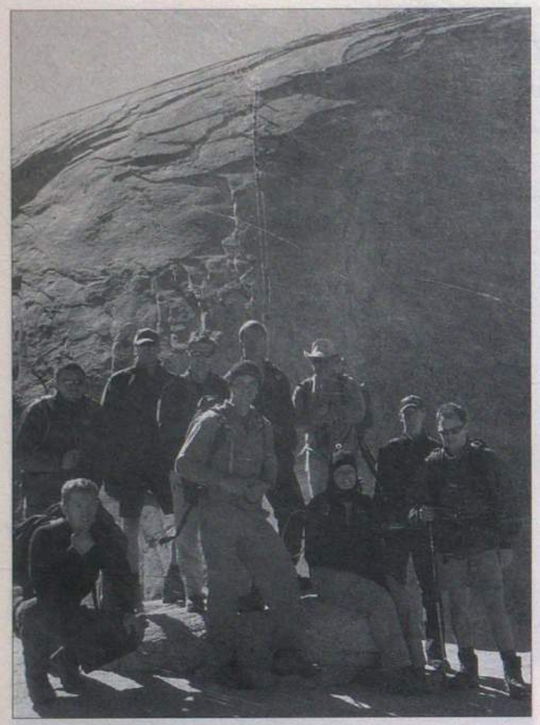
WO2 Kielty and Lt Landreth celebrate on the summit of Whitney with a local mountain man

With the summit conquered, we spent our final night out on the trail treating ourselves by eating what was left of our rations. The following morning we reached the end of the trail, and met our second tour guide, **Tim**, who drove us on to Yosemite National Park.

The main activity at Yosemite National Park was to climb a summit called Half Dome, a day's hike of around 18 miles. The final part of the climb involved climbing up a very steep cliff face



Impressive Half Dome (8,000ft) from Glacier Point



Group photo at the imposing base of Half Dome

on a metal rope ladder. There were no ropes or safety lines, so this was not for the faint hearted. Six of group managed to get to the top and got a great photo opportunity.

The final phase of the ex was the part we had all been waiting for - the R and R package in Las Vegas. You could see everyone's eyes lighting up as we began to wind our way down the strip. With hotels like the *Luxor*, *Mandalay Bay*, and *Caesar's Palace* slipping past our windows, you could see **LCpl Claire Linton** feeling pleased and fully justified in bringing 18 different outfits!

Whilst we were in Vegas, **Sgt Keenan** and **Cpl Best** took a 16-hr return bus trip to see the Hoover Dam and the Grand Canyon. A very long day, but a trip of a lifetime. Meanwhile, the rest of the group were enjoying themselves watching shows and trying their luck in the casinos, **Cpl Sherratt** proving the gamblers adage that if you bet big, you win big. The RSM became quite an expert at black jack, and was spotted in the early hours sitting at the card table with a huge pile of chips.

All in all, after 7 days hiking, 4 days AT and 4 days gambling, we were all happy but exhausted, and started the long return journey back to Ballykelly. The whole ex was a complete success. We all thanked **Lt Landreth** for organising and running an excellent exped which none of us will ever forget.

MERCURY CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

This year's Military Skills competition was held at Magilligan Trg Centre, and was run by the 218 Sig Sqn. As usual, the weather was absolutely dreadful throughout, adding another edge to an already difficult day for the participants.

The competition consisted of a 3.5-mile march, a Falling Plate shoot, an IBSR range, an MT stand, a First Aid stand and a Comd Task stand. The team from 218 Sig Sqn was led and trained by

The Mercury Cup Team. Back row: LCpl Potts, LCpl Walker, LCpl Dacre (RLC), Sig Beasley, Lt Landreth. Front Row: LCpl Rankin, SSgt Sowden, LCpl Murry, Pte Ball

SSgt Sowden. They were an impressive team, showing dedication during the build-up, and admirable effort and commitment on the day. This hard work paid off, and they were to win the Competition, coming third overall in the Mercury Cup Competition. Congratulations to the team, and well done also to those who organised the event.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

OC	**Lt JD Landreth**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Fitzgerald**

The Tp has lost of a number of its experienced techs recently: Cpl **Varley**, on his Class One; and **Cpls Morgan**, **Adolphe** and **Pauley** to 7 Sig Regt. But we have gained some experienced NI 'veterans' from 3 Bde Sig Sqn (which was disbanded in September), **Cpl King**, **Cpl Garvey** and **LCpl Stokes**.

RQMS TROOP

RQMS	**SSgt Kielty**
SQMS	**SSgt Maw**

The closure of 3 Bde Sig Sqn has seen our accountants burning the midnight oil (in some cases past 16.30hrs) bringing all their equipt on to our books. We have just completed the transition to the SA80 A2 rifle, and with the help of several members of the Sqn, this was complete in one day. We as a Dept were also involved in the set-up of the Mercury Cup Military Skills Competition, held on a barren wet Magilligan Trg Camp. We also had the pleasure of organising a function to welcome the new Bde Comd and his family to the Unit. A good time was had by all who attended.

We welcome the new QM, **Capt Eddie O'Keefe** and his family to the Sqn.

MT TROOP

MTWO	**WO2 Stronach**
MT SSgt	**SSgt Williams**

We have recently bid a fond farewell to **Pte Wiltshire** and **Pte Hanking**, and have welcomed **LCpl Bonnie Dacre**, **LCpl Wayne Pope**, **Pte Johnny Ball**, **Pte Dinger Bell** and **Sig John Axtell**.

The OC has hit the floor running since his arrival, and has put together an OC's Inter-Tp Challenge Competition. The first event was Orienteering, which MT Tp proudly won. The other events include Swimming, Hockey and VolleyBall, with each tp running one of the events.

Congratulations go to **Sig Axtell** and **Sig Taylor** on their recent selection for promotion. It was well deserved for the both of them.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

CO	**Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM**

MEDALS PRESENTATION

With a load of LS and GC medals gathering dust in the SSA's office, the RSM was relieved when it was announced that the Garrison Comd, **Brig Shouesmith** would visiting the Station on 25 November 04 and had agreed to present them.

The Comd was met by the CO in the morning, visited various depts around the Regt and ended up in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess for the medal presentation.

The ten recipients with families where **WO2 (QMSI) Wells** APTC, **SSgt Caprio** Royal Signals, **SSgt Collins** RE, **Sgt Clark** RE, **Sgt Hall** AGC(SPS), **Sgt Noble** AGC(SPS), **Sgt Eden** Royal Signals, **Cpl Lambert** REME, **Cpl Lomas** R Anglian and **Cpl Cockrill** REME. The Brigadier addressed the Mess after the presentations and presented flowers to each of the wives.

The day was a complete success, engineered by the PMC, **WO2(SSM) Mayell** and the Mess Manager, **Sgt Johnson**. The day descended into night, at which point the CO, **Lt Col DG Robson**, 2IC, **Maj BJ Spiers** and RSM, **WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM** ended up on Karaoke in the cellar bar, but that is another story...

The proud recipients of the LS and GC Medal presented by Gütersloh Garrison Comd, Brig Shouesmith

OPERATION OCCULUS - DEPLOYMENT OF 212 SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Lt Ahsan*

On 25 August 04, a clear, crisp morning heralded the start of the largest deployment of 212 Sig Sqn since OP TELIC. After the initial hustle and bustle of last minute paperwork checks and weapon bundling, it was a quiet two hours until the coaches arrived. The troops spent the time available in a variety of manners. Some made a few last minute phone calls; some rushed back to their rooms to retrieve a forgotten set of underwear, but most indulged themselves with a farewell McDonalds.

The hour of departure finally arrived and everyone was finally loaded aboard the Balkans Bus. In true deployment style, everyone had brought along a piece of kit to make their lives on tour more comfortable. **Lt Imran Ahsan** had his trusty travel pillow along, **Sig Kelly Stevens** had splashed out on a new PRI special combat smock, and **2Lt Georgie Hood** had enough extra food to feed Somalia.

After two and a bit hours of waiting, we were finally allowed aboard the aircraft. The mandatory safety instructions were followed by a brief take-off, a not so brief flight, and a startlingly short landing. As everyone stepped off the plane, there were a few urgent glances by many to try to spot the nearest toilet.

There was a further one-hour delay as we waited the transport to Banja Luka Metal Factory. On arrival at BLMF, there followed a flurry of briefs on everything from the two-can rule, to liaisons with the locally employed civilians. We were soon brain-dead, but struggled through until the final presentation. After that, it was a mad rush to get our SFOR ID cards, bedding, comfy boxes and a hot meal, all pre-arranged by our man on the inside, **SQMS Deegan** and his trusty sidekick **LCpl Wilson**. After a few quick words of advice from the Sgt Maj, it was a quick trip to the land of nod.

The next day arrived in blazing summer glory. The issued cold weather gear was firmly set aside in lieu of as few layers as people could manage. Some individuals found that they had neglected to bring various essentials, and most of the day was spent attempting to redress these discrepancies.

All members of the Unit are bedding in well and look forward to a challenging and successful tour. Till our next update, we bid you adieu.

THE CORPS BAND VISITS HERFORD

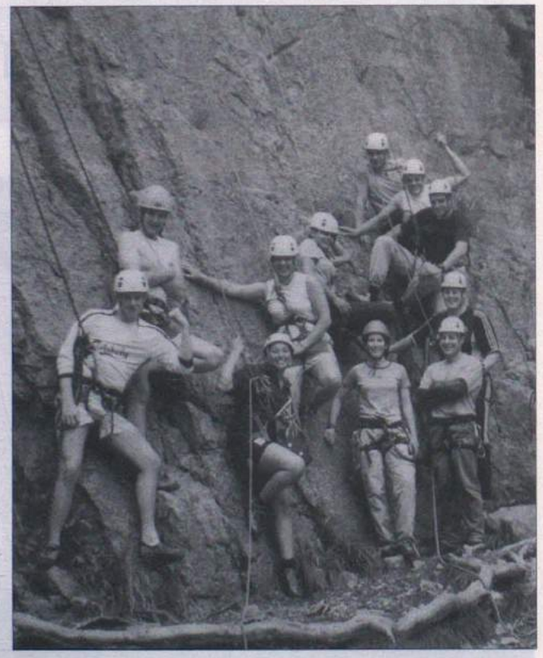
As part of their visit to Germany in October, the Corps Band performed a two-day musical extravaganza in Herford. The first day saw the band perform at Johannas Falk Haus, a school for German special needs children. The Director of Music, **Maj Paul Murrell** got everyone involved from the outset, and both children and teachers were invited to join in and become part of the Band during the concert. The Regimental Band Concert was held in the Gymnasium, and allowed the junior ranks of the Regt and their families the opportunity to see just what our Band can do. As part of the entertainment package, Offrs and WOs (including the CO and the RSM) were suitably embarrassed when they were called upon to demonstrate their musical prowess! The final day saw the Band entertaining the old folks at Albert Nisus Heim in Minden. Here, they pulled out all the stops, performing some 'golden oldies' that soon got the crowd joining in. A great day was had by all.

Director of *Music, Maj Paul Murrell orchestrating audience participation*

EXERCISE DIAMOND STAR

From 24 August to 2 September 04, 212 Sig Sqn ran EX DIAMOND STAR, an AT package based at Huberthaus, Bavaria. 21 soldiers took part, nine soldiers gained their Summer Mountaineering Qualification (SMP) and nine gained valuable quality days rock climbing on a variety of single pitch venues throughout the Algau area.

The aim of the trg was well and truly achieved during the ex. **Sig Morris** faced up to her fear. Early on in the week she spent over an hour on one climb, but she fought through the fear, and by the end of the week it was hard to stop her climbing!



The *gang of climbers getting ready for another days training*

The walkers trekked a number of routes through the stunning mountains of Bavaria. It was run as per the SMP syllabus, but was still made fun by **Lt Northridge** and **SSgt Mitchell's** own particular brands of 'enjoying the mountains'. The final day was assessment day, which included a practical navigation day in the hills and then a written test in the evening.

EX DIAMOND STAR was a success. A number walked away with a qualification, all gained quality days of experience in climbing and walking, discovered the cultural delights of Munich or the excitement of white water rafting on the R and R day, and learned to deal with fear to some degree or another.

The *Royal Signals BA(G) Cross-Country Corps Team*

BA(G) INTER-CORPS CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2004 - *by Sig Scribbins*

1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt hosted the BA(G) Inter-Corps Cross-Country Championships in October 04. It was the first time that the event had been run for some years, and it was a credit to the Gymnasium staff that it was such a success.

Some 200 competitors turned out for the Competition, the weather was at its best and the route was very challenging, consisting of 'uphill' and a little more 'uphill'!

Although there were one or two competitors from other units, the Royal Signals Team, both male and female, was largely represented by the Regt,

The Female Royal Signals Major Unit team came in first in their event. **Sig Scribbins** came third overall and was the first junior female over the line. **Sig Harvey**, **Sig Ball** and **LCpl Watson** came 11th, 13th and 14th respectively. **Capt Loxton** and **Sgt Dolan**, from 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn came 2nd and 4th overall.

The Male Team should also be congratulated on a sound performance, but were outclassed on this occasion by RLC and Light Infantry.

We await the final result of the League. The Female Team is currently in 1st place and the Male Team is fighting it out with 28 Engr Regt for 2nd place.

THE BONE OF CONTENTION RUGBY MATCH - *by Lt Northridge*

One competition that is always at the forefront of every unit's calendar is the annual Offrs and SNCOs Vs Junior Ranks rugby match. This year on a cold and grey Wednesday afternoon, the two sides faced each other, the Offrs and SNCOs with a 'slight' advantage in the size of the pack, and the Juniors with that advantage of speed and agility. One way or the other, it was going to be an interesting game.

The game started with the Offrs and Seniors pack quickly gaining possession of the ball and keeping it tight. The first ten minutes was frantic, with the Juniors putting hard tackles against an Offrs and Seniors pack that was trying to drive the length of the field. Eventually the brute force of the pack carried the ball over the line, with **SSgt Mitchell** scoring the first try of the game. This was the scene to be set for the rest of the game, with the Offrs and Seniors pack dominating, and their backs not getting a look in apart from a quick line out, that allowed **SSgt Blakely** to score.

The Juniors put up a tremendous fight, with their game improving throughout the 20 minute quarters. But their backs never got a chance to realise their true potential, as they were quickly closed in on and shut down. As the final whistle blew, the score was Offrs and Seniors 43, Juniors 0. The trophy, 'The Bone of Contention' was awarded, and we look forward to a feisty match next year.

The fiercely contested Bone of Contention match was one to remember!

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Dick**

This has been a busy few months in the Regt, with the primary focus being on the preparation for EX JOINT VENTURE 04, which is reflected in the Sqn notes. A number of other events have also kept people busy hosting the Bde Study Day, the Cambrian Patrol and the Act of Remembrance in York Minster. The Regt also hosted the Bde Triangular Boxing Competition (congratulations to 30 Sig Regt on winning), the SSAFA Charity Boxing Night, Corps Squash Championships, Div Badminton Championships and the Div Hockey Championships. The last three competitions saw great success for the Regt, so congratulations to all those taking part. The Regt also saw solid performances from the Cross Country, Rugby and Kayaking Teams in their various events. The Regt participated in Children in Need with the 'Phantom Splatter' taking cash for custard pie hits on members of the Regt and York Garrison. A total of £588.22 was raised for the Charity and the 2IC is still wondering who would pay £40 to see him hit!

The Regt now looks towards the challenges of the New Year, which will include the arrival in service of CORMORANT, and the crucial Battlefield Mission, which is due to take place in February. Planning has also started for 'Race the Sun', which will take place on 12 May 05. All Royal Signals Units are of course invited to participate – if they think they are good enough!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM **WO2 Gratrick**

11 SIGNAL BRIGADE TRIANGULAR BOXING TOURNAMENT

- by LCpl N Chisholm

On 19 October the 11 Sig Bde Triangular Boxing Competition between 2, 14 and 30 Sig Regts took place in York. The tournament was well attended, with enthusiastic spectators from the participating Regts providing their corners with immense support.

Sig Gurung expresses her sheer joy at winning her match

The night started with a featherweight bout between **Sig Birtwhistle** of 30 Sig Regt and **Sig Rigden** of 2 Sig Regt. **Sig Birtwhistle** put up a good fight, but **Sig Rigden** ended it with a knock down in the third round.

The next fight was a female welterweight bout between **Sig Loftus** of 30 Sig Regt and **Sig Gurung** of 2 Sig Regt. After three long and hard rounds, **Sig Gurung** took victory by majority vote, and both boxers were congratulated by the referee for a well fought contest.

The second female bout was a middleweight contest between **Sig Tuppen** of 14 Sig Regt (EW) and **LCpl Chisholm** of 2 Sig Regt. **LCpl Chisholm** proved to be too strong for her opponent, and the match was stopped in the first round on the second count.

The last and best contest of the night was a welterweight bout between **Sig Brice** of 2 Sig Regt and **Sig Ryan** of 30 Sig Regt. This was an evenly matched bout where both boxers showed their true capabilities. Though they struggled to maintain their strength, speed and style through three rounds, **Sig Brice** overcame this and inflicted an eight count on **Sig Ryan**, going on to win the bout by unanimous vote.

Awards were presented to both winners and runner up of all bouts. Two extra awards were awarded by Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig D Meyer**: Most Gallant Boxer: **Cpl McLaren** and Best Boxer: **Sig Brice**, both of 2 Sig Regt.

The final result of the evening was third place for 2 Sig Regt, second place for 14 Sig Regt (EW) with the winners of the 11 Sig Bde Triangular Boxing Competition 2004 being 30 Sig Regt.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2 Cooper**

CORMORANT ON EXERCISE JOINT VENTURE

- by Capt Jim King

EX JOINT VENTURE is an annual Tier 3 joint force ex in the planning and conduct of war-fighting ops. It is designed to train and evaluate a JTFHQ and its subordinate component HQs, with the emphasis on effects based ops and consequent management at the operational level. 2 Sig Regt were tasked with acting as the CIS network enablers to facilitate this process.

The Regtl Main Body deployed on the 25 October 04 and immediately began work on the establishment of a CORMORANT backbone network, comprising no less than fifteen separate nodes. Despite some minor setbacks, the network was established relatively quickly - a significant feat when considering the fact that this was CORMORANT's first deployment outside of the test environment. Concurrent to all of this has been the rollout of the comms facilities, both data and voice, into EXCON, the Maritime, Land, Logistic and Special Forces Component Comds.

The three Comms Sqns have been assigned various Component Comds, or in 214 Sqn's case, EXCON. Their tasks centre on the provision of Close Support to their respective responsibilities, and as Regional Management Cells, the maintenance of certain parts of the CORMORANT network.

Prior to the exercising and EXCON staff arriving in late November, the Regt is currently busy working up its procedures and developing its SOPs for the CORMORANT era. This process will also involve the maintenance of the network, and ensuring that

the Regt is in a position to provide the required service to the Staff once they arrive in loc.

EX JOINT VENTURE 04 has so far been hugely successful and a great learning experience for all ranks deployed from 2 Sig Regt. CORMORANT has been used effectively, and experience at all levels is being captured – exactly what is needed prior to CORMORANT being delivered into the Regt in Jan 05.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Haughton**

After only a few weeks in post, **Maj Dave Duggan** has jetted off on OP TELIC leaving a very happy **Capt Bridie Henderson** to run the Sqn and pick up pay of higher rank! The first priority after the summer leave has been preparing the majority of the Sqn to go on EX JOINT VENTURE. As we go to press, the gargantuan CORMORANT infrastructure is in place, and we are awaiting the arrival of the Staff with bated breath.

HALLOWEEN PARTY *- by Sig Lucy Waqalevu*

219 Sig Sqn celebrated Halloween in style this year with a fancy dress party in the Corporals' Club. With many of the Sqn away on EX JOINT VENTURE, the rear party got together to make a night of it. The costumes were outstanding, from the usual witches and fairies, to a spectacular Beauty and the Beast, and even a few highly seasonal superheroes and Ali Gs. Everyone hit the dance floor with **Cpl John Hart** stepping out in true dance diva style.

Thanks go to **Sigs Andi Eddon**, **Jenny Dinsdale**, **Lucy Steer** and **Lucy Waqalevu**, who worked like drones to organise the festivities and produce a banquet of food. 219 Sig Sqn are very much looking forward to another epic party at Christmas when the remainder of the Sqn will be back from EX JOINT VENTURE.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AJ Clewlow**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

The Sqn has been extremely busy over the last few months. A Tp has just returned from OP TELIC (Basrah), but we still have our commitment in Baghdad, where they are working hard and providing excellent CIS support to SBMR-I and other Coalition HQs. **Sigs Milan** and **Hom** spent one month with the Black Watch BG in Camp Dogwood. As we understood there is no Gurkha Bhat - only ORP - but their morale was high.

We have been thoroughly busy in preparation for EX JOINT VENTURE. The Sqn is responsible for the CIS within the Joint Force Logistic Component Comd and Maritime Component Comd.

One of the main non-work activities during this period has been the visit of the Gurkha Veterans. A few months ago the Sqn raised enough money to pay for 16 Gurkha veterans to travel from Nepal to march in the Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph.

They arrived on 4 November and stayed in the UK until 18 November. During their stay they visited the majority of the locs where QGS soldiers are based, including the Gurkha Trg Coy and Gurkha Language Wing at ITC Catterick. The contingent was led by **Maj Hærkabir Gurung MVO** the 6th Gurkha Major of QGS, who joined in 1940.

14 November was a great day for the veterans, as it was the first time they had ever marched at the Cenotaph alongside other members of British and Commonwealth Armed Forces.

Despite our busy commitment, we still managed to celebrate our main festival of Dasain and Tihar. The CO and **Jill Memsahib** kindly attended the party, their first Dashain party, with the Gurkhas and also to start the Juwa - the TRI-PASA session during

246 Sig Sqn soldiers on EX JOINT VENTURE

Maj Dave Duggan with the Det in Baghdad

Tihar (unfortunately he did not win this time!) for which we are grateful.

We participated in the Remembrance Service at York Minster, and **Sgt Vinod**, **LCpl Arjun** and **Sig Amrit** had an opportunity to travel in the Mayor's limo to Morley Town in Leeds to take part in that Service.

Finally, after 20 years of loyal and distinguished colour service, **WO2(SSM) Tarabahadur Pun** is retiring from the Army and going back to Nepal with his family.

We thank him for his outstanding contribution and wish him and his family good luck for the future.

NEWS FROM THE GULF – *by Maj Dave Duggan*

At 11.00 hrs on 11 November 04, a Remembrance Service was held at Maude House, Baghdad, organised by **Maj Howell-Warmsley**, Royal Signals. In attendance were the Senior British Military Representative Iraq (SBMR-I), **Lt Gen Sir John Kiszley KCB MC**, Her Majesty's Ambassador Iraq, **Mr E Chaplin OBE CMG**, plus representatives from all three Services and the Embassy Staff working in Baghdad. The Service was led by **Chaplain DV Whylie** RN with **Sig Symington** from 2 Sig Regt reading the Act of Remembrance.

It was a well attended and moving Service, especially when the names of those killed on recent ops were read out by **WO1(RQMS) A Spence BEM** RLC (V).

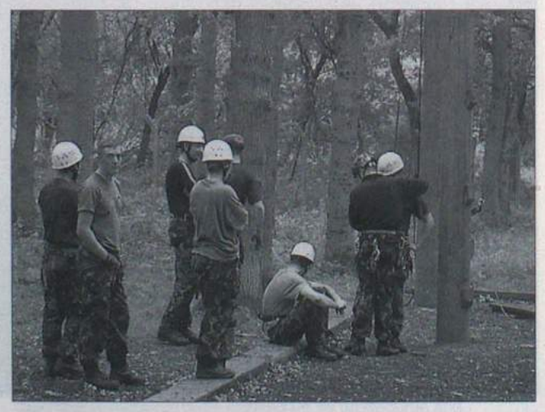
3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Griffiths**

STAFF COLLEGE DEMONSTATION

The Staff College Demo was hosted this year by 3 (UK) Div and based in the UK for the first time in a number of years. 3 Div is currently under-going conversion to BOWMAN and looking towards a fully digitalised HQ in the near future. It is also at the forefront of Future HQ Structures and has been experimenting with a new layout, combining DSG with Main.

3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt have been paving the way for the modern Army, and were requested to display the experimental HQ and BOWMAN dets for the Comd and Control stand. Everyone in the Regt found themselves fully involved, from the newest sig to the CO. The RSM reluctantly surrendered his parade ground to the horrors of the pneumatic drill to allow Main HQ to be constructed on solid foundations, while the Ops Offr sacrificed his time and hair to co-ordinate the complicated schedule. The Sqn OCs prepared their briefs, while the Tp Comds and NCOs



Lt Ewan Watson briefs Staff College students at Div Main HQ

rehearsed the handover/takeovers, armed with whistles and loud hailers. The Yeomen continued to stress as the Sergeant Majors strutted around looking very smart but eating all the cakes.

After 3 days of demonstration and 60 repetitions of each brief, the Demo came to a close. The Staff Officers were sent back to school dragging their mountain of overloaded information, while the soldiers of the Regt received a pat on the back from the COS. It was a busy week that went without hiccup owing its success to months of meticulous planning before hand.

202 (ARMOURED) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Reed**

Having just returned from a very successful Military Training Camp, the Sqns main effort has swung back to BOWMAN. The last 10 'A' Fleet platforms are soon to depart for Ashchurch, and over the last few weeks we have welcomed back the majority of our 'B' Fleet from the conversion process. With regards to individual trg, the members of the Sqn who have yet to complete training with Westlands are going to be 'swept up' during January and February. The look forward being the Sqn re-org to reflect an Armd Tac, 2 Armd Fwd HQs, 1 Whld Fwd HQ and a Rebro capability in line with ORBAT 2005.

EXERCISE IRON FIST

On return from summer leave, the Sqn was straight out again on an action packed Battle Camp - 2 weeks, 3 trg areas, live firing ranges, survival skills, FIBUA and a whole lot of ammo…

First up was a trip to the seaside for some live firing. Next came an advance to contact ex. The patrols encountered a number of incidents before arriving at the main enemy position. **Capt Haslewood** and **Lt Chamberlain** led their platoons in the charge, while **2Lt Freestone** and her platoon arrived in time to watch them return from battle and joined in the well-earned rest!

The second week took place at Bramley Trg Area, and was split into two parts – a survival ex and a FIBUA phase. **SSM Ollie Read** had kept the actual format of the survival phase a closely guarded secret, and the Sqn had feared the worst – imagining fast-paced escape and evasion, coupled with two days of hunger. Instead, we learned the skills necessary to survive if stranded with only a knife, survival tin and your own initiative. The Sqn were taught how to build shelters, collect water (even when there was none to be seen!), and trap animals. Some people proved to be quite talented!

Bramley Trg Area features a confidence course, and we were fortunate enough to be put through our paces. Even those with a long-standing fear of heights braved the ropes and swaying trees. Others showed off their flair on the totem poles and trapeze.

For the final phase, the Sqn was split into 2 platoons, with one in defence of a farm complex and the other preparing to assault. Tension was high as we in defence awaited the inevitable assault - a daring dawn raid by **Lt Chamberlain's** platoon, that managed to force us out of our position. But not for long. We were back the next morning with a cunning plan, **Cpl Taylor** leading his section in a charge on the rear bunker, breaking into the house and enabling our ultimate victory.

This was the first non-comms ex many of the Sqn have taken part in since joining the unit, and hopefully, the first of many.

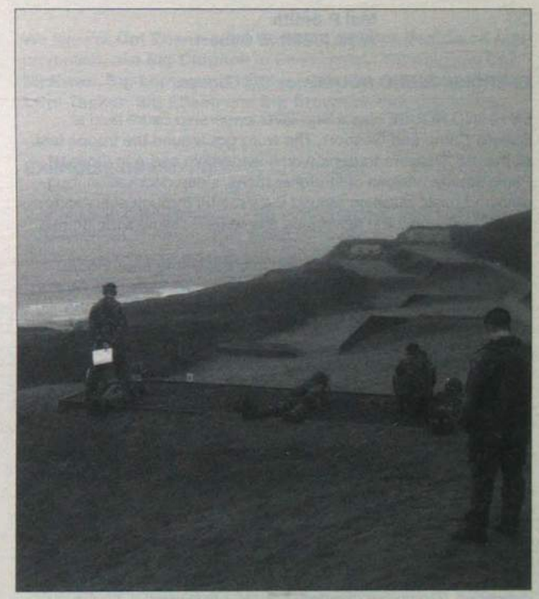
EXERCISE GREEN BULL

Following on from the lessons learned on the Regtl Battlecamp, the Corp's finest deployed on EX GREEN BULL, a Sqn-level mil skills ex, run in and around the Dartmoor area. The ex kicked off with a visit to *HMS Tourbay*, a RN nuclear powered submarine. After a few hours on the boat, the common consensus was that their blokes could stick their extra pay up their torpedo tubes. An

202 Deploy on Mapex

area the size of the Sqn lines crammed with 120 sailors 100m below sea level is not a pleasant working and living environment!

The next area to be tackled was map reading, which produced some interesting results. After being dropped off by Sea King in several locs, the guys were encouraged rather quickly to put what they had learnt into practice. That, or face rather a long tab back to Oakhampton Camp. Mirrored with this activity was the GPMG APWA on Tregantle ranges, which again produced a variety of results.



202 GPMG live firing on Tregantle ranges

The culmination of the ex was the final attack on Scraesdon Fort. This loc will be well known to those who have done the Commando Course, as it is the objective for their final attack. After a steep climb from the coast and some tunnel navigation, the Sqn managed to put in a very impressive assault on a determined enemy. Finally, the guys were extracted by heli back to Oakhampton Camp for weapon cleaning and a few beers.

In summary, EX GREEN BULL was a blistering success, and was enjoyed by all who deployed. The Sqn would also like to offer a

Back in time for tea and medals!

huge thanks to 848 Sqn RN for all their support. The look forward now has to be GREEN BULL II. What you got in store for us this time SSM?

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj P Smith**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) M Gilbert**

EXERCISE RHINO ROUSE - *by Cpl Gaddess*

EX RHINO ROUSE was a Sqn-level leadership cadre held at Bulford Camp and Gosport. The word got around the troops fast: all the JNCOs were to deploy on a leadership cadre to Gosport. Panic struck! Visions of stretcher races, sleep deprivation, bug-outs and basic messing around were racing through everybody's mind. 'How could the seniors do this to us?' 'What's the point?'

Eventually we were called forward into the Conference Room, where our fate would be announced. Rumours were now flowing between the JNCOs until the SSM and the OC came into the room. 'This will not be a ragging' the OC promised. We believed him as much as we believed Bush and his WMD! The first thing we noticed on the timetable was that the stretcher race practically first thing. Our faith in the OC's honesty was slowly decaying.

Our first day of the course was on Camp. We went through the standard PowerPoint presentations, followed by comd tasks. Luckily we got through the tasks without breaking bones or anything else - although we were close on both counts. Having then been told to parade at Nuffield Hall, we were then presented with three stretchers -joy! Each section took control of their stretchers when all of a sudden the PTIs ran off! We were told to catch them - not a chance! There were screams coming from all directions. 'Come on!' 'Faster!' and 'Not that way!'

The next morning was spent doing icebreakers and having discussions on who was the sexiest, **Britney** or **Christina**. I suppose this was a bit different from most cadres, inasmuch that it was slightly more fun than lugging a stretcher about. That afternoon we eventually deployed to Gosport, where again, we were full of anticipation. Our arrival saw us in a classroom, where our Yeoman took us through problem-solving. This actually proved more demanding of our brains than we expected, but at least it didn't involve stretchers or running!

With an early start, the brief for the next day was orienteering. Expecting to just be given a map and told to find our way home, we were surprised when it turned out to be an individual effort in a local park trying to find 14 CPs before everyone else did. At least everyone had the integrity not to cheat as they passed each other coming from different CPs! This proved to be a nice change to the normal orienteering; maybe the OC was actually keeping his promise. The afternoon was a problem-solving test, where we were given a very difficult problem involving a mad scientist, an electrical storm and a monkey in the middle of the jungle! We had an hour to devise a plan and then present it to the DS. The DS were unforgiving; if you could think of a question they could ask, they would. That night was then spent down the pub, before a nice early start of 06.00hrs for PT on the beach.

We couldn't believe it when we got up. It was dark, it was cold and it was 06.00hrs – very painful! We eventually managed to motivate ourselves to go on the run, which involved sprints. It certainly woke us before the morning was spent having discussions on recent political issues. With the end in sight, the afternoon activities were to be a round robin of all the things that we had done including 'blind' comd tasks, discussions again and problem-solving. On our comd tasks we were all blindfolded, and in our sections we had to make a perfect square out of a large rope. If it wasn't difficult enough to find everyone whilst we were blindfolded, our OC kept on tapping us on the shoulder so that we would think it was someone else! I think the DS enjoyed this more than us.

All in all, a very good week that I am sure we could repeat again.

THE KIWI TROPHY - *by Sig Thompson*

The Kiwi Trophy – an arduous march and shoot event commemorating and highlighting the close ties 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt has historically had with our Antipodean cousins in which every able-bodied individual in the Regt participated. A 23km tab over the hills of Salisbury was broken only by a brief sojourn on the local ranges, with dropped shots costing the marksman an extra 100m apiece, and an additional 2kms being awarded to anyone heinous enough to forget their ear-defs. Run over a two day period, the weather on the first day was less than favourable, with heavy rain the previous night and scattered showers all day through ensuring that all competitors found

Sig Norton and LCpl Harle battle it out on the Kiwi Trophy event

themselves mired in the deeply rutted tracks and slipping haphazardly over the chalk paths. Common consensus was that it was akin to 3 hrs of running on the infamous 'travelator' from a certain well-known TV show.

Conditions on the second day were far superior, and doubtless aided **SSgt Paddy Bickerstaff** of 202 Sig Sqn to victory in a time of 2 hrs and 47 mins. Second place went to me, **Sig Thomo Thompson**, in 2 hrs 47 mins 6 secs, despite the obvious handicaps of a treacherous quagmire and an un-zeroed rifle. When the scores were tallied at the end of the two days, 206 Sig Sqn emerged victorious, with its elite personnel averaging the quickest overall time. A shorter 12.8 km route was also laid on for weaker personnel. 206 Sig Sqn also dominated this event, with **Sig Jones** achieving the fastest time of 1 hr 42 mins. Prizes were presented by the GOC, **Gen Lamb** and the New Zealand High Commissioner, **Hon Russell Marshall**. All in all, this prestigious event gave a sense of achievement to all who completed it, and those who are fitness fanatics, like myself, thoroughly enjoyed it. I look forward to the possibility of competing next year - and winning!

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col PW Glibbery**

238 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ian Dobson**
SSM	**WO2 J Cordery**

LIFE IN RADIO SECTION - *by SSgt Marritt*

Yet another busy period for Radio Section, with 18 blokes on EX GRAND PRIX, and a large portion of the Sqn concentrating on delamination.

Before we knew it, it was Ceremonial Season again. The month of November was crowded with parades for the Lord Mayors Show, Remembrance Sunday, the State Opening of Parliament, and the State Visit of the South Korean President, not to mention various Diplomatic Receptions at the Palace.

Sigs Lomas and Sweeney and Cpl Carbery prepare the Corps float for the Lord Mayor's Show

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj N Range**
SSM	**WO2 M Fitz-Patrick**

EXERCISE MAO-TSE TUNG - *by Sig Barnstaple*

EX MAO-TSE TUNG was a series of week-long navexs in the Black Mountains of Wales, organised by **SSgt Alderson**. Week 1 saw the first five victims heading out into the hills after some map reading revision. **Sig Dave Holden** obviously hadn't been paying enough attention as he struggled to identify anything until the rest of the group took pity on him and turned his map the right way round! Foul weather and poor visibility made navigating a real challenge, a far cry from finding your way around Salisbury Plain. After a couple of hard days walking, **Sgt Stan Knowles** found his four compatriots fast asleep like babies by 19.00hrs, huddled round the heater in the luxurious accn at Sennybridge Camp. Despite the weary legs, at the end of the week everyone agreed that they had enjoyed the experience and felt their map reading skills were much improved.

In addition to the events themselves, many an early morning, or in some cases late nights, were spent down in The Mall for rehearsals. The Section now looks forward to a quiet period helping out I and S Section with delamination.

We farewell **Cpl Ensor**, **LCpl Hawkins** and **Cpl Beattie** on promotion, and **Sig Chignell** to Civvy Street. We welcome **Cpl McEwan**, **Sig Lomas** and **LCpl Lawrie**. We also congratulate **LCpl Tasker**, **Sig Ellson** and **Sig Brown** on their promotion.

EXERCISE GRAND PRIX - *by Cpl Bircham*

238 Sig Sqn were sent with 1 Bn Irish Guards to help out on EX GRAND PRIX in Kenya. This was a six- week ex, consisting of live firing packages, blank firing exs, and AT.

The majority of us were sent to help on the Irish Guards CPs as their radio ops. Others were helping in the stores and fixing their radio equipt. Some lucky 'volunteers' got to act as members of the Permanent Range Team, but what they did not realise was that the average Guards range lasted a lot longer than a Royal Signals one - about 8 hrs longer to be exact!

We left Brize Norton on the 14 September and arrived at Nanyuki Camp, Kenya on the following day, where we spent a day sorting out our admin before going to our relevant locs. For most of us, this was Archers Post, (known as 'Archers Roast') in North Kenya. After a number of days setting things up, the live firing packages began. This lasted for just under three weeks, as the three companies went through one by one doing their five-day packages. During this time, most of us were able to get away for a day or two to spend some time at one of the two lodges that were nearby. These were Shaba Lodge or Samburu Lodge. The lodges were extremely nice, and it was good to be able to break up our time in Archers Post by staying there - and certainly great to be able to jump into a swimming pool to escape from the baking heat.

After the live firing was complete, a 4-day blank firing ex began. Here we were again used mainly as radio ops. After the final attack had ended on the morning of 14 October, we all gathered together for a well-deserved bacon and egg bap. A few words were said by the Bde Comd and the CO. They were extremely

pleased with the way things had gone over the last four weeks, and with 238 Sig Sqn's contribution. After a long 7-hr journey back to Nanyuki Camp, we prepared for the long awaited R and R packages.

We had a number of activities to choose from for our R and R: sub aqua diving, paragliding, climbing Mount Kenya, water sports, or just chilling in a hotel in Mombassa for a few days. The most popular choices were sub aqua and chilling in Mombassa (funnily enough!). After this pleasant break, a few days were spent turning the kit around in preparation for the journey home.

The flights home were delayed by about a week, as the RAF were having trouble with their Tri-stars. In the end the majority of us were put onto a civilian flight, arriving back at Wellington Bks late on the night of 2 November, tired from the experience.

The opportunity to go to Kenya was excellent. However, there weren't any volunteers to transfer to the Infantry!

EXERCISE UGLY BEAR - by Cpl Reid

EX UGLY BEAR was a 4-day course designed for Senior Cpls and Junior Sgts. It was designed on a 'need to know' basis, and all of the participants were kept in the dark in respect of the plan of events. The ex was designed to put the participants into real time scenarios, ones that we would not usually come across in the Corps, or indeed in real life.

The aim was to see how we reacted in these situations, as individuals and as a group. The events during the course ranged from night navigation, problem-solving (fairly mundane) to doing damage control on a mock ship.

Each event was all part of a wider scenario. Some of the events were a little strange, to say the least. One example was an early morning drive to the local dairy farm to milk some of the UK's prime cows.

The most bizarre one was when we went to Portsmouth General Hospital to watch a few post-mortems. This was an unexplainable experience to say the least! The culmination of the ex was to act as a Media Officer. We were chucked into a room full of reporters, having been given a scenario 10 mins earlier, and were then bombarded with questions from all angles - tricky! Overall, the ex was a complete success and very challenging.

It was certainly one of those life experiences that we will never forget.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col M Baines**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J Renshaw**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Schofield**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A Morris**

EX ARRCADE FUSION - *by Sig Patterson*

On 25 October 04 16 Sig Regt deployed on EX ARRCADE FUSION 04. This was my first ex since arriving at the Regt 2 yrs ago, and I was deployed as a det comd for an Electronic Support Vehicle (ESV). We set off on a cold German October afternoon for a long drive from Elmpt to Sennelager. Upon arrival at Sennelager, we pulled into loc inside Depot 90, which was to be our home for 3 weeks, through the cold nights and the even colder days.

During the first week we got into the rhythm of the day/night shift system in the Ech CP. This started off as a couple of days on each shift, which included manning the Ech CP. We also had our first RTA with **Sig Henderson's** head colliding with the ESV door.

At the start of the second week, EX ARCADE FUSION kicked off in full swing, which included a manning changeover. It was at this point that I found myself on permanent night shift. The job on the night shift involved making sure that all respective G4 reports and returns were sent out correctly to all relevant agencies within our AOR. The tempo of the ex increased, culminating in an NBC attack, which this signalled ENDEX, and our imminent move back to Javelin Bks. In summary, with this having been my first PTARMIGAN ex with the Regt, I enjoyed the experience and now appreciate that there is a lot more going on in the background to my normal day.

ELMPT STATION CHRISTMAS FETE - *by Cpl Browne*

Saturday 27 November was the day of the Elmpt Station Christmas Fête, which was organised by the MTWO, **WO2 Rayson**. The whole event was to raise money for SSAFA, with a number of stands collecting for other charities as well.

Considering it was late in November, the weather was very kind to the organisers, and the turnout for the event was high.

Shannon's Bar function room was turned into an indoor market for the day, with numerous stores, from the local Scout group to traders from far and wide across BFG. Outside, there were go-karts, merry go rounds, and a bouncy castle for the children, along with a stage for the local school choir to perform carol singing. All of the Station subunits provided stands, ranging from a popular glühwein and beer tent, to X-box tents with the consoles all linked. The Brüggen School choir brought the entertainment to a grand finale on the stage. The day was a complete success with everyone enjoying themselves, and all looking forward to next year's innovative stands.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J R Collyer**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C Batley**

With all Sqn personnel now returned from Iraq, the final two months of the year has drawn the ex season to a close. This was a very busy succession of EX SUMMER SALES, EX ARRCADE FALCON, EX RHINO CHARGE (TN 015) and EX ARRCADE FUSION. This has been interspersed with a steady stream of postings in and out, promotions, and a minor baby boom across the ranks. Congratulations for new arrivals to **SSgt (YofS)** and **Mrs Carter**, **Sgt** and **Mrs Luke** and **Sig** and **Mrs Hawkings**.

The following soldiers have been selected for promotion to Cpl: **LCpls Vickers**, **Southwood** and **Scott**. Belated congratulations for promotion to Cpl go to **Cpls Gildea**, **Faulkner** and **Keighley**. The recent Sig to LCpl Board saw welcome success for **Sigs Hughes 871**, **Yarwood 728**, **Cook 684**, **Kerr**, **Gilroy**, **Hayes 378**, **Webster**, **Hanes**, **Szejok** and **Dyrburgh**.

The Sqn bids farewell to **Cpl Yeatman** to 14 Sig Regt (EW), **Cpl Case** to 7 Sig Regt, **Cpl Holmes** to 21 Sig Regt (AS), LCpl **Ayers** to 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207), **LCpl Brooks** to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, **Sig Cook** to 14 Sig Regt (EW), and **Sig Cummings** also to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. Last but not least the Sqn welcomes: **SSgt Al Finn** from 40 Sig Regt, **LCpl Turnbull** from 280 Sig Sqn, and **Sigs Dugmore**, **Silcott**, **Mustoe** and **Paine** from RSS.

TRUNK NODE 015

Tp Comd **Lt K Bates**
Tp SSgt **SSgt I Strachan**

EX ARRCADE FUSION 2004 was a good end to the ex season for TN 015. The three weeks we spent was, by all accounts, a success. This ex was different from most, in that it was static. This had the potential to become extremely boring and unproductive, and so a trg programme was planned in order to counter this.

After setting up comms it was straight into routine. This involved both work and play for the Tp. It not only provided us with some good comms trg, it also enabled the guys to do some cross trg with different trade lessons being held daily. AS Ops were trained in laying line, and RS Ops on the SHF kit. Everyone was given an understanding of exactly what everything did within the TN, and where it fitted into the bigger picture.

There were also a few competitions held throughout the ex. FIFA 2004 (X Box style) was won by **Sig Baird**, much to **SSgt Strachan's** chagrin, and **Lt Bates** proved he was the Quake 3 grand master. We were able to exercise regularly in the gym, courtesy of 7 Tpt Regt RLC. Many thanks to them. We also had a few birthdays to celebrate. **Sig Kim Watts** celebrated her 20th, **Cpl Mick Case** celebrated his 30th **and Sig John Cowell** celebrated his 21st. We now look forward to an interesting 2005.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj T Cooper**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A Jones**

H TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Griffiths**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wilson**

H Tp have had a busy period of late. As well as being involved in all of the ARRC exs, they have been on deployments. Two recent tasks were in Gibraltar and Bosnia. One det flew out to Gibraltar on 17 October, where some of the Tele Mechs from 642 Sig Tp picked us up, dropped of our bags at Devil Tower Camp, and then took us to Casemates Square to show us the most important thing, the bars.

With regards the job, we were working in one of the oldest buildings in Gibraltar, mostly site work, and working 12-hr shifts throughout the night. That rather put a dampener on things, but we were there to do our job, and being in Gibraltar would make a change from Germany. Still, work didn't get us down. We could work towards two nights off per week. For most of the three weeks, we were drilling through walls at least 1 metre thick. After 12 hrs' hard graft through the night, we were all exhausted by 07.00hrs. The folk at 642 Sig Tp made us very welcome. For a Det leaving meal, they and their civilian workers took us to a social club, where we had a traditional Spanish Tapas meal.

Our short time in Gibraltar was a good one. In a very short space of time we worked exceptionally hard and got a lot of work done. However, we played just as hard, and drank a fair amount of Corona.

A detachment from the Tp also deployed to Bosnia. The Banja Luka Metal Factory was to be our homes for six weeks, and what an experience. We got there on a Tuesday, all nine of us ready and raring to get stuck in and do what needed to be done. The team, headed up by **SSgt Rigby**, was **Sgt Walsh**, **LCpl Aspinal**, **LCpl Stephenson**, **Sig Nuptial**, **Sig Orr**, **Sig Noble**, **Sig McClarance** and yours truly, **Sig Johnson**. After doing arrivals admin and sorting stores out, we didn't start work until the Thursday. The main job was the build in the HQ. It started out as normal working days and back in after dinner for a few hours - nothing too hard. **Sig Orr** and I worked together for the first two weeks on a smaller job installing Myra Black and Myra Blue in five Corimecs which were to be used for the offices of the new unit coming in. The rest enjoyed fitting the HQ building, a Myra Black job that replaced all the old cables for Cat 5e, and the old trunking for new.

Although it was just six weeks long, it was a good tour. We did structured cabling, telephony, underground cabling (UG), poled line over head (PLOH), a bit of fibre here and there, and lots of trunking, the job which drives fear into the hearts of all who do our trade. Basically, everything we were taught in Phase 2 trg, which took nine months, we covered in six weeks - and the required standards were reached and surpassed. All in all, it was a job well done. Bosnia was a great experience and we would do it again, given the chance.

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

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

PROMOTIONS, ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Congratulations to **Capt Davies**, on his commissioning after 26 yrs in the ranks, and to **WO1 (SVWO) Cahill**, for being promoted and appointed SVWO. We have farewelled **Maj Steve Ong**, **Capt Peter Knowles**, **Capt Dave Thomas**, **WO2 (YofS) Monger** and **Sgt Wilf Kempton**, who completed 22 years of service this year. We wish them all the best for the future. We also welcome **2Lts Sam Osei-Agyemang**, **Chris Lower** and **Andrew Jellineck**, and congratulate them on passing the Commissioning Course.

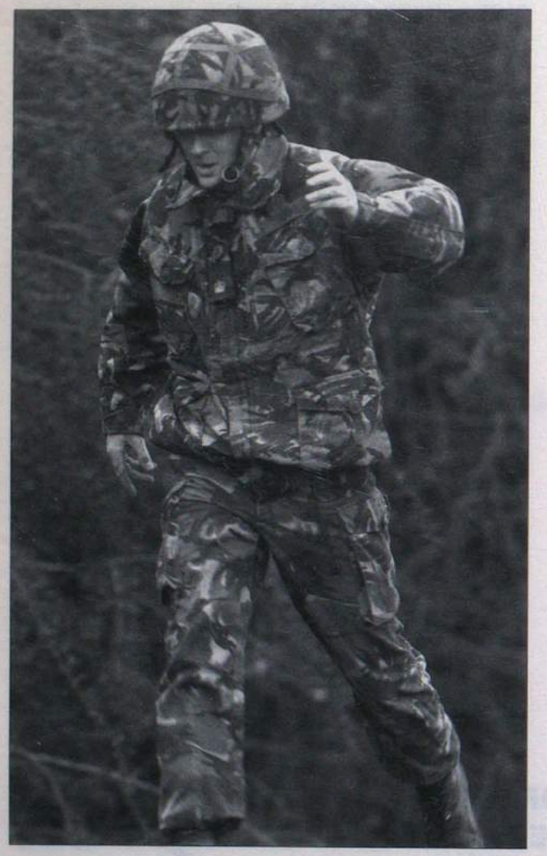
ANNUAL CAMP

The main focus for the Regtl training year is, of course, Annual Camp, and with **Maj Steve Smoothy**, **Capt Windibank** and

TA Soldiers always smiling

WO1 (SVWO) Davies at the helm, it was always going to be exciting.

Phase One started with a short road move to Liverpool, which went surprisingly smoothly, the only exception being the Chief Clerk who had to be force-fed chocolate and Red Bull by the Adjt in order to stay awake long enough to get there. This was followed with an inter-Sqn Mil skills competition, culminating in the TM's torment, an assault course followed by a March and Shoot. The winners were HQ Sqn, although to be fair, 75% of the team was made up from the LAD.



Maj *Lamb leading from the back*

The next week started off with a couple of days for the Sqns to shake themselves out in the fields, followed by the Bde FTX. The locs varied from deep underground bunkers to flat green fields, with just about everything in between. At one point the Special Comms Gp, which comprised 31 Sig Regt (V) with 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (V) and 2 Sig Sqn (V) under comd, was communicating using HF links between Donnington, Dundee, Oakhampton, Germany, Cyprus and the USA.

However it wasn't all about comms. The Adjt, acting as the scenario director, had an evil glint in his eye, and, aided and abetted by the LAD was soon causing mischief and many sleepless nights to all deployed. These distractions ranged from mains power failures to peaceful protestors, visiting Government Ministers, and of course attacks by the local terrorist groups. A special mention should go to **Cfn Noakes**, whose ATO Bomb Disposal Expert demanding the re-siting of every antenna to avoid interference, was a truly exceptional ad-lib. As if to add insult to injury he also videoed the whole thing, which caused some embarrassment when played back.

Quick, check his pockets!

Finally, once the War had been won and the Bad Guys well and truly defeated, we moved en masse to Swynerton and the final phase. For this, we swung away from our operational role and concentrated on the skill that may be required by our soldiers as individual reinforcements to Regular units. This involved such tasks as patrolling night and day, and indoor CQBR, cross country driving and veh anti ambush drills.

HQ Sqn prepares to go under cover

Of course we must mention 94 (BY) Sig Sqn, who were detached from the Regt to reinforce 12 Sig Gp in an ARRC role in Germany. As is usual these days, mission creep resulted in their task growing from providing C2 for the deployed TA PTARMIGAN Regts, to providing RADCON and Comms support to virtually the whole of ARRC Rear. They also found the time to squeeze in a quick visit to Maastricht. The only down side was the 3-day road and sea move either and of the ex, but at least they got their duty free in.

REGIMENTAL OPEN DAY

Another key activity for any TA Regt, is making sure that employers, families and local dignitaries are keep aware of what the Regt is doing. This year, to reinforce the work that the Sqns have done, the Regt held an Open Day at Crowborough camp. With over 60 guests, ranging from Mayors and Lord Lieutenants, to soldiers' children, the Regt put on a mix of active and static displays, designed to show the full range of our skill, equipts and capabilities. The day finished with a cocktail party, where all the guests were able to mingle and chat with the soldiers; and the feedback we have received, indicates that the day was a roaring success.

continued on page 49

THE TSUNAMI APPEAL

The Corps Benevolent Fund has donated £10,000 to the Save the Children Fund, to be earmarked for its work in the Tsunami disaster area.

RHQ consider that this amount could be a starter/pump primer, which we could all add to.

Many readers may already have contributed to the Appeal, but for those who haven't, or those who wish to make an additional donation, this is an opportunity for you to do so.

This is also an opportunity for the many Regts and Sqns who relish charitable fund-raising activities to do it on a Unit basis – and to report it in *The WIRE*.

Please send your contribution to:

Royal Signals Tsunami Appeal
RHQ Royal Signals
Blandford Camp
Dorset
DT11 8RH

Please make cheques payable to **Royal Signals Benevolent Fund**, and include a note indicating that the amount is for the Tsunami Appeal.

Should the current Tsunami Appeal close, we will still direct the funds to Save the Children to support their work in the disaster area.

The WIRE will monitor the contributions as they grow, and will publish the amounts raised in successive issues.

Maj Ian Dobson hands over the cheque for £10,000 to Clare Young of the Save the Children Fund

IRAQ CASUALTIES DOING WELL

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

It wasn't at all as I expected it to be. But then, I really didn't know what to expect anyway. What do you say to two soldiers who have lost both legs and another with a broken back.

These were the thoughts that were going through my mind as I drove up to visit **Cpl Mick Brennan**, **Cpl Neil Heritage** and **Sig Dean Lunn**, the three Royal Signals casualties who had recently been casevaced from Iraq.

In the event, all three were bright eyed and smiling when I met them. They were also very eager to talk to me about the events that led to their injuries. I had assumed that this would be too traumatic for them to talk about, and had intended to do a short story about their experiences during their stay in hospital. They'd had visits from the Princess Royal and the SOinC(A), and had caused quite a buzz with their excellent progress, so there was enough in that for a story.

'No,' said **Neil Heritage**, 'We've not spoken much about it before, and we want, through you, to tell our story before any wild rumours start spreading among our mates.'

Neil Heritage and **Mick Brennan** were injured in the same incident. **Mick** hardly remembers a thing, but **Neil** seems to have a detailed recall of what happened. The following is his account.

Cpl Neil Heritage and partner, Claire

'It was on Sunday, 7 November. We had been working since 05.30 clearing IEDs. We had just finished the job, and were loading our kit into the back of the Warrior, when another vehicle came towards us.

'Then there was an almighty blast that slammed the door of the Warrior and threw me inside. The blast set everything on fire, including me. At this stage, I didn't realise that I was injured; I just wanted to get out of the vehicle and put myself out. So I pushed the door open, and promptly fell flat on my face. There was nothing there to hold me up.

'The Black Watch people quickly rendered first aid to me and **Mick**, and within 40 minutes, a helicopter had arrived. I passed out just as they were loading me into it. I woke up two Thursdays later. **Mick** didn't wake up until the Tuesday after that.

'We both were in intensive care for the first two weeks. I had 4 operations. Now we are getting loads of TLC and physiotherapy, and I've already had an initial fitting for my new legs.

'We had a visit from the Princess Royal when we were in hospital. She came just after lunch and spent 20 minutes chatting to us. She had been well briefed, because she knew all about us - and our families, too. We were just so chuffed. She's a very genuine person.

'Then when we heard that the SOinC was coming, we decided to pull a fast one on him. We knew that he was expecting to see us all laid up in our beds, so we got into our wheelchairs and went off down to meet him at the main entrance as he arrived. He got a bit of a surprise at that.'

I had a very brief chat to **Cpl Heritage's** partner, **Claire**, whilst he was out of the room. 'It hasn't all been as cheerful as it is today,' she said. And I could tell by the look in her eyes and the tone of her voice, that she'd had quite a rough time during the last month living **Neil's** experience with him. It was very obvious that **Claire** had played a major part in his recovery – and would go on doing in the months to come. They have one son, **Callum**, and are expecting another child in June.

Cpl Mick Brennan

Not wanting to intrude too much, I didn't speak much to **Cpl Brennan's** wife, **Debbie**; but she had obviously been constantly at **Mick's** side whilst he was in hospital, patiently waiting for him to come home to their three children.

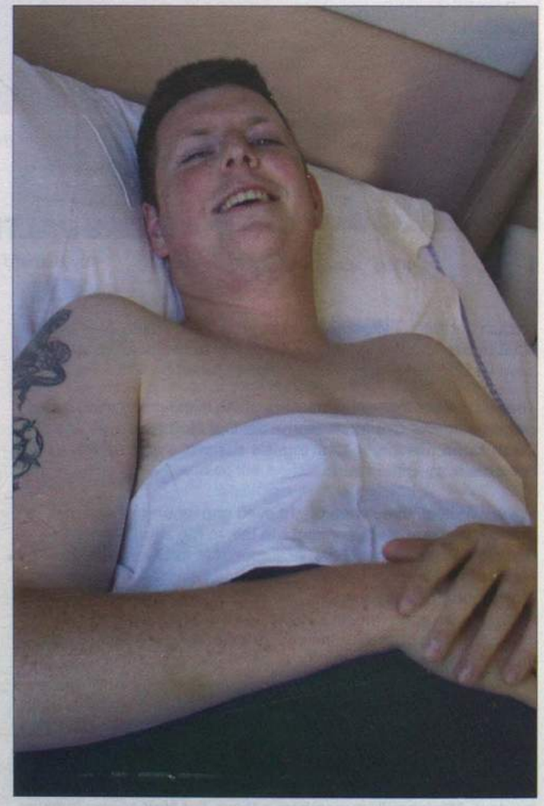
Sig Dean Lunn told me of his event, a RTA on the road in from Al Shaibah to Basrah International Airport (BIA).

'It was dark, and we were just coming off the main road from Al Shaibah. I was on top cover, but the vehicle commander told me to come in until we joined the motorway. Shortly afterwards, the Landrover just rolled over. I was thrown round inside the vehicle and was hit in the back by something.

'**Sig Hutchinson** from 3 (UK) Div at JSUP was there, and he immediately rendered first aid to me. I'm most grateful to him. He kept me warm, comforted and reassured me all the way.

'RAF Regt personnel quickly got a casevac helicopter in. I was strapped to a spinal board, taken initially to BMH Shaibah, then after a few days to BIA and on to Birmingham Airport (they dropped me off before they went to Brize Norton). From there, I had a blue light ambulance ride to hospital.'

'I've ended up with four badly damaged vertebrae. There's no damage to my spinal cord, so I'm very lucky. It was my body armour that saved me from worse injury. I was also very lucky that I had come down from top cover at the time. I'm getting a brace soon, so I'll be up and about in no time.'



Sig Dean Lunn

There were many thoughts running through my mind as I drove back to Blandford that evening. Despite the circumstances, all three soldiers had been so positive about the future. **Cpls Heritage** and **Brennan** had told me of their plans to get straight into para-athletics as soon as they could, and **Sig Lunn** had said that all he wanted was to get back with his mates in 204 Sqn again in Basrah.

In a note he had sent to the Master of Signals, the SOinC(A) had said that during his visit, he had 'found the experience of his visit to them most humbling. Their bravery and approach to current circumstances,' he said, 'were nothing short of inspiring. I had girded myself to lift their spirits, but quite the opposite happened, and it was my spirits that were pulled up by the bootstraps. Their courage and outlook is an example to us all in the Corps.'

I can only agree with him. I had had exactly the same experience. I was also very much aware that the support of the whole Corps family had once again come into play, from the Princess Royal downwards. We can all draw a lot of comfort from this.

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON – WORKING WITH 1st SIGNAL BRIGADE STAFF

- by Sig K Northam, 7 Signal Regt

My alarm sounded at 5.00hrs on the morning of Thursday 8 September and I sleepily got out of bed. It was the first day of the ex and I still wasn't sure what I was to be doing and where I was going. I went down to work and was told to take my FFR to the airfield, where all the vehs were lining up in their packets ready to deploy to their exercise areas.

At 09.00hrs, I was joined by **Maj Henson**, the Bde Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS). We joined a packet of 4 vehs, and spent the rest of the day travelling north to a German bks in Dietrichsfeld. After 8½ hrs on the road, we arrived at a camp full of tents and vehs. The deployed troops there were providing the HQ ARRC Rear Support Comd (RSC) CP and HQ 1 Sig Bde G1/G4 CP. We were shown where we going to work and sleep for the next week. I was impressed when I saw the work tent, which was set up with 6 tables, laptops, phones and PTARMIGAN phones and lights zip-tied to the main frame of the tent. However, the sleeping tent left a lot to be desired. There were 11 of us sleeping on camp cots, and it was freezing and dark.

On my first day in loc, I got to see how 1 Sig Bde G1/G4 Cells worked. There were 8 Offrs/WOs, 1 SSgt and a LCpl answering the phones and emails. I found out that without them, this ex wouldn't work. They dealt with things from portaloo contracts, fuel, spares supply and people being fed, to personnel admin, discipline and RTAs. I even found out what the ex was about. 1 Sig Bde had come into theatre to provide comms for HQ ARRC and its Divs to protect a country that was being threatened by its neighbour. Usually at Tp level, we do not get to hear the big scenario behind the ex. When you actually knew what the ex was all about and what was happening and why, it became much more interesting.

Although I was supposed to be a Radio Op assigned just to drive DCOS, I got to learn a lot about the ex and about other people's trades and what they did to help the ex function. **Maj Henson** had just taken over as DCOS, so every day I would go out driving somewhere new with him to visit parts of the Bde. One day, we visited a 16 Sig Regt Trunk Node, where the Tp Comd showed us around, explaining what each veh did. As a member of 7 Sig Regt, this was new to me, but it was interesting (and complicated) to see how different parts of the Bde worked.

Back at HQ, the main G1/G4 effort was to get 12 Sig Gp (from 11 Sig Bde) into theatre. 12 Gp had 3 TA Sig Regts coming from UK by sea to reinforce 1 Sig Bde. I had to drive DCOS to Emden Port a few times, where a Port Task Group (PTG) from the Bde had set up a reception for the arriving troops. We saw the TA arrive at the port on coaches after their long ferry journey from England. They were then briefed, fed and got some sleep. While this happened, we went to see the PTG unload the vehs from another ship. Each veh got a basic service check by REME personnel from 1 Sig Bde. If they found a problem, the veh was taken to one side to see if the problem could be easily fixed, if not it was marked VOR. It was good that they had all been checked, because a lot of vehs were classed as VOR after the inspection. We were told that these vehs would be fixed before the TA were to drive them in the morning. If the problems were serious, the veh would just be towed. Luckily, all had been fixed by the next morning.

Port operations

The next day, we went back to the port to see the TA being supplied and lined up in their packets ready to drive to their locs. The re-supply took a long time, and I helped supplying lunch packs and rations. Every packet of vehs had to be controlled so that they did not block the routes from the port to their locs, and RLC movement controllers released the packets in a strict order, with the last packets leaving at 14.00hrs that day.

With the TA in place, the 1 Sig Bde Units got ready to move forward to provide HQ ARRC CPs and comms near to the front line. Before they could move, many of the Units had to be re-supplied. I had to drive out at 22.00hrs to see some of 16 Sig Regt conduct a tactical rolling replen, which I had never seen done before. It was really good, as when we got to the loc, I had to drive with just the convoy light on and had to follow someone with a torch guiding the way. We then waited in the dark and cold, amongst the re-supply vehs, which were hidden in a wood on a track lit by cylumes. The Regts' packets then came through and collected fuel, rations and any spares they needed. After the last packet was re-supplied, we headed back and at 03.00hrs, and I finally got to bed.

When I was not out driving, I would sit in the HQ tent and listen to conferences and the G2/G3 reports on the ex. I was quite surprised that the things that were said sounded so real, and at first I was actually convinced that people had been killed and kidnapped, until told otherwise. After I had listened to the reports for a few days, I was given the job of reading out the G2/G3 situation reports at the evening conference each night, this was nerve-racking, but it was good to get involved.

After a week at Dietrichsfeld, with much of the Bde deployed down to the south, the G1/G4 HQ got ready to move to rejoin the Bde MAIN HQ. Before we went, DCOS and I visited two of the TA

Resupplying 12 Gp at the port

Units. I found that the TA enjoy exs a lot more than most Regulars. I guess its because they all have civilian jobs and don't do this as often as we do.

We visited a TA Trunk Node, which had become bogged in. A few of their vehs had just sunk into the soft ground and they had to tow them out. To make matters worse, they hadn't had toilets for a day, and the weather decided to pour down with thunder and lightning. Despite this, they all seemed to be smiling!

It was a relief to travel back down to Elmpt to rejoin the rest of the Bde HQ, because we were to be sleeping in a block that had a shower and a toilet, and was much warmer than a tent. The HQ was located in the middle of HQ ARRC MAIN, which was being built by Suppt Bn and 7 Sig Regt, both from 1 Sig Bde. I had never seen the amount of work required to build such a big HQ. The Units worked 24 hrs a day for 4 days to get it all ready. With Bde HQ in Elmpt, we visited some of the RLC units in the Bde. **Capt Knightly Brown**, the Bde SO3 G1, and I got to drive the DROPS vehs, picking up loads with the hook and pulling them onto the back of the veh – much bigger and very different from my usual Landrover.

Because DCOS is a RLC Bomb Disposal Officer, I also got to visit the RLC EOD det based in Elmpt. Despite having lived on camp for over a year, I didn't even know they were there. The bomb disposal teams let me operate the WHEELBARROW robot, which they use to dispose of terrorist bombs. I had to drive it to a suspect car and get the weapons into the veh. It was a bit like a computer game, using pictures from cameras on the robot to steer it to the target. They then put me into the bomb disposal armoured suit, which is really heavy (60lbs). I then had to lie on the ground and look under the car for any bombs. I nearly didn't manage to get up again as it was so difficult to move in the suit.

The last few days of the ex meant lots of planning by Bde HQ to recover the TA units from field locs back through Elmpt, so they could rest and get ready for their journey back to UK. The HQ staff spent loads of time calculating all sorts of figures, from how much fuel was required to how many vehs were on each part of the routes at any one time, in order to make a plan that got everything back on time without clogging roads or running out of supplies. With the plan ready, a brief was prepared for the Unit COs. I had to brief on the Scenario in front of all of the senior officers, which was really nerve-wracking, but a relief to finish my bit without making any mistakes.

On the day of the move, DCOS and I drove out in the middle of the night to various Movement Control Points along the routes, checking that all the veh packets were coming in on time, and making sure that the plan worked smoothly. By dawn, I was really tired, and once we had confirmed that everything had come in, it was a relief to get some sleep at last.

So that was my experience of working with the Bde staff. At the end of the ex, I had seen more of the Bde than ever before, learning lots of things about what the various Units do and how things are planned. I am told it was one of the biggest Sigs exs ever, and it certainly was different from my previous experiences of exs.

Here we go driving the DROPS vehicle

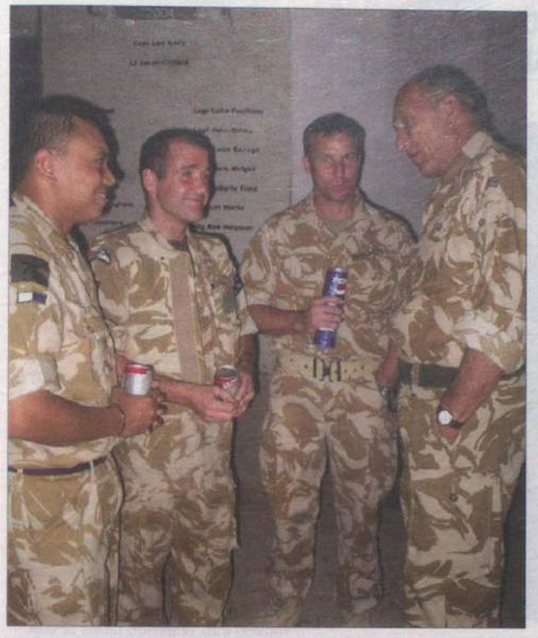
NEWS FROM THE GULF

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT DETACHMENT BAGHDAD

- by SSgt Liam Tosh

SO2 J6	**Maj Dave Duggan**
OC Tp	**Lt Sarah Panting**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Liam Tosh**

Members of 2 Sig Regt deployed on OP TELIC are responsible for providing comms support to the Senior British Military Representative in Iraq (SBMR-I) based in Baghdad. We have 3 different locs across the Baghdad area, which are manned by 32 officers and soldiers. At present, the Tp is in the last month of a 6-month tour. Just when we thought all the hard work was done, 2 Sig Regt decided to give us a new SO2 J6, **Maj Dave Duggan**, fresh from PJHQ. He replaces **Maj Ade Clewlow**, who is straight back to York and then on to South Cerney to exercise his Sqn with 2 Sig Regt's CORMORANT equipts.



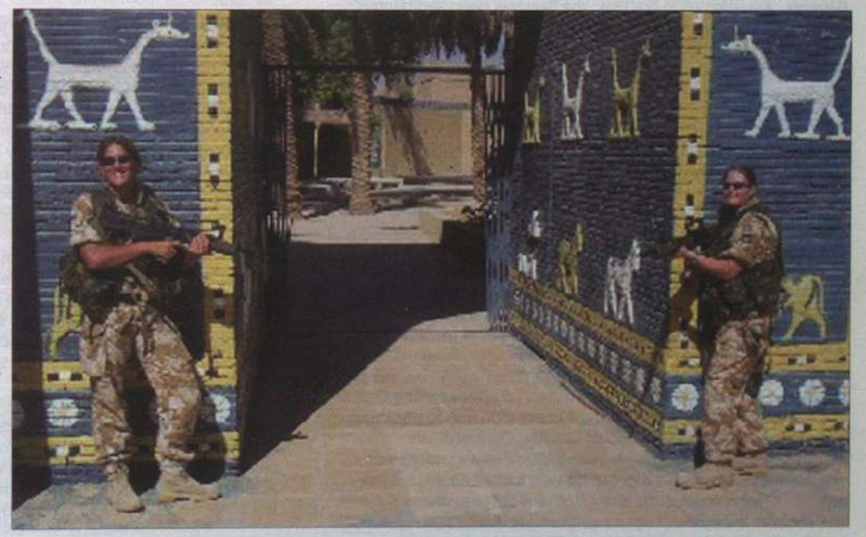
SSgt Liam Tosh and SSgt Bharat meet Gen Sir Mike Jackson on his visit to BSU

The remainder of the dets have had a few busy months, with many of the Tp being back and forth to UK on R and R. This however, left those remaining on the ground working twice as hard to cover. **Lt Sarah Panting** was Tp Comd, Tp SSgt as well as her many other jobs all rolled into one. **Sgt Brett Doyle** has had to delay his R and R slightly to provide enough tech support to **Sgt Michelle Local**, who is standing in for the FofS. **Michelle** is also moving on with the Tp arrangements to carry out a mini Race The Sun in Baghdad (the annual 2 Sig Regt endurance relay event).

During the month of October, the Gurkhas usually celebrate, for a 15-day period, Dashain (which is their equivalent to Christmas). Out in Baghdad it was to be a shorter affair. The celebration was an evening spent at a nearby Global security camp (which is home to about 8-900 Gurkhas).

MY TIME WITH THE DETACHMENT - *by LCpl Robbie Kerswell*

This month has seen a lot of work completed. With the job of helping to install PMR (Private Mobile Radio), came the opportunity for some rigging on Commo Hill, Baghdad. The team consisted of **Cpl Ollie Fox** and **LCpl Robbie Kerswell**, supervised by **YofS Mark Allen**.



LCpl Mel Gros and Sig Lucy Heard at the entrance to what is reputed to be Ancient Babylon

The team first started on the rooftops of Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory, where **SSgt Liam Tosh** also assisted. It was not all plain sailing though, and we came across a few snags. The co-ax we were lifting seemed to be pretty heavy, and when we began to raise the mast on top of the roof, the co-ax fell straight back down to the ground landing not too far from the groundsman **LCpl Robbie Kerswell**.

Then the team went up onto Commo Hill, this time without **SSgt Tosh**. Just as **Cpl Ollie Fox** and **LCpl Robbie Kerswell** were just getting into their work at the top of the scaffolding, EOD decided to detonate some explosives in a nearby field. The lads at the top of the tower hadn't been warned about this, and came down rather quickly! (However it was a safe dismount!). Then, on leaving the site for the end of day, one eagle-eyed **YofS Mark Allen** spotted an unexploded grenade approximately 5m from the veh. That information was passed on to the Americans based on the hill, who then cordoned it off as we left in a hurry.

The job got completed in the time we had, leaving only the terminating of the co-ax, which had to wait until we received the IDR (Independent Digital Repeater). The IDR and all the rest of the PMR radio kit has now turned up, and we are currently taking it thought the testing process.

MY TIME WITH THE DETACHMENT - *by LCpl Marvin Nugent*

I have been at the Baghdad Support Unit now for about seven weeks, throughout which I have been kept busy, particularly this month, as I am the only Inst Tech in my loc. I have been laying the foundations for one of the new systems that has just been brought in. I have also been planning further projects on camp, which are due to be completed in the coming weeks.

The weather here has started to get very cold especially in the morning and at night. The Tp will be very busy in the coming weeks, as we have organised a mini 'Race the Sun' event on 12 December. This event will include swimming, cycling, rowing, a Bergen run, and a stretcher race, with teams from across the Coalition taking part. It is being run in aid of a local charity, and we hope to raise loads of money.

We are all looking forward to the Christmas Day that has been arranged for us at BSU with dinner and afternoon entertainment. We are also trying to arrange a football match with the locals before we our end of tour in January 05, but at the moment they won't play us, as they say it's too cold.

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

Cpl Wilson (1ADSR) chats to LCpl Harvey prior to the Remembrance Sunday parade

OC **Maj G Addley**
RSM **WO1 C Lloyd**

Now that 215 Sig Sqn have departed the heat of the Iraqi summer, 204 Sig Sqn are firmly in place for the Christmas tour.

Having completed OPTAG and buildup trg, the Sqn Main body finally deployed on 16 October, returning to the old hunting ground from TELIC 1.

The handover from 215 Sig Sqn was completed on 28 October and the Sqn then had to await the arrival and sharp eye of **Brig Gibson**. Assisting us in our task, the Sqn has been augmented by a considerable number of personnel from units in Germany and have a whole Tp attached from 2 Sig Regt. We also have a large contingent of TA personnel in key posts who are a most welcome addition to the tour.

EUPHRATES TROOP – RECEPTION, STAGING AND ONWARD INTEGRATION

Euphrates Tp is now set up in its static comms role within the Bde HQ, with all of the dets settled in at Waterloo Lines, and looking forward to a good safe tour. However, elements of the Tp's advance party were lucky to arrive at all. During the deployment on 16 October, we had a very interesting landing in Qatar. Within 100m of the ground, the pilot decided not to land due to fog, hit the gas, circled and tried again. Fresh trousers all round please RQ.

After a 12-hr delay, we arrived at Shaibah Log Base for the start of our Reception, Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) package, which was being run by the Scots Guards. On arrival, we discovered that **Sig Curtis** had been allocated an under slung grenade launcher, which **Sig Curtis** was thrilled about, but the rest of us found most disturbing. With the RSOI package out of the way, we then picked up our vehs and headed for our new base at Basrah International Airport (BIA), which has changed considerably in our year and a bit away.

We say goodbye to some characters in the Tp. **Lt Richardson** our Tp Comd, leaves for ATR Pirbright. **Cpl Williams** leaves us for 21 Sig Regt (AS), where he hopes never to see a 432 ever again. **Sig Malcolm** is off to Warminster; his inspiration will be missed. We welcome **2Lt Nicklin**, back off her Tp Comd's course; and **Cpl Shackleton**. Congratulations to **Cpl Carlisle** on his promotion to Sgt and move to 1 Sig Bde.

TIGRIS TROOP – SETTING UP IN IRAQ - *by Cpl Zoe Schofield*

It has been less than two weeks since we landed in Iraq, and the Tp has already been extremely busy. After a three-day RSOI package at Shaibah Log Base, covering in theatre trg and acclimatisation, we moved into Waterloo Lines at BIA. We hadn't even taken properly over the Camp from 1 Mech, when our first fast ball came hurtling towards us. This was the Black Watch deployment to Baghdad, for which the Tp had to provide an Armd Rebro, 3 LO vehs and crew in support. We initially hoped to have a week to prepare, but suddenly the news came through that the team had to deploy first thing the next morning, which meant a long day and a late finish. The next morning, under **Sgt Theyer** our guys, along with 8 attached from 2 Sig Regt, headed off to Shaibah to meet up with the Black Watch before making their way up to Baghdad. Another Rebro with 3 more ops was sent to Baghdad just four days after the first deployment. All these deployments are keeping **Lt Fulthorpe** on his toes, and if he hadn't shaved most of his hair, off I'm sure he'd be pulling it out.

In addition to deployments, Tigris Tp is responsible for providing ops and techs to positions around Iraq. On rear link dets in Al Amarah, Shaibah and Basrah City, we have **Cpls Neill**, **Williams** and **Parkinson**. The Japanese Bn are looking after **Cpl Raison**, and the Danish Bn have the company of **LCpl Grant**, **Sig McGowan** and **Sig Russell**. The multinational tasks are all 3-week rotational slots, and hopefully everyone will get the chance to experience these. Elsewhere, **Cpl Taylor** and **Sig Lockton** are currently deployed on an OSCA Node situated in Umm Qasar and **Sig Rogers** is operating the Dagger det at Shaibah.

We are looking forward to the return of **LCpl Coyle**, **LCpl Kempster**, **LCpl Ward** and **Sig Herbert**, who remained at Shaibah providing top cover for the ranges. We are also grateful for the return of our Tp SSgt, **SSgt Lawn** and the motley crew he managed to free from Shaibah. They have all been worked hard since they got here, and now want to go back. It isn't nicknamed 'Shaibiza' for nothing.

Cpl Jolliffe has been doing an excellent job sorting out the MT side of things. He was feeling a bit office bound though, and was pleased when he was tasked to do top cover to the border. We've nearly all done this now, as we are required to provide drivers and top cover on a daily basis for convoys all over Iraq.

The rest of us, left here at Waterloo Lines are carrying out veh maint, playing with DRASH (Trash) Tentage, (lucky us) and

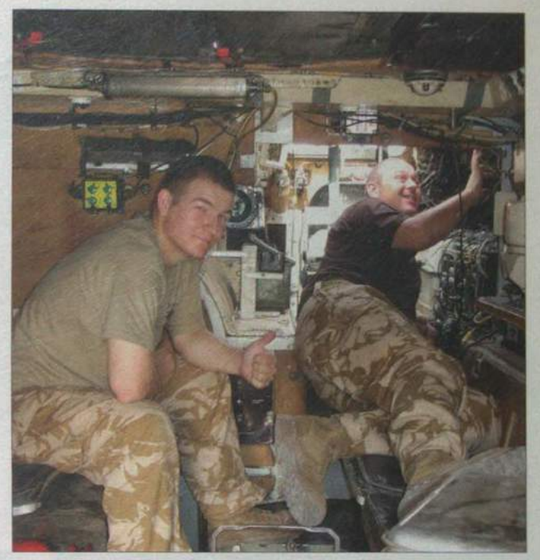
LCpl Tucker is still enjoying boring LCpl Ward with more tales of his recent promotion

preparing for the next fast ball. This could be forward deployment of the Bde, which naturally would happen at a moment's notice. One person a week is on call as the Immediate Response Op, which is a bit cushy really, as you can't leave camp due because the IRO is on 30 mins NTM.

Lastly of course there's the lucky chosen few (**Sgt Allen**, **Cpl Smale-Saunders**, **Cpl Cripps**, **Cpl Turton**) who are returning to the UK, for one week only, to receive trg on SYNERGY.

SUPPORT TROOP – THE ARRIVAL OF THE BLACK RAT

Most people in support Tp arrived in Iraq okay, although **LCpl Halley** and his missing passport caused a little issue for a while. Everyone is just starting to get settled into the new environment, with a lot of people taking on new jobs. Most people are also busy painting Black Rats everywhere (sorry 215). The QM, **Maj**



You saw it here first – techs working in the field. SSgt Dear works on one of the Sqn vehs while Cpl Turton (in true tech style) watches him work

Stoker, also came up with a plan to run a dinner night for the Bde Comd. Unfortunately, the Brigadier liked the idea so much, that dinners have become a regular weekly fixture. Always keen to rise to the challenge and impart a bit of 204 style, the QM made a swift call to the mess manager back in Osnabruck, and the new Euphrates Tp Comd, **2Lt Nicklin**, suddenly found herself deploying to theatre carrying 25 Bde place mats and a good portion of the Mess silver.

MND (SE)
فرقة متعددة الجنسيات (جنوب شرق)

HEADQUARTERS MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH EAST) J6

Ramadan has been and gone, quietly and without much fuss, as the neighbours have been especially and unusually quiet while all eyes have been on the USMC's 'Kinetic' operations in Fallujah. In spite of this, J6 Branch have been especially busy over this period consolidating and bolstering the comms systems throughout the Div AOR in anticipation of the Iraqi National Elections which will take place on 31 January 2005.

Maj Lee Smart has gone all native on us while spending $1.5 million on providing telephones to all the municipal buildings including schools, hospitals and community centre - all potential Polling Stations. His Arabic hasn't improved that much however, due to the fact he's now learning Chinese in preparation for his impending posting to HM Embassy in Beijing. **Lt Col Calvin Owen** has enough difficulty getting him to talk coherent English! **Capt Ross Collins** has decided she's had enough of us all and is going home to 36 Sig Regt while her war stories still have some currency.

Capt Paul Denning has been expanding the PMR radio system throughout the Basrah and Maysan Provinces, making it more of an act of war than it was before, with covert talk-through sites to provide better coverage, and the installation of over 1,000 more powerful veh sets to supplement the existing handsets. **Sgt Majs Carruthers** and **Sid Crowton** and their Installation Teams have been kept busy with the ever-increasing expansion of the SYNERGY network, despite the best efforts of the Shaibah JCB diggers.

SSgt Wilford and his SYNERGY Mobile Team have also been busy, first on a deployment to the Desert border areas with 40 Cdo RM and the Dutch BG, conducting interdiction operations. They have just returned from a month in North Babil (south of Baghdad) where they deployed with the Black Watch BG, on OP BRACKEN providing their strategic comms. **Capt Jon Malcom** and his team deployed with the UK Lead Spearhead Element's VSC 501 from 30 Sig Regt at 24 hrs' notice to provide the rear link for the UK Liaison HQ, which was embedded with the 24 Marine Expeditionary Unit HQ. The shenanigans of this deployment, and the short flash to bang timelines involved, were definitely more 'kin hectic' than kinetic!

Meanwhile, the new Network Control Centre (NCC) has been developed and implemented in accordance with PJHQ's new JFCIS doctrine, and with the assistance of **WO2(YofS) Goodenough**, who has been on loan from the Northern Ireland NCC. He returns to Ulster next week, leaving **Capt Graham Moody** and **SSgt(FofS) Challis** to terrorise the contractors and units in theatre alike.

This is a combination designed to heat things up, which is probably just as well as the desert nights are getting much colder now, and the JSUB QM is refusing to issue winter issue clothing to anyone without recourse to a signed allocation from the Sovereign herself – except of course the QM combat staff themselves, who are currently all modelling/trialling the latest kit themselves.

SPECIAL FEATURE
GETTING TO KNOW 14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (EW)

- by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

As with 11 Sig Regt (reviewed in October 04 *WIRE*), 14 Sig Regt (EW) is another unusual Sig Regt. And as with 11 Sig Regt, there seem to be a few myths about it – myths such as: 'It's not a normal Regt;' 'It doesn't deploy like a normal Regt;' 'It's isolated; 'They work shorter hours;' 'They're very secretive about what they do.' So, at the invitation of the Regt, and having noticed a lot of myth-busting books coming out lately, I visited 14 Sig Regt (EW) to do a bit of myth-busting myself. It didn't take long.

Yes, Brawdy is a long way away. It took me 5 hrs to drive there from Blandford. Most of the Regt haven't relatives in Wales, so it is reasonable for them to have 3-day weekends to return to families if they wish. But, in the 4-day week they work, they work much longer hours, sometimes more than other Regts do in 5 days. And when there is work to be done, they frequently work the fifth day anyway.

A specialist Unit, 14 Sig Regt (EW), is not a 'normal' Regt, in that it is structured differently, it operates differently, it deploys differently, and does an entirely different job from most other Regts. For a start, at approaching 900 posts, it has the largest establishment for a Regt in the Corps. Its personnel are highly specialised and their skills and equipt are in great demand in all operational areas, so they usually deploy in small dets, and often well forward. Their operational tours are sometimes shorter than in other Units, but the tours are more frequent and geographically wider ranging. Their equipt and methods of operating have to be at the leading edge of technology and skill, so they also have a heavy trg commitment to stay ahead.

As to secretive, well the Regt is clearly titled 'EW', so there's no secret there. And electronic warfare is openly defined as: '....the interception and identification of electromagnetic emissions, and the use of means to reduce or prevent hostile use of them whilst ensuring effective use of them by friendly forces', which is also no secret. The secretive bit is how they do it, and the kit they use to do it, which, if we are to keep ahead of the game, must remain secret. But even so, if the importance of their contribution is to be appreciated across the Corps in particular and the field Army in general, the secrecy part of it should be no bar to everyone knowing what the Regt does.

Operations Officer, **Maj Phil Deans**, describes the Regt as more of a Recce Unit, rather than the usual CIS Unit; they do not do close support to formation Staff, as other Regts do. Rather, they collect information and pass it on for Staff to act upon.

'There is a lot of job satisfaction in our dets' he says. 'They can often see what the troops on the ground achieve as a result of their efforts.' He quotes as an example, how early in the war-fighting stage of OP TELIC 1, an EW det had located a troublesome enemy artillery OP, allowing our own forces quickly to eliminate it, and resume the advance.

'The only way to understand EW completely, is to do it,' he says. 'Therefore, the more people we have coming through the Regt, the more the rest of the Army can understand us and use us to better effect.'

'14 Sig Regt (EW) is a positive career move,' he continues, 'and many people come back for a second or third posting. Right now, we are short of linguists, so anyone who can speak another language well, is encouraged to seek a posting with us.'

I asked the RSM, **WO1(RSM) Mark Jolly**, a Welshman from Port Talbot, how you approach an RSM's job in a Regt with nearly 900 people, most of them highly specialised in what they do. 'We have a lot of highly educated people,' he said, 'so the normal approach

WO1(RSM) Mark Jolly

won't work. I have to be a bit more diplomatic. We have to have a lot of trust in people. It's only very rarely that I bark, but when I do it's for a reason.

'Yes, we have very large numbers, but I also have a large body of SNCOs – 13 WO1s and 40+ WO2s. Each Sqn is pulled in many directions, and we have numerous dets deployed all over the world. I can't visit them all, so we must keep in touch with them by delegation through the chain. But I do get a lot of opportunities in the Sgt's Mess to catch up on what people are doing.

'Although each Sqn gets on with its own thing, we do use sporting and AT activities to bring people together, and we have an annual Regtl ex to build and maintain our ethos – and to test Ech!'

SSgt Phil Berry

SSgt Phil Berry, Z Tp Ops SSgt in 245 Sig Sqn, did have some reservations about the loc when he first came to Brawdy. It is a long way away, but there's great camaraderie in the Unit, and the work keeps you active. You have plenty of time to hone your specialist and your mil skills, and there are not many sporting or hobby activities that aren't catered for here. There's even clay pigeon shooting. Outside Camp there is the Pembroke Coastal Walk, and loads of water sports to engage in.

'So far, this has been a very worthwhile posting, and one of the most active phases of my career so far.'

Cpl Steve McCaskell

Cpl Steve McCaskell's previous posting was with 521 EOD Sqn. He has been with 14 Sig Regt (EW) for 5 weeks, and is now Det Comd of a DF det in Z Tp. When the Det deploys on OP TELIC in January, he will remain at Brawdy as Platform Comd.

'I avoided 14 Sig Regt for 12 years,' he says. 'It was too far away for me. My parents are in Glasgow, and my wife is from Lincolnshire. However, the long weekends do help, and now that I'm here, there's loads to do. The AT packages we get are fantastic. And just down the coast, there's wind-surfing, climbing, hill-walking and fishing, to name a few.'

'We have plenty of exs to keep our skills up, and we have a Battle Camp annually.'

'I live off base in the married quarters in Haverfordwest. It's only 10 mins away, and the facilities there are excellent too. There's a good school, a sports centre and a swimming pool within walking distance of my house. My wife enjoys it there.'

WO2 Craig Corcoran RASigs is on a 2 year exchange posting and is currently serving in 237 Sig Sqn. He is from 7 Sig Regt RASigs.

'It's much busier here in 14 Sig Regt than it is with my Regt in Australia,' he says, 'but it's experience that I couldn't get anywhere else. I find the Brit Army very professional, and I'm impressed at the responsibilities carried out by the junior ranks. It's a great learning opportunity for them.

'I'm also impressed at the breadth of trg they get. As well as specialist trg, they're very strong here on mil skills, and the AT they get also stands them in good stead.

WO2 Craig Corcoran

'Compared with Oz, the weather here isn't so good – especially in the winter, but the scenery round here is great. As well as the experience, I'll take a lot of good memories home with me'

LCpl Katie Kingsley-Hughes

LCpl Katie Kingsley-Hughes is a Spec Op in 237 Sig Sqn, and has been here for 9 months. Being Welsh, she enjoys the locality, although she is from North Wales. 'This was my second choice posting,' she says, '- that is, after Cyprus,' she quickly adds with a smile.

'It's a really good hands-on job, and the people in the Sqn are great. We are a really close-knit group.

'Yes, we do work a 4-day week, but we work very hard, and do much longer hours in those 4 days. But that's the way we like it. There are loads of exercises to keep out hand in – and you need that in this job.

'It's a good place to keep up your fitness. Everyone is into it. And the AT opportunities are great – not just at Castlemartin down the coast; we go everywhere – all over the world.'

Cpl Nick Robson

Cpl Nick Robson is a Spec Op in 226 Sig Sqn. 'This posting was my first choice, he says. 'It didn't look too comfy at first – the locality, that is; but I soon got used to it.

'The good thing about this job is that we are always practising or doing our proper role. And we work with state-of-the-art equipment. You don't get that everywhere.

'There are good facilities here on base. We've just had our bar re-fitted, and there's a good gym. There's a great range of AT gear at our disposal, too.'

'This job has really brought me out of my shell. It's great working with all the other trades and mixing with a larger range of people. And as a Cpl, I seem to be more in a management role.

'I'd recommend this Regt and this job to anyone. I wouldn't have missed it for anything.'

LCpl Jamie Campbell is a Rad Op with the Light Electronic Warfare Team, the LEWT, and loves the role. 'I had been with 216 Sig Sqn,' he says, 'and this was my first choice for my next posting.

LCpl Jamie Campbell

'But I didn't expect to be so busy. We are spearhead assets and we're heavily in demand – and heavily committed.

'It's a small team, with very close relationships and a great esprit de corps.

'I very much like the soldiering side. With the specialist work, it's the perfect combination for me. We have heavy responsibilities, and this gives us great satisfaction. And another good thing is that everyone seems to be getting a better appreciation of EW's contribution. It's good to be playing a key role.'

'Sure, the place here is isolated, but it does give you the opportunity to keep your fitness up – and you need that for this job. In any case, we deploy quite often, so we are not here all the time.'

Sgt Paul Chester

Sgt Paul Chester is another Spec Op, and is very enthusiastic about the loc. 'It's fantastic country round here,' he says. 'You've got the Coastal Path, there's hill walking, water sports and climbing. The AT opportunities right on our doorstep are great.

'On base, the facilities are among the best. We've got probably the best junior ranks accn in the country. They're all single rooms, and a very high standard.

'Job-wise, as well as our specialist skills, we probably do mil skills to a higher standard than most Regts. In fact we do a lot of cross trg with infantry. We need to, because we're often at the forward edge of the battlefield.

'We are exercising with cutting edge equipt all the time. My Tp is probably the most exercised Tp in the Regt. We're at it for 3-4 weeks at a time with 16 Air Asslt Bde. And we get the opportunity to do P Coy and para trg.

'And the range of deployment experience we get is second to none. This makes us more in touch with what's going on operationally in the rest of the Army. This is a posting I wouldn't have missed.'

My final visit was to the Training Wing. Here, the Training Officer, **Capt Mark Wallace** made time for me in his busy programme.

His Wing is charged with providing the most realistic trg possible to perform both EW and mil skills to the highest level.

Because most of the jobs in 14 Sig Regt are so very different from those that new postings in will have experienced in other Regts, more time than usual must be invested in specialist trg before they can be fully operative.

Because their placement is usually further forward on the battlefield, their roles also demand a higher emphasis than usual in mil skills. Thus trg requires a great deal of imagination and innovation. Exs must be realistic and demanding. For instance, in a recent scenario that will long be remembered by all who partook in it, the 'enemy' were tasked to act as insurgents, infiltrating and pressing home a vicious suicide attack. This not only brought home immediately how vulnerable troops can be whilst involved in their specialist tasks and how they need to be always ready to defend themselves, but it also represented accurately what can be expected in many operational theatres today.

In the overall trg scheme, great deal of importance is also placed on AT, and so the Regt is the major client of the AT Centre which it runs at Castlemartin about 20 miles south of Brawdy.

I am very grateful to CO **Lt Col Rob Meinertzhagen** and all ranks of 14 Sig Regt (EW) for all the help they so willingly gave me, and for the opportunity to get to know such an interesting and different Unit. Incidentally, I had spent much time practising to get the pronunciation of his name right, only to find that he is known to everyone in the Regt as **Lt Col MZ**. I guess that this demonstrates how close he is with his troops. They all seem to rate him highly.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM	**WO1 M Jolly**

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CN Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 Burrows**

Exercise Devil's Bowler

In October, Romeo Tp and other attached personnel from the Regt deployed on Ex Devil's Bowler in Gibraltar.

This ex was designed to provide additional testing for the INCE equipt in the target rich environment of the shipping lanes of Gibraltar.

One INCE det was situated near Breakneck Gun Battery on Spyglass Peak. At approximately 500m ASL with a sheer cliff 10 metres away, it was not for those who were afraid of heights!

As well as classroom lessons and military lessons, the programmed timetable of events included some more fun activities, such as fishing, powerboat rides, the tunnel tour, the dreaded rock run and lots of sport.

We also had the opportunity to visit Lower St Michael's Cave. This is one of the three natural cave systems in The Rock, and everyone enjoyed the visit.

A long way down!

Answers on a postcard if you can tell which one is Sgt Birch and which one is the Ape.

A visit to Gibraltar would not be complete without seeing the famous Rock Apes. Legend says that when the Apes leave Gibraltar is when the British leave too. To keep ape-human relations high, Sgt Birch spent time getting friendly with them at every opportunity. The Apes are very tame and even brave enough to steal horror bags and the occasional fire extinguisher!

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Flavell**
SSM	**WO2 Tobell**

ADVENTURE TRAINING

During the week of 18-24 October 04 Tango Tp went Adventure Training in South West Wales. The week began with rock climbing and abseiling. We had a good walk to a loc next to the sea and set up there for a day's climbing. Unsuitable weather for the next two days forced a change in the programme. Land yachting was scrapped due to lack of wind, and kayaking cut short due to an excess of wind! Sod's Law! On the final day we went trekking and practised navigation, with the final destination being a pub for a well-deserved pub lunch.

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT CADRE COURSE 2004

It all started on Monday 4 October, with an inspection by the Trg Offr. After the formalities had been completed it moved on to

Henley, here we come!

each individual in turn taking a drill sequence. The rest of the day was spent in briefings to go over skills needed for the second week (mil skills week).

Day two began with a tab over the tank tracks next to the airfield, picking up logs half way to carry on a muddy wet circuit. On completion, we gathered our equipt and were transported to the airfield where a harbour area was erected. That evening was taken up by an orienteering ex.

Day three commenced nice and early. No breakfast, fill in the shell scrapes and onto the Chinook. We touched down at Bramley Trg Area, where we were stripped of all clothes and equipt and issued with coveralls, torch, lighter and a knife – the survival phase. For the next three days we were living in shelters and living off the land, with other concurrent activities going on – these were helicopter dunking at the under Water Escape Unit, high wire assault course, unarmed combat and a raft race with the Engineers of Minley Trg Regt.

On the final day of the first week we were put into pairs and transported down to London (where we again were searched for anything that could help), and given a series of tasks that had to be carried out by 14.00 hrs that day. These included getting on live radio, obtaining the signature of a member of the Royal Family, and going on an open-top bus.

The final week was carried out on Sennybridge Trg Area. This phase was the mil skills week. During this we were tested on our navigational ability, harbour areas, the orders process, FIBUA assaults, and platoon and section attacks. On the final day we launched our final platoon attack and returned to camp. That evening we had a presentation for Top Student, Sig Talbot, Best Field Soldier, Sig Baker and Best Endeavour, Sig Davis.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SL Copley**
SSM	**WO2 Smith**

SQUADRON RANGE CAMP 2004 - by LCpl Williams 955

On Monday 18 October 04, 245 Sqn deployed to Sennybridge Trg Area for a week-long Range Camp. The first day was dominated

Not a very wooden log!

by an APWT for those who had not yet passed for this year, or trg on the GPMG, before progressing onto the GPMG range, where we let loose our aggression on the armoured veh targets with hundreds of 7.62 rounds. And it rained.

Day two featured the 9mm pistol shoot and the Individual Battle Skills Range (IBSR). The latter range was quite a source of entertainment, with **LCpl Robertson**, **LCpl Hughes** and **Sig Bosher** both slightly injuring themselves in their enthusiasm to get into cover. A broken tooth, a bloody nose and a grazed knee respectively. Oh, and it rained.

The third day was split between Battlefield Casualty Drills Training (BCDT- formally known as BFAT) and Range N, individual fire and movement, which has a river running through it. So we all got wet anyway, despite the fact it was raining - which it was.

On the fourth day, we progressed to pairs fire and movement, which I'm sure had some people worried, but the trg of the past few days and the help of the instructors made it incident free, thankfully. And, yes, it rained.

The fifth and final day provided the penultimate challenge for the week, the inter-section march and an exceptionally long assault course. After a lot of puffing and panting, everybody got through it, albeit via nearly every water hazard on the course. I personally fell in twice and was soaked through. Not that it made any difference, because it was raining.

We then had the presentations for the Most Improved Soldier, which was awarded to **LCpl Smith 358**, Best Field Soldier won by **Sig Ball**, and Best Section, which was Section 4. You know who you are. It was something many of us had never experienced before, and something we hope to do again in the future, as an enjoyable time was had by all.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Ironside**

MINI-EXECUTIVE STRETCH EVENING

In a new initiative to inform employers about the benefits of employing a member of the TA, the Regt recently held a Mini-Executive Stretch evening at their TAC in Maryhill, Glasgow. Participants from the Junior Chamber of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee were invited to attend the evening.

The event provided an opportunity for the three teams from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee to test their skills on a number of military activities, such as First Aid, Weapon Handling drills and Negotiation Skills at a Bosnian CP. First Aid and Weapon Handling almost speak for themselves, but tough Negotiating Skills were required by each team, when they tried to pass through a Bosnian CP with a wounded casualty that they had just 'found'. Prior to reaching the CP, each team was handed an Army issue vocabulary card for Bosnia, and had to learn the basics of Serbo-Croat in a very short time.

Once at the CP, the teams found that it was manned by fluent Serbo-Croat speakers from the TA, who had all served in Bosnia during the past 12 yrs. Indeed, **Sgt Kev Byrne** had served on OP GRAPPLE 1 as **Col Bob Stewart's** driver. After much negotiating, each team managed to make their way through the CP with their casualty, to the relative safety of the Officers' Mess bar.

To round off the evening, a bottle of champagne was awarded to the team that **Sgt Byrne** judged had made the most use of their negotiating skills and newfound language skills.

The Glasgow Junior Chamber team was declared the winner, beating Edinburgh by just one point. **Stuart White** of the winning Glasgow team said of the evening, 'It was fascinating to gain an insight into the TA and to experience the challenges they have to face when deployed on ops, through the use of the mock CP.' **Sheelagh Frame** from the Dundee Junior Chamber said of the evening, 'I had a very enjoyable time, as I know everyone from our team did. You have changed my perspective of the TA.'

CO, **Lt Col Roddy Sutherland** said, 'The purpose of the evening was to allow employers to see what the average TA soldier has to offer, such as good man-management skills and an ability to think and work effectively whilst operating in difficult situations. From the feedback so far, we certainly appear to have achieved our aim.'

The winning Glasgow team receiving their prize

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andrew Thompson**

A busy period has seen the Sqn deployed on Annual Camp, supporting EX SCOTTISH HAWK in Caithness, and fighting in the streets during a FIBUA weekend at Catterick, as well as the usual trg weekends and drill nights. All those who attended an excellent FIBUA weekend at Catterick, came away having learned much and enjoyed themselves in the process, despite some scuffed knees and a black eye for **Sig Lyn Grant**. However, several junior members of the Sqn are still in the doghouse after playing the role of starving, but surprisingly podgy, local children, during the overnight ex. Despite the lure of a Kit-Kat and a hot cup of tea, the unnamed recruits refused to divulge any useful information, and remain marked men and women within the Sqn. You know who you are.

Despite ENDEX having been called, **Cpl Richard Melia** managed to secure a cache of WMDs cunningly disguised as bag meals. Showing gallantry beyond the call of duty, he then proceeded to guard the suspect packages like a bulldog, in order, so he claimed, to keep his comrades safe from danger.

Commiserations go to **WO1 Derick Postlethwaite** on his demotion to the rank of Capt. Bad luck, **Derick**. Better start saving for that Barbour jacket! Congratulations go to **Sgt Stuart Henderson** on his recent promotion from Cpl. **Stuart** is currently representing the Sqn on the slopes of Austria, blissfully unaware of the growing list of duties he is acquiring as a new Tp Sgt. Finally, our best wishes go to **Capt Lynne Bertram** and **LCpl Gillian Grant**, who are abroad doing their bit on deployment this Crimble.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

REMEMBRANCE DAY 04

The weekend of 13-14 November 04 saw the fifth Remembrance Day Parade in East Kilbride since the Sqn moved to Whitemoss in 1999. Although this event is viewed as extremely important by all members of the Sqn, the full significance of the occasion was brought into focus during the Regtl tour of WW1 battlefields in 2002.

We are getting ahead of ourselves, however, as before we could parade on Sunday, there was the small matter of the Sgt Maj's Challenge. This is an annual event where the Sqn have to either cycle or run to Dechmont Ranges and then run or cycle back. The soft wailing of the SNCO mantra 'My back! My back!' could be heard long before the competitors crossed the start line.

With the Remembrance Day Parade upon us, the Sqn paraded in the TAC for a final inspection, dressing and presentation of the prize to the winner of the Challenge. This year's victor was **Cpl Gary Cambridge**, who chose to share his prize of a bottle of Glayva with his fellow OP TELIC veteran, **LCpl John Shearer**. We moved the Sqn to the start point for the Parade, which is the RBL East Kilbride Branch. A strong bond has grown between the RBL and the Sqn since the move to East Kilbride, and from this, the Parade has become an important part of local community life. The Sqn are not the only participants. The Legion, representatives of various Regtl Associations, the RBL Pipe Band and contingents from all three Cadet Forces all parade. The Parade marches to the Cenotaph in a local park for the two minutes silence and Wreath Laying, before marching to a local church for a Service of Remembrance. One final march returns us to the RBL, where the Sqn holds a curry lunch for all parade participants, and the RBL present a prize to the best young soldier in the Sqn. The recipient for 2004, was **Sig Campbell**.

MILITARY SKILLS EVENING

The SPSI, **SSgt Gair Sorley**, organised a mil skills competition on the evening of 01 Dec 04, which coincided with a visit to the Sqn of two luminaries from RHQ: **Maj Steve Holt**, the Trg Maj, and the RSM, **WO1(RSM) Ironside**. The Sqn was split into teams, each of which had to go through stands in Shooting, PT, NBC, Driving and Map Reading. The TM and RSM both joined in, and were assigned to teams with the message, 'We did some PT this morning.' That said, the RSM did exceptionally well winning the PT tests, much to the annoyance of the TM. A prize was given to the soldier with then highest scores, **LCpl John Shearer**. A prize was also given to the best team.

ARRIVALS

The Sqn welcomes two new arrivals: **2Lt Lorna Craik** who takes comd of Close Supt Tp, and **2Lt Melanie Vaggers**, who will command NRSC Tp.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Bruce**

The last quarter of 2004 has been very busy for the Sqn. Recruiting continues in earnest to populate fully our new Tp based in Stirling, whilst Sqn trg has been focused on developing our mil skills with a comms flavour.

October saw a big push, with our ITD trg culminating in an exciting range package at Barry Buddon. After zeroing our rifles and some awesome range stew, we spent the day on the Individual Battle Skills Range, where **Cpl Leslie** impressed us all with his ducking and diving from the different forms of cover on offer. From the fence gate to the rooftop, targets were being dropped all over the place. It was a different story the next day, when the Sqn attempted its APWT. Considering many of the troops hadn't fired their rifles for a number of months before zeroing, the scores were high, especially from some of the newer members.

OCdt Halliady on Barry Buddon Ranges

November started with flaming fireballs as we learned to make Molotov cocktails at Whinny Hill in Catterick. A series of stands was completed on the Saturday, including: assaulting a building, mines and booby traps, observation posts, the urban assault course and room clearances. This was great fun and prepared the troops for the nighttime activities. Based around a cordon and search scenario, intelligence was gathered through the night from patrols and OPs throughout the village, before a deception plan led to the first raid at dawn. Chaos followed, as about twenty soldiers attempted to clear five buildings at once whilst under fire from all sides from an enemy that just wouldn't die. It was a real experience.

Later on in November was our Service of Remembrance, held at our TAC. Along with representatives from the Air Cadets, Sea Cadets, the Edinburgh Branch of the RSA and the German

Members of 61 Sig Sqn pay their respects

Reservistenkameradschaft, it was a truly Tri-Service and multinational affair. After an inspection from **FO Erasmuson**, the troops marched round to a packed drill hall for the very moving Service. After the Service, the wreaths were taken to Corstorphine Hill Cemetery, where they were placed on the graves of Royal Signals personnel buried in the Military Section there. It was then back to the TAC for a curry and pub quiz. The whole day was organised by our SPSI, **SSgt Bob Harvey**, who was attending his last Remembrance Service as a serving member of the Royal Signals, before he leaves the Army early in 2005.

The start of December saw the Sqn hosting the Regt as they descended on the capital for EX SALTIRE SLEIGH. A competition was held on Saturday involving a number of stands which included: the obstacle course, 9mm pistol shoot, Saxon driving, veh recovery, line laying, comd post set up, reversing a veh and driving with a trailer. Luckily, the weather stayed kind, and the day was a fun and challenging way to end the year's regtl trg. On the Saturday evening, the Regtl Junior Ranks' Christmas Party was held at our TAC.

It was a fantastic event, with everyone having a great time (especially all the Seniors and Officers, who were waiting on as, and having their own party upstairs). On Sunday, we nursed our hangovers with a walk along the river from the bks where we were billeted back to the TAC to tidy up the carnage from the previous night.

As our SPSI leaves in early 2005, we would like to wish **SSgt Bob Harvey** and **Vicky** all the best with their future, and to thank **Bob** for all his hard work and commitment to the Sqn. **Bob** has been with us for over 3 years and brought a new level of enthusiasm to the Unit, along with his love for his respirator, speed boats, heli-handling and diving.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Hatton**

We welcome the new QM, **Major Abbott**, from the caves of Corsham, and **WO1(RSM) Hatton**, fresh from 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We also bid a fond farewell to **Lynn**, the Orderly Room Clerk, who has given the Regt 17 years' service. She leaves as the Bristol elements of the Regt settle into the winter operational trg environment, whilst the TAC undergoes a refurbishment.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY)

OC **Maj Gus Loverridge**
SSM **WO2**

This year saw more than 400 reservist and cadets taking part in the annual Remembrance Parade in Bristol City centre. It was also very well attended by members of the public. Who were perhaps reminded of its significance by the 60th Anniversary of D-Day in June, and the current situation in Iraq.

39 Sig Regt were well represented, with approximately 50 members taking part. The Parade contingent was led by OC 57 Sqn, while OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Gus Loverridge**, laid a wreath at the cenotaph. Other members of the Horfield-based Sqns were involved in wreath bearing and cenotaph duties. **SSgt Richie Arundel** was again in charge of the Cenotaph duty team, with **Cpl Richard Vise** of 57 Sqn making his debut as a sentry.

This year's Parade was headed up and controlled by the RNR based at *HMS Flying Fox*, who kindly hosted members of the marching contingent after the parade in their mess decks. *HMS Flying Fox* has become a regular visiting point for all Bristol-based personnel, as it serves as our vehicle park while we continue with our major refurbishment of the Horfield site.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Major Ruth Empsom**
SSM **WO2 Hall**

The Sqn bid **SSgt Mike Bell** a fond farewell after a very successful tour. In turn we welcome as SPSI, **SSgt Don Garner** and his wife **Alison**. We welcome back, following a successful tour of duty with 97 Sig Sqn, **Lt Mike Curtis-Rouse**, **LCpl Nick Thompson** and **Sig Louise Penfold**. A warm welcome to the following new recruits: **Sigs Clive Wragg**, **Matthew Eagan**, **Julie Gilmore**, **Matthew Burgess, Pte Daniel Hone** and **Georgina Miles** and **Simon Machin**, who have now just completed their TAFS2. Following their successful commissioning courses at RMAS, we welcome **2Lts Alison Brumfitt** and **Viviene Cotes**. Well done to the following promotees: **Mike Curtis-Rouse**, promoted to Lt whilst in Bosnia; **Claire Goodwin**, to Sgt; **James Osborn** and **Jon Godwin**, to Cpl and **Lisa Green** AGC, LCpl – also awarded Best Soldier on Camp

OXFORDSHIRE LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE

Warm congratulations to **Capt Bob Sheldon** and **WO2 (SVWO) Ray Phillips** who have been awarded Certificates by **Mr Hugo Brunner** HM Lord Lieutenant for Oxfordshire. Both have had illustrious careers with the Sqn. **Ray Phillips** is currently working in China, but we are always pleased to see you when you are home! The PSAO does of course richly deserve his award especially for all the excellent work he carries out for the Oxfordshire Yeomanry Association and Trust.

THE SQUADRON RAISES MORE CHARITY FUNDS

As part of our mission to raise the profile of the Sqn in North Oxfordshire, and as part of our ongoing recruiting efforts, the Sqn has completed a couple of charity events that were very well received.

Following yet another forced march, the soldiers of the Sqn (and a couple of pet dogs) toured around North Oxfordshire led by **Sgt Maj Robbie Hall**, raising the sum of £1,564.73. The money was shared between the ABF and the Oxfordshire Yeomanry Trust (OYT).

Award of Lord Lieutenant's Certificate with Sqn Honorary Col John Bridgeman CBE, TD, DL also in attendance

Members of the Sqn also raised £843.70 for the RBL Poppy Appeal on a freezing cold Saturday morning, 13 November 04 in Banbury town centre. We were pleasantly surprised at the positive approach the public have towards the Poppy Appeal and to the Armed Services. Ex WO **Chris Smithson** organised and drove the event; **Sgt Mark Taylor** and **Sig Clive Wragg** collected the most money and won another bottle of wine!

OXFORDSHIRE YEOMANRY LUNCHEON AND FIELD GUN

The Sqn has acquired a 25 Pdr Field Gun as a Gate Guard when our refurbishment is finished, which reflects the history of the TAC as being RA prior to Royal Signals. The cost and acquisition of the gun was made possible through an appeal for funds to have it decommissioned and restored, by the Oxfordshire Yeomanry Association. A team of ex-Gunners have agreed to maintain it – and they are as pleased as punch! The Gun was on display at the Annual Yeomanry Luncheon held at Slade TAC on Sunday 24 October 04, proudly guarded by **Cpls Steve Bennett** and **James Osborn**.

Cpl Steve Bennett, Gun and Cpl James Osborn.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Mike Lansdown**
SSM **WO2 Dave Lambert**

In June the Sqn said farewell to **Maj Carla Lankester**, OC, with best wishes for her next appointment on the staff at Blandford, and welcomed back **Maj Mike Lansdown** for a second tour in command.

MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER

The Sqn was delighted to be able to host the 77th Annual Reunion Dinner of its Regtl Assn on Saturday 23 October 04, the anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein. We were pleased to welcome the Assn President, **Lt Col Simon Beazley** and **Mrs Beazley**, the Chairman, **Mr George Key**, and the Sqn Hon Col, **Lt Col Don Grocott** and **Mrs Grocott**. Members of the Sqn took advantage of the opportunity to hear first hand about their experiences from those who were there at El Alamein or serving elsewhere with the Middlesex Yeomanry at that time, and a very convivial evening was had by all.

LAFONE DAY

On the day following the Annual Dinner, members of the Sqn again joined the Association for the annual Lafone Day Service in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral, London. Lafone Day commemorates the fallen of the Middlesex Yeomanry from the

Boer War and two World Wars, and is named after **Maj Alexander Lafone**, posthumously awarded the VC for his actions whilst serving with the Middlesex Yeomanry in Palestine in 1917.

EXERCISE YEOMAN CADRE

On a cold weekend at the end of November, the Sqn deployed to Longmoor to get back to some raw soldiering, on a JNCO Cadre ex, ably organised by the Ops Offr, **Capt Rod Hook**, and the Sqn PSI, **SSgt Dave Rimmer**. The ex warmed up with some NBC casualty evacuation and veh-borne patrolling incident handling drills, before developing into a dismounted patrolling ex. SNCOs from the Sqn effortlessly morphed into terrorists – a little too effortlessly perhaps – before snatching hostages, thus presenting the JNCOs of the Sqn with the challenge of finding the terrorists and rescuing the hostages.

A recce patrol led by **LCpl Cooper** carried out the closest CTR possible - so close that he was able physically to confirm the slaughter of the hostages, when a body landed on him, thrown off a bridge used by the enemy as a base.

Having established that there were no hostages left to save, it only remained for the Sqn's spearhead element to carry out a deliberate attack at first light. This was led by **Cpl Bray**, whose section sprung from a ditch under the very noses of the enemy, using the element of surprise to inflict a total defeat.

LCpl Cooper and Cpl Bray find the body of the terrorist ringleader that has just fallen off a bridge

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM	**WO2 Mike White**

The Sqn has, at last, a 2IC (much to the delight of the OC), **Capt James Bloomer** recently having returned from the UK Provincial Reconstruction Team (UK PRT) in Northern Afghanistan. We also welcome back **Sig Robert Charlton**, who was on the deployment with 97 Sqn in the Balkans. **Cpl Ali McGilp** and **LCpl Paul Wylde** timed the ending of their tour on OP TELIC impeccably, and will be joining their friends at the Horfield Annual Dinner. Between the four of them there are bound to be more than enough stories to make the winter nights seem longer.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY, BRISTOL

Boots and medals were well polished as fifty (plus) members of HQ and 57 Sig Sqn fell in, for what is now the country's largest Remembrance Parade outside of London, a parade that seemed all the more poignant when considering current operations. Due to the current refurbishment at Horfield TAC the RNR at *HMS Flying Fox* kindly offered us a home for the day. Their Hospitality was outstanding and those whose joints had stiffened after the marching left the mess well lubricated (in true Bristol fashion).

FIGHTING IN SOMEONES' HOUSE

At the end of November the Sqn deployed on EX BRUNEL WARRIOR to the FIBUA village at Copehill Down. The Sqn was joined by elements of HQ Sqn and a section from 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC). The participants took part in a trg package organised by PSIs **SSgt Dave Langridge** and **SSgt Sean Oliver** along with the 2IC, and run by the Urban Operations Wing (UOW). The mandatory Safety Briefings alone lasted beyond midnight on the Friday. Lessons in Methods of Entry, Room Clearance and Assaulting a Building provided the rude awakening for many on the Saturday morning.

SSgt Ben Newby, SSgt Richard Sharp and Sgt Gringo Inns. 'Trust us, we have done this before'

During the latter lesson **Sig Josh Seller** earned his inch in this column by lobbing a grenade at the upstairs window of the building he was assaulting. The grenade hit the eaves, bounced straight back and onto his helmet. He then tried to head it back in, but failed. It then landed in the midst of the assault team, who scattered to the four winds leaving him perched on top of the ladder to collect the blast. Later that day' everyone enjoyed exploring the sewer system in the village, with a few rather bewildered people finally extracting themselves out of manhole covers at various locations.

The trg culminated in a dawn attack on the Sunday. At one point, with both **OCdt Sarah Trevelion** and **Sgt Dave Jones** barking orders simultaneously, it sounded as if Copehill Down Village was witnessing its worst ever 'domestic', with bullets and grenades swapping places with the sound of smashing crockery. The Sqn ruled the ensuing chaos, and the street was retaken within the hour. After a spot of clearing up, it was time for a 'fat boy's breakfast' prepared by **Sgt Mike Stawrowski**, ably assisted by **Sgt Kerry Hill** and **Cpl Sam Estcourt**.

With barely time to digest their food, it was then onto the confidence course, followed by the Molotov Cocktail range. **Sgt Inns**, the Tech PSI was sent to the back of the queue and had to keep throwing petrol bombs until he finally got it right. Plenty of clearing up after that one - character building stuff! It was a hardworking weekend enjoyed by all. However, the PSI is now having to contend with requests for more violence to be put in the trg programme.

They're getting younger every day

EXERCISE CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT II

- by Sgt Kempton and Cpl Derrick

This year's Permanent Staff adventure trg took place in sunny Eastbourne, home to 56 Sig Sqn. In the previous week, we experienced uncharacteristic hot sunny weather, but unfortunately, our week was planned for the first week of Wimbledon, (Do they not look at history? It always rains during Wimbledon). As you can guess, the weather changed for the worse: gale force winds and driving rain. So prior to our arrival, **SSgt Sven Gronn** liased with Spray Water Sports Club, changing our sailing from Wednesday to Friday.

Following a hearty lunch, we set off mountain biking. **SSgt Gronn** gave us the route, which was only 10 miles, had 4 stiles to cross over and several pubs along the way for refreshments. All we had to do was follow the route on the map in pairs. However, the Trg Maj, **Maj Steve Smoothy** and **SSgt Jase Quilter** decided that they would go by their own route, didn't follow the map, and ended up doing a few extra miles. The RSM, **WO1 JJ Johnson** and **SSgt Mick Green** didn't follow the map at all and just headed for the pub and stayed there until every one had finished. The rest of us just followed **WO2 (FofS) Brett Palmer** and his partner **Cpl Leanne Derrick**, but after crossing the 6th stile, **Sgt Dave Pendleton** had had enough, and proceeded to throw his bike over all the rest. We all gathered at the only pub that was open, to swap tales of the adventure. **Cpl Leanne Derrick** had to exchange her bike, as she had managed to mangle the gears on hers. But she then had to finish the route on a bike with slightly deflated tyres.

The following day saw us hill walking 18 miles along the coastal route of the South Downs. It would have been great, but for the gale force winds trying to push us over the cliffs. At the halfway point, we had a BBQ provided by the Master Chef, **SSgt Steve Howe**. **SSgt Gronn** set off on the second half unaware that a log had been placed in his day sack as payback for the night before. Thanks to **SSgt Gronn,** we all learned some interesting facts about the Coastal Line that kept us amused for hours. That evening we took over the viewing area in the local Pub and watched England lose in the World Cup. To drown our sorrows, we headed for the local night-club, where we strutted our stuff on the dance floor.

On Friday morning we went to the seaside for sailing and windsurfing. **Sgt Dave Pendleton** and **Sgt Wilf Kempton** shared a boat together, and as both of them are scared of water, this was a combination for disaster. Following the safety brief, which warned of the dangers of a swinging boom. **Sgt Kempton** forgot this, and was struck on the head by the boom. **Sgt Pendleton** didn't let go of the mast the whole time, and just sat in the middle of the boat moving his head from side to side as the boom went over. **SSgt (SQMS) John Atherton** decided to test his capsize drills to the disappointment of his crewmember.

During the windsurfing phase, **SSgt Gronn** spent his time holding onto his board and slowly drifting out to sea, as he was unable to get the sail back up. **WO2 (RQMS) Alexander-High** showed sheer determination, and with his very last attempt successfully got on to the windsurf board and sailed it all of 5 metres into the beach. Thanks go to **SSgt Gronn** for organising this year's event and we look forward to next year.

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Garry Hearn**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Paul McGarry**

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS THERAPY CENTRE CHARITY RUN/TAB - *by SSgt Cassidy*

If you have ever served in a TA Regt you will know that recruiting and charity events are high on the priority list, as this allows the Regt to be kept in the public eye. Therefore, the admin order from **WO1(RSM) Paul McGarry** landing on my desk, stating that the Regt would be entering a 7-mile charity run for a local Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre came as no surprise.

The RSM indicated that we would provide a 'Whippet Team' and a 'Tabbing Team' for the event. With such short notice, the Tabbing Team could muster one day of trg for the event, which saw only the RSM attending. Ten days later, all the competitors and marshals paraded on the cold and wet Sunday morning of 21 November, where we received a detailed briefing from the RSM before departing to Maltby.

The event organiser, **Mr Phil Barker**, decided to start the Tabbing Team 20 mins ahead of the main runners. The 3 tabbers, **WO1(RSM) McGarry**, **SSgts Cassidy** and **Shiels**, set off with a goal of completing every mile in under 12 mins. With the old paceman out in front (only 3 metres) setting the pace, the weather decided to turn against us, and down it came. The rain and the cold, blustery wind certainly dampened our bodies, but not our enthusiasm.

Nobody had briefed us on the terrain of the course, so the number of hills came as quite a shock. But with the thought of all the sponsorship money going to such a good cause, failure was never considered. After just over an hour, the final marshal was passed, and the finish line was in sight - or so we thought, until we saw a very nasty decline, which obviously meant-a very nasty incline. But this was quickly overcome, and we finished in a respectable time of 1hr 17mins 38secs.

After dropping off our Bergens in the mini-bus, we all entered *The Pathfinder* public house for some welcome refreshment, a hot cup of tea. The Whippet Team did extremely well, with finishing times of 46mins 14secs for **WO2 (YofS) Mick Proud**, 50mins 17secs for **LCpl Paul Tate**, and 55mins 40secs for **Sig Rob Land**. The Regt is hoping to raise £600 of sponsorship for the MS Therapy Centre in Middlesborough.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Mark Finch**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

PRESENTATION OF FEMALE SOLDIER STATUETTE AT 345 CLUB DINNER - *by 2Lt Richard Torley*

34 Sig Regt was formed, along with the other Volunteer Regts, on 1 April 1967. It was formed from two old Territorial Army Regts, 49 (West Riding) and 50 (Northumbrian), but also included personnel from the Royal Signals Army Emergency Reserve, the Yorkshire Yeomanry, 151 Bde HQ, RCT, RE and many others. Two of its three operating Sqns took their numbers from 49 and 50 Regts, while the third was numbered 90, after 90 Sig Regt (AER).

In 1967 the retiring members of the old 49 and 50 Div Sig Regts and serving members of the newly formed 34 (Northern) Sig Regt, took the opportunity to create an Association to highlight this significant chapter in the Regt's history. The 345 Club took its title from all the Regts by using the first numbers of each Regt, 34, 49 and 50.

The annual 345 Club Dinner is an opportunity for members of the Regt, past and present, to cement the strong relationship that has existed over the decades. In 2004, it was held in October. Earlier in the year, a statuette was commissioned to be presented by the 345 Club to the Regt. It was to be a silver centrepiece that would take the form of a female Radio Operator. In 1968, to commemorate the birth of 34 Sig Regt, **Maj Richard Crosthwaite** was commissioned to produce a statuette in the form of a Radio Operator, which became known as the 'Crosthwaite Jimmy'. The new statuette would be of similar size and style to the original, for them to be displayed as a pair at the annual 345 Club Dinner, one to be placed in front of the Chair and the second in front of the CO, thereby producing a visible and tangible linkage. The decision to use a female for the new statuette was an opportunity to reflect that the Regt had WRAC (Royal Signals) soldiers in 1967 and female Royal Signals today. The Regt has seen a marked increase in the number of female soldiers deploying on ops. The two statues, reflect both genders, provides a very powerful message, whilst linking the history of the Unit to the present.

Mrs Kerr presenting the statuette of a female signaller to 2Lt Richard Torley

Unfortunately, **Maj Crosthwaite** is no longer with us, but it would have been a missed opportunity to present the centrepiece without recognition of his work. **Mrs Kerr**, who at the time was the wife of **Maj Crosthwaite** was invited to present the new statuette at the 345 Club Dinner. I am led to believe that in fact **Mrs Kerr** was the model for the original piece, so this deemed it even more appropriate. **2Lt Richard Torley**, as the most recently Commissioned Officer to the Regt was invited to accept the centrepiece on behalf of the Regt, to represent the link between 1967 and the present.

It goes without saying that the relationship between the 345 Club and Regt is as strong as ever, and long may it continue. Each year is a timely reminder of the hard work and determination done over decades past, which has put the Regt in a very strong position moving into the 21st Century.

If anybody is interested in purchasing a silver replica please contact **Capt Dave Hallas**, PSAO 49 (WR) Sig Sqn on 01904 668646.

TA FOOTBALL CUP

Once again, a fellowship has congregated from all parts of Yorkshire to represent 49 Sig Sqn in the TA Cup. This time, we were to take on 104 Pioneer Sqn from Middlesborough. The away fixture was eagerly anticipated, and new boots were bought and dubbined. A goal by **Sig Neil Varley** after 90 secs settled the nerves, and in the end, the Sqn cruised to a 9-1 victory, the referee deciding to award the opposition a goal out of kindness. **2Lt Richard Torley** finished with 7 goals and **Sig Varley** completed his double. It was good to see some young blood in the side; the average age has dropped below thirty for the first time in living memory. It's the semi-final next – oh the dreaming has begun – and we're on our way to Wembley.

49 Sig Sqn football team in the TA Cup

90 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Richard Lenton**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Les Stimson**

EXERCISE MERLIN RESPONSE

After an action packed year, 90 Sig Sqn decided to wind down for Christmas by participating in EX MERLIN RESPONSE. As part of the Civil Contingencies Rapid Reaction Force, members of 34 Sig Regt attended an aircraft disaster involving an unseen stealth bomber and a Boeing 747. The two aircraft had conveniently positioning themselves over Strensall Trg area for their mid-air collision, scattering crash dummies over the treacherous dirt-ridden ground below. Troops were observed 'pulling peoples' legs' and offering 'helping hands' as and where necessary.

Lt Ferris, LCpl Tate and Sgt Brown (centre three) in their nice green PJs

Not to be put off by the early morning search, **LCpl Paul Tate** of 704 Tp and **Cpl Mason** of 741 Tp decided that the adverse November weather conditions were simply not enough, jumping at the first opportunity to impress the girls by stripping off for a shower in the decontamination tents, as part of a demonstration by the Police Force at the Fire and Rescue Centre in Berkenshaw. Unfortunately for them, donning green paper shower suits and standing in freezing temperatures for twenty minutes did nothing more than leave them with chattering teeth, and a very amused audience. Ten out of ten for trying guys!

REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS WEEKEND

Having recovered from donning paper clothes in freezing temperatures, 90 Sig Sqn packed their bags in search of Deverill Bks in Ripon for the Regtl Christmas weekend. Troops enjoyed participating in a series of stands around the area before watching Brambles Farm destroy 49 Sig Sqn in a game of football in the TA Cup. After Christmas Dinner, members of the Regt sampled the nightlife of Ripon, before returning to the Bks for an all-night disco.

For those who made it to early morning parade on Sunday (which was everyone!), a series of complicated moves awaited them, with an hour of aerobics, leaving a few members of the Sqn feeling a little bit worse for wear!

A well-deserved congratulations to **SSgt Russ Heynes** for being awarded the 11 Sig Bde Wills Trophy, an annual award presented to the PSI deemed to have contributed the most to the TA. Also congratulations to **Sgt Hatchard**, on his recent promotion to local Sgt.

Continuing the theme of success stories, **Lt Helen Baxter** of 741 Tp managed to claim, without question, 34 Sig Regt's Cock-up Cup. Whilst travelling through Germany on EX ARRCADE FALCON, she unknowingly found herself in a position whereby the 'Tp Gold card' (her personal credit card) had to be used to refuel her entire convoy of vehs. MT Dept was only too happy to comment on the unusual method of payment used by the 'monkey hangars!'

Finally, apologies to **SSgt Cassidy** for not receiving a mention in the last edition of *The WIRE*, but with the exception of your excellent football skills last weekend, we really didn't have anything to write about you!

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper BSc**
RSM **WO1(RSM) WE Angove**

The recent months have seen some upheaval in the Regt and we farewell **Lt Col Rick Mather** on posting to Sierra Leone; **WO1(RSM) Al Keen**, who has been released back into the community upon completion of colour service; and **WO2(RQMS) Robbo Robertson**, who has become the SQMS at 67 Sig Sqn. We welcome **Lt Col Joe Cooper**, who joins us from HQ SOinC(A); **WO1(RSM) Mick Angove**, from 16 Sig Regt; and **WO2(RQMS) Andy Buckle** from the now disbanded 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Hall**

ROTARY CLUB VISIT

As part of its commitment in promoting the TA to local businesses, the Sqn recently invited the Rotary Club of Redditch Kingfisher Branch to an open evening at the TAC. The aim of the evening was to demonstrate the trg and skills acquired by members of the TA to this group of 15 local managers and owners, so that they could be better informed of the benefits of having employees in the TA. The group heard a presentation explaining the role of the TA, followed by visits to the MT and REME. The evening ended with a social event in the Sqn bar where the President of the Rotary Club, **Mr Ray Wilcox**, expressed his gratitude, and said he was overwhelmed by the versatility of the Sqn. The Rotary Club had arranged a presentation of £105, which was subsequently passed to the Army Benevolent Fund.

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SOUADRON

OC **Maj AC Giles**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Webb**

53 Sig Sqn have had a busy autumn so far. The first (of possibly many) Clay Pigeon shoots welcomed some surprises into 53's usual achievers board, including **Cpl Mike Colley**, who is subsequently making plans for a new way to spend his weekends

when he retires from 53 Sqn next year after almost 30 years' service in the TA. The shoot was actually won by **Lt Dave Barbara**. But watch out next year for **SSgt(YofS) Adrian Sharman**, who has been secretly practising whilst working in the USA.

53 Sqn's biggest feat of this month has yet again been the Cambrian Patrol. 8 members of the Sqn braved the cold wet hilltop sites to provide comms for the arduous competition. The Regt held a 2 (NC) Bde trade trg camp at Swynnerton Camp from 19-28 November. 54 students successfully completed Driver Trg, Electrician Driver, Rad Sys Op and Tech courses. These consisted of a packed week's worth of intense lessons, climaxing in a 36 hr ex, combining the assessment of the Class 2 and 3 RS Op and ED courses, in a realistic scenario, held on Swynnerton Trg Area.

53 Sig Sqn's journey back to Cardiff was blighted by the need to stop and assist at the scene of an accident on the M50. The 7 soldiers discovered that the Army can indeed act as the fourth emergency service, assisting in traffic control and the administering of first aid to the more seriously injured casualties until the emergency services arrived.

67 (OOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj KL Metcalfe TD**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) M Clarke**

On Friday 22 October, the Sqn deployed to DMC Kineton for a trg ex run over the weekend. On the Saturday various trg took place, AMSCERP, Airwave and Driver trg were the main lessons being instructed, as well as HF trg with a twist. The HF trg incorporated TASC COM, which let the troops talk to a civilian phone line over the HF set. Phoning the PSAO at home while enjoying his Saturday, and calling the SSM on his mobile while getting wet doing driver trg amused the lads somewhat.

On 12 November the Sqn went over to Kineton to settle in to the accn before being up early Saturday morning to start trg. By breakfast time, everyone had worked up an appetite, marching around Kineton completing their CFTs. The rest of Saturday was spent carrying out other ITDs like first aid and NBC etc. When the trg was complete, all deployed back to their TACs to get a good night's rest before the relevant Remembrance Parades.

19 November was the start of Trade Camp. The Camp was quite hard work, with late finishes most nights to cram the work in. **Cpl Scott Caswell** and **Sig Marie Dudzinaki** passed their Class 3 RS OP course, **Sig Andy Simpson** passed his Class 3 Tech course, and **Sig Paddy Dornan** passed her Cat C driving test, as did **LCpl Mike Sheard**.

93 (EAST LANCS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) H Kenny**

Leek Trg Area provided the central loc for another very successful Summer Camp for 93 Sqn, with members deploying to Dumfries, The Isle of Man, and all over the midlands leading the way for the Regt. The Regtl sports day was another medal collecting ex for us, with **SSgt Paul Eldridge** and **Sgt Mark Taylor** leading the younger members to victory in the football. The more senior members chose volleyball and won a nail-biting final against HQ Sqn. As always, we held our own the Regtl crosscountry competition, although the route was slightly steeper than expected. Our normal success in the tug of war competition was not repeated this year, partly due to **Sgt Hopkinson** being half the man he was last year, and the fact that **WO1(RSM) Angove** lent his weight to the HQ Sqn team.

A very well attended Remembrance Day Service led to many hellos and goodbyes. We welcome back **Lt Gallagher**, **SSgt Small**, **SSgt Mellor**, **Cpl Simms**, **LCpl Clayton** and **Sig Cook** on their return from the Balkans. Congratulations to **Sgt Mick Clarke** on his recent wedding to **Dorothy**, an event enjoyed by many Sqn members. A fond farewell and good luck to **Cpl White** on his deployment with 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on OP TELIC 5.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt S Jenner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) A Bennett**

EXERCISE BROKEN ARROW II

After a successful Annual Camp in September, 96 Sig Sqn went into EX BROKEN ARROW II with morale high and everybody approaching the ex with a positive attitude. The ex consisted of testing the many field skills required by a soldier, and included minefield clearance, ambush drills and watercrossing using a raft. Following much practising, the Sqn was ready to put all their new-found skills to the test. **Sig Jennie Postlethwaite** and **Sig Damon Magee** were made section commanders, and set about issuing their orders to get on with the mission at hand. As the saying goes, 'No plan survives contact with the enemy,' and this was definitely the case for **Sig Magee**. As his section came under enemy fire, he decided that the best route to take to attack the enemy was to go straight through a minefield! After some impromptu lessons on the recognition of minefields, such as the chest high mine tape barrier he had just taken his section through, **Sig Magee** led his men to defeat the enemy-eventually! At the call of ENDEX, all soldiers reflected on the outcome of the ex, and the overall feeling was that the whole weekend had been a resounding success.

WAR VETERAN OPENS NO 9 DETACHMENT

On 24 July the new No 9 Det of 96 Sig Sqn was officially opened on its inaugural Open Evening at Tennal Grange, Birmingham, by **Mr John Davis**. **Mr Davis**, aged 85, was enlisted into the RASC as a Driver on 3 May 1939 at Tennal Grange. A week prior to the Open Evening, he wrote a letter in response to the advert and enclosed a history of his war experiences, 'One Man's Dunkirk', a very moving story. He was subsequently invited officially to open the new Det location, during which the OC, **Capt Simon Jenner**, read out **Mr Davis'** story 'One Man's Dunkirk.' This was followed by a short service conducted by **Padre Philip Francis**. The new Det was named No 9 Det in honour of Mr Davis and his colleagues' Section, who were given the Number 9 by the RN when boarding a ship at Dunkirk for return to UK. **Mr Davis** completed the ceremony by unveiling a plaque in the Drill Hall at Tennal Grange. The ceremony was attended by Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Col NC Beacom** and Dep Sec WM RFCA, **Maj M Young**.

The Open Evening was a resounding success, and we welcomed the new Det Comd, **WO2 Dave Neale** (who joins us on transfer from the West Midlands Regt) and the first recruit for the Det, **Sig James Martin**. The Det has attracted a great deal of attention and is heading to full strength in a very short time.

Capt Jenner and John Davis showing off 9 Det's Plaque

REMEMBRANCE PARADE 2004

Although we weren't the only sqn to wear Combat 95 for the parade, 96 Sig Sqn's meticulous preparation and attention to detail meant that we looked smart as carrots. As a result, we stood out from the crowd again on this year's City of Coventry Remembrance Parade. So much so, that several members of the public commented how smart the Sqn was! We were 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 ongoing around the globe today, where our soldiers continue to serve.

As we marched back from the Service, the Lord Mayor of the City of Coventry, **Cllr John Gazey**, took the march off salute.

Afterwards, we retired to the Sqn Club with friends, family and some old comrades, to share an excellent curry lunch, provided by our chefs, **Sgt Gary Wildsmith**, **Cpl Stu Adams** and **LCpl Colin Davenport**.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) KP Innes**

46 (CITY OF DERBY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JD Pearson**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P Beedle**

EXERCISE WINDY TRAIL – *by WO2 Penny Burns*

Sail Trg Week seemed like a good idea to experience something I had never been given the chance to try before, but I didn't seriously expect to enjoy it. The party comprised **WO2 Penny Burns**, **SSgt Carolyn Ryan-Gilbank**, **LCpl Andy Trigg**, **LCpl Gaz Percival**, **Sig Chris Rowlands**, **Sig Katie Jimmink** and **Sig Mark Will.** The trip down to Gosport passed in a haze of reading sailing books and practising knots on the head rests – none of which we remembered the following day. Once at JSASTC we were joined by **2Lt Emma Kelly**. Monday morning dawned bright and blustery and we met up with **Sgt Windy Gale**, who split everyone up into their crews. **Maj Charles Roberts** definitely drew the short straw, with both **LCpl Michelle Waller** (loudest woman in NATO) and **WO2 Penny Burns** as part of his crew on *Lambis*.

After checking the boat, shopping and stowing kit, we set sail for Cowes, where we quickly realised we had stepped into a very alien environment, where the inhabitants used a foreign language. However, once we had put the boat to bed, normality ensued, and we went to the pub, followed by an impromptu boat party – yes I can definitely cope with this aspect of sailing. Tuesday dawned far too early, and we sailed up the Medina for some berthing drills, and practised some man overboard drills in the Solent. We then had a gentle run up Beaulieu River, followed by some frantic short tacking back up to Port Solent. Another quiet night was spent in the pub, still learning knots. However, thanks to **Sgt Windy Gale** and **Amanda**, knots were finally learned that night.

By Wednesday, we had broken our Skipper, who had to go to the doctor, so we spent the day at JSASTC doing chart work. We then had a night sail to Yarmouth in the driving rain, where the Skipper and **WO2 Penny Burns** were very lonely sailing the boat, as

The crew of Petasus

everyone else seemed to find reasons to stay below. However, **LCpl Michelle Waller** produced a lovely chilli on the move.

On Thursday, we completed dinghy drills. We then practised picking up a pile before sailing to Newton Creek, where we carried out anchoring drills and met up with *Petasus*, before sailing to Ocean Village. On Friday we left Ocean Village and put up the spinnaker, rather to the Skipper's surprise without incident. We sailed to Bembridge for lunch, then did some picking up mooring buoy drills, before arriving in Gunwharf Quays, where we met up with all the other yachts. Everyone had the same idea of going out for a meal at the 'All you can Eat' Chinese, before hitting the pubs, so a good night was had by all.

Saturday was the day of the big race, which started early with a theory question paper. The boats then sailed for the start line, where we arrived first and rafted alongside *Petasus*, while we waited for the other boats to arrive. Regrettably, after having been first there, we started the race 5 minutes late due to the Skipper's maths. A good day's sailing had to be cut short when the wind dropped and we were all becalmed, but it was an excellent final day, and we all gained our Competent Crew qualification. All that was left, was one final night out and to clean up the boat. So after my initial trepidation, the question is 'Would I do it again?' The answer is, I already have!

REMEMBRANCE WEEKEND

Remembrance Weekend is traditionally a fairly busy weekend, and this year was no exception. First was the usual few hours of pre-parade drill, taken by our PSI (T) **SSgt Andy Cannadine**, to spare the SSM's voice.

This was followed by the OC's challenge. A keen rower in his University days, he challenged the Sqn to beat his time over 500m on the rowing machine. His time of 1:39.5 was beaten by the SPSI **SSgt Tim Bishop** and **Sig Mark Will**, with the best female award going to **Sig Anna Lisles**. The day's events were rounded off by a Medal Presentation by the CO. The recipients were **Capt Gater**, **SSgt Ryan-Gilbank**, **WO2 (YofS) Burns**, **LCpl Hayes**, **Cpl Willmer**, **Cpl Dabell**, **Sgt Alsop**, **Sgt Hartwell**, **Ex-SSgt Harvey**, **Sgt Shrives** and the OC, **Maj Pearson**.

Sunday dawned bright and cold and the Parade went very well with very good attendance from Sqn members. After returning to the TAC, soldiers, families, friends and visitors from *HMS Sovereign* enjoyed an excellent curry or pie and chips, compliments of our Chef, **Sgt John Simpson**.

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Whalen**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Horton**

CADRE WEEKEND – 30-31 OCTOBER

As with all cadre weekends, the Friday night deployment consisted of rushing to the TAC to be told to 'hurry up and wait.' On arriving at Beckingham Camp, we were met by the ever-efficient QM, who directed everyone to the Reception Centre, where all were allocated beds and, following a safety and syndicate brief, the bar was opened for the permitted two cans.

Saturday consisted of range work for those without APWT, and various stands for ITDs. Some lucky personnel undertook NCRS trg. A gentle CFT finished the day for most soldiers, who were clearly exhausted after their efforts, as only a handful chose to make use of the transport into town.

Sunday's trg consisted of an introduction to the LSW on the ranges for the soldiers, whilst the Offrs and SNCOs received a discipline lecture from the Adjt. This was not a telling-off, but the news that they can now discipline soldiers (or 'administratively deal with them' – Adjt) with the recording of the offence on a single piece of paper.

The highlight of the day was the Inter-Sqn Competition, consisting of the assault course and the tug-of-war. As this was the last weekend when **Capt Andy Powell** was in comd of the Sqn before the return of the OC from Bosnia, there was an extra incentive to win, and show that winning the Tara Cup and the Sqn Trophy at Camp were not just flashes-in-the-pan.

However the overrun of ranges meant that the tug-of-war did not take place, and the effect of the Sgts' Mess dinner on the Saturday night took its toll on the 64 Sqn team, resulting in a disappointing 4th on the assault course.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

On a fresh and cold November morning the parade assembled. Rehearsals were complete, boots were bulled and even the old troops were looking starched and new. The Parade Comd, **Lt Steve Stacey**, was anxious that it should all go well, and was confident his voice would hold out.

As in previous years, there was a good turn out of members of the public, veterans and serving soldiers showing their respects. Medals were worn with pride by both past and present serving members. With **2Lt Emma Kelly** giving some last-minute advice to the parading troops to wiggle their toes to stop themselves fainting, the assembled crowd watched the troops with pride, as they marched past the Cenotaph to the sound of the Salvation Army's brass band.

The CO lays a wreath at the Cenotaph

A curry lunch at the TAC gave some of the younger troops the opportunity to meet and talk to veterans of many conflicts, although **OCdt Dave Lowbridge** may have missed the point when he said that the D-Day veteran he talked to had 'nothing but happy memories of the landings on Gold Beach'.

RETURN OF SQUADRON MEMBERS

3 November saw the return from Bosnia and Kosovo of 97 Sig Sqn. Members from 64 Sig Sqn clearly decided that they deserved their POTL, and hence they did not attend the first drill night following their return. What happened to your dedication? A big welcome to them all, and we hope to see them in the New Year.

Lt Hamish Fell returned safely from Iraq in October full of 'pull-up-a-sandbag' stories. He is now adjusting to civilian life again and rubbing in the fact that he has eight weeks' leave by coming into the TAC on Tuesdays solely to use the Mess!

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JP Ahern**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S Coburn**

EXERCISE BELGIAN DEFENDER XVIII - *By Lt EJ Clay*

In the early hours of the 8 October, eleven members of the Sqn headed off over the Channel for the 18th EX BELGIAN DEFENDER, an international mil skills competition. We arrived at Leopoldsburg by Friday lunchtime, and settled in before starting the competition bright and early on Saturday morning. There were approximately 30 teams entered, mainly from around Europe, with 87 Sig Sqn entering a male team (**Cpls Steve Taylor**, **Pete Magas** and **Steve Weston** and **LCpl Ant Clarke**) and a female team (**Lts Emily Clay** and **Leanne Rudd**, **2Lt Emma Kelly** and **Sgt Ibby Nevill**).

The day started with a short tab out to the area, with recognition questions along the route. This was followed by a round robin of stands, ranging from pistol ranges, VCPs, and the law of armed conflict, to environmental issues within the Belgian Army! And then the fun began... As the female team arrived at the assault course it didn't look too daunting, until we saw 6-foot men disappear into a pit and climb out again. Despite the fact that 3 members of our team were rather vertically challenged, we made a good attempt at it, and actually ended up beating some of the men's times. The grenade-throwing stand was another matter, and after scoring zero points out of a hundred, even I was willing to admit that girls just can't throw. We redeemed ourselves on the section attack stand, despite initially targeting the photographer. Our male team was storming to the finish by this point, but we followed not too far behind.

In the evening we enjoyed a meal with the other competitors, and then the presentations began. This was a particularly drawn out process, as the speeches were translated into four different languages. It didn't take long before chaos reigned. The Best Female Team prize was actually awarded to a male team; and then our team name was read out, but they hadn't translated what we had won. We graciously accepted the silverware for our cabinet and discovered later that it was for the Best Tactical Team. Stories from the day were told until late into the night, and we headed back to England the next day with weary legs and sore heads.

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col HJ Robertson TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) PR Curtis**

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

The CO and all ranks of 71Sig Regt, HQ Sqn and 265 Sig Sqn, paraded with ACF, RN, RAF and the Police Cadets on Sunday 14 November at the TAC, Bexleyheath, in remembrance of soldiers who have laid, and are currently laying their lives on the line for their country. Ably assisted by the RAF Cadet Band, the contingent marched through the precinct to the Bexleyheath War Memorial, where it was greeted by a very large appreciative crowd of civilians and veterans of the RBL and local organisations. The service was enthusiastic with prayers, hymns, and a 2-minute silence. With the prospect of a curry lunch provided by the Regtl Chefs, the march back was brisk. On return to the TAC, a memorial service was held at the Regt's own memorial site. Both military and civilian personnel enjoyed this prestigious occasion and all look forward to doing the same again next year.

The Regt marches out of the TAC for the Remembrance Parade

66 Sig Sqn's Mounted Det leads the Lord Mayor's Show

68 (INNS OF COURT AND CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Manley**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Springer**

LORD MAYOR'S SHOW 2004

In November, the Sqn was proud to provide a mounted det for the Lord Mayor's Procession. **Capt Jane Dodd** led the procession with twelve 68 Sig Sqn riders formed up in three ranks of four, on very smartly turned out horses, borrowed from the Household Cavalry. For **LCpl Claire Hughes**, **LCpl Neil Barrett**, **Sig Richard McCarthy** and **Sig Daisy Busher**, riding in the Lord Mayor's Show was a brand new experience.
After a chilly start, the procession commenced with noisy floats, noisy crowds and a whole host of other distractions, including a massive clucking chicken - worrying for humans, let alone the horses. However, they 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 TV. This year our Mounted Det was fortunate enough to be featured for a good 30 seconds, courtesy of the BBC.

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 so as not to miss the Lord Mayor's celebratory fireworks. A sparkling end to a sparkling day!!

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Michael Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jim Swain**

October saw the Sqn Inter-Tp competition reach its closing stages, with the Charity Event, and November saw the Remembrance Parade and an Endurance Trg Leadership Course.

We attended the Chelmsford town centre commemorations, which were supported by one of the largest crowds seen for some years. Led by **Maj Michael Wood**, the Sqn was at the front of the Parade. The Endurance Training Leadership course was attended by several members of the Sqn, all of whom completed the course. This will allow further enhanced PT to be conducted within the unit under the watchful Squadron PTIs.

Finally we said goodbye to **SQMS John Fensom**, after twenty years with the Sqn. We wish him and his wife well in their retirement.

THE CHELMSFORD PRISON JAILBREAK COMPETITION
- by 2Lt Rawden Leigh

Recently 882 Sig Tp entered a team for the Annual EABC Chelmsford Prison Jailbreak Competition. The team, led by **LCpl Simon Denton**, assisted by **LCpl Honychurch** and **Sig Lloyd**, successfully escaped the prison grounds, hijacked a passing car, (which conveniently happened to be a sponsored vehicle), and made a bid for France. The day ended with the group arriving in Poziere Cemetery, where they laid flowers for Essex Yeomen who fell in WW1.

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Keith Wrate**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Stephen Shelley**

ARMED FORCES SKILL AT ARMS MEETING
- by Capt Downing

AFSAM is the annual exchange of UK and US shooting teams, and 2004 was its 14th year. It originally started out as a Reserve Forces exchange between TARA (Territorial Army Rifle Association) and the US National Guard, who were originally invited to fire at Bisley.

The AFSAM Team

Over the years, the Competition has also attracted teams from Regular forces, making it the largest international SAM in the world. Teams taking part this year included Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, France, Italy, Germany and Norway. UK teams included the Regular Army, RAF, RAF Regt and the TA. Teams from the US included the National Guard (Reserve) US Air Guard and US Marine Corps.

Teams are made up of 4 firers. The TA entered three rifle teams and 2 pistol teams. In recent years, the TA rifle team has had a considerable amount of success, and has won a large number of trophies, including the overall Competition 2 yrs running. But this year, it was the turn of the Pistol team to upset the usual dominance of the US Forces at combat pistol shooting.

The TARA A Team, made up of **Capt Alex Downing**, 71 Sig Regt; **Maj Mike Oliver**, RE; **WO1 Stuart Smart**, Cambridge UOTC; and **WO2 Quilliam**, RE took first place in Service Pistol Team Championship Match. In addition to this, they achieved a 2nd place in the Chemical Conditions Match, 3rd place in the General George Pattern Team Match and a 3rd place in the enemy barricade match. In addition to the team matches, **Capt Downing** won an individual 3rd place in the Anti Body Armour match.

EXERCISE GRAND SLAM – *by Sig Dodgson*

Over the weekend 29-31 October, 265 Sig Sqn provided a small group of personnel to act as enemy for an anti-terrorist ex ran by 63 (SAS) Sig Sqn at Longmoor Camp.

Acting as the enemy can be a dull experience, usually involving copious waiting, followed by firing a few blanks at the scripted moment. However, thanks to the efforts of 63 Sqns PSIs, this proved to be a very fulfilling weekend, providing some excellent trg and a glimpse into the world of the Special Forces soldier.

The ex had been several weeks in the preparation, with 'undercover' photos of us having been captured to allow 63 Sqn members to familiarise themselves with the faces of their terrorist adversaries. On the Friday of the weekend, we were given an introduction to our weapons, which included the Demarko assault rifle, the Remington pump-action shotgun and the Remington sniper rifle. Later, we had a lesson on preparing small-scale bombs with plastic explosives, which we detonated on the old DZ at Longmoor. Just 200 grammes of PE4 can make quite a roar. Further instructions were given on veh and foot contact drills, OBUA and patrolling, all of which was constantly being observed by 63 Sqn patrols, who slowly were able to build-up a picture of enemy activity and intentions.

At night our terrorist cell relocated to a small village, where we moved around to provide targets for observation. For a while, we swamped the local chip shop, which caused a momentary shortage of chips. Needless to say our observers weren't disappointed that we held a meeting in the local pub. On the Sunday morning, having worked out our intentions, the SF performed a raid on our terrorist safe house. **Sig Fox**, our suicide bomber was able to escape outside, where she duly blew herself-up. Others weren't so fortunate, being shot in their beds as they reached for their rifles.

The least fortunate however, were those who surrendered and consequently experienced a 'hard arrest'. After ENDEX however, it was handshakes all round and even a chance to catch up on some old faces.

For more information on 71 Sig Regt, visit www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/71sigregt

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC	**Maj Debs Simcox**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Joe Krikorian**

It has been a busier that normal two months for the Sqn. The Special Comms Course is well and truly up and running, and coupled with the high operational tempo, the TAC is virtually empty. Saying that, there is always something to be getting on with. First Line Inspections, Detachment Maintenance, Range Work and Comms Trg are the flavour of the month.

EXERCISE BRUNELL WARRIOR

An intrepid band of ten of Comms Tps finest left Bletchley for Copehill Down Village for a joint FIBUA ex with HQ and 57 Sig Sqns from 39 (Skinners) Sig Regt. This comprised FIBUA trg at section level and providing the OPFOR for the Bristol based exercising Tps. Friday night started well with the **SSgt Mark Gott** issuing ten brand new issue assault vests – whoever said that the TA never get any new kit?

Friday night saw numerous briefings, followed by a few hours sleep in the shelter (but not warmth) of the buildings. Saturday morning got off to an early start, practising key skills and drills on Shrewton Street. Put through their paces by the 2IC and **SSgt Gott**, their first attempt was a shakedown, which very quickly progressed into a second, much slicker assault. This went so well that the trek to lunch was delayed so that a non-explosive entry could be conducted. At this point the ops officer, **Capt Alex Stanger**, pitched up fresh from his Adjt's G1 course at Worthy Down. He was rewarded with the opportunity to play enemy on the Tp's fourth assault on Shrewton Street.

After evening meal, Comms Tp went into their OPFOR phase, carrying out numerous harassing attacks, followed by a final assault on an increasingly tired 57 Sqn, dislodging them from the village into a hasty harbour, giving everyone a few hrs respite. In the time-honoured fashion, 57 Sqn counter-attacked at first light to recapture their lost positions. **LCpl Nick Vernon** performed heroically, keeping them at bay for 20 minutes. Much confusion followed, which was ably exploited by **LCpl Dan Yates**. By the time ENDEX was called, the final objective, the cellar, still had not been cleared. **Sig Windy Millers'** heroic death would have to wait until another time.

With the hard graft successfully completed, it was time for the fun phase. The Tp went to the Molotov Cocktail range en masse to rehearse. The range was run by **Capt (QM) Phil Smudge Smith** of HQ Sqn, whose humorous briefing set the tone for an enjoyable hour. No one let the Sqn down, although **LCpl Nick Vernon** had to have a second attempt to restore the Sqn's honour. After being cleared off the range and conducting NSPs, it was time to return to Bletchley for the inevitable clean-up.

Thanks for the weekend must go to OC 57 Sig Sqn, **Maj Bill Ruthven**, for inviting us, and to all the Sqn personnel for making it an enjoyable and rewarding weekend.

MEDALS PARADE

On 7 December the Sqn held a parade for Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Lithgow CBE**, to present medals and an OP TELIC pictorial. Recipients were **Sgt Hill**, QCVS; **WO2(FofS) Clarke**, LS and GC; **Sgt Brace** AGC, LS and GC; **Cpl Kemp**, Op Service Medal with Clasp Afghanistan and Silver Rosette (S); and **Sgt Osmond**, **Cpl Burrows**, **LCpl Stephen**, **LCpl Yates**, OP TELIC Campaign Medal (Iraq). **Cpl Clarke** received the official OP TELIC pictorial in lieu of his medal (yet to arrive).

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) is unique in the British Army, comprising both a Regular and TA element, with service being on a voluntary basis. We currently have vacancies for Regular Rad Sys Ops (Class 2 and above), Sys Eng Tech and Royal Signals Electrician trades.

Regular volunteers are required to attend a 5-day SC Assessment Course. The next three courses will be held in January, May and September 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 Rad Sys Ops, Sys Eng Tech, IS Ops and REME trades (up to WO2). There is also a vacancy for a Lt/Capt appointment. Volunteers should contact the PSAO 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) on Mil: 94240 8512 or Civil: 01908 638512.

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj SJP Spiers**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Crawford**

BEHIND ENEMY LINES – *by Sig McCosh*

When I was given the opportunity to go away and assist German and Dutch troops with one of their exs I was really excited. I thought it would be an ideal way of seeing how armies from other countries function. It would also give me the chance to brush up on my basic soldiering skills.

In preparation for this I spent three days on a live firing ex, which I really enjoyed. I learned how to master the skills of section attacks and pairs fire manoeuvre. One thing I was not looking forward to was sleeping out under ponchos, something that brought back terrible memories of those cold, rainy nights on ex during basic trg.

This, however, turned out to be one of the highlights of the ex. After the day's activities, we settled down in the clearing of a small wood, built a small fire and sat around playing cards – very tactical indeed, but then we were playing the enemy.

Our task in assisting our Dutch and German counterparts was to play their enemy to teach them how to deal with certain situations, such as riots and hostage taking. After arriving at our locs, we set our watches to Zulu time and embarked on our first detail. This turned out to be a riot, the highlight being **Sig Malcolm** highjacking a Landrover and **Sig Magill** being thrown into the mud. The riot included tasks such as throwing objects, hurling abuse and mild attacks - just a normal night out really. Everyone enjoyed this, but found the next part of the ex even better: playing injured soldiers and being airlifted by helicopter to another loc.

The ex concluded with a final firefight, which was well planned and brilliantly executed - apart from our un-cooperative GPMG that refused to fire and could not hold back the enemy. From beginning to end, I found both the live firing and playing enemy really good fun. It also helped me brush up on skills I've not used since basic trg. Hopefully we can look forward to similar exs in the future.

CHARITY FUN RUN – *by Sig Rann*

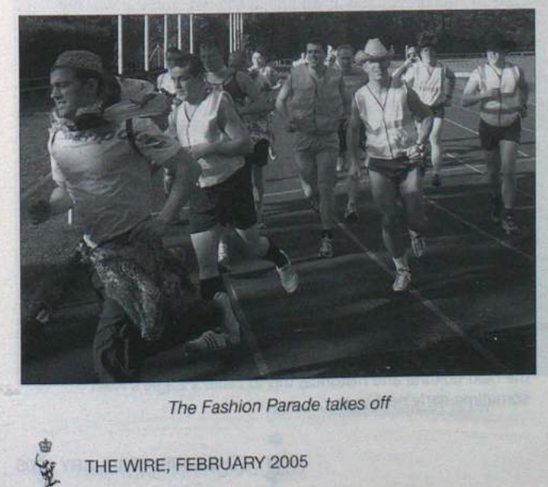
This year, to raise money for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, 200 Sig Sqn decided to organise a fancy dress fun run and chariot pull. This is not as simple as it sounds, when you consider that the chariot had to be built on the way around the 1.5-mile circuit. The three teams consisted of a Bde team and one team each from Alpha and Bravo Tps.

In preparation for the race, all teams were required to make bases for the chariots strong enough to support someone in it. These were made from wooden MFO boxes and decorated in our own particular style. Naturally, Alpha Tp was the best, even if we did come last in the competition for best looking wagon. Our chariot was sprayed in pink and blue paint with a lot of pink lace, courtesy of **SSgt Kidd's** nine-year-old daughter. The Bde team produced an armoured looking chariot, and Bravo Tp managed a manly horse and cart-like chariot.

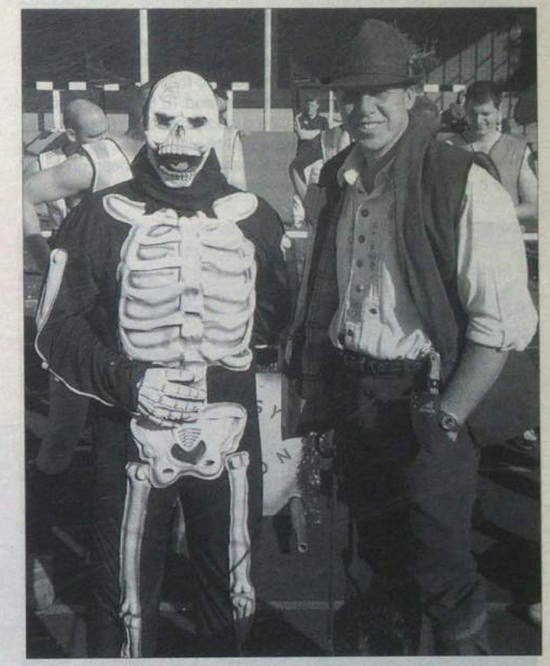
The race started in the afternoon at STC running track, and for once, the sun was shining and the weather warm. The idea was to complete the race after going around the track and building the chariot along the way. After a few words from the RSM and comparing the best fancy dress, from Ninja-Turtles to party boy, we gathered on the start line and set off in staggered starts. The Bde team set off first, and set a quick pace to the first CP. Bravo Tp were next to go, followed by Alpha Tp. Our progress to the first CP saw us gain on the Bravo Tp lads. We got to the first CP, where tired runners were exchanged for fresh bodies, before heading off towards the Bde car park and the assembly site for the chariots.

By the time we reached the assembly point, we had caught up with both teams and were given a chance to show off our chariot-building skills.

The previously built bases had to be bolted to a chassis made by REME. Before being let out of the stocks to the next stop, our chariots had to be inspected by REME, who handed out penalty times of 15 seconds for each building mistake. Due to Bde and 'Bongo' Tp picking up penalty points, we were set off first and stormed down the road. 500m from the finish point, another fresh load of Alpha Tp members were ready to take over the wagon and sprint to the finish. By this time, we were well ahead of the other teams, but we were all too aware of them battling it out behind us. After the last turn into camp, it was an 80m dash to the finish, and amazingly, everyone had managed to close up to us, ensuring an exciting finish. Alpha Tp just got in ahead of Bravo Tp, with the Bde team slightly off the pace. After the presentations were completed, it was into the Bar to celebrate our win and raise more money as well as our glasses.



The Fashion Parade takes off



RSM and OC Dressed up ready for the off

200 SIGNAL SQUADRON TRY THEIR HAND AT BADMINTON
– By Sig Sear

I wasn't sure what to expect when I was told that I would be going to York to play in the Royal Signals Inter-Unit Badminton Championships. I had been 'volunteered' for the team, but I didn't mind, because it meant four days off work and a trip to UK. The problem was that I hadn't played badminton in about 12 yrs, and so was more than a little rusty.

When we arrived, it was confirmed what we already knew; it was a very high standard, with many of the Royal Signals Corps team attending. Nevertheless, we refused to be intimidated, and set about warming up. **Lt Russ Moody**, **Sig Mckenzie**, **Sig McCosh**, **Sig Oldridge**, **Cpl Campion**, **LCpl Howe** and **SSgt Patterson** and I, **Sig Sear**, represented 200 Sig Sqn. **Cpl Campion** wore his lucky red sweatband on his head and wrist, but this didn't help him or any of the other members of the team against the likes of **SSgt Pengali** and **Cpl Williams**, who between them won just about every category. We managed to salvage our pride, with **Sig McCosh** and **Sig Mckenzie** finishing runners up in the Women's Doubles Competition. Once again, the ladies had to come to our rescue.

All in all, it was an enjoyable tournament, which was well run and organised. I'd be more than happy to go again next year, especially if they keep it in York, which has a fantastic nightlife, which was probably the highlight of the trip.

7th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj AE Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Walsh**

MEDAL PARADE

On 04 November, 39 members of the Sqn received their OP TELIC 1 medals from the Bde Comd, **Brig A Bradshaw**. Most of those on parade served with 7 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn during the War, but we also had personnel receiving medals for their efforts with previous units: 14 Sig Regt (EW), 3 Para, and 16 Sig Regt. After presenting the medals the Bde Comd addressed the recipients, and concluded by saying, 'This is a day to reflect back on your achievements and take pride in the medal you have been given. Wear it with pride; I know that you all do.'

Sig Huck receiving his OP TELIC 1 medal from Brig Bradshaw.

MARCH AND SHOOT – *by Sig Forrester*

Trg began with early morning tabs and runs, led by **Sgt Rumble**. With the competition looming, we set to the task of zeroing and check zeroing our rifles. Finally we got to the right range, and spent the day learning the complicated competition shoot. Before close of play, we had a team confident that it would do well on the shoot.

The day of the competition arrived, and initial nerves were soon forgotten as we weighed our kit and received the ammo for the shoot. Before we knew it, we were ten minutes in, dripping with sweat and jogging to ease the burning in our shins. Next, we were in our helmets and carrying the log. We kept a steady pace, and with the screaming loudmouths, **Sigs Evans**, **Craggs** and **Oddy**, we managed to maintain a good rhythm, and it was soon time to drop the burden. Before long, we saw the stretcher looming and adrenaline kicked in. With a mile to go, we stormed along, encouraging each other all the way. With a hundred metres left to push, **LCpl Warwick** put in so much effort that his breakfast reappeared! We finished in a very respectful 57 mins, 36 secs.

After a five-minute rest and plenty of water, we were ready for the shoot. This went without any problems, and we all remembered the order of shots. We were determined to enjoy this part of the competition, as well as make the Sqn proud of us.

The next day, all of the teams formed up ready for the Comd to present the trophies. We were very proud to be awarded the Minor Units' Runner's Up prize, and were only a few seconds off the winning time. What made the whole occasion even better, was that we had not only beaten all of the minor units on the shoot, but we had beaten most of the major units as well.

COLDITZ VISIT – *by Cpl Howells*

On 13 October twelve members of the 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn ventured on a cultural visit to Colditz Castle, the infamous Oflag IV C German POW camp. The trip started with us all in good spirits, looking forward to finding out a little more about the history of the Castle and its inmates. Finally, after suffering a small amount of geographical embarrassment and having an impromptu sight seeing tour of Leipzig City centre, we eventually arrived at the Holiday Inn, booked into our rooms with the plan to see more of Leipzig that night.

The next morning saw us setting off for the Castle itself. After leaving the Autobahn and heading further into the German countryside, it was easy to see why the Castle was thought by the Germans to be escape-proof. In the distance, it appeared above the town of Colditz and although surrounded by scaffolding, it was still an awe-inspiring sight.

The tour of the Castle took around 45 mins, as the tour guide walked and talked us through the various areas. One of the things that caught most interest from the group, was the large number of prisoners who attempted to escape from the 'inescapable' prison; and the amazing ways in which they tried - and in some 31 cases, achieved - 'the home run' (making it back to their own countries). Tunneling, dressing as women or workmen, and some dressed as German troops boldly walking out the gate. And of course, the famous Colditz Glider, which sadly was never used. Later, it was proved that it would have flown, had the war not finished before it was put to use.

Personally, my favorite escape story was that of Frenchman **Lt Pierre Mairesse-Leburn** who, whilst exercising in the park wearing only shorts and a T-shirt, was helped over a wall and ran away whilst being shot at by the guards. He had left a note in his room that read, 'Should I succeed, I should be obliged by the dispatch of my effects to me at the following address – **Lt Pierre Mairesse-Leburn**, Orange (Vaucluse). May God help me!' He did succeed, and the Germans duly obliged, sending him everything he had left behind.

As we left Colditz and prepared to head back to Hohne, there is no doubt in my mind that all who took part thoroughly enjoyed the visit, and would recommend anyone who is interested in WW2 history to do the same. Many thanks to **Cpl Mick Constable** and **LCpl Melvin Evans** for organising the trip. We look forward to the next cultural and historical trip to Hitler's Eagle's Nest sometime early next year.

SPORTS UPDATE

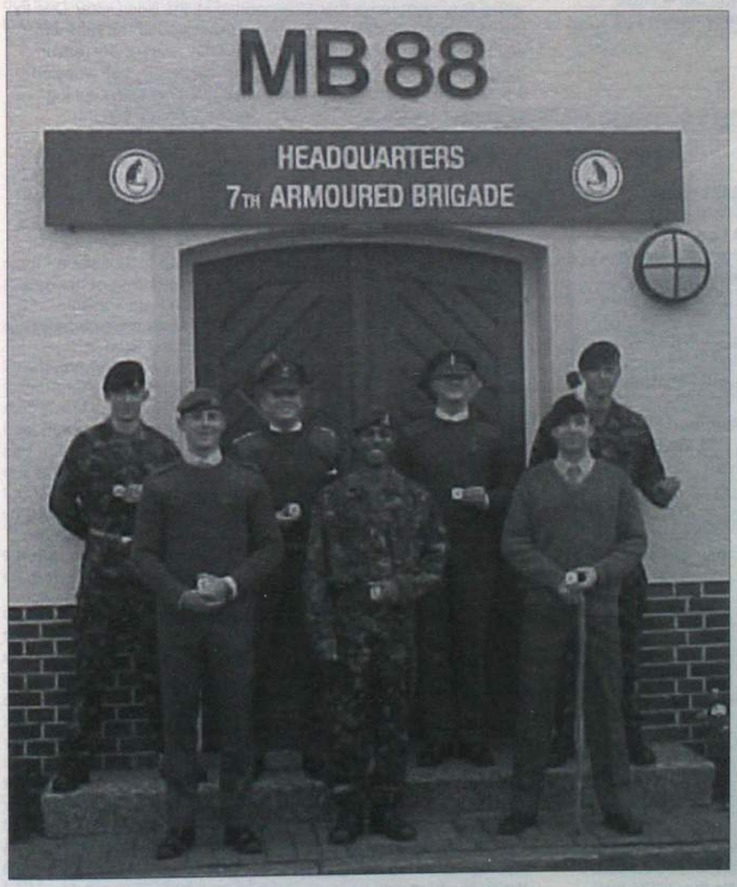
The Sqn has had considerable success on the sports front in the last couple of months. Space doesn't allow us to do justice to all the achievements. The following is just a précis.

The Sqn Football Team is currently unbeaten in all competitions. The highlights of the season have been a 5-4 victory over 1MI (coming back from 3-1 down) and a 4-0 thrashing of 2RTR LAD. Special mention to **LCpl Thompson**, whose fantastic play and high goal tally is doing the team proud.

The newly formed Minor Units Rats Rugby Team have had a good start to the season, winning a close battle with the 9/12 Lancers 29 –24, with **Sig Jaxey Lewis** running in a hat-trick of tries. A tougher battle against 2 Bn REME saw the Rats beaten, but it was a tough contest, and the team is certainly showing considerable promise for the future.

A team of 7 members of the Bde and Sig Sqn entered the Comd's Cup Duathlon, which required participants to run 5km, cycle 20km and then run another 5km. As tough as the event was, the team rose to the challenge and claimed first place of the minor units.

Three members of the Sqn – **Capt Loxton**, **Cpl Powell** and **LCpl Jones** – competed in the first BA(G) Marathon in Sennelager. It seemed like a good idea in August when they signed up for it, but less so on the day. A first marathon for all three, the twenty six point something miles around the range road was exhausting to say the least, but once the pain had gone (a few days later) the achievement sunk in. Especially so, as the men had clinched the Germany Minor Unit's Marathon title.



The victorious Duathlon Team

The team that headed back to the Corps Badminton Championships produced some fantastic results. Whilst the whole team did well, special mention must go to **Sig Zoe Beckett**, who made it to two finals (singles and mixed doubles); and **Cpls Powell** and **Byrne**, who were selected to play for the Corps at the Inter-Corps, coming home with victory in the Inter-Corps Army Double Championship. An amazing result – well done to you all.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP

We welcome **Cpl Mike Morgan**, from 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn NI; **Sig Steve Morgan**, from RSS Blandford, and **SSgt Andy Lockie**, who has returned after six months in BATUS, Canada. Congratulations to **Cpl Shaun Stanham** and his new wife, **Vicky** whose big day was on 20 November 04. Farewell to **Cpl Billy Richards**, who departs to his Class 1 Course.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt F Loxton**
Tp Sgt **Sgt A Clark**
Sgt A Morris

With the majority of vehs away having BOWMAN platforms fitted, the number of taskings, courses and other duties has gone through the roof, so the Tp had been kept extremely busy. Now, with the vehs returning, life is beginning to return to normal, and time spent in the garages is once again returning to its usual level – just in time for Christmas leave! Welcome to **Cpl Al Berry**, who has joined us from ATR Lichfield. Unfortunately, we took him to football trg, where a crunching tackle has left him with a broken leg and bedded down! Welcome also to **Cpl Powell**, who arrived briefly before shooting off to play badminton with the Sqn team and returning with the Army Doubles Championship Gold Medal. Start as you mean to go on! Congratulations to **LCpls Carter**, **Lord** and **Thompson** and **Sig Craggs** on their selection for promotion to substantive LCpl. You thoroughly deserve the credit for your hard work.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt A Rea**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J Giddens**

It's all go in Bravo Tp. October saw us dispersed world wide, with commitments to EX ARCADE FUSION, assistance with the BOWMAN conversion, and various sporting competitions. A particular mention goes to **Cpl Jules Taylor**, who represented the Corps at the netball championships in Cyprus. We say farewell to **Sig Kerrigan**, and wish her well at 30 Sig Regt. Welcome to **LCpl Bamford**, from 30 Sig Regt; and to **2Lt Rea**, from his Tp Comd's Course.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Capt S Lawes**
RQMS **WO2 Maylett**

Supt Tp has been working hard towards the LSI. All the hard work is paying off, and we have had a couple of promotions to celebrate. Congratulations to **LCpl Phil Lacey**, who has just come off the Cpls Board and is awaiting posting to DST Leconsfield. Congratulations also to **Sig Billy Elliott**, who has just come off the LCpls board. Well done again to **LCpl Phil Lacey**, this time for all his hard work towards training and coaching **Cpl Needs** for the Charity Boxing competition. Welcome to **Sig Beer**, who has just been posted in from 14 Sig Regt.

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC Sqn **Maj Richard Spencer**
RSM **WO1 RSM) Ken Marsh**

The last two months of 2004 has seen the Sqn gearing up for the third in a series of BOWMAN Operational Field Trials (OFTs). For us OFT2 (the previous trials were numbered 1 and 1A) had added significance, as it was the opportunity to assess what capability within the BCIP 04 upgrade we are to take out with us on OP TELIC 6 in April 05. In the event, the ex proved to be a marked step forward and the BOWMAN capability we take to theatre is likely to be significant.

However, the field trial has been only one component in an extremely hectic ex programme over the past couple of months. The Sqn has been committed to the Bde's BATUS deployment on EX MEDMAN 5, BG CAST and TESEX exs, the 12 Mech Bde CAST and the System Operational Field Trial (SOFT) – designed to assess the capability of the BOWMAN BCIP 04 ComBAT application software.

In addition, the Unit has undergone all its G4 external inspections, undertaken internal pre-OP TELIC trg and deployed on a further OP TELIC recce. Following a very hard-earned two weeks leave over the Christmas period, TELIC will become the Bde's entire focus as it hands over the BOWMAN development mantle to 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Zoe White**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Stu Foster**

It's all change in Alpha Tp, with a veritable host of promotion-based postings and promotions in place following the recent boards. We say goodbye and good luck to **Sgt Lawson**, who leaves us to go and instruct JMH at Blandford; to **Cpl Beattie**, who moved across the road to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt in January.

We also congratulate our newly promoted Cpls, **Cpl Brittain** and **Cpl Yuille**, who are to remain in the Tp to provide the necessary BOWMAN expertise for the Sqn throughout the OP TELIC tour. **LCpl Thompson** was promoted on posting to BOWTAG(S) in December 04. We also congratulate **LCpls Allan**, **Bartlett**, **Bleach** and **Brant** on receiving their first tape, and **Sig Penny** on being selected for promotion.

EXERCISE BOWMAN CHALLENGE MK III

They say that the best dramas tend to wane on the third episode of their trilogy, but like a good wine, OFT2 matured into another BOWMAN-fuelled episode of epic proportions. The weather certainly harked back to the delights of OFT1 and 1A, combined with rain, sleet, occasional sunshine and the ever-present threat of snow. With adequate forewarning of the new COS's distaste for warmth in the complex, the ops were certainly dressed for all conditions, and started a good trade in hiring out warm kit to those less well prepared Staff Officers.

Prior to the OFT starting, we deployed a number of dets onto the High Capacity Data Radio (HCDR) trials led by the BOWMAN Trials Team. The vehs were deployed to form the largest HCDR backbone yet deployed. Due to the complexities of administrating and controlling the equipt failures, and managing other equipt limitations, the trial was slow to start, but achieved a good measure of success by ENDEX. ENDEX for the HCDR trial signalled the start of the deployment on OFT2 proper. The initial phase was a CPX, allowing the Staff and the Sqn to practise our skills in the field. We concentrated on our Change of Control procedures as a year of tech deployments had led to significant skill fade for the Sqn and Staff alike.

The testing of our procedures was hampered somewhat by a lack of equipt, with limitations in the availability of cables, UCDs, hard drives, group display devices, etc, forcing the Sqn to make use of a DAF to swing the equipt on Change of Control. But this did not detract from the process too significantly. After three days and two Changes of Control, we moved to our start locs for the confirmatory ex.

Bravo Tp were to be practised in the role of MAIN for the ex, having relinquished their responsibilities for far too long over the past year. They did quite a good job of it, considering it was their hierarchy's first time as MAIN.

Initially, Alpha Tp found it difficult to act as Step Up, and spent the first few hours wandering around in a daze, trying to work out who was answering up as zero on the net, until the realisation that the Staff were in the other loc set in.

Not content with giving Alpha a break for a week, we were tasked with a Bde night move that incorporated all the Bde Units. Due to loc constraints, this meant another journey around the Northern and Southern transit route in very slow time. Part of the reason for this delay, was the bright spark who insisted that all wheeled and tracked vehs would travel together, resulting in a stunning concertina effect across the Plain. Another reason can be attributed to **LCpl Jenkinson's** 16/24, which decided to part company with the packet in the first 100m. Thankfully, with no loss of life or generator power. Then finally, as we were within 5 miles of our loc, two of the B vehs in the convoy managed to get severely bogged in.

Once we were in loc, the ex began at a fast and furious pace - for Bravo Tp at least. Equipt-wise, we were experiencing better data passage than on any other ex, and a new Bulk Data Transfer application proved to be a valuable tool for passing Op Orders and other large volumes of data. Management of Staff expectation on data passage proved to be vital once again in the formulation of good working practices within the HQ.

The belief that the system should work like Land CSS(R) was the key failure in this respect. Initially, voice proved to be more difficult than on the other trials, but the volume of traffic passed was considerably larger this time round. It was also found that when the BGs adhered to the RRB configurations, as given in the radio bulletin, this also had the effect of dramatically increasing the quality of our comms!

Another success that boosted confidence in the system, was the Situational Awareness trials. The onus on the Own Situation Position Reporting (OSPR) and Consolidated Position Reporting (CPR) is very much on the det op, who needs to set the correct parameters. Throughout the ex, we had excellent levels of Situational Awareness shown on the birdtable for the staff to utilise. As Bravo Tp deployed with the Big Top Tent (the trials tentage), they were the recipients of a number of high-level visitors, with many stars and much military spending power between them. Not to mention the ability to get the decision to have heaters in the complex reversed by the COS! The visits went exceptionally well, and were supported by elements of the BGs demonstrating BOWMAN capability throughout the Bde.

Whilst the Staff valiantly commanded the battle from an increasingly chillier MAIN, Alpha Tp deployed out a light HQ for CO Engrs to control the final seizure and crossing of the River Avon. On what turned out to be the coldest day of the year so far, **LCpl Dodgson** made a superb effort to warm up our loc by setting his veh on fire. The remaining dets followed the BGs across the Plain and set up the light HQ until ENDEX. This loc proved to be superb for comms and throughout a busy period, comms were superb.

The final part of the ex saw us develop a robust TSB should comms fail: the voice of Sgt **Roderick** whose dulcet tones could be heard across the Plain as he frequently considered his career options in the light of finally being posted to a proper comms unit. Overall, the ex was successful on many levels, providing the tactical trg that we had missed on the two previous trials.

This success was, however, somewhat tainted by the death of a Coldstream Guardsmen on the move back from the ex. Our thoughts go out to his family.

BRAVO TP

Tp Comd **Lt Ed Cuthbertson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Clifton**

The month started well for Bravo Tp, as the results for the LCpl to Cpl promotion board came out. Bravo Tp had four come off the board: **LCpls Burfield** (who has since been posted to 216 Sig Sqn) **Cunnington**, **Dodgson** and **Nicholl**.

Celebration was short lived, however, as the football team played another match. They have not won a game all season (mainly due to all the good football players changing sports in favour of rugby) but the Bravo Tp footballers, **LCpl Ward**, **Sig Coleman** and **Sig Davies** assured the Tp that this time it would be an easy win.

Well it was an easy win, 8-1 in fact. Well done to 19 Tk Tpt Sqn on a great victory! Yet again, the Tp has done very well on the recent Sig-LCpl Promotion Board. Congratulations to **Sigs Hernon**, **Lewis**, **Procter** and **Stewart.**

EXERCISE MEDMAN 5 - *by LCpl Hernon*

There was a good deal of excitement amongst those Sqn personnel who were set to deploy to BATUS for EX MEDMAN 5. We'd heard what a superb trg opportunity it was. Following initial frustrations at the poor availability of flights, **Cpl Thomas** (Bravo Tp), **Sig Hazell** (Alpha Tp) and I flew out to Canada on Main Body 2 on 3 September. The flight to Calgary took 8½ hrs, after which we transferred by coach to BATUS itself.

For the initial preparatory phase of the ex, we were attached to the KRH BG, working alongside their A2 Ech in preparing the vehs for deployment. We also got involved with the preparatory work at the Bde Supt Gp. For the main ex phase, we worked as BOWMAN operators for the Bde Staff. The trg area was enormous, and we got to see a lot of it, as well as getting a good feel for the mechanics of a Bde (-) deployment.

The best part of the trg was its realism. There were few 'exercisisms' and it was good to get away from Salisbury Plain – an area that we all know too well, and which contains too many restrictions. The weather conditions also brought challenges with the temperatures down to -17° C at times.

On our return to BATUS Camp, we turned all the vehs around and handed them back within a week. We flew back on 5 November the better for our experiences. Three weeks later, we deployed on the second OFT on Salisbury Plain – the difference in scale really hit home.

101st LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJS Allen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Lothian**

COMMANDER'S CUP COMPETITION - *by LCpl Abbott*

On 23 and 24 August 261 Sig Sqn took part in the Bde Comd's Cup. A team was made up for what we were told was a 6-mile march and shoot competition. The Sqn tried to find the fittest and best marksmen, but due to injuries and other commitments, we had to make do from limited personnel. In the run up to the competition, as is frequently the case with military competitions, the rules changed from day to day. The 6-mile march and shoot slowly ended up as a two-day military skills competition with a 7½-mile march and shoot. The unluckiest team member was **Cpl Rhodes** who was drafted in the afternoon prior to replace **Cpl Osmond** who had to attend a crypto course.

On the day, we were all eager and ready to go. **Lt Wright** took the navigation in his stride. We even managed time for a quick sight seeing tour, safe in the knowledge that the GPS was wrong and we weren't a km north of were he thought we were...or so he said. Following a short tab, the first stand was a comd task, which involved re-supplying troops under fire. The day continued with a rotation of similar stands, based on ITDs. On a personal note, on the LOAC stand I discovered that you can't put a ring through the nose of a POW and make them dance like a bear, which was news to me and did wonders for team morale! The last stand was run by our own Sqn, led by **Sgt Wornham**, ably assisted by a dog section from 101 Military Working Dogs. The stand tested teams' weapon handling on SA80, GPMG, Pistol and LAW, with the dogs there to add pressure and cause confusion. The only thing left for that night was a CTR and a fish and chip

Lt Wright never turns down an opportunity to pose

supper, kindly paid for by **Cpl Mortimore**, who is still waiting to be paid back. We were lucky to be tasked with conducting the CTR early in the night, and on returning from observing a mock car-jacking, we wearily got into our bashas after weighing our kit for the march and shoot the following day.

The march and shoot was held at RMA Sandhurst, where we were the first team to depart. The route contained a few cheeky hills for good measure, but the highlight was crossing a muddy, stinking bog. At the start, everyone tried to avoid the water, but it became impossible, and wading through became inevitable, which made the final mile even more fun.

The shoot consisted of 16 falling plates from 200m. We were the best team on the shoot, hitting 14 plates, which considering our last practice when we could only hit 2 between us, was nothing short of a miracle. In all, it was a challenging couple of days, and we managed a respectable tenth position out of twenty-six.

Heads down lads. Only another 7 miles to go!

102nd LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj JP Hazlewood**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Dougie Douglas**

The Sqn has undergone several changes since the last time we appeared in *The WIRE*. Now fully established with Regular personnel, it's been almost a year since we achieved Full Operational Capability (FOC). Several members of the comd team who saw the Unit through this crucial phase in the Sqn's development have left and have been replaced by new personalities who will be leading us through the next phase of the Sqn's life cycle. We have had a complete turnaround of officers, the first OC, **Maj Justin Hodges** has left us on promotion and has been posted back to MOD. The 2IC, **Capt David Orr** has assumed his appointment as Adjt 38 Sig Regt (V) and OC A Tp, **Capt Marc Bentley**, has finally succumbed to becoming a Sqn 2IC and has moved to Bramcote to join 30 Sig Regt. The QM, **Maj Mark Everill RLC** wins the best posting award as he has transferred to the Australian Army and heads off to Darwin in the New Year. In their place we welcome **Maj Jason Hazlewood** as the new OC, **Capt BenPsaila** as 2IC, **Capt Hannah Stoy** in the newly established Ops Offr post, **Lt Wartemberg** as OC A Tp and **Maj Graham Robertson** RLC as the new QM. The SNCOs have provided the continuity, with only one of the four Sqn WOs' posts seeing any changes, as **WO2 (YofS) Brendon Plant** joins us from 2 Sig Regt.

After working hard to achieve FOC, the pace of life in the Sqn certainly hasn't slowed. Over the last few months, we've had several challenges to deal with. Currently in our high readiness year we have assumed the responsibility for the JFLogC HQ should it deploy, and are likely to retain this responsibility until another unit (possibly 2 Sig Regt) takes on the responsibility some time next year. With this comes the JOINT VENTURE series of exs, culminating in a major ex involving all of the component comds in South Cerney in November 04, which has been our main effort for the second part of the year. In addition, we have recently opened our Welfare Centre (which is the envy of some of the larger RLC Regts on the Base!); we have deployed key staff to support EX LOG PROVIDER in PJHQ; and have sent personnel on various expeds as well as taking part in EX HALBERD CHALLENGE (a Bde version of the Lanyard Trophy) that takes part in Garelochhead in Scotland.

A special thank-you must go out to all the FTRS personnel from the TA Sig Regts who have been crucial in establishing the Sqn, as well as supporting it during OP TELIC. In particular, **Cpls Hague** and **Griffin** (who are off to join RLC) and **Cpl McDonald**, who is already being missed by the Bde staff.

THE VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL - *by LCpl Marc Harris*

St George's Day, 23 April 2004 proved to be a memorable occasion for the soldiers of Princess Royal Bks Gütersloh as **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal** was invited to open the new Z type accn. The visit also provided an opportunity for **Her Royal Highness** to present soldiers with their Operational Service Medals for operations in Afghanistan. The medal recipients were from a variety of Units, including two from our own Sqn, **LCpl Lee Taylor** and **LCpl Marc Harris**.

LCpl Marc Harris receives his Operational Service Medal

As always with high profile events, the RSM took this as a perfect opportunity for a week of intensive drill. Meanwhile, the remainder of the Sqn participated in the preparation for the visit, which included the mandatory litter sweeps and more importantly, the erection of the two seating stands.

By the day of the parade, our drill had improved slightly and we were looking forward to getting it over and done with, as we developed a slight case of nerves as we watched the stands fill up. We were called out one by one and presented with our medals. The medals were loosely pinned to our chests and several members of the RLC whose drill movements were not as well practised as our own ended up with their medals decorating the floor - much to the amusement of the spectators but not the RSM. When the parade came to an end, I was immensely

LCpl Lee Taylor receives his Operational Service Medal

relieved that it had gone without any hiccups, and looked forward to assisting the Sqn in the teardown of the stands.

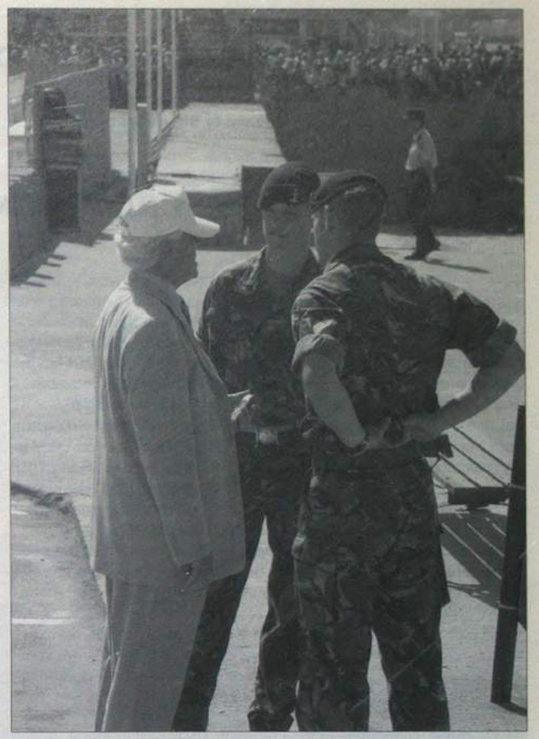
EXERCISE DIAMOND HALBERD – THE 60th NNIVERSARY OF D-DAY LANDINGS - *by LCpl Round*

With just 48 days NTM, 102 Log Bde were tasked to deploy to Normandy to provide assistance to the D-Day Anniversary Celebrations. Unlike other units who were commemorating their own Unit's activities in the landings, 102 Log Bde would actually be providing the real life support to those Units, and co-ordinating all the activities that would be going on over the 3 days. In order to complete its mission, 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (262) deployed to Bayeaux in the Normandy region of France on 24 May 2004 to establish the Bde HQ.

The planned convoy move from Gütersloh, through Germany, Holland, Belgium and finally finishing in Bayeaux, was to take two days. It didn't! After leaving camp at 06.00hrs, the first day went well, apart from a planned 4-hr stop at a service station on the Dutch-German border - thanks must go to the RLC movers! We finally arrived at our intended destination at 15.00hrs, a Belgian Artillery AD camp, for a bit of scoff and some decent kip. The next morning, with over half of the journey still to go, we were a bit apprehensive. We were to be escorted from the Belgian border through France by the French Army. The road-side stops rather than service stations must have really amused them, as the standard sausage roll, crisps, digestive biscuits and yoghurt death-packs could not be supplemented. What proved even more depressing was the rather inevitable fact that the planned trip through France couldn't be completed in a day, but would take two. This meant that we ended up sleeping rough in a lay-by, as opposed to the perfectly suitable service station 10kms up the road!

Eventually we arrived at the Moulineux factory in Bayeaux a day late, which meant there was no time to waste in setting up the HQ. The size of a normal Log Bde HQ is somewhere in between that of a Div HQ and an Armd Bde HQ. For the purpose of this ex and due to the number of LOs, it was closer to the size of a Div HQ, meaning that we would be putting up as many tents as the RQ could lay her hands on. This even went as far as putting up sleeps tents indoors! The majority of the first two weeks were spent preparing for the weekend of celebrations due to start on 4 June. There were more tents arriving by the day, recces to be done and plenty of pan-bashing for those lucky enough to be selected, which meant everyone below the rank of Cpl (unless you're a Tech!). There was plenty of downtime though, with BBQs, Battlefield Tours and the bars of Bayeaux only a short walk away.

Our main task was to provide comd and control radio links to key events and locs during the celebrations. However, a number of Sqn members found themselves acting as bus escorts for the hundreds of Veteran-loaded coach parties that were arriving from UK and all over Europe. We were tasked to make sure the right people were on the right bus, going to the right place, at the right



Pulling up a sandbag. Young signallers talk through what it was like in 1944 with one who was there.

time. This is in itself a difficult task when you are dealing with 80+-year-old veterans, but made much harder by the fact that the authorities were more interested in the dignitaries attending, than the people the events had been organised for. But on the whole, the Veterans, many of whom were returning to Normandy for the first time in 60 years, had a really good time. As did we, who got to spend some quality time with those who have been there and done it and were able to share their experiences with those of us privileged enough to have the opportunity to look after them. Many stories were shared over many beers making the whole experience enjoyable for all involved. All that was left to do was a short drive back home to Gutersloh.

SQUADRON BATTLECAMP 04 - *by LCpl Wildman*

As a well-earned summer leave awaited and the D Day celebrations turn-around was completed, the decision was made to conduct a Sqn Battlecamp. With personal admin finally sorted, the participants where broken down into 2 platoons, each comprising 3 sections of 8, with the JNCOs additionally responsible for the Pl Comd and Sgt roles.

The Battlecamp took the form of various lessons, including patrolling and snap ambushes during the day, and putting our newly-acquired skills into practice along with some harbour routine at night. The sections competed against each other throughout the Battlecamp on a series of tasks, from night nav to cross-country driving, gaining valuable points along the way towards the coveted Best Section prize. Many thanks to **LCpl Joyce** for doing the PTI thing and running the stretcher race in respirators. A special mention must go to 1 Section D Platoon, who whilst on a patrol to recover a re-supply, walked into a 1 Light Infantry Coy ambush and were promptly deafened by 3,000 blank rounds. Unfortunately, their trg hadn't quite prepared them to deal with an ambush of that scale. DS, 1 LI and D Section alike were all quite surprised by this new event in their respective exs. As the Battlecamp reached its final day an inter-section march and shoot competition was held. 2 Section A Platoon looked

favourites, with the fastest time. But they proved incapable of shooting accurately, ending the competition in last place, whilst 2 Section D Platoon took the winners' crown. There was some justice for the section that 'never went sick', as 2 Section A Platoon were awarded best section and most improved solider to **Sig Lewins**. Best overall solider went to **Sig Hetherington**.

Then as per SOPs, it was back to the Sqn and into the bar to discuss the pros and cons of marching on a bearing combined with pacing in the Haltern Trg Area. Overall, good experience was gained by all, especially with the Platoon Comd position being rotated, allowing the JNCOs to experience their one up's responsibilities. Good stuff!

1 NATO SIGNAL BATTALION

CO **Lt Col AD Burgin**
RSM **WO P Chamberland** CA

CO's Reflections As I write these notes, I sit in my office here in Maastricht, Netherlands contemplating my good fortune. I have recently assumed comd of this newly-formed NATO deployable Sig Bn and have been instantly caught up in the hectic daily routine. The Bn consists of a Bn HQ, Maint and Suppt Coy, and four deployable DCM Coys, 3 German and 1 UK. The UK DCM is the remainder of the old 280 Sig Sqn, now known as 628 Sig Tp, based in Javelin Bks, Elmpt. The 3 German Coys are based in Schill Kaserne in Wesel Germany. Alongside this, there are two further DCMs provided by the Danes, in Haderslev and a further German DCM in Wesel. These two DCMs are not part of the new Bn establishment but are, during the transition period, being utilised to assist with the operational commitments.

Suffice to say, the transition from the old structure to the new structure is not without its challenges; merging of equipment accounts, changing of procedures and processes, new personnel and high operational tempo all add to the mix.

The cultural diversity does lead to challenges, and national caveats are well in evidence, but I believe this diversity could actually form one of the Bn's strengths in the long term. What is now required, is a period of build and development allowing the Bn to establish its own individual identity and ethos, whilst continuing to contribute to the operational commitments that exist today.

It is my intent to ensure that the Battalions efforts are recognised in the wider CIS community, and regular *WIRE* notes will assist this.

A NEW BATTALION IS BORN - *by SSgt D Kilgallon*

On 31 October the Ace CIS Contingency Asset Pool (ACCAP) Bn and the Deployable Comms Module (DCM) Bn merged to form 1 NATO Sig Bn (1NSB). To celebrate this occasion a parade took place in Tapijn Barracks, Maastricht. The inspecting officer was **Lt Gen Ulrich Wolf**, Director of NATO CIS Service Agency (NCSA) located at Mons, Belgium.

With so many different nationalities taking part in the parade it was a challenge to all. This in part was due to the differences in foot drill. the Belgian RSM gives all his drill commands on the opposite foot compared with the British format. It was testament to all those on the parade that the drill was of a high standard.

The British elements of the parade included **Cpl Sara Petherbridge**, **Cpl Chris Eckett** and leading a Platoon, **SSgt Dave Kilgallon**. The day was tarred with a taint of sadness, as it was also a farewell to the CO, **Lt Col Keith Whitehead.**

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE – AFGHANISTAN - *by Cpl Sara Petherbridge*

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is an on going mission in Afghanistan. ACCAP Bn provided a team of multi-national comms specialists for the ISAF V mission. 50 members of the Bn departed Maastricht on Monday 5 April to an emotional farewell from fellow Bn members, family and friends.

The journey, via Mechernich, Cologne, and Termez in Uzbekistan, had us landing at Kabul International Airport (KIA) on 7 April. On arrival German body armour was issued and we were transported to our final destination, ISAF HQ in Kabul. The first 2 days were packed with briefings and orientations followed by a 7 day HO/TO from our Danish colleagues serving with DCM (I) normally based at Haderslev – Denmark.

Of the 50 members of ACCAP Bn that initially deployed, 6 were Royal Signals, **WO2 Harry Harrison**, **Sgt Boz Lister, Sgt Pete Richards, Cpl Sara Petherbridge, LCpl Darryl Bramley** and **LCpl Richard Cownie**.

We were all assigned to the Sig Support Gp (SSG), which is responsible to Comd ISAF for the continued provision and up-grade of NATO comms used in and out of theatre. Some of the responsibilities undertaken were, cable laying, WAN and LAN links, PABX/BME, and the Transportable Satellite Ground terminal (TSGT) crew located with the Kabul Multi-National Brigade (KMNB) on the outskirts of Kabul.

As far as the Royal Signals contribution to ISAF V was concerend, it was a particularly successful tour, with all members returning safely. A few worthy notes were: the promotion to full Cpl for **Sara Petherbridge** who was delighted to hear the good news on her 19th Birthday; and the award of the Comd ISAF's gold coin presented to those individuals who had made an outstanding contribution to the mission. Well done to **WO1(FofS) Steve Moore** and **Cpl Sara Petherbridge.**

DESPITE ALL, DEPLOYMENTS CONTINUE – *by Sig Barelli*

In June, four soldiers deployed to Afghanistan to assist with the set-up and day-to-day maintenance of the soon to be ISAF Comd Network (ICN). This is a very modern network system, which after its completion, will provide a secure means of comms throughout the Kabul area to all International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) personnel.

The team consisted of **Sgt Ibinson** (in charge), **LCpl Turnbull**, **Sig Hamson** and myself, **Sig Barelli**. Firstly, we worked closely with civilian contractors siting proposed antenna locs, checking the line of sight and security of each out-post. The system employs the same principles as PTARMIGAN, but more up to date and more compact.

The antennas were sighted at strategic locs round the city: one on the main HQ, another on a Canadian camp at the bottom end of the city, one at Kabul International Airport and one on top of 'Radar Mountain,' named after an old Soviet outpost.

Working out of the main ICN shelter in the HQ, we could monitor each base station at the four locs. Intruder alarms and changes in temperature were all available immediately on the monitor. Link failures would also show via a 'virtual' base station, enabling real-time problem identification and the chance to repair remotely. Our tour finished at the end of September, and we returned to a smaller Sqn and some well earned leave before whatever the next job will be.

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

855 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Bill Lane**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Al Minton**

EXERCISE FIRST ROCK 2004

It was a return to familiar territory in a familiar role for 855 Tp, 81 Sig Sqn (V), Corsham, when it deployed to Gibraltar in September. The objective of this year's EX FIRST ROCK was the running of new fibre-optic cable from the Rock Gun on the 412m summit, down to the Air Traffic Control Centre on the airfield.

81 Sig Sqn has been deploying telemechs to Gibraltar in support of 642 Sig Tp since 1996. Terminology may have changed, but the association between the two Units remains strong. Today it is inst techs deploying in support of DCSA Gib (2). However, Rock veterans would say it was a case of 'only the names have been changed to protect the innocent.'

A total of 2 + 24 members of the Tp under the comd of **Capt Bill Lane**, deployed from 06 – 24 September. Working conditions were hard, but the lads rallied to the cause, ensuring that the work was completed on time. Above ground Temperatures rose to 37° C during the day, with evenings often spent cabling inside The Rock. The tunnels are an excellent snapshot of military history, with the cable route running past Great Siege, WW2 and Cold War installations.

A total of 3km of cable was installed over the near vertical rock face (requiring the use of safety lines supplied by the local RAF riggers), through the Great Siege Tunnels and across the live airfield. This cable is designed to provide a degree of resilience to critical ATC circuits originating from navaids on The Rock.

These circuits are currently carried over a multi-spliced cable, and it is hoped that our work will go some way to enhancing operational continuity for the RAF. The support of RAF airfield ops is symbolic of 81 Sig Sqn's traditional role. Originally formed as part of 81 Sig Regt (AS), our Unit still proudly sports the Beaufighter as its signature.

Throughout all phases of the project, the SNCOs played a critical role overseeing good Health and Safety practices on site. Use of

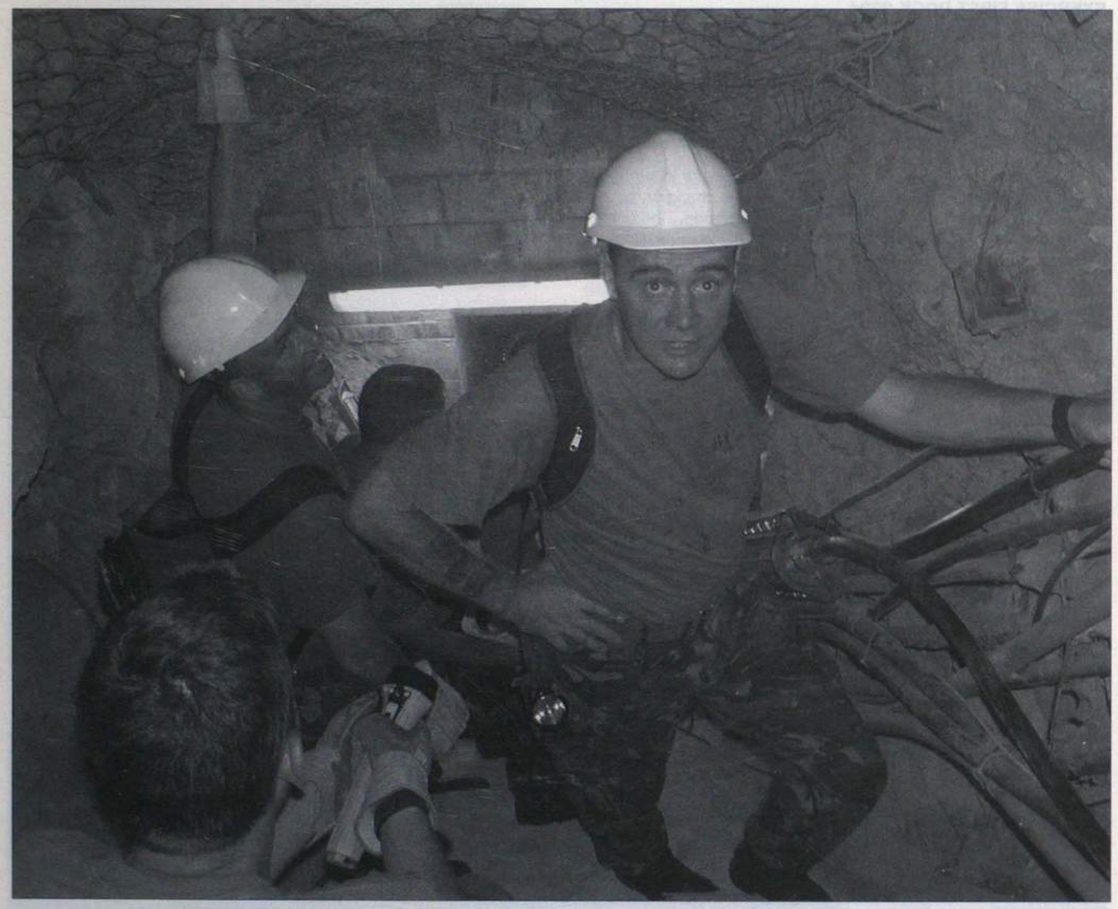
The steep working conditions down the side of The Rock

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and a buddy system was crucial when moving through the 35 miles of low hanging, featureless tunnels.

On the surface, heat exhaustion was an ever-present threat, whilst vigilant FOD (Foreign Object Debris) discipline and general situational awareness was required when operating on the live airfield, with multiple civilian and military aircraft movements throughout the day.

855 Tp also managed to pack in a number of out of work activities, including a fishing trip, an Elton John concert and numerous visits around The Rock. The visit miraculously coincided with Gibraltar National Day, and was a good opportunity for the lads to experience vast quantities of local culture to the wee small hours.

A mountain of thanks is due to the **Capt Colin Hamilton** and the lads of DCSA Gib(2) for their outstanding support and camaraderie.



The cramped conditions in some of the tunnels

SPORT

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB (OFFSHORE SECTION)

Although the two UK based yachts have been brought out of the water for winter maintenance and repair, the Offshore Section has remained active during the early winter months. In November, a crew set sail from Gosport to the Canary Islands to deliver a Challenger 67 to the start line for the Trans-Atlantic Rally for Cruisers Race. Meanwhile, the racing crew jetted out to meet the yacht in Canaries, prior to racing across the Atlantic in an attempt to arrive in St Lucia by 11 December ... and hopefully win the race? Watch this space in the next edition of *The WIRE* for a full race report.

In the meantime, planning for the Winter Continuation Trg continues. Winter trg will take place over the following weekends and is aimed at those personnel who are preparing for Day Skipper and Coastal Skipper qualifications. However, anyone interested in attending one or more of these weekends should contact the Offshore Secretary, via the unit OIC Sailing, stating name, rank, number, unit contact details, previous experience and weekend(s) they wish to sail:

22 - 23 January 2005
5 - 6 February 2005
19 – 20 February 2005
5 – 6 March 2005
19 – 20 March 2005

It is usual for personnel attending these weekends to parade at JSASTC, Gosport by 18.00hrs on the Friday evening, and personnel will normally be free to depart by 17.00hrs on the Sunday. Joining instructions will be issued once crews are confirmed. Personnel are requested to contact the Secretary or Bosun via their unit Sailing OIC wherever possible, in order that consolidated unit nominations are received.

Contact details are: **Capt Elisabeth McLellan** (Secretary Offshore) on Mil: 94331 3731, Civ: 01722 433731, email: elisabethmclellan@yahoo.co.uk or **Sgt Windy Gale** on Mil: 93806 5668, Civ: 01705 765668, email: rsigsyc@tiscali.co.uk.

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

On 8 November 04 the Corps Female Football Team got together in preparation for a league fixture against REME. Trg started off with a short circuit session, followed by a ball skills lesson from **Cpl Ian Pike**, and immediately followed by a short game of 8 a side. Trg was officially complete for the day, but taking advantage of the flood light facility at Blandford, the girls were back again at 18.00hrs.

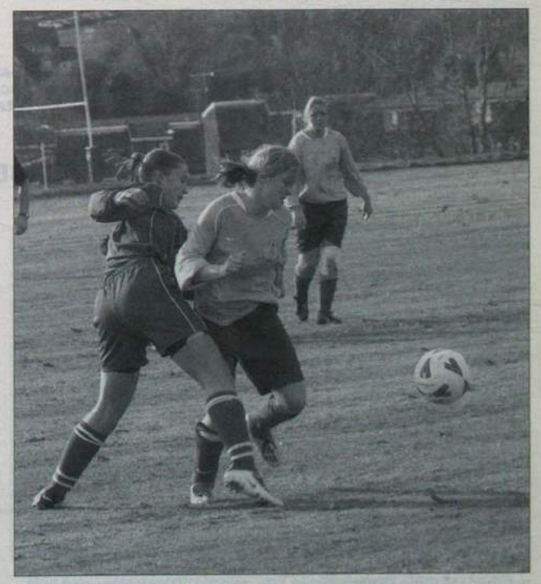
With the girls growing in confidence, trg was stepped up, and a team was emerging with strength in depth from the back, through the midfield to the centre forwards. The goalkeeper, **Sig Sanders** received additional trg from **Cpl Simmi Simpson** and **Sig Jay Daniels**. The afternoon was spent concentrating on defending set pieces and creating set pieces, and **Sig Jody Thompson** with **Sig Katie Paling** proved their worth putting the goalkeeper under a lot of pressure.

Not exactly a ballet sequence

The day had arrived, and the Team met up for an early morning start. After a good warm up, the game started off with the Corps putting REME under a lot of pressure with only their goalkeeper pulling off some excellent saves in the first 10 minutes from **Sig Everton McNally**, **Sig Sam Sowerby** and **Sig Katie Paling**. With some good work from the back by **Sig Jody Williams** and **Sig Kat Beaver**, the ball was moved through the middle of the pitch through **LCpl Chicken Healy** to **LCpl Claire Donald** on the left, who played a first time ball into the box for **Sig Everton McDonald** to score the first goal.

The Corps made a change down the left, bringing **LCpl Claire Donald** into the defence and releasing **Sig Lucy Thompson** to make some good strong runs down the wing. With REME heads down, the Corps pilled on the pressure and a second goal came shortly after, again from **Sig Everton McNally**. At the end of the first half, the Corps team was taken to the changing room for some strong words from **Capt Steve Jackson** and **SSgt(YofS) Marcus Pollitt**.

With the wind now in their faces, it didn't take long before the girls got back into pressurising REME. The middle of the park was highly contested, but with **Sgt Gill Abram** and **Sig Jenny**



Gong for a signing in the big league

Blackburn winning everything in the midfield, it didn't take long before the Corps scored yet again and again and again. Goals were scored by **Sgt Gill Abram**, **Sig Everton McNally** a further 2 by **Sig Sam Sowerby** and **Sig Katie Paling**. With a good win in the bag, it was time to concentrate and ensure that the defence remained strong and the goalkeeper keeping a clean sheet.

The introduction of **Capt Catherine Jardine** strengthened up the right side, and time to rest **Sig Everton McNally** with our secret weapon, **Sig Wood**.

The Corps went on to win 7 – 0. The next game is against AGC in December.

BOXING

A SUCCESSFUL TOUR OF CALIFORNIA - *by Sgt Tony Booth*

The event, the Torrezz Californian Open Invitational, was held in October 2004 in the town of Tulare, California. We had entered a Team of 10 Royal Signals boxers, but a week before our departure, we had three of our team pull out with injuries. Fortunately, **LCpls Tony Copsey**, **Ben Lawler** and **Chris Sagar** were able, at such short notice, to spend 10 days in California.

On 6 October, after an 11-hr flight to Los Angeles, we arrived in autumn weather with a temperature of 35°C. We rested, with only light training, up to the event on the Saturday.

This tournament normally brings around 60 boxers from around the State. But everybody wanted a piece of the British boxers, and over 160 boxers entered the 2-day event, initially causing a few problems concerning who would fight whom.

Eventually, it was all sorted, and all of our 10 boxers were able to box in the Tournament. They performed well, going on to win 8 out of the 10 bouts. The biggest upset of the day was **LCpl Steve Binner**, who with little experience behind him, manage to pick off an experienced Mexican, totally outclassing him.

We were welcomed with open arms by the whole community, and the Team were taken aback by the friendliness of the Tulare citizens. We were shown the local sites, and were taken for a meal by the Town Council and Mexican Association. We managed to make front page of the local papers on two occasions. Hopefully in 2 years we can manage a return tour and win all 10 bouts this time!

Thanks must go to the coaches, **Sgt Phil Robson**, **Sgt Geordie Appleby** and **LCpl Higgy Higgins**.

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

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col GN Donaldson OBE
Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col CP Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

WW2 Veterans' Badge The UK Veterans' lapel badge is a new initiative designed to promote a sense of Veterans' identity amongst the ex-service community and to raise the public's awareness of Veterans and Veterans' issues.

WW2 Veterans wishing to apply for the badge, should write to:

Veterans Policy Unit
Ministry of Defence
Zone 1
7th Floor
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB,

The letter should be headed 'Application for Veterans Badge' and give the following details: Name, Date of birth, Service, Service number, Wartime service (From 19.. to 19..), Theatres served in, Address (including Postcode)

Include in the letter, the statement: *'The above personal information may be used by the MOD and the Royal British Legion for statistical purposes, or to invite Veterans to events, and be stored on a database for these purposes.'* This statement to be signed.

You may also state if you are a Member of the Royal British Legion, and give your Membership No.

New Members We welcome the following recently enrolled Life Members:

Rank/name	*Service*	*Branch*
Sgt Sav Phillips	1979-04	
Sgt Phil Cooper	1981-04	
SSgt Dave Cawkwell	1974-98	
WO2 Duncan Forteath	1975-98	
Cpl Simon Pell	1982-98	
LCpl Andy Brown	1992-98	
Sig Richard Baker	2003-date	Hull
Maj Bill Cochrane	1957-92	
Sig Andy Owen	1991-99	
Sig Neil Powell	1989-94	
Cpl Ray Williams	1955-59	Sheffield
Cpl David Dawson	1991-99	
Sig Harry Seddon	1971-74	
Cpl Tonka Richardson	1980-04	
LCpl Mike Bowness	1950-52	
Sgt Steve Howard	1977-05	
Cpl Neil Inman	1980-93	
LCpl Roy Leighton	1948-50	
Capt John Francis	1948-75	Loughborough
Sgt Bill Mason	1942-46	
LCpl Ian Cooper	1977-84	
Geordie McAllister	1977-85	
LCpl Ronnie Hewitt	1979-86	
SSgt John Bird	1964-88	
Sgt John Jones	1960-71	
Cpl John Hancock	1971-83	
WO2 Mark Yates	1981-03	
Cpl Simon Woodland	1986-97	
Sgt Michael Press	1977-99	
Sig Bert Lythgoe	1982-87	
Lt Col Willy Brewin	1968-04	
Cpl Rod Webdell	1964-78	260 Sig Sqn Assn
Cpl Jonathan Perry	1989-98	
Lt Col Chris Wakerley	1982-01	
Sig Ted Brown	1941-47	
Sig Garry Rees	1988-97	
Cpl Tom Maynard	1992-98	
Cpl Simon Piearcey	1993-98	
WO2 John Skelton	1980-97	
Sgt Geordie Croft	1975-90	
LCpl John Quinn	1983-96	
Col Eric Sambell OBE	1966-98	Bath
Maj Charles Grieg	1965-04	
Maj David Gorse	1971-04	
Capt Dean Briers	1981-04	
WO2 Ray Armstrong	1955-92	Loughborough
LCpl Malcolm Leech	1983-90	
LCpl Lisa Hook (Stanforth)	1991-98	
Sgt John Luffman	1940-46	
Cpl Stuart Smyth	1958-63	
SSgt Kevin Stacey	1979-03	
Cpl Ben Williams	2001-05	
Maj Eddie Canale	1953-88	
LCpl Les Gray	1973-78	
Cpl Mick Potter	1980-04	York
WO2 Peter Crawford	1981-05	
Lt Col Jim Dryburgh	1975-04	
Maj John Marriott	1970-04	
Maj Adam Parsons	1987-04	
Maj Bill Brennan	1970-04	
Lt Col Dick Thwaites	1965-04	
Lt Col Glenn Harwood MBE	1965-04	
Maj Malcolm Emslie	1967-04	
Maj Alexander Ross	1969-04	
Maj Steve Smith	1971-04	
Sig Trevor Bailey	1994-98	
Sgt Warren (Hutch) Little	1991-date	
Capt Dave Thomas	1969-04	
SSgt Bob Inglesant	1981-04	
Cpl Steve Francis	1985-00	
Cpl Kareena Knibbs	1990-date	Middlesbrough
Sig George Knibbs	1961-70	Middlesbrough
Sig Ron Rumley	1960-71	
Cpl Jeremy Marsden	1982-96	
LCpl Alwyn Jones	1949-54	Cardiff
SSgt Phil Render	1981-04	
LCpl Augustine Diamond	1969-79	
Cpl Steven Pears	1982-88	
Lt Joe Rodrigues	1939-46	
Sgt Martin Jowsey	1969-81	
Sig Edward Hazelwood	1988-97	
WO1 John Johnston	1981-06	
SSgt Simon Booth	1980-05	

DONATIONS

Mr R Waldron	£10.00
Sheffield Branch RSA	£50.00
Rev Peter Riley	£25.00
Anonymous	£10.00
Rotherham Branch RSA	£50.00
Leslie Ladbrooke	£10.00
Maj (Retd) R J Goddard MBE	
in memory of **WO2 Jerry Nation**	£30.00
Reg Ayres	£20.00
Cornwall Branch RSA	£500.00
Preston and Blackburn Branch RSA	£30.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
David Chappell	£100.00
W Daglish	£2.96
JA and AM Thompson	
in memory of **Col (Retd) Jack Sanders OBE**	£50.00
Donations in memory of **Col (Retd) Jack Sanders OBE**	£144.10
Reading Branch RSA in memory of **Maj Gordon Giles**	£10.00
Reading Branch RSA in memory of **Bill Yates**	£25.00
Brighton Branch RSA in memory of **Derek Swann**	£55.00
Cardiff Branch RSA	£100.00
Dennis Jones	£10.00
York Branch RSA	£25.00
Mrs J Greenstreet	£30.00
Collection at funeral of Ian Richard Holmes	£51.39
42 Sig Regt Officers' Club	£181.00
East Kent Branch RSA	£250.00
Poole Branch RSA	£100.00
Cotswolds Branch RSA in memory of **Charles Smart**	£10.00
Donald Ellingworth in memory of **Rex Smythe**	£10.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Jane Knight**

Our Autumn Lunch at the Army Golf Club went with a swing when, in late October, we were joined by friends from other Branches, not forgetting the ladies from the WRAC Association, who happily have transferred their allegiance since the demise of their Aldershot Branch. **Phillip Dunsford**, our Webmaster, and his wife **Jan** were our guests. **Mary Pagan** did an outstanding

Brig Noel Moss (centre) with Capt Fi Hargreaves, Tom and Kath Lynch and Edelgard Moss

job in organising the event this year, and ran a lucrative raffle. Our thanks are due to **Mary**, and not a little to the generosity of those who donated the prizes. The Golf Club has proved a very popular venue for this occasion, and much is due to the staff who welcomed us and served an excellent curry.

Early in December we held a pub lunch at the *Bat and Ball* in Farnham. It was ably organised by **Mary Pagan**. An earlier lunch at the pub during the summer ostensibly had been a get together for our widows, but it was gate-crashed by our Members, and proved so popular that **Mary** seems to have a long term commission for the Branch.

We enjoyed an excellent Christmas luncheon at St Omer Bks, where probably they are carrying out mopping up operations even as we go to press. We were joined by a party of Officers and WOs from 261 Sig Sqn, who have helped us maintain a close relationship with the serving Corps. We were delighted to see **Betty Ribchester**, who remains a loyal supporter of the Aldershot Branch. As on past occasions, the repast and the service were second to none, and the Supervisors and Students Course, who served us are to be congratulated; they will make a great contribution to their regts.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Ken Brown**
Secretary **Phil West**

After the summer recess, Branch activities started with a lunch in beautiful surroundings on the banks of the River Arun just outside Arundel. There was a good attendance on this pleasant occasion.

Our October meeting was a quiz, when the Branch pitted its wits against the local Sig Tp and, and for the first time in years, just managed to win. Sadly this month we lost an esteemed member, **Derek Swann**, whose life story cut across the whole history of WW2, as recorded in his obituary.

Our Annual Dinner was held in November, when 82 members and guests dined at the Courtlands Hotel in Hove, and enjoyed a memorable occasion. The guest of honour was **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, Master of Signals. Our Chairman, **Ken Brown** who is the poet laureate of Royal Signals, introduced our guest in verse as follows:-

I have a reputation for breaking into verse
So here's a presentation - for better or for worse -
And as I try to do my best, I think it would be wise
To concentrate on our chief guest, and not just generalise
Though, on this one occasion, to generalise is right
For General Sir Sam Cowan is here with us tonight.

As I start to sing his praises, there can be little doubt
The problem is, not what to say, but what I must leave out
His involvement is terrific in everything he sees,
So I should be specific in naming some of these:
Master of Signals in our Corps; our Association's Chief,
There are many, many more - some far beyond belief
Service Patron to the Team from British Service who
Tried to make come true the dream of climbing Makalu
One more interest I must name, the men of Nepal
And the Gurkha Welfare Trust that helps sustain them all.

That ends this partial review of our esteemed Guest's life –
Now we are pleased to welcome him, and Lady Anne, his wife.
I've spoken in full measure, now I will speak no more
Except to say, with pleasure – 'Sir Sam - you have the floor.'

After the meal and speeches there was a successful raffle to assist Branch welfare work and then there was dancing until the early hours.

The Branch paraded at Brighton on Remembrance Sunday with its standard. A wreath was laid on behalf of the Branch. At this parade the guard of honour was provided by 884 Sig Tp, whose turnout and drill was of an impressively high standard.

The Branch continues to prosper with a stable membership, and provides a social programme to meet the needs of a varied membership, and to provide both welfare and a focus for continuing the fellowship of the services.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs J Barrett**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

This edition of the Branch notes has been overshadowed by the sad passing of one of our original Members. **Maj (Retd) Charles Hughes BEM** passed away in Maidstone Hospital on 11 November after a long battle against cardiac problems. He will be sadly missed by the Branch, who were well represented at **Chas'** cremation, and who offer **Rita** and her family their heartfelt condolences on her loss.

Fifty-one Members and guests proceeded to Guines, a short distance from Calais, to attend the Cloth of Gold Celebrations as described in the last edition. Much good food was consumed, with an appropriate amount of wine to accompany it. The party was entertained most royally by medieval singers and dancers celebrating the occasion when, in 1520, **Henry VIII** and **Francois I** substituted a gourmet meal and martial arts tournament instead of a pitched battle. What a good idea! And what a pity that the idea didn't catch on!

Remembrance Day was acknowledged as usual by a large contingent from the Branch, marching through Canterbury to the Cathedral for a moving Service and an equally moving Address given by the present **Viscount Montgomery of Alemain**, the son of **Monty** of world renown. The traditional lunch was taken this year at the Boughton Golf Club, and was much appreciated after the long morning's event.

Olive Castle is making good progress, although still reliant on her mobility chair (and **Frank**) when attending our functions. **Donald Crisp** was rendered temporarily immobile when he stubbed his naked big toe against something solid. The resultant hobble to the GP and the display of the plumred and swollen digit elicited the unwelcome diagnosis that the collision had brought on a case of gout. Whoever heard of a Welfare Member with gout?

Peter Foakes, he who has been more seriously immobile over the last year, is determined that he and **Peggy** will attend this year's Christmas Lunch to celebrate his vast improvement in health. We look forward to giving them both a great welcome.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd JB Greenwood**

On a weekend in mid October a coach load of our members, along with the local REME Association Branch, headed off for a night out at The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where we were introduced to all the REME and Royal Signals in-Pensioners. As always on these occasions, everybody had brilliant time, and at the end of the evening, one of the veterans, sought out our Hon Secretary, **Barry Greenwood** and quite seriously asked if we could come again the following weekend, as they had enjoyed our visit so much.

Also in October, eight of our members headed by our Chairman, **Paul Burton** headed over the channel to our annual visit to Ypres. **Paul** was honoured to take up the invitation to do the exaltation.

On Remembrance Day, along with other Service organisations, our Branch Members attended the Service and Parade at Newbury Park War Memorial, along with Mayor of Redbridge and other civil dignitaries. It was encouraging how many members of the public also attended this parade. Afterwards, along with the Mayor and entourage, the CO and RSM of 36 Sig Regt invited us back to the 36 Club at Ilford TAC, where we were fed with the now traditional curry lunch. While we were in Ilford, one of our Members, **Ron Sale** had been invited to attend the Ceremony at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, where he much enjoyed the experience of being alongside so many other veterans.

We had the sad news that about two of our members recently. We were notified that **Alex Sharman** had died in October, and regular attender, **Len Owen** died 9 November. Some of our Members, along with our Standard, attended the Service for **Len** at the City of London Crematorium on 19 November. Our condolences go out to both families, and especially **Len's** wife, **Barbara**, who is also recovering following a recent quadruple heart bypass operation.

Our last meeting of the year at the end of November was a social evening and we keep the formal side of the evening to the minimum. However, there was one event that should be noted. **Paul Burton** was presented with his 50 Year Badge and Certificate. After this, it was on with the refreshments provided by **Iris Burton** and **Frances Greenwood**, for which we offer our thanks. Everything must have been appreciated, as all the food disappeared well before the end of the evening.

At the time of writing these notes, we do have one more event this year to look forward to, which is on 12 December and is a Sunday Lunch in the Sgts Mess of 36 Sig Regt to which we have been invited by **WO1(RSM) Mark Giles**. **Mark** has gone out of his way during the year to forge links between both the Regular and TA soldiers and our RSA Members, and this has been much appreciated.

Looking further forward to our Formal Dinner and Dance on 19 March 2005 has a special significance, as it marks the Eightieth anniversary of the formation of our Branch. Because of this, we are expecting to have a much larger top table for our high-ranking official guests. This event has always been popular with all the expected 140 places being taken up weeks before the day, as in previous years. Therefore we ask that members get their requests for places in even earlier than usual this year. 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 Sig Regt, Gordon Road, Ilford at 20.00hrs on the 4th Tuesday of each month except December.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Bill Irving**
Secretary **Mrs Olive Irving**

On Remembrance Sunday 14 November 2004, a wreath was laid by our Branch on behalf of Royal Canadian Legion, Kincardine Branch 183, Kincardine Ontario Canada.

Whilst visiting Canada in August this year **Bill** and **Olive Irving** were presented by the Kincardine Branch, with silks and badges on behalf of our Members.

It was decided by our Members that a wreath would be laid as a gesture of comradeship and friendship. We were proud to do this, and honoured when we received a photograph showing that a reciprocal wreath had been laid in Kincardine for Exmouth RSA on 11 November.

We are proud to be building bridges across the ocean, especially as we will be commemorating the 60th Anniversary WW2 in July 2005.

The Exmouth Branch laying the Canadian wreath (left) and their own wreath (right)

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **James Prentice**

Branch Member **Andy McArthur** arranged for a speaker, **Sarah Hunter**, a fund raiser from the West of Scotland Blind Association (Visibility Scotland), to give a talk on the work her Organisation does over the whole country to help blind and partially-sited people. It was a very interesting talk. Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan**, thanked **Sarah**, and wished her well in her endeavours.

27 Branch Members attended the Remembrance Sunday Service held in George Square Glasgow. **John McNab** laid the wreath on behalf of the Branch, and **Bill McNamara** paraded the Branch Standard. The Salute at the March Past of the Veterans other Associations and Service personnel, was taken by the **Rt Hon The Lord Provost of Glasgow**, **Liz Cameron**, ex officio Lord Lieutenant of the County. **The Rt Rev Dr WJ Morris** conducted the Service. CO 32 (Scottish) Sign Regt (V), **Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**, and Piper, **LCpl Alistair Beaton** of the Regt attended the Remembrance Ceremonies at Bishopbriggs Cross, and later the Service at Auchinairn, Bishopbriggs. This scribe attended the Auchinairn Service this year, and I laid my personal wreath with the Royal Signals badge centrepiece after the Service **Cllr Tom Smith** laid a wreath on behalf of East Dunbartonshire Council and thanked **Lt Col Sutherland** for attending with the piper.

The Annual St Andrews Dinner Dance was held on Saturday 27 November 04 in the Hall at 32 Sig Regt HQ by kind permission of the **Lt Col Sutherland**, who was a guest at the top table with his wife, **Margaret**. Members at the top table included Branch President **Lt Col A Petrie**, **Mrs Norah Petrie**, **Capt J McNaught**, **Mrs McNaught**, **WO1(RSM) A Ironside**, **Mrs**

Michelle Ironside. Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan** and **Mrs Isobel McMillan**. **Capt Graham Reith** was also among the 72 Members and friends who were at the function. The Ceilidh band named *Rusty Nail* were something different. They not only played traditional dance music but, one of their number called out some dance steps in the western style, encouraging everyone to join in the circles of eight.

The Loyal Toast was given by **Tom Connor**, who also gave the Toast to the Colonel-in-Chief. The toast to the RSA was given by **WO1(RSM) A Ironside** of 32 Sig Regt. The Branch President welcomed all the Members and friends to the function. He thanked the Members and friends who worked to make this the success it was on the night. He thanked Master Chef **WO2 John Wren** and his team for an excellent meal, and the volunteer waiters **Norma**, **Angela**, **Eric McWaters jnr**, **Jim Cook**, **Angela Bradley** and **Sharon Whiteford** were brought into the hall to receive the vote of thanks from the assembled company. The President also expressed his thanks and appreciation for the co operation received by the branch from the Offrs and members of 32 Sig Regt.

Lt Col Sutherland then addressed the company, giving a short summary of the Corps latest innovations, and how operations were affecting service in different parts of the world. He also mentioned how pleased he was to have received the invitation to the function, and was pleased to help foster the goodwill already existing between the Glasgow Branch and the Regt.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mr RPM Taylor**
Secretary **Mr H Ferguson**

The Branch embarked on a very ambitious project in early October. 12 members and friends, including **George Royle**, our Dunkirk/Normandy veteran, went on a battlefield tour of the Normandy Landings of 1944. The tour was organised by **Ian Ashworth Davies**, through Leger Holidays, and after an early start from Manchester, we eventually arrived at our hotel in Caen at 21.00hrs.

Reveille the following day was at 07.00hrs, and after a quick breakfast, we started the tour proper by paying our respects at the British Cemetery at Ranville, followed by visits to Pegasus Bridge, and the Café Gondré, the first building to be liberated by the British 6th Airborne Div. We then toured Gold, Sword and Juno Beaches, where **George** came ashore with the Canadians 60 years ago. He did permit himself a few tears in remembrance.

George Royle (4th from right) with the party at Juno Beach

Our next stop was Arromanches, where we saw the very impressive working model of the Mulberry Harbour, and we ended the day at Bayeux, where some members went to see the tapestry.

Day 2 saw us at the Merville Battery, which was disarmed by the Paras in the early hours of 6 June. In the afternoon, we toured the American sector, Utah Beach, Point du Hoc, and the enormous cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach, where nearly 10,000 souls are interred (including the **Neland** brothers, whose story inspired the film *Saving Private Ryan*). We ended this day at St Mère Église, where a model of an American paratrooper still dangles from the church tower.

On our final day we visited the sites of last battles for Normandy: Hill 112, Caen, the Falaise Gap, and the Polish memorial at Montormel.

We all agreed that the trip was extremely interesting, and our guide **Dr Jackie Henderson** certainly made it so. Another is planned for 2005.

The Branch mustered 24 members at this year's Remembrance Parade.

We end with the sad news that our Life President, **Maj Jack Holmes**, passed away in October. The Branch was strongly represented at his funeral, by forming a guard of honour, and the Branch Standard was paraded by **Peter Halford**.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs A Grainge**
Secretary **Mr R Grainge**

On Sunday 24 October, our Branch hosted a Number 1 Area lunch, and 97 RSA members and guests attended, including **Peter** and **Sheila Cuckow**, representing RHQ; **Barry** and **Sylvia Moody**, No1 Area Representative; and **WO1 (SVWO) Neil Dixon** of our host unit, 34 (N) Sig Regt (V). The function kicked off at noon, with members from Catterick, Darlington, Newcastle and York Branches, arriving at the TAC Brambles Farm, in good time and spirits.

After taking refreshments at the Sgts Mess bar, ably run by **Sgt Bruce Bassett**, **SSgt Ian Cairnes** and **Sgt Bob Silk**, it was then seeking out and chatting to old and new friends. Lunch was served at 13.00hrs, excellently prepared and served by **WO1 Neil Berry** and **Cpl Arthur Warner**. After lunch, time was allowed to refill glasses, whilst the Lady members of the Branch busied themselves selling the raffle tickets and Bingo books. The raffle prize numbers were boosted greatly by Members donating prizes.

At this point, **Peter Cuckow** made a short speech on membership and recruiting. The raffle that followed seemed to go down well, with one lucky recipient picking up a 1½-litre bottle of whisky. Then followed another chance to recharge glasses before a game of Bingo, playing for £20 a house. Once again, it was time to refill glasses and have a final chatter before Members started to drift off home, whilst our intrepid dishwasher, **Sgt Bob Silk**, ensured that was thoroughly cleaned up. Thank you to our OAPs, who gave up their Friday afternoon snooze to lay out the tables and chairs in the drill hall, and to all members who cleaned up after the event - not forgetting all those who attended to make it all worthwhile. Thank you all.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **John Brown**
Secretary **WO2(FOS) I Wolfe**

The Annual period of Remembrance is over once again. As usual, it was a busy time for Branch Members, starting with the

ceremony at Palace Bks, Holywood, organised by 15 Sig Regt. **Lt Col (Retd) CR Lightfoot** represented the Branch. **Billy Dixon** paraded the Branch Standard at the RBL festival at Belfast's Waterfront Hall. The War Memorial in the grounds of Belfast City Hall was the setting for the laying of crosses by the Lord Mayor, Councillors, Forces representatives and exService associations. Branch ViceChairman, **Jim Reilly**, laid the cross on behalf of the Branch.

On Remembrance Sunday, Branch Members led by Branch Chairman, **John Brown**, paraded with 40 Sig Regt and the Royal Signals ACF Det to St Marks Parish Church, Belfast. The Branch Standard was in the very capable hands of Standard Bearer **Bill Dixon**, both on parade and in the Church. **Jim Reilly** once again laid the wreath in the Church. On return to Clonaver TAC, a number of crosses were laid at the Tom Maguire Memorial, before we partook of the welcome food as guests of the CO and RSM of 40 Sig Regt.

After a short November Branch meeting, the speaker for the evening was **Capt Rev Duncan Weaver** CF, Resident Padre in Palace Barracks, Holywood, who gave us an insight into the duties and problems of a Padre, particularly when serving with active service Units in Kosovo and in Iraq. Those present were amazed to learn that even in the thick of the action, a Padre is forbidden to use a weapon even in his own defence. I wonder how many people would relish being in that position. The thanks of the Branch go to **Rev Weaver**, and to Asst Secretary, **Carol Cameron**, for arranging the talk

If you are exRoyal Signals (TA or Regular) or were attached at a Sig Unit, why not decide to join us. We need your support. Further details can be had from the Membership Secretary at Blandford. A welcome awaits any serving or exSignaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our website for what's on?

NEWCASTLE AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Secretary **Mr Jim Nelson**
Chairman **Mr Doug Bristow**

With a kind invitation in our pocket, an intrepid band of Geordies descended on Imphal Barracks. After great confusion and a grand tour of York, we eventually arrived and were guided to the bar where we settled down with a glass in each hand.

After the address of welcome by the Chairman and **Brig Wood** we began looking for old pals and comrades from days gone bye. There were a good selection of the Northern Branches in attendance, so this was quite easy. Comrades last seen years ago were found and the tall stories started.

The intrepid band from the north

After a very good curry lunch, we again adjourned to the place of refreshment to continue the tales of yester year. Time eventually caught up with us, and it was time to head back north. Good byes were said to our friends, and with heavy hearts and fond memories we left for home.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

Our final event of 2004 was the annual Christmas supper, at which we enjoyed a splendid buffet laid on by our Social Secretary, **Thelma Wakefield**.

Apart from the grub and the odd shandy, there was an opportunity to exchange Christmas cards, polite chat and probably a few war stories. The evening was rounded off with some hearty carol singing.

Some weeks before, the 'Old Codgers' had enjoyed one of their regular pub lunches, followed a few days later by the quarterly Branch meeting, also held in a local hostelry. Remembrance Day was fitted in to the Branch programme, with representation by the Branch at 94 Sig Sqn's Parade in Windsor, and the Salvation Army Service, in the evening, at Reading.

Next years' programme looks as though it is going to be just as busy. In addition to the regular events, there is a plan afoot for a short tour, in the spring, to the Northumbrian countryside, from a base in Darlington. Perhaps there will be a touch of nostalgia as the bus passes Catterick!!

Last but not least, we congratulate Branch Member, **Alec Brown** on the 70th Anniversary of his joining the Corps. He signed on in 1934, and although he initially trained as an Operator Sigs, he switched to Instrument Mech for the rest of his Army career. Apart from UK postings, **Alec** has seen service in India, Iraq and Iran, before he was discharged in 1946.

We are an active Branch, and if you would like to know more about us, details can be found on the RSA website.

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) HJB Wall MBE TD JP**
Secretary **ND Wamer JP**

The Chairman of the Shropshire Branch, **John Wall** and his wife **Philomena**, decided to do something different to benefit their community when arranging to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary. They organised a Charity Modern Sequence Dance,

an event enjoyed by many of their numerous friends and Association Members, and which raised the sum of £510.00, for the County Air Ambulance. The photograph shows **John** and **Philomena** presenting the cheque to the Chairman of Shropshire County Council, **Maj (Retd) Adrian Coles MBE TD**, and **Mr Frank Leath OBE JP BA**, Immediate Past Chairman of Shropshire Area Health Authority, who accepted it on behalf of the County AirAmbulance.

YORK BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Spray**
Secretary **Bob Cook**

We were fairly busy during the month of October involved in various activities, the first of these being a presentation to the then CO, 2 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Stuart MacRostie MBE**. Have you ever tried to make an appointment with a CO who is in the throes of handing over - (Mission (nearly) Impossible)? But with dogged determination, the efforts of our President managed just that.

Promptly at 12.30hrs on 7 October, our President, **Maj (Retd) B Abbiss** and a party of four Members assembled at RHQ to meet with the CO in his office. There, the President thanked **Lt Col MacRostie** for his support during his comd, and presented him with a commemorative gift on behalf of the Branch. It was a painting depicting three scenes of York, and was graciously accepted. After a few words and a glass or two of bubbly, our party departed.

Saturday 9 October was a bright but chilly day, ideal weather for a parade. The occasion being the Freedom Parade through the City of York on which Army Cadets and small group of us joined with 2 Sig Regt to march. The Chief Executive of York, **David Atkinson**, read the Freedom Scroll, and then the Lord Mayor, **Janet Looker**, inspected the Parade. After the formalities, we then marched through York, led by the 34 Sig Regt (Northern) Band, passing Mansion House, where **Cllr Looker** took the Salute. The march was well received by the crowds in York, as we made our way back to the start point, where the Parade was dismissed and we dispersed. The Members who attended, thoroughly enjoyed the parade, and had quite a jaunty step as the Regtl March played us through York

Sunday 24 October found a group of Members braving the elements and journeying to Middlesborough for a social occasion. Those attending had a great time and gave full marks for the hospitality.

On the 26 November the Annual Dinner was held in the Sgts' Mess, Imphal Bks, York. This was a glittering occasion with a long table resplendent with Mess silver glistening in the candlelight complementing the ladies in their finery. Our GOH was 2IC, 2 Sig Regt, **Maj I Buchanan**, who, after the toasts, gave the gathering some food for thought with his comments and ideas on the future of the Corps. We then repaired to the anteroom, where we participated in a Horse Race Meeting. This was well supported, with a percentage of the takings going to charity. Our thanks for the organisation of this event go to **Willy Grey**, who appears to have taken on the role of Mr Fixit for the Branch.

The Branch would like to take this opportunity to welcome **Lt Col John Botterill** as CO, 2 Sig Regt, and trust it will not be too long before we make his acquaintance. Owing to the exigencies of the Service (I love that phrase), he was unable to be present at the Annual Dinner.

2004 has been very good year for our Branch, and we anticipate that the Committee, with the help of the members, will continue the good work in 2005. With that, we wish you all a Happy New Year.

AIR FORMATION SIGNALS REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Dr David Vickers**
Secretary **Mr Dennis Egan**

While on holiday in North Wales during the last week of October 2004, **Colin Morgan** visited the founder member of what is now the AFSR Association, **Maldwyn Evans**.

After spending an enjoyable and interesting afternoon with **Maldwyn** and his wife, **Margaret**, **Colin** left it till last to inform him that he had an official duty to perform. On behalf of the AFSR Association, **Colin** presented **Maldwyn** with a framed Certificate, and Badge, representing Honour Membership of the Royal Signals Association, along with a personal letter of congratulations from RSA Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle**.

Maldwyn Evans being presented with his Honour Membership Badge and Certificate by Colin Morgan

Maldwyn was overwhelmed, and a little astonished. He was receiving recognition some twenty years after he had inaugurated the first gathering of a group of exsignallers, which in turn progressed to the AFSR Association, which now numbers well over 300.

It was a high note on which to end the visit, which we feel certain will be long remembered.

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mr Mick Teague**
Secretary **Mr Tony Hull**

We would like to welcome the following new members: **Peter Barnett** from Cyprus**, David Patch** from Guernsey and **Charles 'Wag' Jeffries** from East Sussex. It would appear that advertising in magazines such as *The Legion* and *Yours* is still paying off, as well as our website. http://bebadorset.tripod.com for which we must thank our Webmaster, **John Harrison**.

We have been invited by Guernsey Branch to attend the last celebration of Liberation Day on 9 May 05 and take part in their parade. A party of approximately twenty ex-Beverley Boys hope to attend, staying in Guernsey from 4-10 May.

Our exTreasurer, **Arthur Cotillard** and his wife **Daphne**, have settled well into their new home in Australia and would welcome visits from anyone who might be on holiday out there from the U.K. Their email address is: dapart@optusnet.com.au

THE POLISH METAL DETECTOR MK1

BBC Scotland is currently working on a series of programmes provisionally entitled *Coast*, which will tell a range of stories from around the British coastline.

As part of this series, they are researching a the story of how a Polish Signals Officer, **Lt Josef Stanislaw Kosacki** invented the first portable electronic mine detector, the Polish Metal Detector Mk1, whilst stationed at St Andrews, Fife during 1942. But they are a bit lacking in detail on the story, and are trying all avenues, including *The WIRE*.

It is just possible that, among our readers, there is someone who knew **Lt Kosacki**, or the metal detector. If so, Assistant Producer, **Dearbhla McNulty**, would like to hear from you. She can be contacted on 0141 338 3109 or dearbhla.mcnuly@bbc.co.uk.

CORRESPONDENCE

GIBRALTAR VISITS, EVENTS AND HOSPITALITY

From: **Robert Chitty**
'Althea'
32 Fourgates
Menheniot
Liskeard
Cornwall
PL14 3SR

Dear Sir

I refer to the article on Gibraltar in the October *WIRE* by **Ian McKay** of the Edinburgh Branch, RSA.

My wife and I visited The Rock, as we do annually, for a 2-week break in August 04. We were there for the Tercentenary Celebrations, and being an affiliated Member of the Liskeard Branch of the Royal Naval Assn, and an Honorary Member of the Royal Gibraltar Regt, I can appreciate **Ian's** pleasure as the hospitality afforded to him by their Gibraltarian hosts.

During our stay, we were guests at the presentation of the Freedom of Gibraltar to the Royal Navy after 300 years, the Guard Mounting Ceremony of the Royal Marines, and various other celebrations as guests of the Regt.

As a Corps member, I am particular honoured and proud to be the only non-resident Member of the Royal Gibraltar Regt Assn and proudly wear their tie when in Gibraltar, but the Corps tie when on Remembrance and other occasions, such as 21 October, Trafalgar Day.

I am regularly in contact with all my friends, especially the editor of the *Gibraltar Chronicle*, who publishes my articles, and may I say thank you to **Ian McKay** for his splendid article on his visit, and through your columns thank him for his appreciative words. All my Gibraltarian friends and comrades who have read them thank him for his kind words.

Certa Cito...

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

RONALD LEIGH MANSELL

Cheryl Baylis is trying to out more about her late grandfather, **Ronald Leigh Mansell**, who served with Royal Signals in Burma during WW2.

Ronald was born in 1926 in Pontyclun, South Wales. He was known to have sustained a head injury during his service, but he survived the War.

If anyone can provide further information to add to this, **Cheryl** would be very grateful. Her address is:

31 Glenside
Pontnewydd
Cwmbran
Torfaen
NP4 1 BN

7 TRAINING REGIMENT PASSING OUT PARADE

Richard Gibson in looking for anyone who might have a photograph of the passing out parade of 7 Trg Regt, Catterick somewhere around 16 - 19 May 1952.

If you can help, please call **Richard** on 01795 472889 or email: gibby@auckdrive.freeserve.co.uk

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

A MILITARY DISASTER – *by Col (Retd) Paul Randall, ex- 8th Army Sig Regt*

It was exactly 62 years ago. At long last, after the hard fought Battle of Alamein, the 8th Army commenced its famous advance resulting in the capture of the whole of North Africa. By the end of November, we were well on our way to Benghazi, in spite of mine-strewn roads and dreadful weather. It was all too good to be true.

Our orders were to establish Army HQ outside Benghazi to avoid constant air attacks, and my old friend **Tony** and I were sent separately, carrying Officers Mess equipt and the precious supply of fresh water. It was a joy to reach the Jebel Akbar, the so-called Green Belt, and to drive through small towns like Derna and Barce, where there were Italian settlements. It was wonderful to see houses, streams and vegetation.

As dusk fell, we found ourselves in the little settlement of Giovanni Berta. The cultivated grapes here and the village were dominated by an enormous wine factory. We were parched, and could hardly believe it when we turned on the taps and gallons of lovely red wine poured out. Once we had sated ourselves, we emptied all the containers of water, and filled them with wine.

CRAMPTON – WO1(RSM) RA Crampton (Ron) died on 31 October 2004.

Ron Crampton was born on 12 August 1931 and spent his early childhood in India, arriving in UK at the age of 15 to complete his education. He had other ideas about this, and enlisted on 7 July 1948 as a Boy Soldier in Royal Signals. He did his trade training at Harrogate, and in October 1950, he was on his way to Korea, where he served until March 1953. Thereafter, he served in UK, Cyprus, BAOR, the Middle East and Malta before completing his service in August 1971.

In the words of his daughter, **Ron** was a modest man, a true gentleman with never a bad word to say about anyone – except Manchester United and Tottenham! He loved sport, especially cricket, and was very active in later life, climbing Sydney Harbour Bridge only four years ago. From his early days in India, the sense of adventure never left him.

He was a devoted family man, reliable, rock steady, and so very wise.

Ron is survived by his wife, **Mary**, four children and eight grandchildren, and will be sadly missed by them all.

DINSDALE - Sig Ian Matthew Dinsdale died on 2 November 2004.

Ian Dinsdale was serving with 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Germany, when he was tragically killed in a road traffic accident. A highly valued and popular member of the Sqn, **Ian** will be sadly missed by his comrades. Our deepest sympathy goes to his parents, **Teresa** and **Paul**, and sister, **Helen**.

FERGUSON – Maj JM Ferguson (Jim) died on on 1 November 2004.

Jim Ferguson was born in Paisley on 25 April 1936. He was called up for National Service in Royal Signals in July 1954. After training as an Operator Keyboard, he was posted to the Grobbendonk (Belgium) Sqn of 2 LofC Sig Regt (later to become 16 Sig Regt).

Just prior to his release from National Service in 1956, he met and, married his wife, **Louise**. He had been bitten by the military bug, and after a year and a half, he reenlisted into the Corps in January 1958, eventually returning to 16 Sig Regt as a WO1(YofS). He was selected for SSC in 1975, and after two years as 2IC 55 Sig Sqn TA, became Regtl QM in 1977. **Jim** served in a variety of units from the small, isolated, det in Belgium to HQ UKLF. He served with static comms units in Aden, Hong Kong and Rheindahlen, and field units such as 1 Div (during Integration), Corps HQ and 24 Bde His commissioned service saw him also at Air Support and HQ Trg Gp (8 Sig Regt).

Jim was a practical communicator, who strove to keep things simple. His CEIs were masterpieces. **Jim** took PVR in 1987 to take up a Tels Liaison Officer post with JHQ Det of 4 Sig Gp (Tels Div Germany). Following the end of the Cold War, when numerous reorganisations were taking place in National and NATO elements on mainland Europe, he was particularly successful in dealing with the numerous demands of senior National and International Staff Officers, and was fully involved with daily changes that were demanded within the JHQ, HQ ARRC, MND and many isolated dets throughout Germany and the Low Countries.

Jim was diagnosed with cancer in 1998 and spent eighteen months fighting it. He was declared clear in 2000, and quickly got back to full throttle. Following his retirement in 2001, for which he realised his dream of a new Mercedes, he threw himself into developing his garden in Salisbury. He studied gardening matters with a fierce intensity. Yet he still found time to help out in the Corps Museum. Sadly, the cancer returned this year, and despite a brave effort, it became inoperable. **Jim** died at home with **Louise** at his side.

His funeral in Salisbury on 10 November was attended by relatives and friends from all along the way of his life. **Jim** was generous to a fault. He was devoted to **Louise**, their daughters **Grace** and **Tina**, their husbands **Richard** and **Rick**, his grandchildren **Brian**, **Nicola** and the recently arrived **Harry**. He will be sorely missed.

ROSS – Maj RS Ross (Toby) died in January 2004.

Toby joined the Middlesex Yeomanry as a Territorial in May 1936 when it was the Div Sig Regt for the Cavalry Div (and then for the Mobile Div). He was commissioned as a 2Lt in October 1940, and posted to 8 Armd Div Sig Regt. He was promoted to Capt in 1941, and later served as Wireless Officer under **Gen Horrocks** at 30 Corps HQ. He was promoted Maj and posted to 7 Armd Div in October 1943. He remained in the Army until released on 15 April 1946.

ADVERTISEMENTS

MESS KIT FOR SALE

3 piece mess kit, comprising jacket, currently ranked as WO2 (RQMS), waistcoat, lightweight trousers.
Height: 5ft 7ins
Waist (adjustable): 36-38 ins
Chest: 42ins
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Price: £200.00.

George Hayes
7 Hartley Meadow
Whitchurch
Hants
RG28 7BW
Tel: Home: 01256 895232
Work: 01256 897526
Mob: 07768 000055

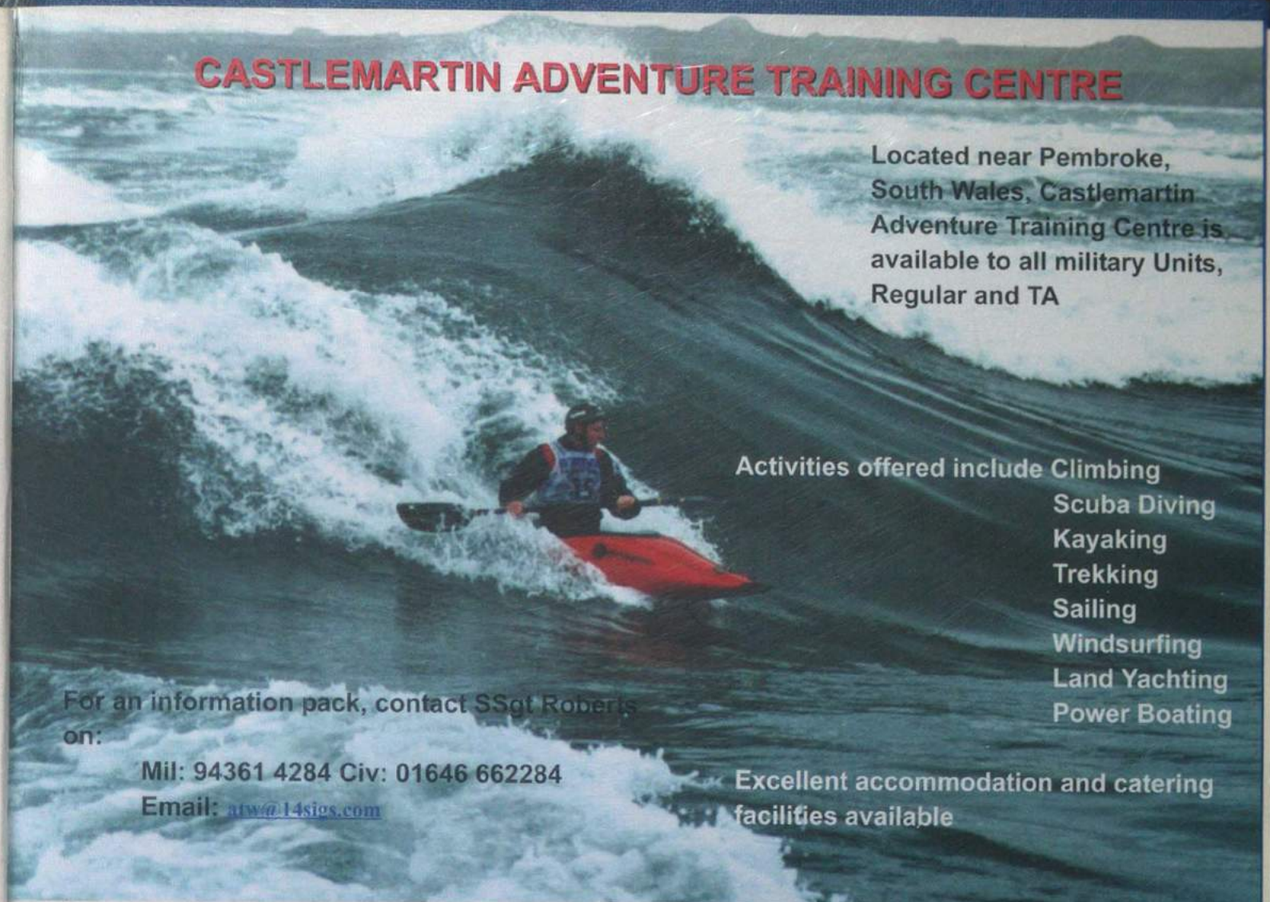
Certa Cito
Lodge No 8925

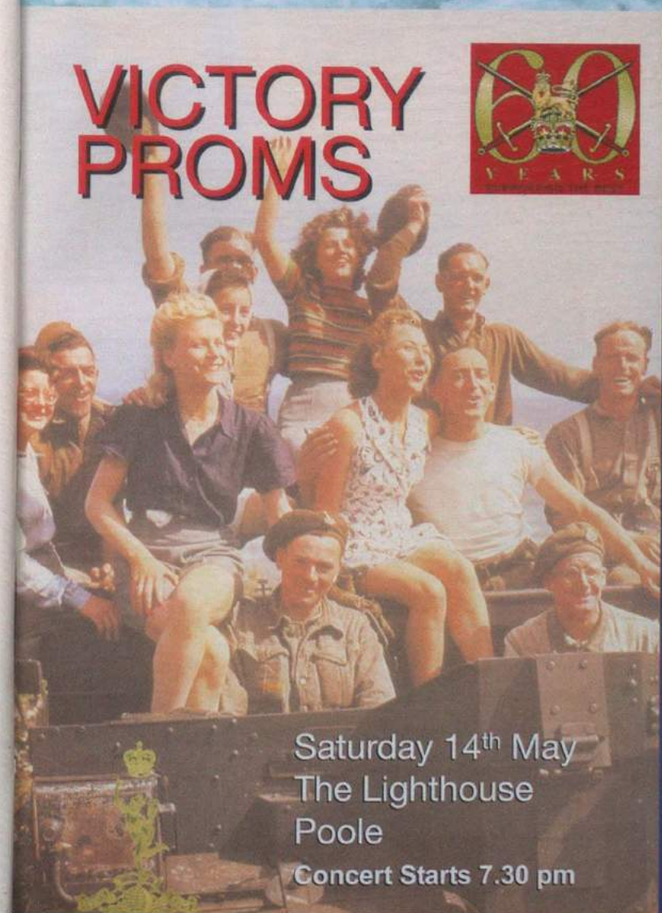
The 25th Anniversary of
Certa Cito Lodge
21st June 2005

All military Freemasons are most cordially invited to attend the 25th Anniversary Meeting of Certa Cito, the Masonic Lodge formed for Members of the Family of Royal Signals, to be held at Freemasons' Hall, London, on Tuesday 21 June 2005.

Further details of the Anniversary Meeting may be obtained from **Hywel Thomas**:

Daytime Telephone: 0207 089 4782
Evening Telephone: 01428 605400
E-mail: hywelthomas@globalnet.co.uk





A Charity Fund-raising Concert
Organised by the Royal Signals Museum
In aid of The Royal Signals Museum Education Trust and The Army Benevolent Fund
IN COMMEMORATION OF VE AND VJ DAY

Featuring
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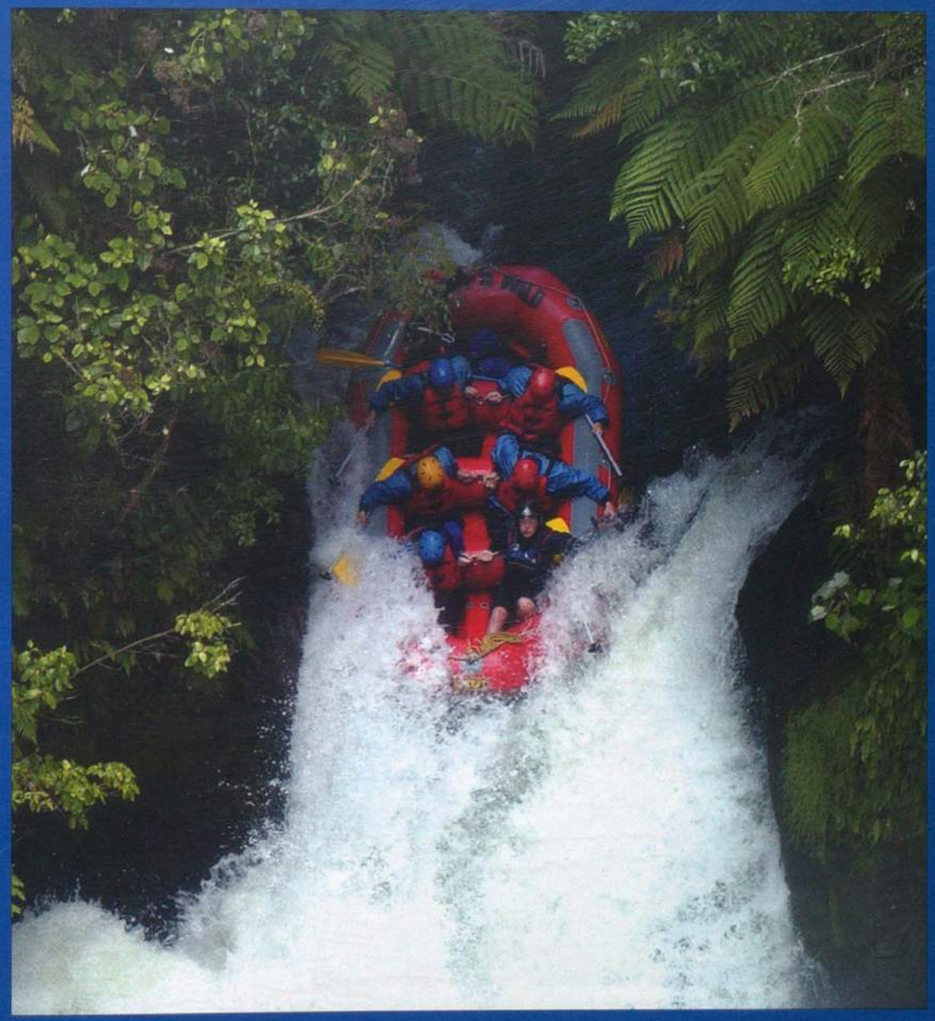
THE Wire

April 2005

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE wire

April 2005



The Royal Corps of Signals

HOW DO YOU GET A PHOTO ON THE FRONT OR BACK COVER OF THE WIRE?

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

'We've been trying for months and we still don't make the front cover. Why?' A frequent comment from many a CO or OC. For one issue, an adjutant presented me with his 'front cover photo' – which we didn't use. But, to his chagrin, we did use another one he had submitted. So what's the answer? Do we just have to get the Editor in a good mood? Or buy him a beer? No, there's more to it than that – but I'll still accept the beer! There are four things I look for: Impact, Relevance, Technical Quality, and Artistic Merit. This is what I mean:-

December 2004. This photo has it all. It has impact; we see immediately who it is and whom she's talking to. When we look closer, we can see by the facial expressions, that the Princess Royal is interacting with the second Gurkha. The focus is good, as is the resolution. It is a 4 megabyte photo.

Impact

The photo must have the power to attract the reader, and draw him or her into the magazine to read what it's all about. A simple rule here: If your Unit has won the Lanyard Trophy, we don't want to see the team lined up giving us cheesy smiles; we want to see them in action, winning the Lanyard Trophy.

Relevance

Not just a pretty picture. Last year, we received a beautiful landscape photo. 'This one's got to be front cover material,' said its enthusiastic sender, 'It's so beautiful; it's got everything.' Well, hardly. I could find precious little to connect it with the story. The old Chinese proverb, 'One picture is worth a thousand words' is as true as it ever was. The rule here is: 'What do you want this photo to say (in support of your story)?' and: 'Does it actually do this?'

Technical Quality

You don't have to be a professional photographer to get a technically good picture. All you need to remember is to get it in focus, to have good contrast, and if it is a digital photo, to have the highest resolution possible. Focus is easy enough to understand, but the notion of contrast may not be. We need for the subject(s) to stand out from the background. Dark things against a dark background won't give us this; nor will camouflaged troops in DPM against a green bushy background. But you can overdo it. It you have a strong light coming through the window behind your subject, his/her face will be lost against it. As for high resolution for digital photos, you need to set your camera to the highest level possible. It may not give you as many photos on your card, but it will give you quality. Another rule is, if it will fit on a floppy disk it may not be high enough resolution. We need 1 megabyte or higher for each photo.

February 2003. Here, the background is just enough to place the event, but not too much to detract from the subjects. The joyous expression on the face of the handicapped child carries a strong message, as does that of the two soldiers. The DPM on each soldier contrasts sufficiently with the two different backgrounds. The focus is good, and at 1 megabyte, so is the resolution.

Artistic Merit

We could say a lot about artistic merit, but we don't have the space. Simply put, artistic merit is all about having a picture that it pleasing to look at. What's in the photo needs to be well balanced, rather than all bunched up in one corner. The focal point needs to show what you are trying to say with the picture. Where possible, we need to see more of people's faces and expressions, rather than just their backs. When you take the photo, always have a quick look at the background to avoid things like the appearance of a tree growing out of someone's ear. And don't cut off people's arms and legs.

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Established in 1920

The Wire

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Please refer to *Guidelines for Contributors*.

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Editor Maj (Retd) B L Redshaw
Deputy Editor Miss D S Haselden

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FRONT COVER

Serious White Water Rafting

During EX APHRODITE MAORI, CCU Cyprus went white water rafting. Here is one team coming down a 21ft waterfall on the Kaituna River in New Zealand's North Island. The full story is on page 122.

REAR COVER

Grand Slalom

A combined RSS/11 Sig Regt team did particularly well in the Corps Alpine Ski Championships in November (see page 141) **WO2 Neil Pollitt** took top award for the Individual Combination event. He went on to do well in the Army Ski Championships. Here he is on the Grand Slalom.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

The Charge of the Light Brigade

As of January 2005,1 Mech Bde has re-rôled as 1 Light Bde. Consequently, 209 Sig Sqn becomes 1 Light Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. This has involved them climbing out of their panzers and squeezing into Landrovers and Pinzgauers.

A World Ranking in Indoor Rowing

A scratch, but enthusiastic team from 39 Inf Bde and Sig Sqn (213) entered in a 100km rowing competition in Ballymena towards the end of last year. With no previous experience, very little trg, and with two members short of a full team, they were disappointed, but not very surprised when they came last.

However, their times were crosschecked with every other 100km indoor rowing event held in the world so far – and they found that they have a World ranking of twelfth. They are seriously considering (so they say) the Beijing 2008 Olympics!

Read about this harrowing experience with a joyful ending in 39 Inf Bde and Sig Sqn's report on Page 93.

Tsunami Appeal

1 (UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt have got stuck into raising funds for the Tsunami Appeal. There wasn't a regimental approach. Instead, it was left to each Sqn to use it's own initiative. One sqn auctioned privileges, such a becoming RSM for the day, or avoiding PT. Another had a moustache growing competition. Their report plagiarises Churchill with 'Never before in the field of charity work, has so much been raised for so many by so few.'

Read 1 (UK) Div Sig Regt's story on page 95.

Serving with the Japanese Army

During their deployment on OP TELIC, **Cpl Lynch** and LCpl **Ritchie** of 40 Sig Regt were sent to Al Samawah to join 3 Japanese IRS Gp, known as JAPBAT, to provide comms support for their Engineer group. They must have done a good job, because, at the conclusion of the attachment, they were given a full battalion parade held in their honour, at which the Japanese CO read out a citation and presented them with a medal.

Their story is told by LCpl Ritchie in 40 Sig Regt's report on page 92.

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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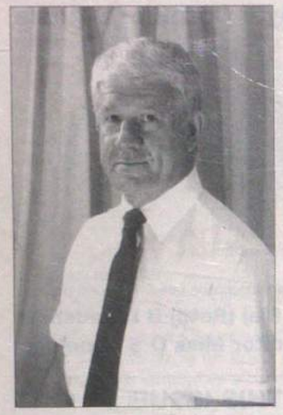


EDITORIAL

By a series of co-incidences, there is quite a lot of coverage of New Zealand in this issue. Interesting reading, I thought, but it wasn't all deliberate – honest. Whilst on holiday in New Zealand in February, I visited most of the RNZSignals Units there (which was planned); then, by chance, CCU Cyprus sent in a story on an AT exped they had done in New Zealand; and hard on the heels of this, was a story from **Maj Matt Crow** RNZSigs, of his experiences on the Coast to Coast race there. But please don't be concerned, it's not my intention that the Commonwealth takes over *The WIRE*!

It is now three years since I became Editor of *The WIRE*. I believe we have come a long way in that time. With the help and encouragement of many people, retired and serving, COs, OCs, NCOs and soldiers, not to mention my Deputy, **Dawn Haselden**, and prior to her, **Maria Field**, we now have a pretty good publication - one of the best, if not the best Corps or Regimental magazines. And there have been other spin-off effects.

This month I had a comment from a young subaltern, who said that it was looking through a copy of *The WIRE* last year, and being impressed with how interesting unit reports in it were, that convinced him to join Royal Signals. Similarly, COs and OCs are now realising and reporting how useful *The WIRE* can be for promoting their Units and helping them with internal Corps recruiting. The Unit profiles we have done during the last year have also helped in this respect. So it is very comforting to receive confirmation that the magazine is contributing to Corps external and internal recruiting, which is one of its four aims.

We now need to do the same for the Retired Corps, i.e. the RSA. We need to make RSA Branch reports more interesting, so that they will attract members of the Serving Corps to join the RSA when, or before, they end their service. It may not be as easy as it is for the Serving Corps.

Branches don't become involved in operations, sport or adventurous training as the Serving Corps does, so it might seem that the scope for interesting stories is limited. However, some Branches do go on battlefield tours; some visit interesting places (such as Kneller Hall); some go on excursions in UK or abroad; and many join with TA or Regular Units for social or welfare events.

So there is scope there for more interesting stories, and with a bit of thought, they can be written in appealing ways, rather than, '...first we did this, and next we did that...' And we can leave out the domestic intra-Branch issues, which have less of a Corps-wide appeal - things such as Meeting reports, which are more appropriate to Branch Newsletters. So Branch scribes, here's a challenge. Please see what you can do. And don't forget, I'm here ready to help you; you have only to write, call or email me.

These days, battlefield tours are very well run, and we can learn a lot from them – often more than we expect. On a personal note, I can recall when I was in the Falklands last year, the one I took part in on Mt Longden.

It all came alive for me, and I could really imagine that I was attacking that feature with 3 Para. I had read many books on the Falklands War, but this tour gave me much clearer an insight into that conflict.

I can well understand (and I'm always impressed by) the effect that battlefield tours have on our younger soldiers. They seem to learn a great deal from them, and are always inspired by them, which clearly shows the part they play in the development of our soldiers. We have a number of reports of such tours in unit reports in this issue.

In one of these, ATR Lichfield's contribution, **Sig Baydem's** account of their Battlefield Tour to Normandy (page 89) clearly shows the breadth of understanding of the planning, execution, the contribution and the consequences that event, that this young soldier now has. It is to be hoped that more COs and OCs recognise their value and promote, plan, organise and debrief more and more battlefield tours.

BOOK REVIEWS

CERTA CITO LODGE - THE FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS *- by Hywel Thomas*

Freemasonry is believed to have originated in England in the late 16th or early 17th centuries, descending directly, or indirectly from the craft of the medieval stonemason. The part played by the military in the development of Freemasonry, both home and abroad, has been considerable since a Master Gunner to King Charles 1 was admitted to a lodge in Edinburgh in 1634. In 1641, the same lodge admitted a General and a Quartermaster and five years later, at Warrington, a Royalist Captain and a Parliamentarian were also made Masons.

In his book, published to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of Certa Cito, the Lodge formed in 1980 for members of the family of Royal Signals, **Hywel Thomas** traces the spread of Freemasonry around the world by soldiers and sailors of the Crown using 'travelling warrants' as their authority to establish several hundred new lodges on behalf of the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland. The book describes how Freemasonry, or the Craft as it is known, was developed, how it established its present infrastructure, coped with the privations of warfare and hostile public opinion and has nurtured and sustained its important relationship with the Armed Forces.

Hywel Thomas, a Founder of the Lodge, summarises the history of Certa Cito over the past twenty-five years. Details are provided of the Masonic and military service of the 200 members of the Lodge over this period, all of whom who served in the Corps, including several quite famous personalities: **Maj Victor King**, who served 55 years with the Colours, enlisted as a boy Sapper, joined the Corps in 1920 and became the first Foreman of Signals; **Brig Claude Fairweather**, who served with the Chindits in Burma and Commanded 2 Div Sig Regt, the First Master of the Lodge who remained an active member well into his nineties; **Bill Hart**, who was Senior RSM in the Corps immediately after WW2; **Col Geoffrey Dicker**, Colonel Commandant; and many others.

The book, which contains many references to other publications that chronicle the role of the military within the Craft, aims to stimulate interest in Freemasonry in general and in Certa Cito in particular, from current and future members of the serving and retired Corps.

The book will be launched at the 25th Anniversary Meeting of Certa Cito at Freemasons' Hall in London on 21 June 2005. It will then be on sale in the Corps Museum Bookshop at £8.00, all proceeds from its sale going to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

HERFORD HALF MARATHON

201 Sig Sqn are organising the 2005 Herford Half Marathon, which will take place on Sunday, 22 May 2005.

The entry fee for the event is £15, which will also covers your T-Shirt. The top 50 participants will also receive a medal.

Entry deadline is 2 May. For an entry form, or for more information, contact Lt Oosterveen or SSgt Abbott on Herford Mil: 3572, Civ: +49 5221 9953572.

HIGH QUALITY SNCOs REQUIRED

HQ SOinC(A) is looking for volunteers, male and female, of any trade, who hold the rank of Cpl (must be recommended for Sgt), Sgt or SSgt to fill Royal Signals Recruiter posts.

The length of tour is 30 months, and you must have at least 12 months left in the Army on completion of the posting as a Recruiter. Successful candidates will attend a tenday attachment at the recruiting office, followed by the four-week Regular Army Recruiters' Course prior to reporting for duty.

The following posts are expected to become vacant as shown:

Recruiting Office	Reporting Date
Croydon (London)	October 05
Middlesborough	November 05
Warrington	January 06
Swansea	January 06
Bournemouth	February 06
Carlisle	April 06
Milton Keynes	April 06
Doncaster	April 06
Hull	April 06
Birmingham	April 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 Mil: 94371 2132 or Civ: 01258 482132.

SOinC(A) places a high priority on filling these important posts with the very best SNCOs the Corps has to offer. So, if you have what it takes, go for it.

COMMAND LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT COURSES

The Royal Signals Senior and Junior CLM courses have now been running since January 04. There have been 8 courses at each level and Military Leadership Group has seen 272 and 305 Students respectively pass though their doors. There has been some available places on most of the courses to date and individuals are reminded that they too have an important part to play in managing there own careers.

MLG appreciate how busy the field Army is at present, but if students find themselves available for a course at short notice, then they should ask the OC or Adjt to telephone Records or MLG. If there are available places on the relevant course, then bid for it. MLG are pleased to see and train soldiers at any time, even at sort notice after all; it's their job.

These courses are designed to give Senior and Junior NCOs the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a Tp SNCO and Det Comd in and out of barracks. The SCLM course is run over a 3-week period, and the JCLM run over 4 weeks. NCOs are challenged both mentally and physically.

During the JCLM course, the students gain their Defence Instructional Techniques (DIT) Qualification in Week 1 and in Weeks 2 and 2 they cover the in-bks element of CLM. Week 4 involves the special-to-arms trg, where the students spend a week in Brecon, carrying out defensive and offensive operations, giving the students a chance to apply their leadership skills in the field. The SCLM follows a similar format to the JCLM, but without the DIT element and with a higher level of information.

The feedback from both courses has proved very positive, and they are constantly undergoing fine-tuning to allow for the maximum amount information to be passed on to the students. So do not listen to the rumours that these are old courses under new names. Come and find out for yourself and learn more about how to lead, manage and command. More importantly, you may learn a lot more about yourself.

The Warrant Officers CLM (WCLM) is delivered by Comd Training Group (CTG), and they have delivered 4 courses since January 04, with 128 students coming through. The course consists of 3 days' mandated non-operational comd leadership and management content, as identified for potential WOs across the Army. There are also 2 days of updates on CLM material appropriate to Royal Signals.

DITrg(A) has incorporated amendments to the mandated element of CLM at all levels, in April, June and October 2004, resulting in the up-dating of both the Course Training Plans (CTPs) and the delivery material. Internal evaluation in accordance with DSAT has been carried out throughout the year, and this has allowed some fine-tuning of the courses within the constraints of the training objectives. External Evaluation will be carried out by DITrg(A) and other agencies to ensure that CLM is sustained and maintained well into the future.

LEADERSHIP

The Royal Signals Leadership Course is run 3 times a year, with a target population for each course of 20 students. Currently these target numbers are not being met. Only 48 students have come through the last 4 courses. Units are encouraged to submit applications for this course in accordance with the course purpose, which is to develop and assess leadership qualities and skills in Royal Signals potential supervisors and potential officers. The current trend does suggest that some units are using it as a JNCO Cadre, or to put soldiers into a pecking order for Promotion Boards. It is important for the right students to attend this course, and they will find great benefit from what they learn about

themselves, and also learn about each other. This course has consistently received excellent feedback, with many students regarding it as the best course they have ever attended.

In response to an External Validation carried out by TDT SOInC(A) and also in response to the introduction of CLM, a revised RSTO document has been developed for this course. From this, a revised Course Training Plan will be developed, for delivery in April 2005. There is much that is very good about the present course, and it is expected that many features will be retained. However, there will be a greater emphasis on assessment, and an effort not to duplicate the delivery of CLM. In general, the course will be attended after JCLM and prior to SCLM, and the target population will come from those individuals expected to take up Supervisory appointments in the future, and selected by CO/OCs as benefiting from this particular training and development.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, February 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col IW Mackenzie	OCE HQ Land
Col RA Sharp	DI (SI)
Lt Col WP Crowley OBE	G6 HQ Land
Lt Col Dryburgh	HS Pending Terminal LVE SO1/Chief Instructor
Lt Col CR Owen	LAIPT
Lt Col CH Turner	Royal School of Signals
Maj J Carmichael	DRFC
Maj D Gordon	Glasgow and Strathclyde UOTC
A/Maj EF Clee	Air Warfare Centre (AE)
A/Maj J Howell-Walsley	36 Sig Regt
A/Maj M Keech	DI(SI)
A/Maj JR Knight	Systems HQ SOIC(A)
Capt MA Bosworth	MOD A Block
Capt A Dick	2 Sig Regt
Capt SM Knight	2 Sig Regt
Lt JE Ellis	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
Lt CM Northridge	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt

OFFICERS, March 2005

Lt Col JP Wilson	CD Branch HQ Land
Maj J Doughty	JSSU Digby
Maj NJ Makepeace	Batcis IPT 1
Maj LD Roddy	Concepts HQ SOinC(A)
Maj JST Sykes	238 Signal Sqn
A/Maj D Stapleton	JSSU Cheltenham
A/Maj ES Wilkinson	HQ APHCS
Capt MA Bosworth	HQ Northern Ireland
Capt E Grieve	2 Sig Regt
Capt SE Pittaway	1 Sig Regt
Capt G Shakespear	Defence School of Transport
Lt KT Bates	ATR Lichfield
Lt L Griffiths	ATR Lichfield
Lt CM Yarroll	222 Sig Sqn 3 (UK) Div

WOS and SNCOs, February 2005

WO1 DL Evans	Royal School of Signals
WO1 M Johnson	2 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD G Dewar	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 RD DP Sheerin	8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO1 RD MP Townley	2 Sig Regt
WO2 RD C Marlowe	11 Sig Regt
WO2 AJM Hewson	D CBM(A) Knowledge Enviroment
A/WO2 RD NL Hunt	2 Sig Regt
SSgt YofS TC Vanandel	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt D Copley	16 Sig Regt
SSgt KL Crawford	Cyprus Communication Unit
SSgt AW Dutton	19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt LJ Ellaway	SP SCM IPT
SSgt RM Goldsmith	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
SSgt AD Hayler	2 Sig Regt
SSgt G Sullivan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/SSgt B Robson	11 Sig Regt
A/SSgt DJ Wilson	16 Sig Regt
Sgt JT Beaumont	Royal School of Signals
Sgt D Gauchi	DISCU HQ
Sgt DJ Hankin	224 Sig Sqn
Sgt MJC Holt	7 Sig Regt
Sgt DE Jones	Royal School of Signals
Sgt RJB Luke	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt P McKenna	HQ SOInC(A)
Sgt DJ Pickard	36 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt GO Prydie	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt CH Teale	Royal School of Signals
Sgt WGD Wright	36 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt T Fairbairn	Royal School of Signals

WOS and SNCOs, March 2005

WO1 RD TA Henry	11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD DM Abson	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 RD TJ Lappin	7 Sig Regt
WO2 RD J Tinnion	30 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD MA Concepcion	2 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD J Mason	LSP Oman
A/WO2 RD DC Whitworth	7 Sig Regt
SSgt TP Blakely	BMATT Sierra Leone
SSgt SE Perry	HQ Land
SSgt DC Whitworth	7 Sig Regt
SSgt SJ Young	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt RM Groundsell	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Sgt MG Johnston	15 Sig Regt
Sgt DM Lamont	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt N McAnulty	39 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt RJ Oconnor	7 Sig Regt
Sgt DW Offord	Royal School of Signals
Sgt D Sawyers	628 Sig Tp
Sgt JS Thomson	21 Sig Regt
Sgt D Wildish	36 Sig Regt (V)

RETIREMENTS

February 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Mullender - Lt Col JE Mullender	05 Feb 05
Norris - Maj JM Norris	01 Feb 05
Parfitt - Col P Parfitt	16 Feb 05
Standen - Maj JM Standen	22 Feb 05

March 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Knightly Brown - Capt R Knightly Brown	31 Mar 05
Stretch - Col MK Stretch	25 Mar 05

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Tony Urwin**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Neil Pollitt**

KUKRI TROOP – *by Cpl Dan Hine*

The Tp has hit the ground running this year with the tech workshop moving out of the garage to make way for CORMORANT, the arrival of the latest Yeomen's course, and RSIT appearing on the group radar.

We have recently said farewell to **Sgt MJ Holt**, who will hopefully be given a proper job at his next unit.

We have also said a sort of goodbye to **LCpl Tracey Ardron**, who finds herself elsewhere in the School on her Class One course.

Soon to go is **Cpl Si Harris**, who will be taking his specialist knowledge to Germany within the next month.

Welcomes are extended to **Sgt Tracey Fairburn**, who comes to work in the Cell; and **Cpls Ben Redfern** and **Dan Hine**, who have come to support **Sgt Robbo Robinson** in his technical endeavours.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Noddy Baugh**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Bob Lawrence**

BOWMAN SYSTEM MANAGEMENT SECTION
– by Capt Phil Tonks

Bowman System Management Section has now become a reality. So far the Section has been nailed to its desks conducting course design and development. On 31 January, the wheels started turning with the running the first All Arms Regimental Signal Officers' Course. By the end of February, the remainder of us will run the first steady-state Tri-Service BOWMAN System Managers' course.

If your unit is interested in places on the Steady State courses, check out the full dates on Defence Net: www.blandford.army.r.mil.uk and look under Training Plans in the G3 box.

OPERATOR SECTION – by SSgt Steve Bartleet

Now that CLANSMAN has had its day, it's time for change. Antennas and Procedures will still be taught but Equipments will make way over the next 12 months or so for BOWMAN. Most of the instructors have been BOWMANised.

Whilst all this cross-training has been going on, we have the sad task of saying goodbye to three well known and long standing members of the team. **Mick Altham**, **Tony Luckman** and **Grahame Nichol** have decided to call it a day, and will be leaving us shortly. Yes, with combined totals of more than 50 years' instructional commitment and 100 years of military service comms, it's time for a ZKJ from these call-signs. The whole group would like to wish them a happy, long and active retirement.

COMMAND SECTION – *by Sgt Sean Jackson*

It had been a quiet period up until Christmas to allow the group to get away and become BOWMANised, with members of staff completing Advanced Signaller and System Manager (Formation) courses.

Straight after Christmas we had Troop Commanders' Course 60 arrive on our doorstep, frothing at the mouth with eagerness to be educated in the ways of CNR management. Four weeks later, they became the managers of the future.

As for EX SEARCHING GLANCE, well all those previous notes from other courses were of no use, as the new Capt RM has completely reformatted the ex for the better, even if one or two of his ideas were a little too RM in places!!

EXERCISE RADEX DRAGON III - *by Cpl Tom O'Hanlon*

The latest in a series of RADEX-led AT exs departed camp on Saturday 8 January, and after a 14 hr journey, arrived at Haus Magnus Lodge in Wertach, Bavaria.

On Monday, the first day of skiing, the novice group found themselves trying to stand up on skis, while four- and five-year olds were flying past them and laughing. Meanwhile the intermediate/advanced group spent the morning on some easier runs, as some of the group had not taken to the planks for several years.

There is always one slow starter, and **Cpl Tom O'Hanlon** was the group's volunteer. By the end of the day, the novice group was off the beginners' slopes and the intermediates had had their confidence restored, despite **SSgt John Batts'** attempt at an emergency stop with his ski under his body while doing Mach 10 down a red slope.

Tuesday saw the novice group getting the basics back after they had forgotten them all, much to the annoyance of their instructor, **LCpl Ben McGinn**. The high point of the day was the instructor skiing backwards, taking photos, and creaming in, much to the amusement of the locals.

Ready for the piste

The next couple of days skiing were spent by beginners slowly but surely improving their skills and building confidence, while the intermediates spent their time on some more difficult runs, with some going off-piste.
The last day was spent with the whole group skiing together on red slopes. The novices had achieved their Basic Ski Proficiency Award, whilst the intermediates were well on their way to attaining the Advanced Ski Proficiency Award. A thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding time was had by all, with everyone now looking forward to EX RADEX DRAGON IV, hopefully sometime in the spring.

POWER SECTION
– by SSgt Guy Padfield

The section is now entering another busy period with the changeover to the new generators, which are already coming into service.

You never know what will appear in the section on an almost daily basis. It's a tad like pot luck, with a variety of subjects to teach, there is always something new in the morning.

The section has had a good sort out and "out with the old and in with the new" is an understatement. Things just keep on moving forward - for the better we may add. We are now all looking forward to the coming year so we can all drive on and take our trade into a new era.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1 SA Hadley**

Lt Col MJ Fensom took command of the Regt from **Maj IA Walton** on Friday 7 January. **Lt Col Fensom** joins us from the post of CI Systems Div RSS.

Lt Col Fensom takes command from Maj Walton

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RCSigs
SSM **WO2 C Overton**

GORDON'S CUP 2005

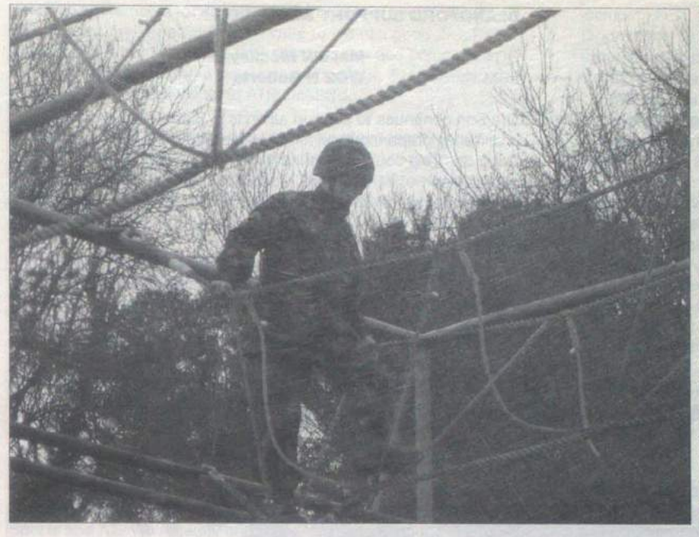
Like previous years, 1 (Ouston) Sqn struggled to fill 2 teams for the Gordon's Cup due to the high turnaround of soldiers. However, **SSgt Chappell** and **Cpl Yeomans** would not admit defeat, and set about this seemingly impossible task. After many hours of name juggling, they managed to fill one team, recalling **Sigs Abouda** and **Davies** from 3 Sqn to be the female reps.

With five days to the competition, we still did not have a full second team. Then as if by magic, 10 Ghurkhas arrived fresh from ITC Catterick, and raring to get stuck in.

The teams then under went an intense trg regime conducted by the Sqn cadre, covering subjects such as 9mm pistol, recognition and comd task trg. After watching the Gurkhas practising the assault course, we began the competition day feeling quietly confident of a win over the other Sqns.

As the day progressed, it was very close, with our Sqn lying in 2nd place before going into the last event. Having had a technical victory in the log run we knew we had a fighting chance of an overall victory.

As the teams began the Landrover push, it was an open competition. With just a couple of points separating the three teams, anyone could win. But through sheer might and



Very carefully, a Gurkha Sig takes to the rope bridge

determination, 1 Sqn were the fastest team, clinching the overall victory from 2 Sqn to become Gordon's Cup Champions 2005, finally taking the trophy off 3 Sqn for the first time in years.

We would like to thank the Marshall of the day, **WO2(SSM) Overton** and our unofficial sponsor's Jacob's Cream Crackers.

HARROGATE CUP VOLLEYBALL *- by Sig Narara*

Our volleyball team was made up of 7 of my fellow Fijians and **Sig Coughlan**. We were quietly confident that we could win this event, as we play volleyball all the time at home. Beaufighter Tp provided the most competition, and the game was really challenging, making us defend more than we would normally like to.

A special mention should go to **Sig Bibi**, who had an excellent game; **Sig Suka**, who kept the team going' and **Sig Tabarea**, who made sure he ruined any chances the other teams had.

The hard smashes produced by **Sigs Douglas** and **Tabaka**, and my killer serve left the other teams defenceless.

Preparation for the competition was quite hard. We had developed our own game plan, and thankfully, this paid off.

The Winning Volleyball Team

The cheering from our supporters also ensured we walked away with the Cup. Thanks go to **Cpl Dawson**, who organised the team, and all the team supporters. Without their support the boys could not have done it.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj IJ Carter**
SSM **SSgt Hounsell**

January saw the Sqn welcoming **Maj Carter** and biding farewell to **Maj Youngson** to America. **WO2(SSM) Williams** also departed, leaving the Army after completing 22 years' service. We wish him well in his new career as a NVQ assessor in Germany. We also welcome **Cpl Dom Reynolds** to Beaufighter Tp.

After a well deserved Christmas break, the Sqn swung back into action with an inter Sqn competition (CATTERICK SUN), a one-day event consisting of ten arduous events, such as log race and assault course, all of which were in preparation for the Gordon's Cup competition.

On the build-up to the Gordon's Cup, a number of days' extra trg were needed to develop the Phase 2 soldiers to the required standard, enabling them to take part effectively in events such as weapon handling, vehicle recognition, BCDT and comd tasks. They were all instructed by the Sqn Cadre.

We started the year with the Harrogate Cup competition, the first event being Volleyball. 2 Sqn entered a male and female team. The male team came third and the female team won the woman's event. The results were undoubtedly aided by the effective trg and coaching conducted by **Cpl Chelsea Reynolds** of Beaufighter Tp.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj RM Jones**
SSM **WO2 Ward**

GORDON'S CUP COMPETITION

The Gordon's Cup Competition was held on Saturday 22 January, and involved all three Phase 2 Trg Sqns in a series of Military based stands. 3 Sqn have held this Trophy for the past six seasons of the Competition, and the plan was to retain it one more time! After several hrs of intense battling between the teams, it was clear that this particular competition was going to be very close, with only 3 points separating all three Sqns.

It was also clear that the winners of the final stand would be the holders of the Gordon's Cup – but what would it involve?

As the Regt stood by on Hawke Square, the final stand was laid out. It involved each team pushing a SWB Landrover to a marked point where it would stop, and each team had to don NBC suits. Once out of the suits, they then pushed the vehicle forward to another checkpoint, where they each had to eat a number of Dry Crackers, before continuing to push the vehicle over the finishing line.

This became 3 Sqn's downfall! After several weeks of intense physical trg, Comd Task practice and research into the Corps Values Standards and Ethos to prepare us for a win, we failed dismally in the final event, becoming the slowest Cracker eaters in the Regt!

Congratulations therefore go to the new winners 1 (Ouston) Sqn, who are the new holders of the Gordon's Cup – but only until September this year, when we meet again to return the trophy to its rightful owners!

INSTALLATION SYSTEMS ENGINEER AWARD

Congratulations go to **Sig Lee Jolley** for gaining Top Student on the first Inst Sys Basic Recruit Course, which was held in Blandford over the period 11 October 04 – 02 February 05. **Sig Jolley** was presented with a PDA by the sponsoring company, Elonex, during a presentation ceremony held in Blandford on 01 February 05.

Sig Jolley is now looking forward to joining his new unit, 216 Sig Sqn in April 05, after completing the remainder of his driver trg modules. The rest of the course are each congratulated on an impressive academic course performance, and they too look forward to their new postings over the forthcoming weeks.

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj JW Mackay**
SSM **WO2 N Roberts**

The Sqn continues to support all units in Blandford Garrison, and is currently preparing itself for changes within the Regt and the Garrison. This could be the last time that the Sqn presents Wire notes as part of 11 Sig Regt. Congratulations to the MTO, **WO2 Lee Crossing**, on being selected for promotion to WO1; a most deserved promotion.

We welcome our new OC LAD, **Capt Andy Laurie**, and we also welcome back the Sqn OC after a period of illness.

ARMY

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

EXERCISE GREAT ESCAPE 2! DRAGON

EX GREAT ESCAPE 2! DRAGON, this was an alpine skiing exped to Val d'Isere in the French Alps. It was held over the period 08-23 January 05, rotating Regtl personnel through two six-day blocks of skiing. The first group of skiers included the new Sqn OC, **Maj Mike Parke**, the Sqn SSM, **WO2(SSM) Olly McGrail** and from the Para Regt, **Sgt Kev Cosgrove**.

It was an extended trip to loc, because we missed the intended Dover-Calais. We eventually arrived in Val d'Isere after a total journey time of 22 hours! Not one to be put off by this the group settled in with some light refreshments before the morning's skiing.

The first day was mainly for placing skiers into ability groups with a simple skiing assessment down a gentle slope of around 100m. The SSM was surprised to be placed in the advanced group. Our Para Regt rep, after taking an involuntary nosedive, was placed in the intermediate group. The new OC (who'd been in post for four days and was now on holiday) already had his Advanced Skiing Proficiency Award, and despite a dubious run, found himself, by default, in the advanced group.

Intermediate Group taking a break before the hard work

RQMS Hutchenson on the piste

The week went on with some fabulous skiing and weather conditions, culminating in both the advanced and intermediate groups hiring 'blades' (small skis about 60cm long) and tearing about the piste like professionals. The week ended in our final social evening, and being treated to a few beers and a fondue. Let's just say the beer went down better than the fondue! All we had then to look forward to was a 22-hr mini bus journey back to camp. Thankfully, this was made slightly quicker, as it was all downhill out of the Alps. Aside from the journey, a great week was had by all.

BEING AN ATR TROOP COMMANDER
– by Capt Caroline Staples

I had a fantastic time with my first unit, 30 Sig Regt, but as my time there came to an end, I had to decide what I wanted to do next. I had learned a lot about comms, but I had spent relatively little time on my 'green skills'. If I were to make a good 2IC, I would benefit from spending time planning exs and being out in the field. So I requested a posting to a Trg Regt. Fortunately, there was a space available at ATR Lichfield.

The first course I took proved to be quite a steep learning curve, but there were a number of people on camp I could go to for advice. My current Tp is a mixture of Royal Signals and Royal Engineer recruits, and my Trg Team is made up of Royal Signals and Para Regt instructors.

The courses involve long hours, but this is balanced by a generous amount of time off between each Tp. The Trg Wing issues the timetables, but the day-to-day running of the Tp is up to you, with minimal input from the hierarchy.

The syllabus is very diverse, covering Skill at Arms and NBC to Battlefield Tours and AT. Decisions affecting the progress of each recruit lies firmly in the hands of the Trg Team, and the recruits' success is largely dependent upon you and your efforts.

Working with other cap badges has been very interesting, and managing their careers a new challenge. The ATR is very supportive of getting its instructors on courses and partaking in Sports and AT. We recently entered a female team in the Div Cross Country Champs, which we won; and the Regtl Football Team was crowned *Soldier Magazine* Team of the Month.

AT expeds for Permanent Staff include a mountaineering trip to Peru, skiing in Val d'Isere and Scuba diving in South Africa. Life at ATR(L) has far exceeded my expectations. Every day is varied, and the interaction with the recruits is very rewarding. Being a Tp Comd for a further year, is a fantastic opportunity.

It's a chance to do more Inf-type activities and get out from behind a desk to command! Seeing the recruits you have spent 12 weeks turning into soldiers, pass off the square at the end of their course, is a brilliant sight. If you're lucky enough to get the opportunity to work at an ATR, take it!

SMITH TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Aileen Hill**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Mark Wilcock**

Since the last issue of *The WIRE*, Smith Tp has yet again managed to turn a group of civilians into a Tp of smart soldiers. The recruits were welcomed back from Christmas leave to one of the more relaxed weeks of the course – AT and the Battlefield Tour. Funnily enough, this ensured that all of them came back after a two-week period off.

The AT ex was conducted in the Peak District, and was designed to introduce the recruits to the vast range of activities on offer. They undertook rock climbing, hill walking, mountain biking and kayaking.

The Permanent Staff also attend this ex, and it is a good chance to build on their experience, with a view to gaining a qualification in one of these activities before they leave the ATR.

For the Battlefield Tour the Tp visited Normandy, and enjoyed a wind-swept trip along the historic coast. The article below describes in detail the events of the trip.

So with the fun part of the course over, it was back to the ATR and another week on the ranges. The main focus of this week was the APWT, and for some of the recruits, a pass on this seemed extremely challenging. This allowed the Section Comds to use their much-needed coaching skills to assist the recruits with all aspects of shooting.

The course cumulated in the final ex to Sennybridge Trg Area. This ex is designed to test recruits on all aspects of their trg, including NBC and first aid. As usual, the Brecon weather was the biggest enemy, and after five days exposed to this (as well as other little surprises we had planned) all recruits managed to put in a great effort for the final attack.

The good thing about the final ex is that the Section Comds assume all the responsibility that goes with their role. For example, they are responsible for the movement and navigation of their section to various locs on the trg area, as well as for the issuing of attack orders and general conduct of their section in the field. The experience they gain is second to none for a Royal Signals Cpl.

With the final ex over it was time for hours of drill to be up to scratch for the Pass Off Parade. Thankfully, all went well on the day, and Royal Signals have another six young enthusiastic soldiers to nourish!

As for the Trg Team, a week's leave awaits us before the rigours of a hectic TA course coming our way. It can't be said that there is never anything to do at the ATR!

BATTLEFIELD TOUR - *by Sig Baydum*

On 7 January 2005, 19 members of Smith Tp, along with our Tp staff, **Capt Hill** and **Cpl Stephenson**, journeyed to Normandy. As new British soldiers, one all of us have looked forward to this event and were ready to take on board some of the Army's rich history.

After careful and skilful planning during the years 1940 to 1944, hundreds of thousands of men were deployed. Although these men had been training for years for this mission, they didn't have a clue where they were going.

The invasion plan was to land on the beaches, known by their code-names as Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword, and to capture and hold certain key bridges, including the well-known Pegasus Bridge.

On our journey to France, we were shown video clips and given maps and other useful materials, which helped to give us a better picture of what the invasion was all about. By now, we were getting ready to re-live what had happened over sixty years previously.

Our first stop was Gold beach. Gold beach along with Sword and Juno were landings for British and Canadian assaults. The two other beaches, Utah and Omaha, were left to the Americans. Here we were, standing on history looking out to sea just as the Germans soldiers had.

It was only then that we started to visualise what it would have been like to have been here on 6 June 1944, where it all happened. Men had travelled by sea by day, by night; some sickened by rough the seas, others by the smell of death.

Today, the area is covered in monuments dedicated to the brave soldiers who gave their lives, as well as several amazingly preserved gun emplacements constructed by the German soldiers.

The Germans had planned their defence well, and had placed all the artillery pointing at interlocking enfilade angles along the sea front to ensure that their shells exploded over the biggest killing zone possible. Its must have been complete chaos and confusion, grenades goings off, minefields being blasted. This was indeed war, and unsurprisingly called by some, 'the longest day'.

To conclude our tour, we visited the graves many who had died there. Some we were briefed about, others unmentioned, and some known only to God. The cemetery was very peaceful and proudly we paid our respects.

We respect their bravery, commitment and courage. We will remember them.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col M C Smyth-Roberts**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Mitchell**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj D Deegan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) B Gillies**

BADMINTON TOUR TO SINGAPORE

In late September the Combined Services Badminton team went on tour to Singapore. The tour was originally organised to go to Nepal, but due to political unrest, it was decided that it would be safer to tour the Island known as the London of South-East Asia. We arrived in Singapore, after a 20-hr flight, three aircraft changes and seven vacuum packed meals, at 08.00hrs. After a quick brief on the do's and don'ts of the trip and a run down of the schedule, we were unleashed on the Island. Almost all of the 15 strong touring party headed straight to bed, but the Signals boys (**Cpl Williams** and I) headed for the Big City. We finally arrived back at the Furama Hotel in China Town around 02.30hrs laden with cheap electronic gear, and nursing hangovers.

The tour started in earnest the following morning with trg session along side the Singapore Army team, which boasts a staggering number of international players. Due to the temperature and a near hundred percent humidity, it was not long before were all having second thoughts about the trip. Somehow we all managed to muddle through, although there were a few who, claiming old injuries had flared up, sat on the sidelines for a long period of time. That evening was spent at the famous Raffles Hotel drinking Singapore Slings and eating Monkey Nuts in the lounge bar. No trip to Raffles would be complete without a visit to the Billiard Room, where the last tiger in Singapore to be shot was displayed. Unfortunately, we had to settle for seeing it from outside due to a Masons' meeting being held inside.

The next day was an evening match against the Singapore Army Under 21's team, which the Combined Services won, although I would like to point out that alleged Army Number 1, **Cpl Williams** did not manage to win a game. (a fact that he failed to rectify throughout the tour).

The fourth day was a day spent by the hotel pool, trying to get as much water into our systems as possible due to the excesses of the last two days. Most people were suffering with the heat, humidity and the social side of things was starting to have a telling effect.

The fifth day was the day we played the full National Team. Once again we proved that we were more that equal to the test, and the match was won by the Singaporeans by only the narrowest of margins. Afterwards there was a meal of *Min Gerange* and one or two beers to bond the teams. (it did not escape notice that while the Singapore team drank water, the Combined Services team drank all the beer). Day six was another day spent sight seeing round Changi Jail and the famous Orchard Road (all in the name of recovery).

The next match was a fun match against one of the oldest clubs in Singapore, the Singapore Swimming Club. Formerly a colonial club for diplomats and government personnel, it was steeped in colonial history. It was at this club that **Cpl Williams** suffered a humiliating 15-0 15-3 defeat at the hands of a 52 year old gent who just made him look like a novice whilst on court. The rest of the team fared a little better, and the match was drawn only because the Swimming Club not having a ladies' team, (it being an all male club). Once again the Singaporeans showed how hospitable they were by laying on a feast for the players.

The last two days of the tour were for sightseeing and R and R - boy did we need it. The days were spent shopping, sitting by the pool, or on day trips to the island of Sentosa for the Singapore Zoo, around the famous harbour of the ethnic enclaves, experiencing Singapore nightlife's rich diversity, and in China Town, where we entered pole dancing competitions in the notorious *Bamboozle Bar*. The only downside to the trip was when the American aircraft carrier *USS Nimrod* docked in Singapore for the last two days of our trip and deposited over 8,000 crew onto the Island, causing a price hike.

By the time everybody boarded the plane home, we were all exhausted (mentally and physically), but very happy, safe in the knowledge that we had given a good account of ourselves.

Special thanks go to **Sqn Ldr Heslin**, for organising the trip, and the Chef on the Singapore Airlines 747 for giving me the free bottle of champagne - even if you are a Crystal Palace fan.

CHARITY BIKE RIDE FOR ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND
- by Sig Robins

This Christmas, Santa was left with no reindeers (as they all went on strike), so it was left to COMMCEN Tp to pull his sleigh and save the day. C Tp set up a bike and sleigh outside the main NAAFI in Thiepval Barracks, with the hope of raising money for the Army Benevolent Fund. The aim of the event was to cycle as a team as far as possible in a 12 hr period (0800-2000hrs), each individual in the 8-man team doing a 15 minute spell on the bike

Lt Col Smyth-Roberts peddling hard to achieve 3rd place, with Sig Robbins, LCpl Taylor and LCpl Thorburn

before handing over to the next person. People were asked to guess the total distance the team would travel and donate £1 to charity.

The CO, **Lt Col Smyth-Roberts** arrived to kick of the event wearing a Santa outfit to get everyone in the mood, and set a benchmark distance of 8.06km. With careers hanging in the balance, it was up to **LCpl Thorburn** and **Sig Blakeley** to outdo the CO, and push him back to 3rd spot overall, Both recording distances of 8.93 and 9.15km respectively. The overall winner was **LCpl Cameron**, who pushed out a massive 9.40km. Later in the day we also had a guest appearance from the Tp Comd, **Capt Newton**, who asked that his distance not be printed for security reasons!

After a day of sweat and tired legs, the total distance pedalled was 360.63km. A big thank you must go out to all the generous people of Thiepval Barracks, and everyone who took the time out of their busy schedules here in NI to take part in the event. Overall, we managed to raise a whopping £1,000 for the ABF. A special thanks must go out to **LCpl Taylor** for all her outstanding efforts put into organising the day.

Cpl Osborn with Claire Sweeney holding the lucky mascot

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Hanby**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) TJ Lappin**

NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION AT ST JAMES' PALACE

The Not Forgotten Association is a charity organisation for veterans from all three Services that caters for veterans of WW1 to the Gulf War. The veterans come together for this prestigious charity event supported by many celebrities and helped out by us, along with 30-40 other serving personnel from all three Services.

This event was held at St James' Palace on 9 December. The invitations were provided by **Capt Alf Cupper** and **SSgt Kim Cupper**, who had been before. The invitations were quickly snapped up. Who could turn down a day out in London rubbing shoulders with celebrities?

It was an early start to the day, travelling from Northern Ireland to London, and it was a hectic race to get into central London on time. After running around Whitehall looking for somewhere to change into our Service Dress, we finally made it on time at St James' Palace.

The surroundings in the palace grounds were a pleasant sight, with laid out to perfection, as you would expect to be. The first task was to meet and greet the veterans - and the occasional celebrity. We then escorted the veterans into the Lounge and Throne Room area for tea and cakes. When everyone was seated, it was our opportunity to mingle with them and listen to their war stories, while the celebrities walked round entertaining them.

When that was over, the veterans were moved into a performance viewing room, where each celebrity would take turns on stage entertaining. This also gave us chance to stay backstage and chat to the celebrities, which was a great experience, especially for **Cpl Osborn** who was asked for a dance by **Esther Rantzen**! However, he declined, but turned his attention to **Claire Sweeney**!

The atmosphere was great, **LCpl Grove**, **LCpl Mellor** and **Sgt Jeffs** spent most of the evening trying to get the glamour models phone numbers, to no avail! One individual did have success, but no names will be mentioned!

The whole day was a great experience. We are all looking forward to the next Not Forgotten Association charity event on 22 July 05.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AR Fawcett**
SSM **WO2(SSM) MJ Wakeling**

TSUNAMI RELIEF 'GUITARIOKI' *- by Corporal M Robertson*

'You know that thing you did for the Tp Xmas Do ... I think you ought to do it again... but for charity this time... and make sure that it's when I'm back from my course.' With these few words **Capt Ben Norton**, Tp Comd Echo Tp, set in motion the cogs which brought the World the latest entertainment craze – Guitarioki (or Busking as it is called on the Underground).

Cpls Nige Falconer and **Dave Orme** were thus asked to repeat the guitar-based entertaining they had provided at Christmas. But this time it would be in order to raise money for the Tsunami disaster relief efforts. The concept was simple, the intrepid Cpls would entertain the crowd of Sqn members and invited guests, with a few songs, and then the floor would open up for whoever fancied themselves as a potential **Michelle McManus** (who?) or **Will Young**. As the evening wore on, the list of those who harbour delusions of fame became obvious.

Special mention must go to the OC, **Maj Fawcett** and the 2IC, **Capt Parkinson** and their rendition of *Suspicious Minds*, which was truly - different. Different doesn't go half of the way towards describing the blues improvisation performed by **WO2(FofS) Scaife** and his harmonica, for what seemed like half an hour. Even those who are musically tone deaf gave it a try. The main example of this being the solo performance by **Sgt Stu Gray**, which we were later told was supposed to be the theme from *Bob the Builder*.

The night was a definite success, and wouldn't have been possible without the assistance of **SSgt Sarah Matthews** of HQNI, who lent the audio gear and who also joined the group on more than one occasion. She provided superb accompaniment to her boss, **Capt Craig Shrives** whilst he belted out the Dubliners favourite, *The Irish Rover*. In all £210 was raised on the night. A cheque was presented to BFBS at their own somewhat larger but significantly less cosy Charity Concert the following night.

40 (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

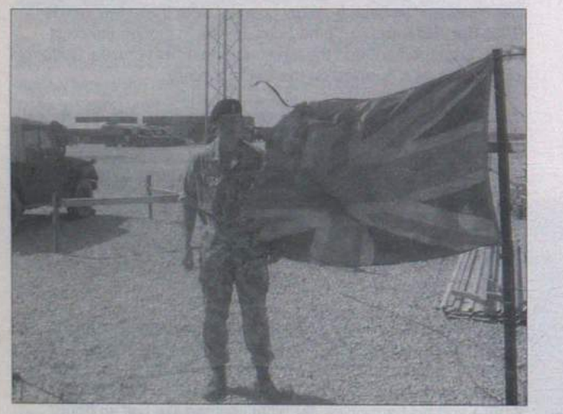
CO **Lt Col SD Hodges**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Henry**

By the time these notes are published, we will have said a farewell to **WO1(RSM) Henry** and to **WO2 Bob Vickers**. **Trev Henry** is off to see out his remaining sentence at Blandford, and **Bob** moves across Belfast to work for a bunch of Medics. We wish them both the best of luck in their new jobs.

69 SIGNAL SQUADRON IN IRAQ: THE JAPANESE BATTLE TOUR EXPERIENCE - *by LCpl Ritchie*

Towards the end of Op TELIC 4, two of us were sent to Al Samawah, to the 3rd Japanese IRS Gp. This was carried out to facilitate the change over from 1 Mech Bde and 4 Armd Bde at Basrah, and to provide signal support for the Japanese Engineer Gp in that region.

Both **Cpl S Lynch** and I mobilised from 69 Sig Sqn to join 2 Sig Regt, and were attached to both 215 and 204 Sig Sqns in Iraq. Our tasks included ensuring that the conference calls from MND(SE) ran smoothly, and this involved making sure the Japanese Sigs Offr responded at the appropriate moments during the conference. **Cpl Lynch** had been at JAPBAT, as we would refer to it, earlier in the tour for two weeks and he knew where all the facilities were, and how to perform the required tasks. This was quite useful, as most of the Japanese recognised him from his previous stay. The Japanese also had I-Net facilities, which allowed them to communicate via email to all other assets in the Div. This also had to be monitored to ensure it was functional 24/7. The majority of personnel at JAPBAT were officers, but they treated us as if we were the same rank as them. Some of them would call around to the ISO container in which we slept and monitored the comms kit, to socialise.



LCpl Richie at JAPBAT in Al Samawah

The food at JapBat was as you might expect, rice and fish of different sorts, although the mayonnaise was really tasty and added flavour to the boiled rice. We would regularly go to the gym, which had all the equipment you could imagine. There was a shop selling the usual consumables and an entertainment tent where we could borrow DVDs, games or phone home on a sat phone. During our stay at JAPBAT, the camp was mortared once, and we had to spend 2 hrs in the shelter until the Dutch forces had cleared the area. The Japanese forces were not allowed to carry out the clearance themselves.

The morning of our return to Basrah Airport, the Japanese asked us to join them on a farewell parade, and asked us to make a speech. **Cpl Lynch** prepared the speech several days beforehand and passed it on to the interpreter, **Ebbi**, so that he could translate it into Japanese to be read out in front of the 300 Japanese troops on parade.

The parade began with Japanese PT, which lasted for 5 minutes, and was like joint loosening exercises - a lot less stressful than what we were used to at Basrah. Once the parade was under way, we were marched onto a platform and, after the Japanese flag had been raised and saluted, the speeches were read by both **Cpl Lynch** and the interpreter, **Ebbi**. The CO of the Japanese forces presented us both with a Japanese flag badge and the JGSDF (Japanese Ground Self Defence Force) medal. Our time at JAPBAT was very relaxed; we found the Japanese personnel there to be very friendly and accommodating.

LCpl Richie and Cpl Lynch being honoured by the Japanese CO

ARMY BOULDERING COMPETITION - *by Sgt Chambers*

On Friday 28 January 2005, a team from 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) travelled to *HMS Indefatigable*, a Marine camp near Llanfairpwllgy, North Wales, to compete in EX TASMANIA DRAGON (the Army Bouldering Champs). This is the first time the Regt had entered a team, and we were led by **WO2 (RQMS) Conlan** (Sp Sqn) with **Sgt Chambers** (66 Sig Sqn) and **Sig Wiles** (85 Sig Sqn) supporting. There were approximately 70 competitors, with teams from a wide variety of Regular units (including Gurkhas), OTCs, and ourselves as the only TA unit.

Saturday dawned bright and sunny and, after a hearty breakfast but with a feeling of trepidation, we headed for the climbing walls. The competition comprised three sections of ten climbs, with an hour to complete each section, and teams moving through the sections on a round robin basis. The strategy brief from **WO2 Conlan** was to pick an easy climb to start with, but this didn't seem to pan out, as all the other teams must have had the same idea. When the starter klaxon went, they dashed for the relatively easy climbs and we were left with the devilish No.10, which the team leader made look easy but, after falling off several times, still looked quite hard from my vantage point - flat out on the crash mats.

Three upper body workouts, and several aching muscle groups later, the team had not disgraced itself and, after several pints of

liquid painkiller in the evening, the aches and pains faded into insignificance. The results were presented in a way that prevented us from knowing how we had done - but there were teams worse than us.

With our enthusiasm bitten, we are looking forward to the Trg Maj including more climbing and bouldering activities in the trg programme to prepare for another assault on the Competition next year.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

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

HAPPY NEW YEAR - *by Sig Harrison*

As the year 2004 has come to an end, the Sqn looks forward to another successful year in 2005. As always, the yearly wind down... didn't, and the Sqn remained busy right up to Christmas.

December saw the Sqn taking part in a Snowboarding competition, EX MERCURY GLACIER, which took place in Kaprun, Austria. Here RQMS **WO2 Sheard** put his body on the line, and subsequently returned one arm shorter after breaking a collarbone. In line with the normal silly season shenanigans, the SNCOs and Offrs had a trg day in Coleraine. Very little gossip escaped from the 'What happens on SNCO/Offr trg, stays on SNCO/Offr trg' shroud of secrecy. However the smiles and alcoholic haze rising from the minibus on their return, spoke volumes. Over Christmas and New Year, the Sqn was manned 50%, so that all could enjoy either a Christmas or New Year break.

Last year saw several promotions from Sig to LCpl: **LCpls Woodhouse**, **Mark Balsdon** and **Immie Hamid**, and our congratulations go to them. Our congratulations also to **LCpl Sophie Gibson** and her husband **Graham**, on the arrival of their son, **James**.

There were also some new arrivals: **LCpl Dickenson** and **Cpls Kerry** and **Ollie Smith** from Blandford; **Emma Marlow** and **Jim Black**. A big welcome to all. There were also couple of departures: **LCpl Ben Clarke** and **Cpl Gordie Donaldson**, who both left for Civ Div. Good luck for the future.

So now onto 2005. Time to get knuckling down to some more hard work and more competitions, including the Bde Munro Cup Competition and Battlecamp.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIP 2004

On 11-12 November 04, the Sqn sent 3 elite squash players to York where 2 Sig Regt were hosting the 2004 Royal Signals Squash Championship.

First on court was **Cpl James Russell**, who had an unlucky first round draw against one of the Corps players. Compared with many of the first day games, it was a long match, with **Cpl Russell** eventually ending up a very gallant loser, 31.

Next on court was **WO1(RSM) Downie**, who had an easy first couple of rounds, until he met the Corps Number 1, who decided to give the RSM a coaching lesson, feeding the ball to all corners sending him spinning in all directions. A good laugh was had by all in the crowd.

Finally, it was the turn **of Capt Alex Senneck,** a newcomer to the game, but improving quickly with the marathon trg sessions with the RSM prior to the tournament. After a very creditable performance, **Capt Senneck** was eliminated in the second round into the Plate Competition, along with **Cpl Russell** and the RSM.

Unluckily for the unit, the RSM was drawn against **Capt Senneck** in the second round of the Plate Competition, and after a punishing 5 sets, the RSM managed to squeeze through as the victor. Later in the day, the RSM and **Cpl Russell** were to meet in the semifinal of the Plate Competition for a 'grudge match', which could go either way.

The opening game was a tight tussle, with **Cpl Russell** sneaking it, although it was apparent that he was beginning to suffer from the after effects of the previous evening. With the RSM feeling his age, but still reasonably fresh after a very sensible early night, he ran out the victor, 3 1.

With this encouraging result, the RSM was then propelled into the final of the Plate Competition for the 'Battle of the RSMs' against the RSM of 2 Sig Regt. The match produced a range of gracious skills and tactics, consisting of smacking the ball as hard as possible with **WO1(RSM) Downie** eventually coming away with the silverware, winning the final of the Plate.

To **Cpl Russell's** surprise, he was then presented with the best prize of the competition, for Most Outstanding Young Prospect - a nice new racket, beating the RSM's Tshirt and balls. It was then back off to NI for some hard trg for next year's event.

NORTHERN IRELAND INDOOR ROWING COMPETITION
- By Cpl LG Flanigan

On 16 November 2004, eight members of 213 Sig Sqn took part in a 100km rowing competition at St Patrick's Bks, Ballymena. The eight plucky individuals who volunteered to represent the Bde were **Cpls Flanigan**, **Jones**, **Tucker**, **Rawlinson**, **Fell**, **Darlington**, **LCpls Davies** and **Carrington**.

Using rowing machines, the event was a timed race over a metered distance of 100km. None of the team members had a rowing background, but all relished the challenge of competing against experienced rowers with an under-manned team of 8. The other teams to compete against us were JCU, 3 Royal Irish, NITR, 5 AAC, 25 Engr Regt and NICSS.

The team entered the sports hall to be greeted by the sight of six rowing machines lined up on the hall floor. We were one of the first teams to arrive, and we noticed at the far end of the hall a team of middle-aged men grimacing and performing bizarre stretching routines. 'No problem,' we thought, 'they didn't stand a chance against the twenty something thrusting junior NCOs amongst our team.

The competition was already in the bag.' As more teams arrived though, our optimism began to wane. Enter the Harlem Globetrotters, ten 6ft plus men built like Goliath in matching Basketball vests. These guys meant business.

As time went on it became apparent that we were not going to take the lead. Two of the teams had soon increased their lead over us to 15,000m. These were the JCU contingent and 25 Engr Regt, and it was clear that the competition was between them.

With around 18,000m left to go, the competition already had a winner 25 Engr Regt. We were pleased for them, but we still had the problem of completing the event, as fatigue, pessimism and hand blisters began to take their toll on our team. With 5,000m left, it was 3 RI and us left in the race. They were ahead, but there was still a chance. At the 2,000m point, the inevitable happened, and we were the last team rowing.

However, we attracted a large crowd, which helped us along in the final gruelling stages. Finally, **Cpl Tucker** was in the seat for the last 250m, and to a rapturous applause and flashing of cameras, we reached the 100,000m point. It was over, at last. The PTI who monitored our progress throughout the day, was impressed with our efforts, considering we were two men down. He believed that with a full strength team things would have been a lot different.

At the Award ceremony, we received a special mention considering our under-manned team. The other competitors were shocked to learn this, and gave us a good round of applause. We then had another surprise. The times were cross checked with that of other times recorded this year in similar competitions around the world, and it was officially announced that the 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) rowing team are ranked at twelfth in the world at indoor rowing. As a result, we are considering entering ourselves into the Beijing Olympics in 2008, as the mixed coxless eights, if this event does actually exist.

Overall, it was a very challenging and testing event. With determination and humour, the team overcame all obstacles to finish with a very respectable last place. It was a worthwhile experience for all involved, and each of the team members intend to enter themselves, both individually and as part of a team, in more competitions in the future.

EXERCISE IBERIAN FINN *- by Cpl Karen Tar*

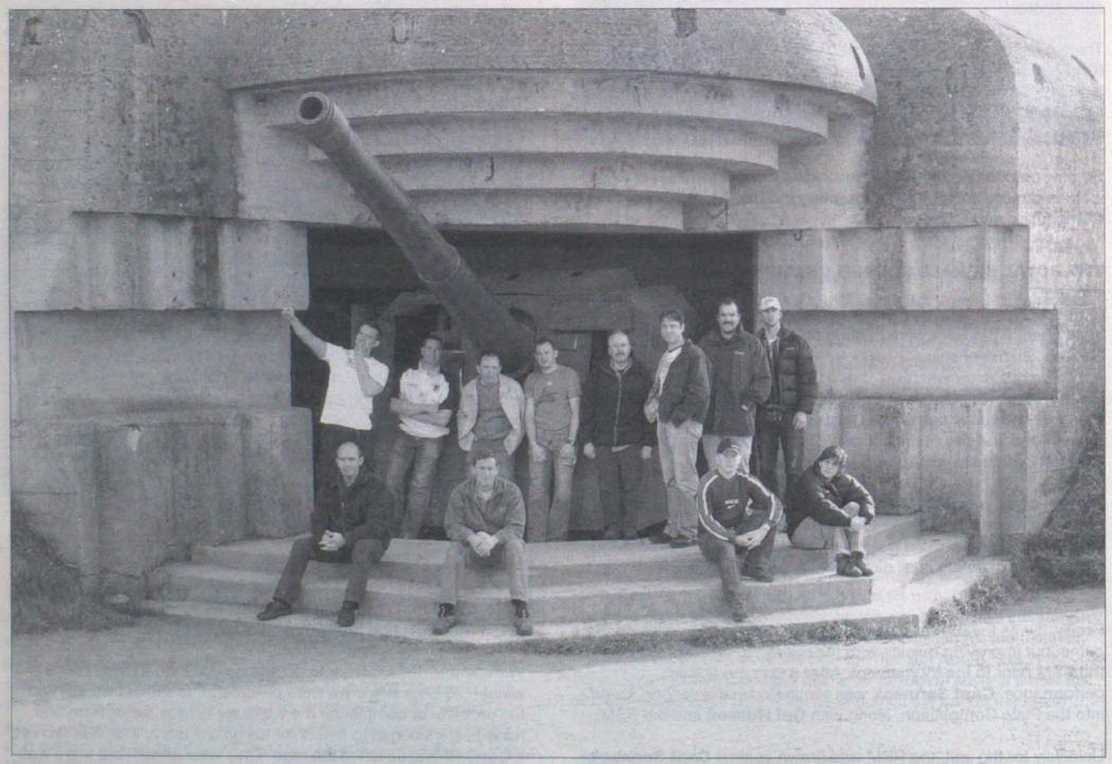
Lots of hill walking and rock climbing was our intention on EX IBERIAN FINN 2004 (no, honestly it was), and we weren't to be disappointed, After arriving at our apartments in Calpe, we were delighted to find each apartment had a sea view and was located literally a stone's throw from the beach. However our delight would soon dissipate as we realised how much time we would actually spend on the beach as opposed to up a rock face, or scrambling up a mountainside.

It must be noted at this point, that **Cpl Ben Williams** was surely a little bit confused as to what this AT lark was all about. 'I'm scared of heights, I hate hill walking and can't get used to the heat in hot countries - and what do you mean we have to be at the minibus ready to go for 08.00hrs?' It must also be noted that whilst hardly 2 foot off the floor, he would start begging to be let down NOW. This performance was in stark contrast to our three climbing superstars, **Cpl Jamie Russell**, **LCpl Zoe Roberts** and **Sig Shell**. Our hill walking excursions were equally as challenging as our rock climbing excursions - or should that be as vertical as our rock climbing excursions? All in all, it was a very enjoyable package, and hopefully will lead to some of the participants bidding for rock climbing courses in the near future.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR 04 *– by Cpl L Pears*

On 3 October 04, 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) conducted a Battlefield Tour in France. A select group of war enthusiasts went to DDay Landing area of Normandy. After a journey involving a flight from Belfast to Liverpool, a coach trip to Portsmouth, and an overnight ferry crossing to Le Havre, the battlefield tour got under way. We started with a visit to the Canal Bridge the famous 'Pegasus Bridge.' This was one of the key targets to stop the German reinforcements attacking the troops who were to land on Sword Beach (a site we visited later). Other locations over the few days visited were, Ranville Cemetery (first French village to be liberated during the early stages of the War), and Merville Battery (scene of the German defence battery which was heavily bombed but still intact prior to DDay). We also stopped at the beaches where the D-Day landings took place at Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha and Utah, and the British, German and American cemeteries.

On the whole, the visit was a rewarding and excellent experience for the whole of the group, and gave us all an insight into how much the men of WW2 had to face in order to give us the lifestyle and freedom that we have today.



The Merville Battery

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Sherrin**

WO1(RSM) O'Neill is wished a fond farewell by all of the Sqn's personnel as he leaves the Regular Army after 22 years colour service.

Kevin (he may as well get used to it!) will be sorely missed by the Service, and is wished the very best of luck in all he does in his new civilian life.**WO1(RSM) Sherrin** replaces him, having arrived on promotion from 30 Sig Regt. We wish him a successful tour.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt JD Landreth**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Fitzgerald**

It has been a relatively quiet period for the Tp in terms of arrivals and departures, with only one newcomer, **Sig Reynolds**, who has joined us straight from Blandford. This has meant that the Tp has been able to establish a good working routine since Christmas.

Special mention to **LCpl Rizza**, who has been selected to represent both the Corps and Army football teams over the last few months. Well done. If he's as fast on the pitch as he is in his car, it's no wonder he has been selected!

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Reid**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Love**

We welcome into the Tp **SSgt Buffery**, from 11 Sig Regt; **LCpl Moorhead** and his family, from 7 Sig Regt; **Sigs Reidy** and **Sheenan** from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt and 7 Sig Regt respectively. We hope they all enjoy their tours here.

Leaving the Tp are **Cpl Sherrat**, who moves on to RSMDT; **LCpl Lindley**, who is off to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; **LCpl Bladen**, who gets his dream move to the White Helmets; and **Sig Smith**, who is off to 14 Sig Regt (EW).

Finally, **Sig Pollard** returns to the mainland in order to start a new life with his family as a civilian. We wish the Pollards all the best for their future.

Cpl Thorpe recently completed his PTI course, having been ranked second on the course. Congratulations also go to **LCpl Bladen** for passing White Helmet selection, and **Sig Jones** and **LCpl Jones** for passing their Class 2 assessments. Just the recommendation to go now boys, and you've cracked it!

Further well dones are also extended to **Lt Reid** and **LCpls Rankin** and **Brown**, who were all promoted recently.

MT TROOP

MTWO	**WO2 Stronach**
MT SSgt	**SSgt Williams**

Over the last few months the MT have had **Sig Taylor** posted to Blandford as Acting LCpl, so we hope all those visiting Blandford will stick their head into the guard room to wish him well.

Promotions have been good to the MT, with **LCpl Rick Steel** being awarded the acting rank of Cpl, and **Sig Axtell** stepping into his shoes as Acting LCpl. The future is rosy.

Moving on from the MT is **Cpl Paul Clancy**, who is to become a tarmac tech, and move to the Trg Wing to educate all of Sqn in the ways of the world (not much knowledge of football though).

Looming us in the face are the weddings of **Sigs Jones**, **Bryant** and **Axtell**. We hope they all know just what they are in for!

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM**

The 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Skiing Regt have had a hugely busy time since Christmas leave and have managed to compete, participate and enjoy a whole host of Alpine, Nordic and après ski activities.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT WEEK

The CO's management development week was an arduous 5 days spent in the Tyrol region in Austria; a bonding experience that went a long way in promoting the team ethos.

During the five days the CO took his Comd Team on the ski slopes of Fieberbrunn, St Johan, St Jakob and the Steinplatte, as well as ice climbing, sledging, ice go-karting, skidoo driving and tubing. With varying abilities at skiing, from complete novices to experts, and a whole bunch in between, the group skied their socks off, taking advantage of the excellent ski conditions on offer.

With the deep powder snow that had fallen overnight, the first day's skiing provided fun for all, whether experienced or not. Much amusement was had as many of the group piled into deep powder, not used to such conditions.

It soon became a tradition to name a slope after a member of the group after a significant and noteworthy pile-in had occurred.

Many a time could the cry 'Phil's Hill' or 'Jane's Slope' be heard, as **Capt Phil Muir** and **Capt Jane Squires** proved their spectacular inability to off-piste whilst trying to keep up with the CO and **Maj Keily**. During the first day, the beginners' group progressed with great speed from the nursery slopes to quite tricky blue runs. It was to everyone's amazement and surprise that by day four, they had moved on to red, and even black runs!

The evenings were spent conducting further 'development' on activities that provided high thrills as well as high injury rates (particularly on the sledging). The group was also inducted into the Austrian ritual of Après-Ski – for the uninitiated this usually comprises of extremely dodgy euro-pop played by dubious musicians' with people getting in the party mood by drinking copious amounts of beer and schnapps and singing along with said euro-pop!

After 5 days of hard skiing and winter sport activities the group returned to Herford to find the snow had followed them – with cries of "let's go skiing for sports afternoon tomorrow". A memorable trip was had by all, with the Command Team well and truly bonded and some very good skiers now in the making.

EXERCISE PIPEDOWN 05

The Alpine Team always seems to have minor hiccups prior to going on exercise, and PIPEDOWN was no exception. Three days before we were due to leave, we found that two of our skiers could not make it. **LCpl Lee Hickman** had a broken jaw and **LCpl Si Row** had fractured a vertebra on the first day of his skiing holiday over Christmas. We had also lost our reserve, **LCpl Kate Hopkinson**, who had been involved in an RTA and had sustained whiplash. We did, however manage to get two other guys who were very grateful for the chance to get away and have some time off work.

Members of the EX PIPEDOWN team before embarking on another last place finish

After a late start, we drove through the night, taking 10 hrs to reach Les Contamines in France. The accn was a bit small but nice. To our delight, we had our own kitchen, but that meant it was self-catering, and we had to cook for ourselves. Most of the meals were edible, but **Cfn Trev Holding** managed to mess a scrambled egg. For the record, **Lt Oosterveen** did not cook one single meal - but he did choose some nice wine! There was no time for trg, and we were straight into racing on the first day. We all skied our best and did reasonably well considering it was our first time at the Div Championships. However, we did manage to leave with a gold. It wasn't a medal, but a nice golden tan!

GOC'S FAREWELL TO THE REGIMENT

The GOC, **Maj Gen Peter Wall MBE** said farewell to his Sig Regt on 21 January 05. The Regt paraded on the square under the ever-watchful eyes of the 2IC, **Maj Barry Spiers** and the RSM, **WO1(RSM) Craig Bruce**. The GOC addressed the Regt and said some very kind words of thanks for all their effort, support and good humour during his time at Herford. A fitting end to his reign as GOC, **Maj Gen Wall** was driven out of camp in a Challenger 2 to the rapturous applause from the Regt who had lined the route to the gates. A fantastic curry lunch awaited the GOC on arrival at the Officers' Mess for his final leaving function before departing to take up his new post in PJHQ following in the footsteps of his predecessor. We wish the GOC all the best for the future and would also like to welcome the new GOC, **Maj Gen John Cooper DSO MBE** to Herford.

The GOC leaving the Regt in style

REGIMENTAL CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM

Under the veteran leadership of **Capt Carl Walsh** and **WO2 Joyce**, the Regt Cross-Country Team have had an excellent season. From flat Gutersloh, over the hills of Hameln, through the snow and ice of Herford, to the Paderborn tank tracks, the blue shirts have fought their way into the top of the Div League. With one meet still in hand, the women have an un-assailable lead, and only the Light Infantry have a chance to beat the men (but since they practise it doesn't count). **Sig Maker** was the star of the BA(G) women's individual race, which at 10km is 4km longer than the team event. Only in the BA(G) relays did the women let the silver mingle with the gold.

The team entered into the Inter Unit Competition at Blandford on 2 February with high hopes that any of **Sigs Scribbins**, **Maker**, **Harvey** or **Bain** among the women, and **Sig Walsh** among the men, might be selected to run for the Corps. And despite the race being a poacher's showcase for 21 Sig Regt (AS), the communicators in blue put Herford on the map. The women came second behind 21 Sig Regt (AS), with **Sig Scribbins** as the second fastest junior woman; and the men came a close third to 21 and 7 Sig Regts, with **Sig Walsh** coming in 10th and **2Lt Evans** 11th out of a field of over 150.

But we should be careful not allow the sensation of potential Corps selection for the young bloods to blind us to the true hero, **Capt Walsh** who, in the view of this writer, should be awarded the Spirit of the Regiment for his injury-shrugging insouciance in the face of all adversity. Unfortunately he just falls outside of the age bracket!

TSUNAMI FUNDRAISING

Being a caring sharing Regt, we decided that we would to do our bit and raise some much-needed money for the Tsunami Appeal. Rather than a Regt charity event, the Sqns were left to their own devices to get the cash!

Not one to miss any chance to promote a good cause, the lads and lasses of 211 Sig Sqn raised over 700 for the appeal, generously undertaking to sacrifice an afternoon's work so that they might get stuck into a whole range of fund raising antics. After a fiercely contested auction, **Sig Just** handed over 50 to become SSM for the day, answerable only to **Sig Jones**, who was commissioned OC for ready money. A 10 entry fee to the photography competition bought a shot at the chance of a day's leave for the winner. The famously warlike attitude of the Sqn was replaced by a truly artistic sensibility - so much so that Maj **Katy Caie**, usually so decisive, is yet to announce a winner. **Lt Cath Hamp** said of the event that she had organised, 'Never before in the field of charity work, has so much been raised for so many by so few.'

A front runner for the top prize in the photography competition

After the Christmas break, **Sgt Thompson** of 212 Sig Sqn was confronted by probably the worst moustache that he had seen in his career. It was just a pencil line above the lip, and **Sig Thomas** proudly announced that he had been growing it since September! Not wishing to single him out for ridicule, (honest), the RSM was approached for permission for members of 212 to grow moustaches in aid of the Tsunami appeal. Permission was granted, but as the Sqn was somewhat depleted due to deployment to the Balkans, it was decided that the whole Sqn would attempt to grow a Regimental-type tash within the time allowed according to QRs. The competition was fierce, with daily comparisons taking place, and some of the male members saying they would only join in if certain female members of the Sqn were not allowed to enter!

The day of judgement arrived on the 2 February 05. What remained of 212 Sig Sqn paraded outside RHQ for the RSM's decision, and the proud bearer of the worst tash was Comd Tp's newly-arrived **Sig Earnshaw**. **Cpl Steers** from Supt Tp was judged to have the best tash, although no prize was awarded due to it being blatantly GWAR. **SSgt Mitchell** was reacquainted with the Provost Staff as he was marched away for having a weak and unmilitary tash. **Sgt Thompson's** tash was deemed to be of standard, but he is 300 years' old! And not to forget **Lt Northridge's** sports mans tash - well 5 a-side! Although the parade was a bit of a giggle, the reason for it was more sombre. 212 Sig Sqn members raised 660 in aid of the appeal.

The remaining 2 Sqns took the easy option, but with the purpose of raising some serious cash. The soldiers of HQ Sqn and 201 Sig Sqn were allowed to purchase late starts to the day or buy themselves off PT! **WO2(SSM) Joyce** being the racing snake that he is, got the wrong end of the stick and ended up paying to *do* PT! Over 1,000 were raised by 201 Sig Sqn. Anyone would think they didn't like PT!

With money still being collected, the final amount raised has not been announced. Needless to say, the Regt made the effort to try and make the difference, and we hope that our modest donation to the Tsunami Appeal goes some way to helping rebuild those part of Asia that were devastated on 26 December 04.

THE SPIRIT OF THE REGIMENT TROPHY

The Spirit of the Regiment Trophy was part of the leaving gift from our previous CO, now **Col Andy Bristow**. He wished for the Trophy to be awarded annually to a soldier in the Regt who has shown grit and determination, always giving their all.

The first recipient of the Trophy and a cheque for £300 was **Sig Bain** of 201 Sig Sqn. The award was presented at the Soldiers' Christmas Function, much to the complete embarrassment of **Sig Bain**, in front of the whole Regt, who had also been lubricated with a couple of lagers. The CO, **Lt Col David Robson**, didn't feel it necessary to embarrass **Sig Bain** even more by reading out her citation!

Sig Bain being awarded the 'Spirit of the Regiment' by the CO

EXERCISE SNOW TOPPED DIAMOND - *by Lt Paul Carpenter*

Way back in March 04 a letter entitled 'Spare Capacity – Trails End Camp' appeared in Sqn second sight file. It went on to say an AT facility, designed to cater for the needs of troops exercising in BATUS, was being under utilised, and various packages were being opened up to units outside those troops exercising in theatre. Excited by the prospect, I rapidly put in a bid, and started the usual process of applying for clearance and funding.

The package I had booked was a combination of Alpine and Ski touring, culminating in a three-day exped, where our new skills would be put to the test. In addition, I planned a day of husky dog sledging.

Our flight from Frankfurt took us over the frozen wastelands of Greenland and the North Atlantic where out of the window we could see the white specks of icebergs floating in the gloomy ocean.

After a whistle stop tour of Trail's End Camp, we were all itching to get our skis on. But first we had to meet our instructors – a mad little French-Canadian called **Phil**, and **Dave**, an unbelievable chilled-out instructor with 43 years of skiing under his belt. We

spent the day in the low Alpine area familiarizing ourselves with skis and the seal skins.

The next three days we were on the piste, with the conventional gravity-propelled skiing, and an introduction to the snowplough. Our skiing was interrupted when on our fourth day in Canada, we had a near death experience, when the trailer the minibus had been pulling decided it was going to pull the minibus. Fortunately the only thing we hit was four foot of soft snow at the side of the road, and no one was hurt.

The entire group was looking forward to the three-day exped, although a little apprehensive about the two nights in a self-dug snow hole. The day we set off we had fantastic weather, with the sun lighting up the ice crystals on the snow to produce an effect known locally as 'Disco Mountain'. We took the chair lift up to the top of Standish Ridge, but instead of skiing down the piste, we set off towards our bivvy site on the horizon, much to the disbelieve of everyone else on the slopes. Our route took us over a frozen lake. The fact that we were experiencing a warm spell and the ice was thin for the time of year, worried us less than its name - 'Grizzly Lake'.

After several pauses to talk about the likelihood of avalanches, we reached our bivvy site and started to dig what would be our homes for the next couple of nights. The night was surprisingly comfortable; it fell to -10°C outside, remained just above freezing in our snow caves but most importantly, a snug 29°C in my sleeping bag.

By the second night we were very comfortable in our snow caves after the day we had spent touring the snow-covered Canadian landscape. By the end of it, we were all looking forward to the

Sig Steve Collier, Cpl Stacy Fayers and Sgt Titch Meakin

return to civilization. Our final day on the slope was a doddle after that - skiing is so much easier without a 40-pound Bergen on your back. Unfortunately, all this warm weather we were experiencing, meant there was not enough snow to do our day with the husky dogs. But we were grateful for a day's rest before a night in Calgary to let our hair down.

Although this was an exped based around an activity, many people do in their leisure time. And it's true to say all participants were taken out of their comfort zone for large amounts of time. Finally, all those that took part would like to thank everyone at Trail's End Camp.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Dick**

All Wire Notes seem to start with the phrase 'this has been a busy few months' but in the case of 2 Sig Regt, this is definitely the case.

The headline news is of course that CORMORANT is beginning to arrive and the Regtl focus is now to get the system working as designed. The Regt is also busy changing its fundamental outlook on life to that of a High Readiness Unit.

The range of G1 – G9 issues to be addressed is staggering, especially as we need to achieve a start date of 1 April when the Regt is to be ready for ops.

The Regt has also been up to a number of other activities. The major activity before Christmas was EX JOINT VENTURE 04 (JV04), held at South Cerny.

As you may remember, the last set of *Wire* Notes was written while JV 04 was still ongoing and CORMORANT was in effect being used for the first time. Fortunately, the system worked well on the ex, and was declared a great success. However, it was an unrealistic environment in which to test the system fully. But in March we will deploy to Scotland on the first realistic CORMORANT ex. We wait to see the outcome.

Other activities have included the award of a number of Campaign Medals to 23 members of the Regt who have been deployed on ops over the last couple of years. We were grateful to **Brig Wood**, the CE of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association of Yorkshire and Humberside, for taking the time out to present these medals to the worthy recipients.

Brig Wood presents the medals

In January we also welcomed back **Maj Dave Duggan** and the composite Sqn from OP TELIC 4. The op has been hugely successful, and all those involved are to be congratulated on their efforts over the last 6 months. Not only did they do their work to a very high standard, but they also managed to raise more than $9,500 for charity by doing 'Race the Sun Baghdad'. Full details of that event are at the end of these notes.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM **WO2 Gratrick**

The Quartermasters Department has had a very busy time this quarter taking on CORMORANT. The RQMS(T) headed the team that deployed to DSDC Ashchurch to take over the seventeen vehicles. The task went smoothly, and a great deal of time and patience went into CES checks, followed by handover to the det comds. A big thank you to the team of storemen who did the takeover: **Sgt Paul Selby**, **Cpl Bart Simpson**, **LCpl Mat Judge**, **Sig Hamblin** and **Mr Kev Potter**.

The Quartermaster would also like to thank the stores team for the hard work in preparation for the recent LSI. A lot of long nights and hard work went in to the inspection from which a highly satisfactory report was received.

214 SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2 Cooper**

The New Year has started off in full throttle with a large Sqn manpower overhaul and the taking on of CORMORANT to concentrate on. Everyone is working immensely hard, and their efforts do not go unnoticed. We are fully looking forward to deploying CORMORANT on Sqn and Regtl exs, and getting ourselves prepared for high readiness in April this year. These are busy and exciting times to be in 214 Sig Sqn, and we relish the challenges ahead of us.

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN AND INTO THE FIRE

- by 2Lt Dave Higgins, Viking Tp

My first impressions of 2 Sig Regt were coloured by what I had heard from friends who had served in Royal Signals. 'You'll have a great time. It's only 10 minutes walk from the centre of York.' 'I hope you like sport... Especially Rugby.' 'You'll get to travel because they're taking over an Out-of-Area role.' After a 5-hr drive up from Berkshire I arrived at the imposing 'Keep', swearing that never again would I venture onto the M25 during the all-day Sunday rush hour. The barracks themselves loomed large against the backdrop of a gusty Yorkshire night, and as the tall wooden gates creaked open and I passed by the Gatekeeper, (otherwise known as the MGS staff), I felt like I was being transported back to the medieval gates of York. This illusion was soon shattered as **Lt Olivier** bounded into my room in the Officers' Mess. He soon put me at ease; in fact, all my new colleagues went out of their way to make me feel at home, although this did little to reduce the traditional wide-eyed 'rabbit in car headlights' look.

The coming weeks flew past in a blur of red-penning, interviews, chats, and kit issues – very similar, in fact, to the first few days at Sandhurst. But as my first salute as a commissioned officer flew up, I realised that now, I was not playing at being a soldier in a training environment, but instead had to begin accepting the responsibility of being an officer. The memories that I will take with me of my first few days at 2 Sig Regt are: of remembering every face but no names; **2Lt T Kelly**, my fellow fledgling and partner in crime; the amount of paperwork required for anything; turning up to find that the unit had no kit; and the remarkable quality of the soldiers that I met.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Haughton**

At the end of 2004, 219 Sig Sqn deployed with the Regt on the first outing of CORMORANT, EX JOINT VENTURE 04. This was the first time many in the Sqn had actually set eyes on the new kit, and it was an ideal opportunity to get to know the newest bit of comms equipt in the Corps. It was a good job we deployed with people having a good sense of humour though, as this rather long ex in freezing cold hangars could have put some people over the edge. A lot of fun took place in the CP (cosy place), which was full of IT equipt.

The New Year started at quite a pace. There have been a number of new faces arrive into the Sqn, some from the factory but many, due to the restructuring of the Regt ORBAT, from 214 Sqn. This has brought with it the usual headache of chasing personnel and paperwork to ensure they are both where they should be! The Sqn is happy to welcome back the OC, **Maj Dave Duggan** and all those who were involved in OP TELIC 4 and OP VERITAS. They were successful tours for all those involved, and they are currently making good use of some well-deserved POTL.

219 Sqn soldiers assist in a Baghdad orphanage

We are currently busying ourselves for the next Sqn, hoping that we don't experience the whiteout conditions that were the norm last year. Although short on actual comms equipt, the Sqn is busy preparing personnel for deployment all over the globe. As the 'Other Tasks' Sqn, this includes supporting OP HERRICK, OP VERITAS Forward and Rear, providing a CORMORANT trg team, Regtl Recruiting Team and any other enduring ops.

As such, we currently have soldiers in Florida, Qatar, Iraq, BATUS and the Falklands. With Afghanistan also to be added to the list, most of the Sqn will soon be involved in pre-deployment trg. Looks like the forthcoming year will be an interesting and very busy one.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AJ Clewlow**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

A challenging year now behind us, we move into the CORMORANT era and the new challenges this provides. After the rigours or JOINT VENTURE 04, we now have our initial allocation of six CORMORANT dets, and we are involved in the new system tests prior to the planned Sqn and Regt level exs. As we move into our trg year, these will prepare us for our move into the High Readiness cycle.

We are extremely glad to welcome back our remaining members of the Sqn on the conclusion of their successful tour on OP TELIC 4. Currently **Cpl Bain** and **LCpl Narantak Rai** are deployed in Iraq on OP TELIC 5.

In his capacity as Comd Queen's Gurkha Signals, **Lt Col DB Warne** accompanied by **Maj(QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO** (Gurkha Major QGS) paid an official visit to the Sqn on 19 January 05.

NEWS FROM THE GULF - 'RACE THE SUN – BAGHDAD'
- By LCpl Sagar Rai

'Race the Sun' is an annual event run by 2 Signal Regt, which sees teams from across the Army compete in one of the biggest day long endurance relay events - all in aid of various charities. Whilst on OP TELIC 4, members of the 2 Sig Regt composite Sqn based in Baghdad thought it would be a good idea to try to do something similar, to give the Tp a focus, and win the hearts and minds of the local Iraqi people.

Led by **Sgt Michelle Local**, assisted by **LCpl Ratna Tmg** (PTI) and other Tp members, the work began. As you may well imagine, there are many very worthy causes and charities here, however the one that touched our hearts the most was a garment factory in the Karada District of Baghdad. The workers here are all deaf and mute, and have grown up in the adjacent orphanage. Since the war, the factory has been struggling to get back on its feet and regain the contracts it once had. So we thought we would try all we could and see them through this difficult time and hopefully, give them a good start for the future.

To make the event a success, we invited teams from across the Coalition Forces. Originally the event was supposed to be held at various locs across the International Zone, but because of the increasing threat in this area, we had to come up with an alternative that was still worthy of the challenge of 'Race the Sun'. So it was decided to hold the event within the perimeter of the US Mission Palace Complex. The event started at the crack of dawn on 12 December 04, the first teams being the Signals Titans (US Signals) and the Team Phoenix from US Army Civil Affairs. Each event was on a points system, and was run over a 30-min best effort, with the team covering the most distance getting maximum

A worker in the Karada Garment Factory

points, and so on. It was to be a round robin covering 5 events in all (run, cycle, swim, row and a Bergen march (15kg)) and finishing with a 1,200m stretcher race, with each team member being carried over a 200m lap.

For the 2 Sig Regt Sqn teams, the day started in the freezing cold water, and finished some 4 hrs later, very hot and tired with the stretcher race. There were many spectators from across the Coalition Forces to support the event, and some of them probably thought we were a bit mad. However, we had a really good day, and when the final results were announced by **Air Cdre Cunningham** (DSBMR-I), both 2 Sig Regt Sqn teams had only one point separating them at the top.

The Imphal Warriors won ahead of the Imphal Tigers, proving again to our American friends that we are without doubt the best soldiers in the world. When the individual results were announced, we also had victories in the swim (**SSgt Tosh** and **Sgt Woodray**), the run (**LCpl Ratna Tmg**), cycle (**LCpl Kerswell**), Bergen march (**SSgt Hughes** and **Sig Symington**) - and we ran away with the stretcher race in a time of 6 min 33 sec (a massive 45 seconds over our nearest rivals). The amount of support we had for the whole event was overwhelming, and there is still money coming in from across the IZ and from our base in York. In total, we have so far raised $9,550.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D Hudson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Griffiths**

202 (ARMOURED) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Simon Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ollie Reed**

After a restful Christmas period, the Squadron returned to work and reformed under the new ORBAT 2005 in preparation for the completion of BOWMANisation. With a full forecast of events to look forward to, it looks as though we can look forward to another busy and active year.

EXERCISE MEDICINE MAN V - BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD (BATUS) – *by Lt Walton*

Having not long completed a tour on operations in Iraq, I shook the sand from my Bergen and was slingshot around the world to act as Temporary Staff at the highly acclaimed trg unit BATUS in Canada. My employment was that of Battle-Group Tactical (BG Tac) Safety and Liaison Officer and was to be known as '83'. The culture shock hit me as I arrived in early July. A 3-hr drive from the airport, with one bend in the road for the entire journey and nothing but fields of crops and livestock for miles around. The hustle and bustle of British society had surely been left on the other side of the Atlantic. Arriving at BATUS, I soon realised I had left the world of the Royal Signals behind, with row upon row of Challenger 2, Warrior and CVRT on view for all to see. Greeted as the new 83, I soon found out that everyone at BATUS was assigned a call sign, even the wives who simply added 'W' in front of their husband's. This was a strange place!

With the first MEDICINE MAN of the season cancelled due to operational commitments, it left my first few months rather empty. This was however, to be of great advantage, allowing me to sample the flavour of Canadian life through some travelling as well, as being better prepared for the arrival of KRH BGs in September 2004. With the nearest town a 45-min drive away, and the nearest city (Calgary) 250km away, there were plenty of road trips and fun to be had from water parks to National Parks, not to mention some serious skydiving! 1 There was however some work to be done, with the UK Govt and MOD's eyes on the success of BOWMAN on its largest ever field trial – a fully BOWMANised BG, the pressure was on everyone at BATUS to provide the best trg possible. For me, this meant attending BOWMAN courses, TEWTs,

safety briefs, becoming a TES (Tactical Equipment Simulation) trouble-shooter, and completing a Range Management package, allowing me to safety supervise a whole host of weapons rarely seen in my own Corps.

Now with a better understanding of my role, as the BG Tac Safety and Liaison Offr, I would have a number of tasks to perform, often simultaneously. The safety of BG and Tac HQ during live firing, was primary, and involved zap checking around 30 vehs every morning at 04.00hrs This involved physically seeing and accounting for the vehs' locs. I was then to mark and monitor these during the live firing package, so that range templates could turn (allowing live firing to commence), and their boundaries remain uncrossed. Secondly, I was to act as the liaison officer between the CO of the BG and Comd BATUS, ensuring all relevant plans and info were passed. Other responsibilities included troubleshooting for the BG HQ, helping run ranges for BG personnel, attending BG planning meetings and O Gps, TES troubleshooting during the TES phase, and navigating my driver around the Prairie (a trg area the size of Luxemburg) both day and night. All in all, a busy job!

With the ex underway, it was soon obvious that sleep was at a premium, and with working hours exceeding 20-hr days at times, both Safety Staff and BG personnel were on edge. The first half of the 24-day ex consisted of a Live Firing package and took the BG from one-day 'dry run-through's' to a 4-day Combined Arms BG, exercising all elements, including engineer and artillery support, through to the A1 and A2 Echs. Having never seen a Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank live firing before, this made for some great pictures, especially at night. If this wasn't enough, later on I was even allowed to play the role of commander, driver and gunner - and although being the gunner was like playing Nintendo, nothing could beat the thrill of driving flat out in a 60 tonne tank! After five firing, followed TES, the largest game of laser quest seen to man. With OPFOR (Opposition Force) played by another BG made up primarily of 1 RTR, the second half of the ex was even more exhausting for the BG than the first. A thoroughly gruelling, but invaluable ex for both the BG's trg and BOWMAN's performance.

Unfortunately BOWMAN has a long way to go before the Armoured Corps will accept it with open arms, as will I'm sure the rest of the British Army, Navy and Air force. With multiple problems, ranging from its lack of stated range, intercom failure, and its continued inability to the send the data its creators swore it could, BOWMAN trials are something we will continue to see for many years yet to come.

With the arrival of the snow and the opening of the ski slopes, it was time to make the journey back to a miserable UK, and use the knowledge I had gained at BATUS to assist the BOWMANisation of my Tp.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Smith**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Gilbert**

With many still feeling the effects of Christmas and New Year celebrations the Sqn has been quick to get back into action. A very busy six weeks has seen elements of the Sqn deploy on Ops, EX LION SUN, AT, BOWMAN courses, as well as keeping the many and varied balls in the air.

HELICOPTER DUNKING COURSE

206 Sig Sqn was given the great opportunity for a day out to the Helicopter Dunking Tank at Yeovilton. An early start shocked a few, and this set the theme for the day! On arrival we were given coveralls, shoes and a safety brief. A video showed the importance of helicopter exit skills, and then it was our turn to practise these potentially life-saving skills. We were put in groups of 6 and there were 4 types of drill, straight down in day light, upside down in day light, upside down in twilight and the favourite, upside down in the dark, where some could be heard calling 'Mummy, Mummy, Mummy!' as the helicopter hit the water! The morning went very quickly, but when it was your turn in the dunk tank, it seemed to be the longest 30 seconds of your life!

EXERCISE SNOWY DRAGON

EX SNOWY DRAGON was an AT skiing package, to Bavaria put together by **Lt Rachel Thompson**. For many, the ex was an introduction to skiing; the majority had never skied before. The two instructors taking the exped were **SSgt Dave Allen**, who was taking the basic skiing group, and **WO2 John Driver**, leading the group with previous skiing experience.

On Saturday 8 January 05, the group set off for the 16-hr journey across Europe to Bavaria. Upon arrival on the Sunday morning, the group was given time to familiarise themselves with their surroundings, unpack and admin themselves, before getting across town to rent more skiing equipt for the week ahead.

On the Monday morning the group departed to the slopes, where they were split into the two groups. The novice/challenged group learned all of the basics on one of the smaller slopes, whilst the group with apparently previous experience took the cable cars through the mountains to the top, where they began their instruction.

Throughout the week, it became evident that some people took to skiing better than others, with **Lt Thompson** showing how it should be done, whilst **LCpl Colwell** showed alternative ways of getting down the slopes.

The week's skiing was fantastic, with some really strong characters providing the week with some great laughs. With the week progressing, the competitive edge took over with **Sigs Adams**, **Chappell**, and **Freeman** competing to not be named as the biggest ski Rooney of the week. Overall, it was an excellent week, with all of the exped members getting awarded at least their Basic Ski Proficiency.

206 Sig Sqn on the Piste

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Warne**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Hancock**

OPERATION PHILLIS

Yet again 256 Sig Sqn was called at short notice to deploy overseas. The call came on the 09 November 04, and by midnight that night, an Operational Liaison Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) were already en route to RAF Lyneham, under the control of **Sigs Robertson** and **Glendining**.

The team were the first in theatre, and hit the ground running as they landed in the heart of the action in the Ivory Coast, where they met the French HQ, 1 km west of the airport. A further 3 OLRT teams were in close pursuit, and barely had time to taste the club class champagne before landing some 8 hrs later, breaking all pervious records for an OLRT deployment.

The teams were: **Cpl Gibney** and **Sig Earle**, **LCpl Whitfield** and **Sig Farrar** and **Sig Lock** and **Sig Beckett**. There was yet another OLRT team also en route to theatre, that of **Cpl Page** and **Sig Dexter** - part of the Spearhead Lead Element, who had also been called to theatre.

The teams where whisked through the chaotic Accra Airport, Ghana, and taken straight to the British High Commission, where the first team had secure comms in within minutes. The remaining two teams were placed on high alert to deploy elsewhere in theatre. By midday the next day, with little sleep, it was time for Team 3 to spring into action, and they deployed to Accra Airport ready to receive evacuees.

LCpl Whitfield grabbed his body armour to deploy across the border to the unstable Ivory Coast, where he spent 13 hrs in blistering heat maintaining secure comms on the Airfield at Abidjan.

The whole operation was a complete success, with over 200 British nationals flown to safety. Yet Again 256 Sig Sqn have proved they are cut above the rest, when it comes to rapid deployment, strategic and secure comms.

EXERCISE ARDUOUS CYGNET – *by Sig Pandu Tamang*

EX ARDUOUS CYGNET, normally known as the CO's Cadre Course, took place in both Gamecock Bks and in Stanford Trg Area from 07 – 26 November 2004. The main aim of the course is to develop leadership qualities, assess potential as Junior NCOs, and finally to present the soldiers back to their own Sqn as a lean, mean, Royal Signals fighting machines. A total of 30 soldiers participated, with a final pass out number of 28.

On the first and second day of the course, we were subjected to three tests, BCFT, BPFA, and a written test. After this, we were divided into our three sections forming a platoon, and continued mil skills trg in this manner. The lessons included ITDs, Battle Field First Aid, NBC, Basic Instructional Techniques (BIT), Combat Estimate, Comd and Leadership, Map Reading, security lessons, and other activities, such as individual drills, with daily PT early in the morning whilst in camp. Also included were an APWT, LOAC, recognition, etc. Being continually assessed in all subjects and the manner in which we performed in our teams, was quite a stressful experience, as well as being both physically and mentally challenging. Prior to the final ex, we deployed on EX SHAKEDOWN on Nescliffe Trg Area during 16-17 November.

The aim of this ex was to impart military knowledge in detail i.e., how to dig shell scrapes, how to occupy harbour areas and experience night nav. That ex came to an end with a mixed run in sections, including Bergen, log carry and stretcher run.
The field phase was conducted in Stanford Trg Area. It was the hardest part of the course, lasting for five days and nights. During this time, every soldier was given the opportunity to command his or her section. The responsibilities of a section comd involved leading a section through various tasks, such as night nav, delivering orders for a section, recce patrol, standing patrol, security of harbours and re-supply. Doing all this in cold wet conditions was very difficult and required a lot of patience and determination.

ENDEX was announced after the attack in build up area. After this, we were driven back to Gamecock Bks. On Thursday 25 November, the Top Student conducted the pass off parade. Both the Top Student and the award for the best field soldier of the course were awarded to **Sig Pandu Tamang**, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn.

OPERATION BRACKEN – 250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON
- by Capt John Malcolm

It was Wednesday 20 October, the first day of the Gurkha Festival of Dashain, and I was curled up in bed, sleeping off the first night's celebrations. I was awoken by my mobile phone and the Regtl FofS saying 'Can you get to a military line please, Sir?'
This was the first thing any of us heard about OP BRACKEN, the re-deployment of the 1 Black Watch BG to the infamous 'Sunni Triangle'. We were to deploy a small det to FOB KALSU, 45 km South of FOB DOGWOOD, and provide a Liaison HQ with USMC 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). That first phone call instigated 3 days of frenetic activity - collecting all the extra equipt we would require, testing and plugging it all up, signing for sandy combats and ECBA, counting Crypto, last minute doc checks, and finally, manifesting and air prepping. By 21.00hrs on Friday, as we left camp for Brize Norton, we felt as if we had done an op tour already.

The move by C17 to Basrah went smoothly enough, and we were met at Basra Air Station by some familiar faces from MND(SE) J6. We received our first brief on what we would be doing from a map laid out on the floor of the arrivals area of the Airport. We would be flying up country in a C130 to Baghdad, and then travelling by road, through the 'Triangle', to FOB KALSU, HQ of 24 MEU.

It was here that we first learned that OP BRACKEN had been nicknamed OP CERTAIN DEATH by the Black Watch, and that FOB KALSU was mortared on most days. Suddenly, everyone looked a little more apprehensive. We all then moved to the QMs to start signing for kit. It was at this point, that we realised that we already had someone MIA. **LCpl Sjezok** was nowhere to be seen. He was eventually found back at the APOD, in the tender care of the RAF Police, having failed to get on any of the transport.

We didn't stay long in Basrah - just long enough to check zero our weapons, sign for everything we didn't have time for in UK, and eat a month's worth of pizzas. At 03.00hrs on Monday 25 October (only 5 days from receiving the Warning Order) we moved to the APOD to catch our C130 north. We were loaded into two C130s. The first carrying the majority of the det and both Landrovers, had no problems, and landed at Baghdad on schedule. The second, carrying **LCpl Tham** and the already cursed **LCpl Sjezok,** had an engine problem minutes after take off, and turned back for Basrah. There followed a pretty lazy day for the rest of us, as we waited for the RAF to fix the C130 and send it back up to us. It finally arrived at around 17.00hrs. On arrival at Baghdad, we met up with our US escort of heavily-armed Humvees and set off for KALSU.

KALSU is pretty hard to describe; imagine M*A*S*H, in the desert. Everything is sandbagged, fortified or walled off with huge concrete walls. Some of the buildings are half-collapsed, and

others are half-built. Electricity and water are both patchy, yet there are two Internet tents and an excellent gym. Mortar shelters are everywhere and you soon learn to keep track of where the closest is. The US Marines are brilliant. They disprove all the horror-stories of working with US Forces. They are professional, dedicated, completely helpful, and not at all 'gung-ho'. We had a short honeymoon period of a good nine days when no mortars landed on the FOB at all. We had begun to get quite cocky about the mortar threat when, one evening, the natives got rather restless. A barrage of rockets had us cowering in our bunker for about 30 minutes. However, this did give **Cpl Dickinson** the opportunity to complete the first det challenge. In a terrified voice, worthy of an Oscar nominee, he asked, 'What the **** was that?' **Capt Malcolm** was half way through replying, 'What do you think it was?' when he realised that he had just been Waah'ed while under fire.

At time of writing, we have been in KALSU for a little over a month, and are due to return to UK in a week or so. The deployment has been a learning experience for all of us, from getting out of the door, operating daily in pretty unusual conditions, to working so closely with the US. It could only happen at 30 Sig Regt! Jai 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn!

OPERATION HERRICK *- by Lt D Wright*

At the end of September 2004, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed a tp of 27 personnel to Afghanistan to conduct a relief in place with 258 Sig Sqn. 258 Sqn had successfully completed the build at 4 locs in theatre. An 11 man det led by **SSgt Iain Giles** was deployed to Kabul to run the Comcen at Camp Souter, their mission to provide CIS support to BRITFOR and the Kabul Patrols Company (KPC), with **Sig Edwards** providing close comms support to the Comd. 3 smaller dets were also deployed to the north of the country to support the Provisional Reconstruction Teams. 6 men were deployed to PRT Mazar-E-Sharif (MeS) led by **Lt Dan Wright** and **Sgt Harkness**, 5 to the Fwd Support Base (near MeS) led by **Sgt Somoras** and 5 to PRT Maimana led by **Sgt Dev** and **Cpl Danter**

The task of the Tp is to supply and administer strategic, operational and tactical comms systems for the KPC, 2 PRTs and 12 Military Observer Teams (MOTs). The Sqn's excellent experience with LWRN, TACSAT and VHF comms systems, along with attached IS Engrs from Supt Sqn, made it a smooth transition between the two sqns.

The immediate task for our dets in the north was to train the deployed MOTs on the use of TACSAT and LWRN sat comms systems. This was made all the more challenging by half of the MOTs being multi-national. Luckily, their spoken English is a little better than **Lt Dan Wright's** Romanian. Most recently, the challenge of installing ISAF comms systems at all dets in the North, and the associated trg required in maintaining these systems, has kept all deployed personnel busy. Despite this, many of our lads have been able to get out on patrol with the MOTs.

Everyone has enjoyed working with the ARIB (1WFR), particularly the Tp Comd who, during his Nottingham University days, seems to have shared many former drinking spots with their soldiers. It must be one of the most multi-national theatres that British troops are currently deployed to.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Ironside**

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andrew Thompson TD**
SSM **SSgt Davie Riach**

The Sqn had a busy social calendar over the holiday period with *The Clansman* holding a very well-organised families day. We even managed to arrange for Santa (**SSgt Bud Burnett**) to make an appearance, which brought a smile to faces young and old. The same evening, the Sqn hosted its party for the adults; with plenty of Christmas Spirit, the event was a roaring success. For the first time the Sqn hosted it's own Hogmanay bash, and our thanks go to **Cpl Hunter**, our PASO, **Capt Postlethwaite**, and all the others who made the evening a massive success.

January has been a busy month for the Sqn, as we carried out a COMMS EX to practise our OP COMPASS role. This event was skilfully planned and co-ordinated by our Sqn YofS, **SSgt Webb**. The weekend was a great success; everyone learned something new - and we did achieve comms, which is always a bonus. We also hosted the Regtl weekend at Gordon Bks; this was a military skills weekend that was planned by our PSI, **SSgt Muligan**. Saturday consisted of 11 stands that had activities, ranging from veh recovery to observation. It also included stands laid on by other units in Aberdeen, providing a wide variety of tasks and challenges to the troops, tasks such as correctly attaching a casualty to a stretcher rather than just using bungies. The Offrs' and Sgts' Messes held their joint Burns Supper on Saturday night. As usual, this event proved to be quite an eye-opener, with the address to the lassies by **SSgt Sorely** and the response from **SSgt Niblock**. The speech caused all, including the innocent, to take cover in case they should be hit by some of the wit and rapport that was flowing between the lovely 'couple'. Sunday consisted of sports for the soldiers, and some very useful lessons for the officers. Everyone enjoyed themselves.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

In a military sense, the months of December and January are traditionally quiet ones for the Sqn, as the main focus moves to the myriad of social functions happening both in and out of the squadron. The number of social commitments with employers, families and friends makes it hard in this period to even find a date for all of the events, but as can be expected the Sqn managed. Upon breaking up for the Christmas stand down, we had managed to hold a kids' Christmas party, Junior Ranks' function and a Sergeants' Mess function, along with the numerous permanent staff functions. This meant that we broke up with most people secretly glad of the break.

January is normally the month where the Sqn is eased gradually back into the TA habit, and this year the focus was on mil skills, paired with tribute to our National Bard, **Robert Burns**. The first Sqn weekend of the year was deeply flavoured by these components, and the accolade must go to the SSM, **WO2 Karen Swan**, whose reply from the lassies is still being spoken of. The following weekend was the first RTW of the year, and the flavour more or less was the same as the previous weekend. However, accolades this time go to **SSgt Gair Sorley**, who again stamped his personality on the Regtl Burns Supper.

This is a time of turmoil within the Sqn hierarchy. Along with the delivery of a new batch of officers, we are losing our esteemed leader of many a year, **Maj Donald Gordon**. **Donald** has been a member of the Sqn for more years than he wishes to remember

and has been OC for most of the time that we have been in East Kilbride. It is with gratitude and just a little apprehension that the Sqn waves goodbye to **Maj Gordon**, and await the appointment of his successor. He is moving back to Glasgow UOTC as a company comd, thus completing the loop by returning to the unit where he joined the TA and completed his initial training as an officer. A big Hello to **2Lts Craik**, **Vaggers** and **Colford**, who are joining us, and by the time that this is published 52 Sqn will be under new management.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Bruce**

January was a typical month for the Capital Sqn. Lots of ITD trg, making sure everyone has qualified for their bounty in time, a splattering of parties, and an adventure to Aberdeen. After the number of lectures given by **Capt Graham Gaw**, everyone is now a self-confessed expert on the Law of Armed Conflict, and the sight of the car park at Castlelaw Ranges has never looked so appealing after a 'walk' over the Pentland Hills.

The Regtl Trg Weekend saw the Sqn travel beyond Dundee for the first time in living memory, to attend a team-building challenge hosted by our northern allies. A day of cunning, physical, logical and fun challenges proved to be very successful. **Sgt Munro**, our chief clerk, impressed the techs with his soldering skills on their stand. Just don't tell them what your Civvy job is! A particularly difficult stand involved answering a series of general knowledge questions, to come up with a combination for a safe.

The day's trg completed, the Offrs and SNCOs prepared for an evening of song, verse and good food as they celebrated the life of Rabbie Burns in fine style. **Lt Kev Dempsey** impressed us all with his rendition of Scots Wha' Hay, almost decapitating a rather important guest, whilst **Sgt Alex Cook** amazed us all by his fantastic singing voice.

Not content with one party to celebrate the Bard, the Sqn held another Burns Supper the following week, this time organised by Rabbie's long lost great grandson, **Capt Peter Campbell**. A fine feast of haggis, cooked up by super chef **Sgt Andy Crawford**, was followed by more verse and song, with **Sgt Joe Poulson** bringing the ode to the lassies into the twenty first century. The evening was a resounding success, ending with everyone singing the *correct* words to Auld Lang Syne, and retiring to the bar. Congratulations to **SSgt Jane Chisholm** who, on 19 January,

SSgt Jane Chisholm getting her award

was awarded a certificate in appreciation of her meritorious service. The text on the certificate read: 'The President, Vice Presidents, Chairman and Members of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for the Lowlands of Scotland Hereby place on record their high Appreciation of Meritorious Service rendered by **Sgt Chisholm'**. **Cpl Harvey** also received the Award, but has yet to collect it from the clutches of the PSAO!

Finally the Sqn says goodbye and good luck to its SPSI of the last 4 years. **SSgt Bob Harvey** leaves us and the Army to settle in Cyprus with **Vicky**, where he hopes eventually to run his own diving company. We wish **Bob** and **Vicky** all the best with their move to the sun and look forward to some cheap AT expeds! As a result, **Sgt Mark Kelly** is sat at the desk of power until a suitable replacement is found.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER

As in previous years, the Regtl Ski Team split into two factions for this ex. Those attending for the final two weeks of the Royal Signals Championship, and those hardcore attending only for race week.

Travel this year was easier than past years. We had managed to persuade the system to allow us to sail from Rosyth nr Edinburgh, so it was just a matter of getting all the team to our Edinburgh loc. We were at the ferry port in half an hour. After an enjoyable crossing, we spent Sunday 28 February travelling through Holland and Germany to Austria, arriving just after the bar shut. The Monday morning was spent on the Kitzsteinhorn slopes trying to remember how to ski, and then we were split into groups during the dreaded ski-off.

The first week passed quite quickly as we all worked hard to get back to previous levels of ability, with the highlight being a midweek trip up the Schmittenhohe (a typical ski area, as opposed to the dark side of the moon of the Kitzsteinhorn glacier). **Sig Grant** spent most of her time in the poles (practising racing through poles) being in the second highest group. **Sgt Henderson** and **LCpl Andrew** seemed to spend all week zooming down slopes with big grins on their faces. **Sig Johnston** however had decided to practise the black art of snowboarding, so her first week in Austria was spent mainly bottom down. From compete beginner, she went on to complete a week of racing – which if anything is an accolade for the instruction available, and of course, the effort put in.

The weekend leading in to race week provided a chance to relax for most. A contingent went to the American PX in Garmisch and proceeded to shop like it was going out of fashion. Others went for a leisurely stroll around town, and **Capt Davidson** spent a lot of time tidying his room, then visiting police stations once he discovered that he had lost his wallet. The hardcore (race week only) skiers arrived over the weekend, which signalled the end of trg and the start of racing - and time to recommence friendly hostilities with 31 Sig Regt (our main rivals).

Race week was a flurry of activity, with good results achieved by all. The main events competed for in the TA Championship are Team Slalom, Team Giant Slalom and Overall Team. Early on in the week our A Team won the Team Giant Slalom. This put us in a good position to pick up the Overall prize as long as we had a respectable showing in the Team GS. Midway through the week, **Capt Dods** surprised **Capt Davidson**, when he produced the Lycra catsuits that the 2 Capts had bought to race in. The next day both of them arrived attired in Lycra, looking like skiing frogs! This was interesting until **Capt Dods** fell on the third gate of a race and slid on his belly halfway down the course. **Capt Davidson** found this very humorous, until the next day when he fell during the vital Team GS race. In the end, the A Team had performed well enough to sweep the board, taking all TA prizes, and spending their second year as Royal Signals TA Skiing Champions.

The B team also performed extremely well, but unfortunately did not compete for prizes. The Regtl Ski Team is still improving, and we thankfully have a replacement for **LCpl Andrew** (who is now at RMAS Sandhurst) in **Sgt Cabby Henderson.** Our next event is EX SNOW LION in March. Hopefully more TA Units will be in Austria next year to compete with us.

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

CO **Lt Col D Somerville MBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) M Browitt**

A CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

The Regt held a charity fund-raising event to boost the funds of the ABF and SSAFA (Forces Help). By the beginning of December, the invitations were sent out, and our impressive guest list was starting to develop. With the help of the Formby Silver Band under the leadership of **Louise Hough**, and voices well lubricated by Gluhwein and mince pies, the evening was a resounding success.

The principle civic guests were the Mayor and Mayoress of Knowsley, and the Chairman of SSAFA Merseyside, **Mr Alex Littlejohn**. We also welcomed **Brig JJ Powe OBE** Comd 42 (NW) Bde and his wife, **Boo**.

Various cheques were presented: **Capt Gerry Whelan** PSAO 42 Sig Sqn presented a cheque for £1,000, which was part of the £2000 he and members of his Sqn had raised in a coast-to-coast walk. Two other cheques, totalling £2,200 were presented to SSAFA (Forces Help) and ABF.

During a pause in the singing, the Bde Comd promoted **2Lt Trump** to Lt, and **Daniel Morgan**, who spent 2 weeks with us on Work Experience, was presented with a Regimental Plaque by the CO, **Lt Col David Somerville**. The evening was ended with one of our speciality curries, which was well deserved, as **Louise** had certainly made the guests work for their supper!

Daniel Morgan receiving a plaque from Lt Col Somerville

SURPRISE 65th BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR OUR HONORARY COLONEL

We learned that our Hon Col, **Col Peter Toyne** and his wife, **Angela** were visiting the 65th parallel in the Antarctic, and that part of that trip would involve a visit to the Falkland Islands. The CO mentioned, in passing, as COs do, 'I wonder if we could do something for him?' and the RAO, **Maj Bob Dobson** was targeted.

Soon itineraries were furtively discussed between the RAO and **Angela**, and after many emails and telephone calls, a surprise visit was arranged to the Sig Sqn in the Falklands. Once aboard ship, further clandestine emails were sent and received confirming the ship's arrival at Stanley. Once all was in place, the whole plan changed. Apparently the ship's Captain had decided that there were 'special ice-bergs' that the passengers should see. Midnight emails were again delivered, changing the date and time for the visit, and hoping that the Captain would, this time, dock the ship in Port Stanley.

This he duly did, and a reception committee was sent to start the visit. This was somewhat modified, as the Hon Col had to be collected from hospital in Stanley first! But that is a whole different story.

Met by the Sqn 2IC, **Flt Lt Stu Rhymer**, and **WO2 McDonnell**, the party were welcomed by the Sqn and then given a guided tour of the battlefields around Stanley, finishing at the memorial, where they were presented with an engraved 105mm shell case and a bottle of champagne. **Col Toyne** was thrilled by the visit and the

Flt Lt Stu Rymer presents Col Toyne with an engraved 105 mm shell case in front of the Port Stanley Memorial

generosity of the Sqn, and we all thank them for the effort involved in planning the trip, and in particular OC Sqn OC, **Maj Paul Anderson**.

UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS

Members of the Regt's shooting team have recently returned from a trip to Germany after competing in a Reserve Forces nternational Shooting Competition. Over two hundred reservist teams of four, from throughout Europe, participated in the two-day event, held on the American Forces ranges at Alsfeld near Frankfurt.

The competition was fired using the HK SL8, which is a civil version of the HKG 36 assault rifle, which all participants were unfamiliar with. Despite strong competition, and near zero temperatures, the Team achieved a worthy 19th place. The opportunity to qualify on the M9 (Beretta) pistol, M249-minimi machine gun and M4 rifle, resulted in all but one of the team receiving the qualification and certificates.

Cpl Sheila Turner failed to qualify, but earlier that day, she had been seconded to a German ladies' team, achieving first place, and had received a 105mm shell case as the Winner's prize!

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Garry Hearn**
RSM **WO1(RSM Paul McGarry**

15 BRIGADE CHALLENGE CUP FINAL
- by WO1(RSM) McGarry

SSgt Jamie Martinez to CO: 'Sir, I'm a bit of a footballer and I'm keen to get the Regts' Team going.' CO to SSgt: 'Crack on Staff.' It was as simple as that. The Team was formed and entered into the Regional Competition. Initial trg saw the Team (average age of about 40!) head to the Eston Sports Centre to start their gruelling 5-aside warm-ups. It was obviously a winning formula, as we soon chalked up a victory over Sunderland UOTC (average age of about 18!) and victory over 49 Sig Sqn (V) from Leeds.

The final duly arrived, and the Team, keen to make it a treble victory and lift the cup, arrived at Catterick Garrison. Full of anticipation, the strips were issued and the team talk began. This was all new to us, as on previous games the team talk usually consisted of 'How many players have we got?' Even although we had lost 2 key players to injury (**SSgt Gaz Williams**, striker, and left back, **Sgt Mac McLeod**) we were still full of confidence.

Despite going down to ten men after 6 mins, we went in 1 up at half time, after **A/Sgt Craig Straughan** converted a penalty. The Geordie Gunners came out strong in the second half and eventually got the equaliser. 2 more players went down with injury leaving our team tired and frustrated, and despite our best efforts, the Gunners put a second in.

The final whistle went and, our progress in the Challenge Cup National competition was over. Congratulations to 101 Regt RA and to **SSgt Jamie Martinez** for all his hard work. Reaching the final of our first tournament was a great achievement. Onwards and upwards!

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Smith**
SSM **SSgt CA Phillips**

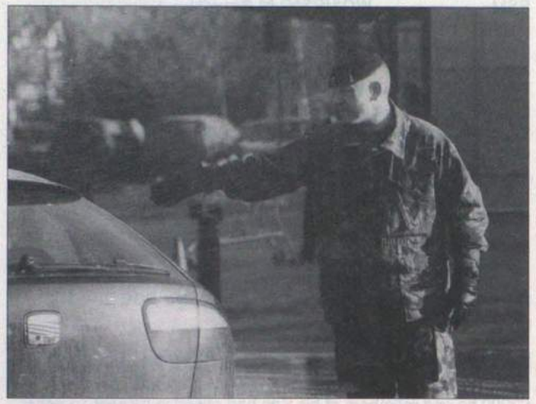
Since the last edition of *The WIRE*, there have been one or two changes in ORBAT 50 Sqn. We extend a warm welcome to **Maj Simon Smith**, posted in as OC from 90 Sqn; and **Capt Jay Croslegh**, the Trg Offr. **Sgt Milligan** joins the ranks of the Permanent Staff, arriving from Balado Bridge. Departures include **Maj Jez Bailey**, posted to HQ Sqn as UESO; and **WO2(SSM) John Howe** to Civvy St. Thank you for your commitment to the Sqn over the past years, and good luck in all your future ventures.

Capt Paul Denning has returned from OP TELIC, ready to resume his post of Sqn 2IC (and principal contributor to *The WIRE*!). Not to be outdone, the Sqn Ops Offr, **Lt Shane Ferris** finds himself deploying on OP TELIC in February.

CHARITY CAR WASH

The Sqn was approached by local Radio Station Alpha FM to support their charity car wash in aid of the Tsunami Appeal. Always willing to support local causes 705 Tp, under the direction of **SSgt (FofS) Dave Cook**, threw themselves behind the event.

On Saturday 22 January, the Tp, Alpha FM, the 'Blazing Squad' (complete with Limousine Fire engine) and the local Cub Scout pack set up stall in the Sainsbury's Car park in Darlington, armed to the teeth with buckets and sponges.



'What a disgusting, filthy motor! Fetch it over here at once!

Sgt Paul Standing guided the customers towards the wash instead of the car park exit, and 11.00hrs saw the first soapy sponge hit a windscreen. **Sigs Lance Nixon** and **Rob Saunders** did an excellent job keeping the customers happy with their sterling service. **Sgt Karen Jemmet** got the Foreman's car gleaming, and **Sgt Gary Fletcher** may have scared one or two of the locals with his Fireman's Hose. **Linda**, the Foreman's wife ensured that no car made a clean getaway (get it?) without contributing to the Appeal. The flow of water, cars and donations was continuous until the end of the event. Apologies to the cars being turned away at 15.00hrs, but all involved had worn themselves out.

That's much better!

After closing shop, the FofS supervised by **Cpl Paterson**, returned to Alpha FM to count up the lolly. A total of £507.61 was raised towards the Tsunami appeal, and the Tp pledged a further £200 to the cause.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 8 *- by SSgt(FofS) Tibbetts*

On the morning of Saturday 27 November 04, five of the Regts' finest ambassadors boarded a minibus, left Middlesborough and embarked on a journey of over 800 miles to compete in the annual Corps Snowboarding Championships. **SSgt Dean Leach** was the first admin casualty, having forgotten his passport. However, the 10-mile detour to pick it up was forgiven, when he returned to the bus with passport in left hand and a small peace offering in the other. The journey to Kaprun, Austria went exceptionally well with no major incidents along the way.

Once in loc, the team quickly located their bashas before going through the admin cycle with the rest of the competitors. This included paying for the package, kit collection and briefings, more briefings, more briefings, and finishing off with - a briefing! The team now fully kitted out, and well-briefed were ready for the two weeks of boarding that lay ahead. **Cpl Paterson** was particularly excited about the first day of snow action, as the snowboard he had been issued with was a particularly fetching one! It was to become known as 'Gay Board', leaving the Cpl wondering whether or not to go out and buy a matching pink all in one ski-suit!

The team at the top of the Kitzsteinhorn. Cop the groovy snowboard!

The team thoroughly enjoyed each day of the first week, which was essentially the trg phase. For beginners, it was learning how to become a boarding dude; for the intermediates and advanced riders, it was a chance to hone their skills under the excellent guidance of the Dutch Civvy instructors.

The arrival of the weekend meant two days off for all competitors. The 34 Sig Regt team was no different from others, and in true TA style embarked on a mission to drink Zell-am-See dry before returning to the lodge 'kebab in hand.' The team did However, manage to soak up some of the Austrian culture with a Saturday afternoon trip to the Christmas market in nearby Salzburg.

The second and final phase of the Camp was Race Week. This is what all competitors train for, and would sort out the men from the boys! Unfortunately, the Squad lost one member when **SSgt(FofS) Tibbetts**, our star competitor, had to return to the UK for a compassionate. This meant that the four-man team selected would consist of two Regular and two TA soldiers.

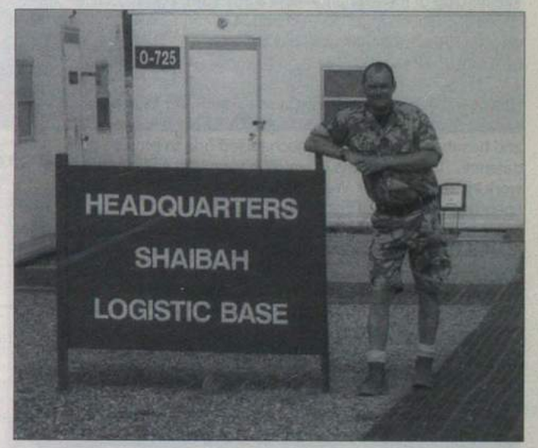
SSgt Dean Leach, the most experienced member remaining, now shouldered an additional burden, as he was now hot favourite to win some silverware for the Regt. He enjoyed little success initially, until he decided to spend every spare hour of every day dragging the rest of the team around the local ski/snowboard shops. With lots of shiny new kit and a maxed-out credit card he went on to claim a win in the runners-up category of the novice dual slalom event. Unfortunately **Cpl Paterson's** experience failed to shine through, when he was beaten by the Regt's novice riders, **Sgts Eddy Waring** and **Micky Jemmett**.
Unlike the trip out to Austria, the return to Middlesborough was a little more eventful. The team bus was first stopped by the German Polizei who demanded to check that 'ze papers ver in order!' Then, on entering France and encountering the first motorway toll booth, **Cpl Paterson** decided to use the UK Shell Card in the toll machine to obtain passage. Unsurprisingly, the French machine saw the words 'UK', thought there must be an Englishman on board - and confiscated it! Thus, on returning to England, **Cpl Paterson** had to scrape together his beer money to fuel up the minibus!

The team would like to thank **Capt Michelle Worden**, **SSgt Graham** and the rest of the Camp admin team for making the two weeks thoroughly enjoyable, memorable and above all, a great success.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Mark Finch**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

We welcome Back **WO2 Dave Carr,** who has just completed a seven-month tour as the RQMS at Shaibah Log Base, on OP TELIC. **WO2 Carr** thoroughly enjoyed the challenge he had been given, and would recommend the experience to others. The Sqn wishes him well in his new post as SSM, Recruit Trg Team (RTT).



Amazingly, even the RQMS couldn't get trousers that fitted him!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Chris Jones TD BSc GCGI**
SSM **WO2 John Harkin**

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

Once again it was the Regt's honour to organise the Remembrance Parade held in Middlesborough on Sunday 9 November 04. The Parade, with dets from HMS Marlborough, The Tyne Tees Regt, Pioneers and Sea, Army and Air Cadets, as well as ourselves, was brought to attention by the Parade WO, **WO1(SVWO) Neil Dixon**, 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 Middlesborough who are currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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

As always the event ended with a reception held at Brambles Farm TAC, with guests including The Deputy Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire, the High Sheriff, the Chief Constable and the Mayor of Middlesborough. The catering, of the usual high standard was provided by the RCWO, **WO2 Neil Berry**, and his team. The Regiment, and particularly HQ Sqn, is very proud of their connections with Middlesborough. It is right and fitting that that they lead the Parade every year. Long may this tradition continue.

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MA Giles**

OPERATION APRON – LATVIAN EXCHANGE

Some time ago, **SSgt Gaz Topps**, the Regtl Trg SNCO, applied for a place on a scheme known as EXCHANGE AU PAIR, a little known programme to allow short exchanges of 2 weeks between a large number of foreign countries' Armed Forces. The exchange is available to all Regular and TA personnel.

The first leg of the exchange saw **SSgt Topps** go to Latvia. The opening question from the exchange Latvian soldier summed the visit up: 'Are the Beatles still big in England?' This was going to be a long 2 weeks.

However, the visit was well organised, showing all aspects of the Latvian Army and Navy. The country is about the size of Wales, and has the equivalent of a mechanised bde to provide its defence. The conditions in which most of the soldiers live and work in, are very poor. We, as an Army are very privileged, spending exercises in better buildings. The food on offer in the bks was not of a high standard, certainly nowhere near that we receive in the Regt from our RLC Chefs. **SSgt Topps** ate a meal at one of the bks and it was probably the first time he hasn't cleared his plate.

The British Embassy in Latvia has a mission to advise and guide their attempt at establishing a Sig Sqn to provide their Army's comms network. Being an Electrician, **SSgt Topps** was worried that he was going to struggle with this task. Not the case at all; the 31 soldiers in their Latvian Signal Corps were more than appreciative of the advice and guidance given.

The reciprocal visit to the UK for the Latvian soldier, **Stassi**, started with a week at Sennybridge. On the arrival, the soldier was issued with PLCE and 'scratcher' then told he would be deploying in 4 hrs into the field. Welcome!

A week of mil training and comms trg left the Latvian amazed. The size and diversity of trg being conducted was far beyond anything they would carry out. The second week took advantage of the Regt's location. **SSgt Topps** acted as tour guide and took the Latvian soldier into London.

They visited many of the major tourist sites, and laid a good amount of shoe leather on the Westminster pavements.

A trip to Colchester, seeing 216 Sig Sqn in their daily routine, was also very successful. The Latvian soldier was particularly impressed that there were more Techs in their workshop than there are in the whole of his Corps - not that **SSgt Topps** agreed; he preferred to see them out in the field! **Stassi** went home with his new digital camera full of images, and his head full of new British Army slang.

SSgt Topps has since been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, which was presented to him by **Brig M Lithgow CBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess in Ilford on 9 December 04.

SSgt Topps being presented his LS and G C Medal by Brig M Lithgow CBE, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Rowson**
SSM **WO2 J Davis**

The Sqn welcomes back **SSgt Allen** from his tour in Iraq. His 6-month tour included a deployment to Camp Dogwood, and he has returned safe and well, and looking forward to having some well-deserved POTL.

EXERCISE ESTUARY CHRISTMAS

EX ESTUARY CHRISTMAS was a Sqn working weekend to assess driving, map reading and comms skills. We also had HQ Sqn accompanying us for this ex.

On our arrival at Pippingford Park, we were arranged into 3 groups. We then competed three stands in a round robin, comprising a comms stand, map reading and cross country driver trg. The morning's activities went well, apart from the two vehs that had minor collisions. After lunch, **Lt Wood** was put in charge of the comd and control ex, where he had to control 6 teams in Landrovers who had to find **SSgt Berry** and **Sgt Witts**, who were driving around the trg area. The aim was to force them into a penned off enclosure by blocking junctions all over the trg area. This went well apart from **SSgt Berry**, the SPSI, getting bogged in.

On our return to our respective TACs, we found that Sig **Lee** and his band of happy workers had organised the Sqn Christmas function, with the theme for the night a *Stars In Your Eyes* fancy dress party. One of the most notable costumes was that of *Sig Allsop* dressing as **Britney Spears** which, as an 18 yr old, she carried off well. At the other end of the scale, was **SSgt Howson**, who is nearly 40 for the seventh time, coming as the mother of **Britney Spears**. Our thanks to **Sig Lee** and his helpers for the excellent evening's entertainment.

Continued on page 125

NEWS FROM THE GULF

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

Cpl Howard and Sig Jackson deployed on OP BRACKEN with the US Marines

OC **Maj Addley**
RSM **WO1 Lloyd**

204 Sig Sqn are currently deployed on OP TELIC 5 and are based at Basrah International Airport (BIA). Not only have we been running the Bde HQ with Euphrates Tp, under the comd of **2Lt Nicklin**, we have had a multiple out on the ground throughout the election period from Tigris Tp, under the command of **Lt Fulthorpe**. We have also been manning SYNERGY Dets throughout Iraq. It has been a case of all hands on deck from all of the Sqn, which has made it a very busy tour for so far. The Sqn as a whole are very much looking forward to returning to Germany once 12 Mech Bde and Sig Sqn replaces us towards the end of April.

However, one man has escaped early. We have said goodbye to **Cpl Wills Williams**, who has been posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS). He was a very influential figure to the younger lads and will be missed by all. We wish him the best of luck for the future. - *by Sig White*

EUPHRATES TROOP - *by Sig Rodway*

The main role of Euphrates Tp is to provide comms and life support to both Bde and Div HQs at BIA. The Tp also has a number of responsibilities at out-dets across the country. A tech and op permanently man a SYNERGY cabin in As Samawah, providing synergy blue comms to the Japanese Bn, whilst teams are also deployed in Umm Qasar and Shaibah Log Base. The deployment to the Japanese Bn at As Samawah always proves to be exceptionally popular. The Japanese have a wide array of facilities that we do not have in BIA, including their hugely popular massage chairs, diet of raw fish and hot steam baths. **Cpl Clamp** and **Sig White** definitely got well acquainted with the Japanese customs on their deployment, and were well involved in the hot bath ritual!

Within the HQ, members of the Tp man the Comcen, Radcon, JOCS suite, tech wksps and SYSCON; and also escort the LECs around the building. **Sigs Jim Jenner** and **Taff White** have

CO of the Japanese Bn, Lt Col Fukuda poses with the SYNERGY team of Cpl Phillps, Sig Kendrick and Sig White

taken the latter role in their stride, and have even attempted to learn Arabic, although not to much avail!

Alongside permanent members of 204 Sig Sqn, the Tp is also bolstered by soldiers from the TA, 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn , 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn, 2 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt (EW) and 16 Sig Regt. We therefore have a wealth of experience within the Tp that has bonded to form a cohesive unit over the past 3½ months. Now over half way through the tour and past the elections, the Tp are ready for new and exciting challenges that the next three months will bring.

OP AELENA - DEPLOYMENT FOR ELECTIONS IN IRAQ

- by Sig Rodway

The objective of OP AELENA was to provide Provincial Joint Ops Centres (Joint Iraqi and UK BG Ops Rooms) secure comms back to Bde HQ during the elections. Bde Radcon, with Bde Fwd was moved to the Old State Building (OSB) in Basrah City, where we assumed control for the period of the elections. Personnel who deployed on OP AELENA from 204 Sig Sqn for Radcon were, **WO2 (YofS) Yates**, **Cpl Walker**, **Sigs Kendrick**, **Portwain**, **Heardley**, **Grice**, **White**, and myself. Thanks also go to **Cpl Douglas** and his team from the QM Dept for the mammoth task of clearing up the 'open toilet' like conditions, as well as to **Cpl Officer** and the other electricians for their long days grafting to sort out the power. The OP lasted 10 days and was a complete success.

TIGRIS TROOP

Tigris Tp is the Mobile Comms Tp, whose tasks include proving 4 Armd Bde with the ability rapidly to deploy an armd or light HQ, along with providing comms assets to the BGs as required. The Tp has deployed on ops with a huge range of comms equipt. This has included the deployment with 1 BW on OP BRACKEN with standard CNR equipt. It has also included deployments with TACSAT, HARRIS 138/325, BARRAT radio as used by the Iraqi Police Service (IPS), the DAGGER 501 variant, Dial-up I-Net and Personal Mobile Radio (PMR), which have all provided a challenging mix of old and emerging comms.

The Tp also possesses four SYNERGY Mobile Dets. Taskable by Div, these new Royal Signals assets provide a secure voice and data facility to wherever they are deployed. Since the arrival of the SYNERGY dets into theatre, the crews have supported a wide range of Major Units and tasks. SYNERGY dets have deployed to the Bde Survey Coy, 40 RM Cdo, QDG, 1WG and 1BW, along with Multinational deployments to the Italians and Dutch in support of ongoing ops.

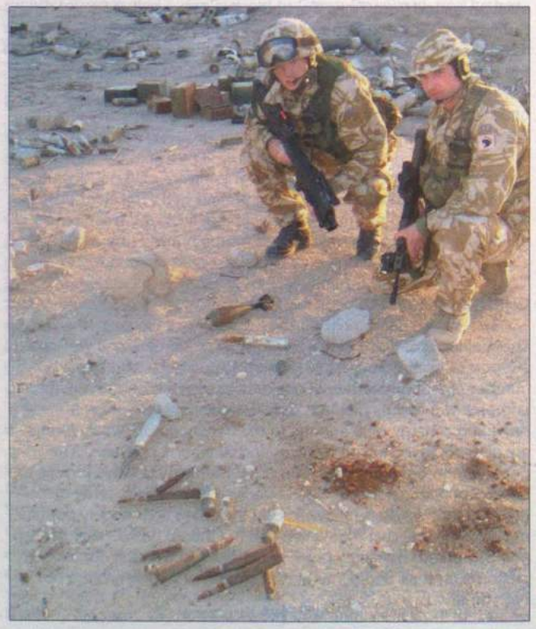
Sgt Allen (36 Sig Regt) about to begin the set-up of the SYNERGY Det in Al Amara

The Tp has deployed soldiers working in support of all the BGs, including the Danish Ops Room. The exiled **Sig Dundon** is currently perfecting his Danish and has appeared on the hand-over brief from one Danish unit to another! During the elections, two dets deployed out to sector HQs to provide direct comms support to the polling stations in Al Querna and Al Majidiyah. Here, **Sig Herbert** managed to deploy without underwear, but managed to turn some thermal trousers into Peter Pan trousers and wear them for the whole deployment. Unfortunately for everyone else, he continued to wear them when he returned to Waterloo Lines.

The Tp also provides a Multiple to the Bde. Led by **Sgt Haskell**, they have patrolled around the BIA area with the RAF and recently deployed into Basrah City itself, conducting framework patrolling, lurks and VCPs with 1DWR. **Sig Thomas** has kept the multiple going in the most trying conditions, with a volley of gaffs. This has included his attempt at trying to wear two sets of body armour, not realising he already had a set on, and his ability to find the best positions for taking cover, including in front of SNATCH headlights. For the elections, the multiple provided the security for OSB (site of Bde Fwd), where the force protection was run by **RQMS Dixon**. He told the multiple that 'If the building gets over-run, just think of the film *Zulu*'. (The following day he sat down with the admin team to watch *Zulu* to get some tips, just in case). If anyone goes to OSB, please keep an eye out for **Sgt Maj Mohammed,** known for trying to get **Sig Crawford**, (whilst on guard) in his words to have a bit of 'jiggy jiggy'. He even tried to pay **Sig Crawford** for his services. The SYNERGY crew at OSB were not to escape either. The local Iraqis took a fond liking to the det electrician, **Sig Ronayne**, and wanted to have 'jiggy jiggy' with him as well.

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRAH (JSUB)

JSUB provides stores, MT and LAD support to the entire Basrah Air Station. The nucleus is based around 204 Sig Sqn Support Tp, but with considerable augmentation from both Army and RAF. **WO2 (RQMS) Martwich** (from 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt) having completed his stores mathematics, proudly announced to the OC that the QM Dept was handling 2½ regts' worth of stores. The increase in stores has only just been matched by the increase in RQs. in addition to **WO2 (RQMS) Martwich**, we have **WO2 (RQMS) Dixon** running Waterloo Lines, which has meant that **WO2 (RQMS) Watt** has had to re-name himself Senior RQ, although to his consternation, not many people seem to be paying attention to it. In addition to their QM duties, the stores folk have also been running the now infamous (and now weekly) Black Rat Dinners for the Brigadier. Sometimes, you wish you could be less successful, although **Sig Harbron** and **LCpl Williams** can now add silver service to their list of many talents. The LAD have also been busy making Gate-to-Gate Challenge, run trophies and gate barriers, as well as taking the time to keep the 300+ contingent of vehs on the road, much to the annoyance of **Cpl Mead** and **LCpl Vaughan** in the MT, who then have to service them!



Sigs McGowan and Lockton with finds made whilst working with the Tigris Tp multiple

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM **WO1 M Jolly**

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj CN Cooper**
SSM **WO2 Burrows**

SQUADRON PACEX

As part of validating the drills and skills for deploying the SLE and ABTF elements, 226 Sig Sqn conducted a PACEX in the local area. Due to the rapidly deployable nature of the Sqn, it was important that our operational capability in fairly placid surroundings was proved. However, the area was far from placid during that week. We had the highest winds so far this year easily reaching 80 mph+.

LCpl Evans hanging onto a mast, to stop it or him from blowing away

Out on the airfield everyone coped very well in the adverse weather conditions, even though a few berets may have gone missing! It was very good trg value, especially in putting masts up and cam nets in such high winds.

The Barracuda EW platforms finally set up and staying in place.... Just!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SL Copley**
SSM **WO2 Smith**

OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENT

On 2 January 2005, members of 245 Sig Sqn, and a chosen few from the rest of the Regt, began the long and arduous journey to Iraq. As always, a good seven hrs were spent at South Cerney removing explicit material from our luggage (FHM, Loaded, etc) and handing in all lethal weapons (nail clippers and plastic knives) before finally leaving for Brize Norton. We eventually arrived at Shaibah for a day of briefings, followed by a range package to re-zero weapons - which took a while, with some of the Sqn being

As everyone knows, sleeping on a Herc is a hard task, but Sig Kiff managed this quite well

put on the remedial 25m range. With all this done, the Sqn went its separate ways, with some staying in Basrah for a nice three-month holiday, and the hardcore element going up to Baghdad.

Once at our destinations, the hand over began and we got on with our jobs, with some staying at Camp Victory and some at BSU Maude House. It took no time at all for the jungle drums to start banging, with **Sgt Dave Briscoe** bugging all the lads out because of some outgoing (not incoming) mortar fire, nice one **Dave**.

CHARITY EVENTS

On Saturday 29 December, **SSgt Berry** organised a jumble sale at the Dale Road Community Centre, and £170 was raised for the Tsunami Appeal.

On Wednesday 12 January, 245 Sqn hosted a charity 5-a-side football competition in aid of the Tsunami Relief Fund. The event was organised by **Sig Chalmers**, and she successfully persuaded the majority of the Regt to join in and make a donation. The event was well supported by 245 Sqn, and a big thanks goes to **Sgt Butler**, who tirelessly refereed the games for over 3 hrs without a break. **Capt Wadia** presented the winning team from 226 Sqn their prize. In total, £150 was raised.

EXERCISE MOUFLON AWAKENING

With most of the Sqn away, the remainder of us deployed on a det drills ex in the local area. Any hopes of staying dry and clean were soon dashed, when veh recovery drills were practised on Day 1 on the cross-country driving course, thanks to **Sgt Rees'** recce of the largest bog. The dets practised setting up, defence and tearing down drills, both day and night. Although a lack of 5.56mm blank hindered counter attacks, the endless supply of 7.62 allowed everyone to get their hands on the GPMG. After numerous enemy drive-by shootings, they finally came too close and were taken prisoner, allowing prisoner-handling drills to be practised.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

New Tp Comd, 2Lt Godfrey, experiencing her first Sigs ex

OC **Maj DL Williams**
SSM **WO2 Linton**

ROAD SAFETY COMPETITION 2004

On Wednesday 10 November, under the supervision of the MTO, **Capt A Slack**, the MT ran a Safe and Skilled Driving Competition in conjunction with National and Divisional Road Safety Weeks. There were 8 stands, run by the MT personnel throughout the day. This included a skid car, RTA stand, Colin McRae Rally Driving Play Station, reversing skills, recovery, navigation, safe and skilled stand and a theory test stand.

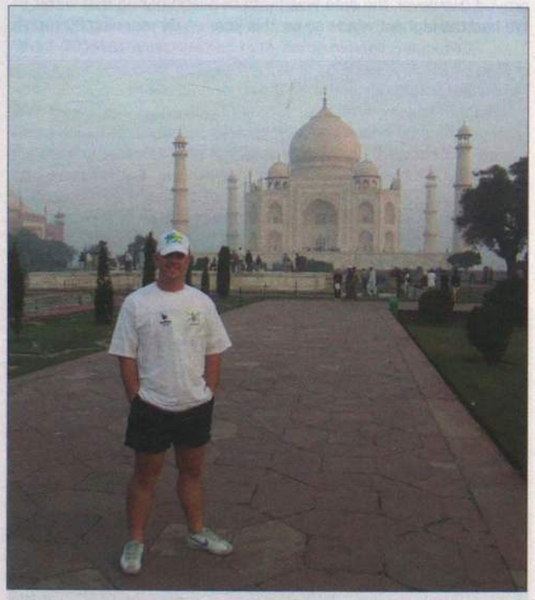
Throughout the competition, it was a close-run thing between HQ Sqn and 237 Sig Sqn, with 226 and 245 fighting it out for who would take the third spot. It wasn't until the end of the day that **Sgt Wallis** and his team of merry men pulled through on the Play Station stand, by scoring an amazing 6min 23sec across the arduous Rally circuit, thus claiming second place and a vital 2 points, which secured victory for HQ Sqn.

EXERCISE TAJ MAHAL CHARITY CYCLE CHALLENGE

Between 20 31 November 2004, **Sgt Masters** took part in the Taj Mahal Challenge in India. This involved cycling over 512 miles in 10 days on heavy fixed-gear bikes, in considerable heat, often over rough tracks. Coping with the frenetic crowds and chaotic traffic in towns was a challenge in itself.

There is no finer way to discover this ancient land than by cycling along the quieter country roads, through rarely visited villages and temples whilst stopping on the way to visit the Keoladeo bird sanctuary and ancient city of Fatephur Sikri.

It was a wonderful breath taking moment when we arrived at the Taj Mahal. After 512 miles, the bruises, sore bums and aching muscles seemed to evaporate in an instant. Leaving aside the physical and other achievements of our group, the major plus to this trip was the rather large sum of money raised for disabled children. So far we have raised £52,412 and more may still come in.



After 512 miles a view like this makes it worthwhile

CONSERVATION WORK

On Monday 11 January, Comms Tp set off to Castlemartin to take part in some conservation work. When we arrived, we were met by **Lynne Farand**, the Conservation Worker for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. We were split into 3 groups; Shrub Clearance, Tree Guard Removers and Stile Building. The groups were told what was to be completed over the course of the day, and set to work straight away.

This was followed by more the next day, even though the second area was much tougher. We battled through the overgrowth and finished the path in time. With a job well done, a very wet and tired Comms Tp set off back to Brawdy to our easy day to day job in the hangar!

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

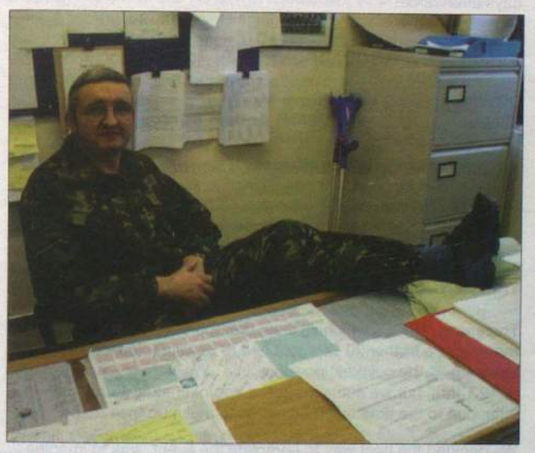
CO **Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

RHQ PHYSICAL TRAINING

Even before dawn breaks in the Shires, there is movement on the high, mist covered plateau of Azimghur. The unmistakeable figures of the RHQ Hobbits running (running?) up to Gymqueen Palace for the start of the thrice-weekly ritual body abuse, is an eerie sight.

First to arrive are normally **Sgt Lancaster** and **WO2 Cottage** from the RAO, their having set off the night before. Our very own Gollum, RAOWO **WO2 Dave Church** is always there but puts on his cloak of invisibility when the activities start. The Ops team of **Maj Jim Lambeth**, **Capt Bob Wymer**, **WO1(YofS) Rick Carley** always eagerly await the late arrival of The Dwarf, Gimlie, aka **Capt Tac Bartlett**. The more times he is late the more attention he gets! The Gymqueen currently in charge of pain distribution is **Sig Mac MacEneny**, who likes to think he can get his own back on the CO for every pound that he has been fined. **LCpl Ange Johnson** always seems to have the edge over **Sgt Ions** when it comes to the sprinting, but he gets his own back in the eyebrow raising.

Just before the activities start, it's fast and furious, as the group pairs off hoping and trying desperately not to get paired with 2IC, **Maj Maycock**, particularly if it's the Boxing Circuit. Its more often than not the brave Prince of Gondor, **Lt Col Ollie Halstead** himself, who makes the sacrifice and ends up wishing that he had taken up arm wrestling as a boy. Prince Aragorn (The Adjt), **Capt Mike Morton** and RSM, **WO1 Dickie Dyer** make up their own special forces Auk Battering Pair, and are now very accomplished at skipping. After the circuits, it's a game of some warlike contact sport involving a ball, and a game that the CO's side never fail to win. All the Hobbits exit the Palace into the bright sunshine of Azimghur to do the work of the good Gandalph in the Blue Palace of Blandford.



RCMO, Capt Chris Kidd puts his feet up after a RHQ PT Session

Nice one, 21 Sig Regt! I've just returned from Middle Earth, and can identify with this. Nearly all of the Kiwi signallers I met had been Orcs in the films, and some showed off their wounds sustained during the filming - Editor

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT WIN ARMY CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS.

21 Sig Regt (AS) swept the board at the Army Cross Country Championships held at RMAS. The Women's event was won by England select runner, **Cpl Sophie Morris**, despite a fierce challenge from an England U19 Champion. The 21 Sig Regt Team also boasted the Inter Services Women's Orienteering Champion, **LCpl Steph Bogart**, strengthening the team of **Sigs Kirsty Bage**, **Nat Curtis**, **Becky Harvey** and **Rachael Jones**.

Shortly afterwards, the men's event was again dominated by 21 Sig Regt. **Sig Haggai Chepkwony** coasted home on the gruelling Sandhurst course in a time of 30 mins 10 secs. The Team beat its nearest rivals 1 Para by a massive 270 points. **LCpl Stu Laycock** and **Cpl Kev Conlon** were strong on the day, and the result wasn't in doubt, when we had nine of our runners in the first 30 or so places.

21 Sig Regt (AS) now dominates the sport in the Army, and sent out a clear message to the Teams in the Inter-Corps Championships.

Cpl Sophie Morris coasts home as the Women's Champion

Sig Haggai Chepkwony comes in first with no one else in sight

Never mind the smoke. Here we come!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Bob Lovett**
SSM	**WO2 Dave Taylor**

REGIMENTAL MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION
- by 2Lt TJ Hooker

The Regimental March and Shoot was the first in a line of Inter-Sqn mil skills competitions that make up the CO's Military Challenge after the Regt returned from EX RED BEAUFIGHTER IV. More than 30 participating teams were well up to the task, having been put through a rigorous trg schedule by their respective Sqn PTIs. All had to ensure that they had the appropriate (15kg) in their Bergens so as to avoid the strict time penalties for 'underweight' teams.

The first of the teams was set off at 07.30hrs in the dim light of early morning, and the remainder followed at 10-min intervals. The initial two miles, conducted at nothing more than a brisk march by most teams, led to the Assault Course and the challenges of the 12ft wall.

This particular obstacle had been well rehearsed in the preceding weeks, although some still struggled to get the last man up. On the whole though, this phase of the competition was tackled well, despite plenty of smoke distractions and some harassing fire from a very cold LSW gunner!

On the final stretch, teams opened their stride a bit more to give maximum effort on the last three miles, and for some this was a fairly emotional time, especially going up and down the revetments. Crossing the finish line then led teams on to the 25m range for a 9mm pistol shoot. This promised to be an interesting event, as most of the participants had only recently completed their pistol WHT, and certainly hadn't fired before. While there were not too many holes in the targets, the shoot added to the resounding success of the competition, but win or lose, all who took part in the competition, enjoyed the experience and ached for days afterwards!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steve Morgan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Anthea Burdus**

REGIMENTAL ORIENTEERING *- by Sig Heys*

The Regimental orienteering event took place on Friday 14 January, and was an event that many thought was going to be painful and a waste of time. I was chosen to represent TM Tp, along with **WO1(FofS) Flather**, **Cpl Aitchison** and **LCpl Thurston**.

There were 10 CPs which all team members were to collect. Then there were a further 30 CPs that had to be visited collectively by the team, in the quickest possible time. We were given a start time of 12.14hrs, but we actually started approximately 45 minutes later, due to the time taken by teams to make up their maps.

We decided the best way to complete the event, was to imagine the Camp area split up into four sections, with each team member taking a section to visit every CP in it, as well as visiting the ten compulsory CPs. Our team completed the event in just over 47 mins, which turned out to be the winning time.

Overall, I think the event was well-organised and enjoyable. Some have even decided to take it up as a new sport. Why? Because it was running a long way with a purpose.

Christmas Lunch

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Lloyd Golley**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mick Brown**

END OF THE YEAR FOR 244 SIGNAL SQUADRON
- by Cpl Rutherford

The month's festivities started off with the Regtl Christmas day on 8 December 04, where we all marched down to Colerne Village Church for the usual festive singing. After all had sung their hearts out, it was time to retire back to Camp for the awaited Bone of Contention Rugby match. It was a close match for both sides, but the Offrs and SNCOs team eventually beat the Junior Ranks. Although a cold day, it was helped by one of the Sqns supplying refreshments, not just tea and coffee.

From the Rugby Pitch it was then back to the cookhouse for the much-awaited Christmas Lunch. During the meal, the odd covertly thrown sprout and spud was seen, but generally the whole affair passed without serious incident.

Towards the end of the week we had the Regtl March and Shoot Competition. Over five miles, with an assault course and a 9mm-pistol shoot to finish off with, it was noted that most of 244 Sig Sqn personnel excelled in the shoot, even hitting a few targets. The Sqn won the Individual Team event, but came second in the overall standings. Everyone who took part, thoroughly enjoyed the day.

Overall, December was a very busy period, with functions going on throughout the whole month. As the month passed, and with people itching to get away, the last few days were left for the usual clear up and preparations for the New Year. However there remained the last PT session in the gym, which was an aerobics session. There were a lot of people who seemed to lack co-ordination and were not as supple as they thought, with bodies falling all over the place. Although a hard session, it was the conclusion to a very busy year for the Sqn. Indeed, the time had come to party and to recharge those batteries ready for the New Year, when the exercises to start looming again.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jason Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ganesh**

INTER SQUADRON MARCH AND SHOOT
- by Cpl Nabinkaji Gurung

Like all the Regts throughout the British Army, 21 Sig Regt takes CO's Challenge as one of the major events in the Regtl calendar. The Challenge includes Cross-country, BPFA, Football, Boxing, March and Shoot and more.

The March and Shoot Competition consists of 7 teams from each Sqn, each with 8 participants. The weight of the Bergen is 15kg, and water and helmet is carried by all participants. The march is 5 miles, and there is an assault course about half way through it, which everyone has to go round twice. Firing the pistol at the 25-metre range concludes the event.

On the day, 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn were full of enthusiasm and motivation. The teams were numbered Team 1 to Team 7, and each team was given a different time to turn up at the start point. The first team started at about 07.30hrs with everyone looking fit and optimistic. After about a couple of miles the team arrived at the Assault Course.

The 12 feet wall, supposedly the hardest obstacle of the race, was never so for us. We then continued running. When we saw the finishing point in the horizon, it was encouraging.

Everyone gave their best effort. But this did not conclude the competition - there was still the Shooting Phase. This was a new experience for some members of the team, as they have never fired pistols before.

248 Gurkha Sig Sqn were the overall winners of the event, leading by more than an hour over the second Sqn.

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND SIGNALS RE-VISITED

- by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

Whilst in New Zealand on a family visit in February, the word got around that I was there, and I was soon invited to visit some elements of the NZ Army, in particular, my old Corps, Royal New Zealand Signals. Since I last served in it, the New Zealand Army has shrunk in numbers to about half the size of the UK Royal Corps of Signals. You may think that this is tiny compared with the British Army – and it is, but as a percentage of New Zealand's population (4 million) it works out about the same as in UK.

After many changes both in its purpose and its structure, New Zealand's Defence Forces have settled for a peace-keeping or disaster relief role, deploying all round the world, from Iraq to Afghanistan, East Timor to the Solomon Islands. The largest deployment is based on an Infantry battalion battle group, although most have been and still are, much smaller than this. But small as they are, the NZ Army is well equipped. They have just taken delivery of a large fleet of state-of-the-art Canadian LAV3s; all their trucks are Mercedes Benz Unimogs; and they are in the process of replacing their ancient Landrovers with Pinzgauers. Comms-wise, they are currently taking delivery of a system very similar to BOWMAN, and they are looking strategic comms systems similar to ours.

Royal New Zealand Signals is also small-scale by our standards. Currently, they have only three small squadrons, of which two are nearer troop strength. But, small as their Corps is, Kiwi signallers are just as skilled, just as resourceful, and just as dedicated as those of the once-called 'parent Corps.' It was a pleasure to be with them.

My first port of call was to 3 Sig Sqn at Burnham Camp, 25km south of Christchurch. Under the command of **Capt Shane Atkinson** and SSM **WO2 Koren Linn**, their role is to provide comms support for 3 Land Force Group, to support disaster relief operations at home, and to provide EW capability for the NZ Army. However, RNZSigs being so small, they have also provided signallers for deployments to the Solomons, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and East Timor. When I called, most of the Sqn had just spent the weekend on a large military skills exercise, and were busy cleaning weapons and equipment, but some of them made time to talk with me.

Cpl Nehi Kahu from Hastings, Hawkes Bay, proudly told me that he had been in the Army for 18 years and 3 months. He started out in Infantry as a regimental signaller, seeing service in the Solomons and Bosnia. He remembers manning vehicle checkpoints just outside Sarajevo in 1995. He moved to RNZSigs in 1999. He is a CIS Op, commanding a det in one of the Sqn's Radio Tps.

Cpl Nehi Kahu

With a half smile, he claims that he was conned into joining the Army by his brother-in-law, a WO1 at the time. 'He took me into his office and gave me a paper to sign.' he recalls. 'The next thing I knew, I was a soldier!' But he doesn't regret it. 'It's a great life, a good environment, and the overseas deployments are great.' As his mates started giving him grief about 'being interviewed for the press,' **Nehi Kahu** quickly excused himself, saying that he had to prepare a lesson to present to his det.

Cpl Candice Price is from Whanagarei in NZ's North Island. She's been in the Army for 5½ years. 'It was the uniform and watching war movies that first attracted me,' she says. 'But I do like the physical side of it – keeping fit.' Currently, she is double-hatted (what's new) as a Det Comd, and as the Sqn's Transport NCO. She has spent 2 yrs in EW as a comms analyst. She has had two overseas deployments, one on board a RNZN ship in SE Asia, and the other in East Timor.

Cpl Candice Price

'In East Timor, in my spare time I got to work on building a school with some of our Sappers,' she recalls. 'Building on this experience, we went on to build a helicopter LZ in 3 days. We were all girls, and became known as Concrete Det. When the LZ was finished, they painted a *Playboy* Bunny Girl on it.

SSgt Richard Hood is the Sqn's Ops Cell SSgt and head of its IS Dept. He comes from a mid Canterbury farming family. Originally an Infanteer, he has been in the Army for 17 years.

One of his earlier deployments found him training locals in Cambodia in mine clearance work. 'Difficult and dangerous' was how he described it. Later he was training UN and NGO personnel in mine awareness – 'Much less stressful.'

Having developed an interest in computers, **Richard Hood** changed to RNZSigs in 1999, and has developed and used IS skills in a number of roles. He spent 6 months in East Timor developing and maintaining IS networks. He spent 4 months in Afghanistan doing similar work. 'Conditions were a little different there,' he says. 'It was 30° C when we arrived, and before we left, it had dropped to -16° C!'

SSgt Richard Hood

He has just been granted a 5-years extension to his service. 'Our skills are in great demand, and there's lots to be done in developing the younger soldiers. It's also an exciting time to be in RNZSigs. There are lots of overseas deployments, and a lot of new equipment coming on line.'

After stopping by in Wellington to chat with their Regimental Colonel, **Col Colin Richardson** (who wishes to be remembered to all the Royal Signals personnel he has known over the years), I then pressed on to Linton Camp, near Palmerston North. Here I met up with 2 Sig Sqn, commanded by **Maj Kent Collard**.

2 Sig Sqn is the largest of the three NZ Sqns, and has a Sqn structure that we would recognise in Royal Signals. It comprises Sqn HQ, 21 Tac Comms Tp, 22 IS Tp, 23 IS Tp, and 23 Log Tp (equivalent of a support tp). There are also an Ops Cell and a Cipher Cell.

The Sqn's main role is to organise, provide and sustain comms, IS and EW requirements for NZ's deployed forces. To do this, it frequently draws personnel from the other Sqns as well as from its own strength.

LCpl Heather McGurk

LCpl Heather McGurk is from Napier, in Hawkes Bay on the east coast of NZ's North Island. A CIS Op, she has been in only 3 years.

Last year, she deployed to Afghanistan for 5 months on OP CRIB. 'I was a driver/operator, and the roads were absolutely terrible.

Mostly, we could do only 20 kph, and the local drivers were maniacs. But we had interesting experiences, unearthing weapons caches, and watching out for land mines!'

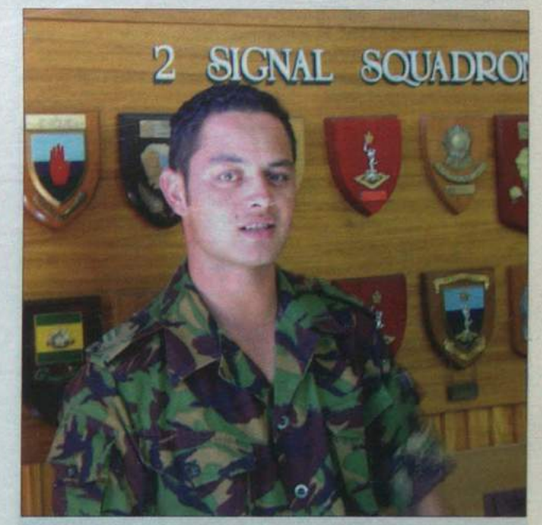
'I've done loads of courses and exercises. The toughest was the survival training course. They have all given me confidence. I'd recommend the Army to anyone.'

2 Sig Sqn is the main focus for RNZSigs, and its RSM, **WO1 Ralph Wallace**, is also the Corps RSM. I'd heard mention of the RSM when I was talking to signallers in 3 Sig Sqn about their new Pinzgauers. 'The only thing that's wrong with the Pinzgauers is that they are bit small,' they said. 'We can't fit our RSM into them.' When I met **RSM Wallace**, I could see why. Forget **Jonah Lomu**, this RSM is big – not far off 2m tall and weighing around 130 kilos. As an RSM, he doesn't need to use his voice much! That said, you would go a long way to find a nicer and more efficient SNCO. The troops love him.

RNZSigs Corps RSM, WO1 Ralph Wallace

Cpl Adam McCann is from Tolaga Bay on the East coast of NZ's North Island, more or less the same *iwi* (Maori for spiritual home) as my own sister-in-law, **Henrietta Redshaw** (the first female WO1 in RNZSigs). He has been in the Army for 8½ years, and had had a number of interesting deployments in the Pacific. In 1997 he was in Bouganville on OP BELISI, a peace monitoring operation. 'It was my first overseas deployment,' he says 'and it was great experiencing another different culture and doing my job for real.'

In 1998, before the troubles, he was in the Solomon Islands running a rear link for a Sapper Sqn on exercises there. Then, in 1999, when the East Timor crisis arose, he was with the first deployment on OP CASTEL, providing rear link comms for the NZ Inf Bn battle group. 'It was the largest real operation I'd seen up till then. The Aussies were also involved, and being in Sigs, I could see the bigger picture.'



Cpl Adam McCann

When I asked him what he enjoys most about his job, **Cpl McCann's** response was, 'Overseas travel, meeting people' and in a more serious tone, 'and making lifelong friends, a thing that you wouldn't get in Civvy Street.' He also enjoys training the younger recruits. He also recalls meeting Brit soldiers in NZ on EX LONG LOOK. 'Boy, were those guys fit!' he said.

Cpl Rod Bowler is from Gore, in the far south of NZ's South Island. (When he spoke, I recognised his Southland burr). A systems engineer, he has been in the Army for 9 years.

In 2001, he deployed for 13 months on OP CASTEL, when it had developed into a peace-keeping operation. He has also been on exercises in Australia, Fiji and Singapore.

'But the best one would have to be Antarctica,' he says. 'It was summer, not so cold, but cold enough. But it was truly magic.'

He enjoys sport, keeping fit, and the many AT expeds he goes on. 'The pay's good, and, with the new comms kit coming in, the job is now getting really interesting.'

Cpl Rod Bowler

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

XXXV

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RG Dalton**

HERE WE ARE AGAIN

The Permanent Staff annual dinner at Canley was organised by the QM, **Capt Steve Lockwood** and his staff, and took place immediately before the Christmas break. It brought in all of the Permanent Staff, both military and civilian, from the outlying Sqns, and was a unique way of thanking them for their tremendous efforts during what has been a very busy year for the Regt. The CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, welcomed everyone, and took on the role of a genial host, making everyone feel completely at ease. Tables were mixed, so that everyone got to know their counterparts from other Sqns. This created a family atmosphere, where stories and ideas were exchanged, sprinkled with light humour and friendly banter.

The Civilian Admin Staff in particular, were in fine form, having recently recovered from the SPS inspection, where they achieved a remarkable Satisfactory Plus grading, which sees them being excused a formal inspection this year. Well done to you all. The meal itself was fantastic, thanks to the efforts of **SSgt Paul Holland** and **Cpl Stephanie Gibbons**, who produced a memorable feast. Finally, a special congratulations from all members of 35 Sig Regt, both past and present, to **Lorraine Sweeney**, the outstanding Admin Officer of 58 Sqn on being awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List.

Mr Charlie Walker and Chrissie Castle sharing a joke at the Dinner

BACK INTO THE OLD ROUTINE

The Permanent Staff returned from the extended Christmas break on Tuesday 4 January. The new Trg Maj, **Maj Neil Turnbull**, re-energised the Regular Permanent Staff with one of his new and extremely popular PT sessions, which soon got them back into the old routine. Thus revitalised, they then reactivated the trg programme, which kicked off with the first trg weekend of the year. The mild weather allowed 89 Sqn to have a successful joint comms ex with 48 and HQ Sqns around Bruntingthorpe Airfield, while 58 and 95 Sqns engaged in a spot of mil skills trg and ranges at Nescliffe and Kingsbury respectively. Here members of both Sqns put the final touches to their Bounty-qualifying ITDs. 58 Sqn also had some fun when they deployed to Gamecock Bks, Bramcote to undertake the mil swimming test and to attempt the combat swimming test. As an interest period afterwards, the Sqn TA personnel were introduced to the finer arts of floatation techniques, using only their military clothing as aids.

The Radio Det team from HQ Sqn at Bruntingthorpe

A week later, the MTWO, **WO1 Mick Doherty** and his intrepid team, began descending on Sqns to carry out the annual MT inspection and maintenance ex, EX SILVER SPANNER. SILVER SPANNER is specifically designed to keep our extensive fleet of prime movers operationally available, by achieving high maintenance standards. As the MTWO would be at great pain to emphasise, this ex relies heavily on the attendance of TA Det Comds who have a responsibility for routine maintenance of their installations to maintain their battle-worthiness. Last year he was extremely disappointed at the lack of support, but this year attendance at this ex quadrupled, and by all accounts was a considerable success, much to the delight of the MTWO and the CO. So by the end of January, sober, focused and eager, we were firmly back into the old routine and looking forward to an exciting and challenging trg year, which will include Annual Trg in Gibraltar later in the year.

MEDAL PRESENTATION

The Hon Col, **Col Brian Foxon OBE TD ADC**, was delighted to be invited to present the VRSM and the Iraq Medal at a special ceremony held at Canley TAC on Tuesday 1 February. He was staggered to be confronted by twenty-one recipients - believed to be our largest ever medal contingent. This delightful, though lengthy medal presentation had to be stage-managed by both the RSM, **WO1 Russ Dalton** and the Adjt, **Capt Pat Pritchett**, who had to read out carefully each citation to ensure its success. This ceremony commenced at 20.30hrs, and was still going strong at 21.30hrs when the last citations were being read.
The VRSM has a long history (almost as long as the LS and GC). It was first instituted in 1894 as the Volunteer Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. It has since gone through a number of changes and variations and today the VRSM and clasps is awarded to all ranks in recognition of 10 yrs long and efficient service in the Volunteer Reserve Forces. The ceremony included many soldiers receiving both their VRSM and Iraq Medal, highlighting considerably, the changing face of the TA, and their involvement in many overseas deployments, more recently, on OP TELIC. They were warmly congratulated for their sterling efforts in supporting the Regular Army in a particularly hostile environment. Following the presentation, the Hon Col and the CO paid tribute to all recipients and their families, partners, employers and friends, who have given them support and encouragement, before joining them in the Sqn bar to enjoy a celebratory supper and drinks.

The VRSM recipients with Col Foxon

Sgt Kate Yeubrey with daughter Laura and partner Sgt Tony Hadley

WELCOME BACK

Staying with OP TELIC, the Regt welcome back all our TELIC 4 personnel after a particularly fraught tour in Basrah and elsewhere in Iraq. It was good to see **Sgts Moley Roberts**, **Jean Parr**, **Ian Townsend** and **Wayne Amos**, **Cpls Steve Alpers** and **Paul Spicer**, **LCpls Jean Parton**, **Chris Fulthorpe**, **Joy Gilford** and **Phil Mclachlin** arrive safely back home.

We are now looking forward to a special article from **Sgt Ian Townsend** on his extraordinary experience in Camp Dogwood with the Black Watch. This should be included in the next edition of *The WIRE*.

LIFE FORCE

At the core of any TA unit's survival is the need both to recruit and retain. In the past, we have done well in both areas, but like many units, we are beginning to suffer a downturn, which we are anxious to reverse. Retention is very much addressed in-house, and all Sqns are looking carefully at this issue, looking at all aspects of TA life and what we can offer the TA soldier.

Recruiting requires a great deal of effort, both inside and outside of the Regt, to attract new blood and to reach or exceed our established levels of manpower. Many initiatives have taken place recently, and we are now getting more involved in joint recruiting with the Regular Army.

We expect some positive results following EX MIDLAND SOLDIER in March. In the meantime, we are relying on word of mouth, calling cards, local advertising and open evenings.

Sig Marcus Thompson receiving the award of best recruit from the CO

The most recent of this took place at 48 Sqn in Birmingham, with the support of a professional PR company. As a result of keen and widespread advertising and 48 Sqn's own extensive endeavours, sixty potential recruits turned up at the open evening, resulting in ten recruits being attested into the TA – a remarkable achievement.

More of these are planned throughout the Regt, so we hope to see a reversal of fortune on the recruiting front.

It was also good to see many of these recruits pass off at a special parade held at Canley on Saturday 15 January, when **Sig Marcus Thompson** received the award of Best Recruit.

SERVICE IN 35 SIGNAL REGIMENT

If you are a Regular soldier about to leave the Army, or an ex-member of the Regiment who is considering re-joining, 35 Signal Regiment could utilise your extensive military and professional skills. We have many vacancies that could suit your skills and we can tailor a package to suit your circumstances.

If you are interested and can commit at least 27 days of your spare time in the year, then please contact the Regiment direct on 02476-673405

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj JS Gunning**
RSM **WO1 K Weaver**

It has once again been an exceptionally busy period for the Sqn leading up to Christmas. We have deployed with the Bde on EX EAGLES EYE, the biggest land forces ex for some considerable time, embarked on several Sqn and Tp-Level exs, conducted overseas AT, and partaken is sport at all levels.

EXERCISE PARTHIAN SHOT II – *by Capt Hawkins*

EX PARTHIAN SHOT II was designed to refresh and test basic soldiering skills at a low level. The Sqn deployed to the NBC Trg Centre on STANTA for a week of intensive trg that was planned as series of a round robin of stands. The Sqn was split into two groups that rotated through two phases, Comms/MT and NBC/Fieldcraft.

The Comms stand was used as a comprehensive refresher to provide solutions to the problems that were faced on EX EAGLES EYE. The MT stand focussed on veh maint and the actions to be taken in a veh ambush. This emphasised to the troops how much of a target a moving convoy is, and the importance of well practised drills in the event of an attack.

The NBC/Fieldcraft phase saw the troops introduced to trench warfare. The idea was that the 'platoon' would occupy a defensive position, and over the course of a two-day period, be taught an NBC package. As time moved on and the relevant lessons were covered, the threat level would rise, until the dress state of 4 Romeo was enforced. A withdrawal from the trench system was then imposed, but as a twist, in what was already a tiring phase, casualties were taken en route to the ERV. It was here that the platoon had to dig deep into their energy reserves to extract at speed, dressed in 4Romeo, carrying 4 stretchers. This certainly tested the fitness and stamina of the troops. The final part of this phase was the reoccupation of the trench system. Consequently, a deliberate platoon attack was launched on the loc. This was executed at speed with an abundance of aggression. A very impressive sight considering that we are soldiers of the Royal Corps of Signals!

EXERCISE EAGLES EYE – *by Capt Lumley*

Apache has been fielded on a major ex! EX EAGLES EYE was the major Air Asslt ex for the Bde for the year. Not only did it see 723 paratroopers jumping into Scotland, but also the first air asslt by a bn arriving on a LZ in no less that 15 CH-47 Chinooks to take an airfield. All of this was done under the dull warbling of the WAH-64 Apache Longbow attack helicopter.

Keeping it tight – a nice landing

The main effort for the exercise was not the testing of comms, but the facilitating of CIS at the Joint Mounting Centre, RAF Lynham, the Airborne Task Force (ABTF) and the Rapid Air Land of the Step-Up HQ was a challenge in itself, as all of these requirements were length and breadth of the UK.

Without going on too much, the ex has been declared a rousing success for the stars of the show – the Apache and the Air Asslt tps. But from a Sqn point of view, we were pushed to our limits - and loved it!!

EXERCISE ALPHA STRIKE 2004 – *by Cpl Oliver*

It was a cold November morning, a Bde long weekend, and no surprise, Alpha tp was on ex. The breakfast was booked, the armoury opened, and the troops were ready to rumble.

After 1½ hrs' drive to STANTA trg area, we got the range package underway with grouping and zeroing. On the initial shoot, it turned into a little bit of a bun fight, with the targets laughing at us, but once the lads got into the swing of things, Fig 11s started to fall. The light was failing, so the range was cleared, with the troop returning to camp for some much-loved weapon cleaning.

EX ALPHA STRIKE – Brassing up the battlefield

The following day was much the same as the first, with the addition of the dreaded APWT. Concurrent activity trg was also carried out on the GENERAL and the LAW outdoor trainer.

Wednesday/Thursday was a bit more exciting for the lads, with the introduction of the IBSR range, which brought together a whole range of skills, from target indication, pairs fire and manoeuvre and individual soldiering skills. The night concluded with the announcement of the LCpls' promotion board and a few quiet beers.

Friday saw the culmination of a good week's trg when **SSgt Watson** issued his battle orders to initiate the final attack, involving three sections. The attack, using simulation mortars, smoke and live GPMG support fire, concluded with Alpha Army given the enemy a 'bloody good brassing-up'.

Special thanks goes to **SSgt Watson**, who finishes his tour on a high at 216 Sqn, and now leaves us for BATUS Main.

SPORTSMAN'S DINNER 2004 – *by Sgt Crouchman*

The Sportsman's Dinner has its origins in the Aldershot days, when 216 (Parachute) Sig Sqn was part of the now disbanded 5 Airborne Bde. It was decided that there should be formal recognition for those soldiers who had excelled in military, trade and sporting areas.

The evening takes the form of a Regimental Dinner in order to give junior ranks in the Sqn an insight of what they can expect at a formal Regimental Dinner. The dinner for 2004 was held on 2 December. Offrs and SNCOs in mess dress, Juniors in No. 2 dress assembled in the bar for pre dinner drinks to await the arrival of the rather colourful and charismatic Guest of Honour for 2004, **Mr Bobby George**.

After finishing the well-prepared meal, it was then down to **WO1(RSM) Weaver** to announce the Award recipients, who were:

Sportsman of the Year	**Sgt Good**
Football Player of the Year	**LCpl Langley**
Rugby Player of the Year	**Cpl Oliver**
Best Newcomer	**Sig Morris**
Best Field Soldier	**Sig Wood**
Best in-Barracks Soldier	**Sig Wild**
Turnbull Trophy (Best Shot)	**Cpl Bradley**
Best Tradesman	**Cpl White**
Best Kept Det	**Sig Goring**
Missing Link (Best Rigger)	**LCpl Oates**
Operator of the Year	**Cpl Wear**
Best Course Report	**Sgt Good**
Forge Baker Trophy	**Cpl Tran**
RSM's Award (Maroon Boot)	**Sgt Kemp**
OC's Award	Lanyard Trophy Team 2004

Bobby George presents Cpl Tran with the Forge Baker Trophy

Mr Bobby George presented the awards to the deserving recipients. It was then time to retire to the bar for some well-deserved refreshment and entertainment by the men, in the form of troop skits.

Thanks to an enthusiastic committee the night was an all round success and was enjoyed by all, we now look forward to the Sportsman's dinner 2005.

EXERCISE TUMBLING TIGER I and II – *by Lt King*

EX TUMBLING TIGER I and II are two freefall skydiving parachute AT expeds to Lake Elsinore in California.

EX TUMBLING TIGER I took place from 22 March – 08 April 04. The exped consisted of 20 personnel from a variety of backgrounds: 13 from 216 Sig Sqn, 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 partaking. The AFF course enables the complete novice skydiver to obtain his Category A skydiving licence and consists of a variety of different jumps.

Overall, this exped was a success, and towards the end, the students were managing 5 or 6 jumps in a day. Half the participants flew home on the 7 April, leaving 7 personnel behind to terrorise Las Vegas, San Francisco and Los Angeles during a week's leave!

EX TUMBLING TIGER II took place from 24 October – 06 November 04, and consisted of 7 personnel from 216 Sig Sqn and 2 instructors. The 7 soldiers from 216 Sig Sqn had all participated in EX TUMBLING TIGER I. The aim of this exped was to further the qualifications and skydiving experience of the soldiers. The next step for participants of the AFF scheme is to achieve their Category B skydiving licence. This is awarded once you have completed 50 parachute descents and have gained the Individual Canopy Control 1 (IC1) qualification. IC1 is awarded when a skydiver has displayed the ability to land 5 times in a small landing area on the drop zone. When the skydiver is awarded a B licence he or she is then classed as an experienced skydiver.

Lt King and a friend

Students on the exped also undertook formation skydiving trg with the two instructors. This involved jumping with 3 other skydivers in formation and is called Formation Skydiving 1 (FS1). To gain FS1 a skydiver must complete a 4-point 4-way, (i.e. a four-person formation) and must make four new formations on one jump. Normally, the skydiver will do this with 3 experienced skydivers.

This exped saw some unusually wet weather for California, so quite a few days were lost, but all the students managed to be awarded their IC1 licence, so this was another successful exped.

The AFF scheme is certainly the quickest and most direct way to enter the skydiving world. Expeds of this nature are relatively easy to organise, and can be conducted all over the world. AT within the Armed Forces is an integral part of trg and development. It puts personnel outside of their comfort zone, and in risky environments such as skydiving, it can make soldiers undertake things they would not normally think themselves capable of. It also gives commanders at all levels a chance both to assess their soldiers out of a green uniform, and to learn what they are like socially! As an Officer, as you work up the chain of command, your job responsibility becomes greater, so you have less chance to organise or partake in AT. Therefore being a Tp Comd is the ideal stage in your career to start leading expeds.

RUGBY

As a round off to the year (and silly season), the Juniors took on the Offrs and SNCOs in the annual rugby match. Without going into too much detail, the Offrs and SNCOs taught the young bucks a thing or two by bringing home a 24-7 victory and not a single visit to A and E.

The OC briefs the Seniors Team

CONCLUSION

The Sqn has had an excellent year on exs, on the sports pitch and in the mess. We look forward to 2005 and the undoubted challenges it will bring. See you there!

COMBINED COMMUNICATIONS UNIT - CYPRUS

EXERCISE APHRODITE MAORI - *by LCpl Jimmy Luton*

2,291m high and a highly active volcano, Mt Ngauruhoe was an awesome sight to behold and an unforgettable first experience of mountaineering.

In November 2004, 1 was fortunate enough to be one of the 12 members of a CCU exped, organised by **SSgt Jim McEwan**, which set off to the North Island of New Zealand.After 3 days of travelling, we finally arrived at the first phase of the exped, a 6day trek around Tongariro National Park. On approaching the Park, the Tongariro Massif was plainly visible, with its snowtipped peaks standing proudly above the pictur esque countryside.

The start point, Whakapapa Village, at the foot of Mt Ruapehu, was where we made our final preparations, packing in all the equipt and supplies needed to sustain us over the journey.

My Bergen seemed rather heavy, but it felt good to escape the plane and minibus seats to stretch my legs at last.

The first day's walk was a nice gentle introduction to what was ahead. Leaving Mt Ruapehu behind us, we set off on the Tongariro Northern Circuit, one of the 'Great Walks' of New Zealand. The sun was shining, the path well trodden, and spirits were high, as we walked through grassy plains and across mountain streams. Mt Ngauruhoe loomed ominously in the distance, as we neared Mangatepopo Hut, our first overnight stop. This first day had only served to loosen up the legs and get us used to the weight of our Bergens. By the end of the 9 km trek, it had started to feel quite heavy, but I optimistically expected that after I had consumed some of its contents, it might feel a little lighter tomorrow.

The next day the Bergen felt even heavier, but there seemed little point in complaining. Everyone else carried equally bulging backpacks, as we set off on the second day's trek walking through a damp mist. With visibility poor, there was very little to see that morning as I peered out from beneath my GoreTex hood. The lush greenness of the Mangatepopo Valley was broken only by the protruding black volcanic rock that gradually took over to become a steep black rock face. As the altitude increased, the drop in temperature was notable. That, coupled with the thick fog that surrounded us, made the prospect of another 5 days' walking less than appealing.

The steep climb up towards Mangatepopo Saddle was energy-sapping. The heat generated on the climb quickly disappeared, as we paused for a quick brew and a bite to eat. It was with some surprise, that a break in the cloud revealed we were at the foot of Mt Ngauruhoe, 2,291 metres high. An almost perfect cone-shaped volcano, climbing up at an almost impossible angle, and capped with snow that streaked down its symmetrical flanks, it was an incredible site to behold. Not visible all morning due to the cloud, its impact was greater seeing it up so close.

Miraculously, the cloud gave way completely, and as we started our ascent, the sun was shining. Progress was slow. The loose ash under foot, along with the steep slope, meant that for every few steps upwards, there was a slip downwards. Each step was becoming an enormous effort, and the chat between us stopped completely. The weight on our backs certainly didn't help. The other climbers we encountered on the slope either had small day sacks, or had opted to leave their packs at the foot of the mountain. With the unpredictable weather, we kept all our kit with us, in case the cloud returned as quickly as it had left us.

After climbing for a good 30 minutes, I looked around and was disappointed at how little distance we had covered - probably about 250 metres. It was getting difficult now, and the intense pressure from climbing with weight was taking its toll on some of us. However, from where I had stopped, I had an awesome view of the surrounding volcanic landforms below, and beyond I could see the vast expanses of New Zealand countryside spread out into the distance. The invigorating view spurred me on, and I was more certain now than ever that nothing was going to stop me from reaching the summit.

As we scrambled onwards, a new danger now presented itself. Loose rocks, bigger than footballs, dislodged by climbers above, would from time to time whiz past, preceded by a shout of 'Below!' This was not good for the nerves.

I dislodged one myself, and turned to see it bounce dangerously towards **Sig Jo Turner**. As it hurtled towards her, I was beginning to fear the worst, but then it took a bounce to the left, and harmlessly passed her by. It was also getting more difficult to keep my footing at this stage; the rocks and ash were making it extremely hard going, and it was taking all my concentration now, just to get one foot in front of the other.

I stopped for a moment at a vent in the side of the volcano, where hot air was blowing out in contrast with the freezing air that surrounded me. Looking down the mountain now was turning my stomach, and I had resorted to scrambling on all fours, as the terrain became more difficult. Some time later, I stopped to take a look up, and was pleasantly surprised by the sight of the peak just 50m ahead. That was just what I needed. Scrambling on and not daring to look back, the last 50m was a little easier underfoot, and it wasn't long before I was at the top.

The summit of Mt Ngauruhoe. L-R: SAC Wayne Manville, SSgt Jim Mc Ewan, Sig Jo Turner, LCpl Jimmy Luton, CT Mike Thay

The view was amazing to say the least, and the feeling of overcoming such a huge obstacle was indescribable. It was a moment never to forget. We spent some time taking a few photos of the incredible views, but with the weather being so unpredictable, and still a fair journey ahead of us, there was no time to dwell.

The descent wasn't exactly plain sailing either. Although it didn't take long in comparison with the ascent, most were on our backsides at least once.

After such a hard climb, completing the rest of the day's trek took some determination. We returned to the saddle before crossing the base of the South Crater. Then there was a climb up to the Red Crater, where recent lava flows could be seen. More breathtaking views were ahead as we passed the three Emerald Lakes. Their brilliant colour is caused by the minerals washed down from the thermal area of Red Crater. From there, we sidled around the North Crater and down to our destination of Ketetahi Hut, with Lakes Taupo and Rotoaira in the distance.

The mountain produced a few minor injuries that day, and the next day's trek was split into two groups. **WO2 Andy Amies** told us that this was to be the hardest day's trekking. My Bergen felt like someone had slipped a concrete block into it, and every muscle in my body strained with each step.

We returned back to the Red Crater and down the Oturere Valley, where the track weaved through strange, unearthly jagged lava forms from early eruptions. Briefly stopping for lunch at Oturere Hut, we then continued to Waihohonu Hut, trekking over open gravel fields, crossing a few streams, and marvelling at the everpresent breathtaking views in the distance.

That day, and until the end of the trek, the two JSMEL instructors, **WO2 Andy Amies** and **WO2 Shuggie Wilson** of 1RHF, gave us instruction in Summer Mountain Practices. This included map reading, routine and emergency procedures, use and care of kit and navigation. In such physically demanding conditions, the instruction we received seemed to go on board easily. In this sort of environment, without the necessary knowledge and experience, you would succumb to the elements very quickly.

The next day's trek was to be the longest distance we would travel in one day taking in about 27 km. We started off by crossing the dry Rangipo Desert, which featured vast plains of wind sculptured sand and volcanic rock, with Mt Ruapehu, all of 2797 metres high,

always in the distance. Then the track went up through mountain beech forest, where the weather worsened, and the GoreTex made another appearance. Yet again, the hut was a sight for sore eyes. The weather was foul that night, and the shelter the hut provided was more than welcome.

Waitonga Falls. L-R WO2 Andy Amies, LCpl Jimmy Luton, Sig Jo Turner, Sig Sandy Sanderson, SSgt Jin McEwan, JT Jaz Grenfell

The last two days back to Whakapapa were more of the same. Difficult terrain over physically demanding treks, with changeable weather. As predicted by the instructors, the walking had become easier as our bodies were now accustomed to the altitude and the weight we carried. All the same, by the end of Day 6, the minibus, cramped as it was, was definitely a welcome sight.

The next phase of the expedition was White Water Rafting, something we were all looking forward to. After a brief stopover at Lake Taupo, where a bit of socialising down the local town was in order, we were off to the Mohaka River. For the next two days, we were in the hands of a crazy Kiwi called **Jody**, who would entertain us with tales of injuries he had sustained while rafting.

It was with some anticipation that we set off down that river, but expert instruction on hand, we navigated the rapids without us (or **Jody**) breaking any bones or falling out. Despite this, it was an exhilarating experience negotiating the rocks and rapids of the river in an inflatable raft.

Grade 5 rapids

The next day we would raft the mighty Kaituna River, incorporating 14 rapids and at 21 feet, the highest commercially rafted waterfall in the world (see front cover). Before descending this mighty drop, **Jody** set the mood by telling us of the Maori God (Taniwha) who would pull you under the waterfall should you fall in, and how he had felt his hand on more than one occasion.

The first raft managed to get over without casualty, but the second raft got caught under the huge weight of water and **Cpl Steve Lacy** came out. He was dragged under the waterfall and popped out moments later. Luckily for **Steve**, the Maori God had let him off with a bloody nose and two black eyes, but no serious harm was done.

The day ended with a trip to Rakeiao Marae, where we were guests of a traditional Maori family. This was a great experience. We were greeted with the traditional Maori Haka, and I was made Rangatira (Chief) for the night. Although I didn't know it at first, this meant I would nominate myself and two of my 'tribe', **Sig Sandy Sanderson** and **WO2 Shuggie Wilson**, to attempt a Haka for the rest of the tribe (very much to their amusement). After this, we were treated to a traditional Maori banquet (hangi) and then allowed to bathe in sacred Maori Hot Springs.

We stayed in the village that night and felt privileged for the experience. The next day we would be back on the second part of the trekking phase at Egmont National Park. Here we would put into practice what we had learned at Tongariro, by leading the group at various legs of the trek.

Unfortunately, the weather was poor and the views virtually nonexistent, which made it a little more difficult. But these condi tions showed us how important the skills we had learned were. Our training made it possible to navigate despite the poor visibility. We were to have climbed Mt Taranaki, but the bad weather ruled this out. So the JSMELs devised another route around the Mountain and back down. It wasn't until we were off the mountain, that we realised how good a decision this had been. On getting into the minibus, we had barely taken off our boots, when we heard news over the radio of a light aircraft that had crashed into the side of Mt Taranaki in the adverse weather!

With the trekking phase over, the last day of the exped was spent at Waitomo Caves. We abseiled into the abyss, before arriving at an underground river. Our guides instructed us to leap into the cold black river and land on our rubber rings. For a moment I wondered if he was serious, but before I could question it **JT Austin Fuller** took the lead and launched himself into the blackness. Following him, we also jumped in and travelled down an underground river to the sound of chattering teeth. The caves were filled with glow worms, which made quite an awesome spectacle in the deep underground darkness. Another hour or so of negotiating underground waterfalls, and a few tight squeezes saw us climbing back out into daylight. After our underground adventure, we were treated to a well-deserved cup of soup and a bagel, before setting off back to Auckland.

After a couple of hours of well-needed sleep, we headed into town to have a few drinks, and get to know a few of the locals. After returning from the local night clubs in the early hours of the morning, we spent the next day doing some last minute gift shopping, and seeing a few of the sights before embarking on the long journey back to Cyprus.

During last few days of the exped, we were all asked what we thought we had gained from the experience. With all the walking we had done, and at such high altitudes, fitness sprung immediately to mind. But a couple of weeks on, I've realised that the benefits didn't stop there. We all enjoyed the exped, and felt an enormous sense of achievement. The experience had also taught us teamwork, leadership and motivation - all things that can be employed in our working environment. Some of us may wish to continue mountaineering and look forward to completing MLT or even becoming JSMELs. Some of us would just look back on the exped as a good experience. Either way, everyone of us has taken away something from this trip of a lifetime.

Continued from page 108

45 (EASTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M McKenzie-Bell**
SSM **WO2 N Back**

Sig Irvine having just completed the jump

Soldiers from 45 Sig Sqn who recently took part in a sponsored parachute jump, have raised a grand total of £1,187.79 in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital.

We had barely caught our breath from a demanding year when, on 4 January, the Sqn deployed on our first ex of 2005.

Unsure of the turnout at such an early stage, we were delighted to deploy all the available assets with manpower to spare. The OC put this down to good leadership, but others said it was impending Visa bills that did it!

It was only after this successful ex that we had time to ponder the events of the previous year. We can certainly be proud of our recruiting effort, where we seem to be bucking the national trend. We are also proud of our trg, which has new recruits and seasoned soldiers fully engaged. Our new IT skills package is a big hit with employers too. Most of all, though, we are proud of two individuals: **LCpl C Davie**, who distinguished herself and was awarded the Poulter's Plate, an annual award presented by the Master Poulter to best junior soldier in the Regt; and to **2Lt V Freer**, who was awarded the prestigious Greenhill Trophy by 11 Sig Bde.

Both ladies are sure to impress again in 2005. It was during a gap in trg, where a fun activity had been organised by **SSgt(FofS) Tex Bennett** that **LCpl Davie**, part of a team of two, was given an initiative task.

She took her team member to Ipswich, managed to make an appeal on local radio, obtained a flight in a plane, had lunch, borrowed a vehicle and made her way back to Colchester, via Earls Colne airfield – all with only 10 pence in her pocket, no mobile phone, and by 15.00 hrs! There is only one word for this – formidable.

As the year is only just starting, we have plenty to look forward to. First on our list is the Regimental Expedition to Nepal, where members of the Sqn have fought for places on this chance of a lifetime expedition. With an early camp this year set for June, we have an opportunity to expand our horizons with a battlefield tour in Italy. **2Lt Freer** will be leading, and it is looking *'molto bene'*.

54 (EAST ANGLIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DA Prince**
SSM **WO2 AS Osborne**

It's been a busy year for the Sqn, with a number of tour postings, promotions and changes in various appointments. We welcome back **Maj D Prince** as the OC.

Many of the appointment changes have been as a result of operational deployments, especially on OP TELIC. Both **Capt Collins** and **Lt Adie** deployed in early 2004; **Sgt Allen**, from 754 Tp, deployed in August 2004 and is due back in February 2005. **Sig Hunt** from 757 Troop has also deployed, and is now attached to the RLC as Driver at Shaibah Log Base. **SSgt Outlaw** is now back from a 12 month posting on OP OCULUS in Bosnia.

We were sorry to learn recently that **SSgt Beach**, also on tour in Iraq, has been evacuated as a casualty of a RTA. We wish him a speedy recovery and extend every good wish to his family. Sadly, there have been some recent departures of long-standing Sqn personalities. **LCpl Wilson** left after gaining a young recruit of her own called **Elizabeth**. **2Lt R Morley**, formerly OC 757 Troop, left to join another more artistic unit based locally.

Finally, we welcome **Cfn Weall**, who has recently arrived from the Kings and Cheshire Regt and has transferred to REME.

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper BSc**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Hall**

Due to trade camp commitments, EX VIXEN'S CHALLENGE saw a younger than usual team entering the CO's annual mil skills weekend.

Despite this, the team finished competently all the stands on the weekend at Nescliffe. However, during the watermanship phase, **Sgt Sue Walton** attempted to board HQ Sqn's homemade raft after it had left the riverbank.

This resulted in a trip to the dry cleaners, and many of her team mates believing she was on selection for the SBS! Meanwhile, back at the trade camp, **Sig John George** was collecting his award for top student on his Electrician Class 3 course.

HQ Sqn enjoying a relaxing day on the water

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AC Giles**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Webb**

The final trg weekend for 2004 took place in mid December. The day began with a CFT, an APWT and a respirator check. Given how quickly **WO2(YofS) Giles** ran out of the 12 x 12, RHQ obviously don't have these checks very often! It was then back to the TAC to prepare for the Christmas Party. **Sgt Tim Haughton** and his sidekick, **Cpl Pete Thomas** excelled themselves in providing the entertainment, as plenty of Christmas Spirit and Goodwill to All Men was on show during the festivities. However, Sunday morning revealed the Sqn in a more reflective mood, but the Children's Party that afternoon topped off a memorable weekend for all and set up the Squadron for the stand down period.

EXERCISE DRAGON'S CHALLENGE

EX DRAGON'S CHALLENGE was the first Sqn ex after the Christmas break and was the first in a long series of mil skills exs in the build up to Annual Camp. It was also an opportunity to prepare for the VIXEN'S CHALLENGE weekend at the end of the month.

Sennybridge is never welcoming, particularly not on a cold, wet weekend in the middle of January. However, the poor weather conditions on Friday night gave way to a relatively good day on Saturday. The DS, ably led by **Sgt Thomas**, had put together an excellent package of skills, from the traditional Casevac under contact, to the more unusual patrolling blindfolded through a wood - thus encouraging us to patrol making minimal noise. The nightnav was won by Team Pete (**Cpls Pete Langton** and **Pete Thomas**), who had time, if not the inclination, to talk to the DS. Less should be said of **Cpl Rachel Prosser**, who may be in danger of losing her position as the Sqn Orienteering Champion after a slight incident of geographical embarrassment. Sunday saw bayonet trg with the dummy subjected to bags of aggression from members of the fighting 53 Sqn, who were by now looking slightly the worse for wear. Spurred on by **Capt Walker's** call for war cries, a fair deal of aggression was unleashed onto the unsuspecting dummy. After that, anger management was no longer required. All in all, despite the cold weather, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and learnt some useful new skills.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj KL Metcalfe TD**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Clarke**

The Sqn had their annual Christmas ex, EX HOAR'S FROST, on 10 - 12 December. On the Friday night the troops deployed to Swynnerton Trg Area and took part on a night navex. They were dropped off n couples round the trg area, and had to find the way back to Bunker 6 without being spotted by the enemy. Everybody got back in time and got their heads down ready for the long day on Saturday.

Saturday's highlight was helicopter trg. After being taught on various drills, people got to have a ride on the chopper. A few people got off the thing feeling rather worse than when they got on (that's the AAC for you!!). Once the trg was finished, everyone deployed back to TAC Stratford for the Christmas dinner, where the Sqn Juniors enjoyed being waited on by the Offrs and SNCOs. After an excellent meal cooked by **Sgt Tracey Fleming**, and the toasts by **Sig Steve Bennett**, the OC gave a speech and presented the Yeomanry Sword of Honour, a prize given to a junior rank who has excelled throughout the year, above and beyond what is normally expected. This year, the recipient was **LCpl Nick Caswell**. Once this was presented, the OC then recognised the promotions of **Sgt Dave Smart**, **Cpl Nick Caswell** (a double good night for him), and **LCpl Hedges**. The night's festivities then carried on and many a beer was supped.

14 December was the last drill night of the year. TAC Stourbridge went out for a meal, while TAC Stratford had a quiz night. Everyone left their respective TACs looking forward to the holiday period and reflecting on a good year for the Sqn.

93 (EAST LANCS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM **WO2(SSM) H Kenny**

It finally happened. After a great deal of trg, 37 Sig Regt deployed on an op to support the emergency services in Carlisle. Due to the location of the incident, 93 Sqn became the lead sqn to assist with members of Comd's Response Troop (CRT) deploying from Redditch. An excellent response was given to the call out, even though it did inconveniently take place late on a Saturday night. The last man in was the PSI(T) who was on an outing in Coventry at the time and did not consider himself fit to drive a motor vehicle.

With Maj Cosgrove co-ordinating efforts in Blackburn, the Trg Maj, **Maj Mulholland**, deployed to Penrith to see how the Sqn could be best used. Meanwhile **SSgt(YofS) Gibbon** sat down and found the best loc for the SAINT Relay Veh to provide the best coverage for the Carlisle area. It was unfortunate that the loc the Yeoman found was also the windiest hilltop in Britain as **Sgt Jase Hodgkinson** discovered when his 9 X 9 disintegrated. Eager to get a day off work, **Sgt Hopkinson** and **Sgt Aldcroft Colling** were soon on hand to take over from the slightly moist SRV crew.

Also deployed, but to a more comfortable nice warm office, were **SSgt(YofS) Gibbon**, **LCpl Joynson**, **Sig Roper** and **Sig Kendrick**. Many thanks should also be given to those who were called in just to hurry up and wait. The deployment was a considerable success, and did bode well for future ops.

93 Sig Sqn practise the finer points of de-bussing

EX VIXEN'S CHALLENGE took place over the weekend 21-23 January 05 at Nescliffe Trg Camp, and involved an exciting package of events carefully co-ordinated to effect the most time from its participating teams. It has now become the norm for 93 Sig Sqn to field its usual high numbers, and this year was no different. The Sqn not only fielded two teams, but also contributed to the DS on a number of stands. These stands included Watermanship, a Bayonet range, Log endurance run, a SAT range, a Command task, First Aid scenario, a military/general knowledge quiz, and the obligatory March and Shoot to round off the weekend. Each stand had its own challenges, bringing out the best in each team and in its individual team members. Up for

grabs was the title of Champion Squadron, 37 Sig Regt. After the dust had settled, the prize went to 67 Sig Sqn, with the best overall Sqn to 93 Sig Sqn.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt S Jenner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Bennett**

EXERCISE COLD COMFORT

EX COLD COMFORT was the last trg weekend before Christmas and was a mil skills weekend, which incorporated the Sqn Christmas function. This year, it was held at Piddlehinton Trg Camp, near Blandford.

96 Sig Sqn letting their hair down

Saturday morning kicked off with an APWT based at Chickerall Ranges, Weymouth, and a watermanship stand based at Wyke Regis Camp, Weymouth. The latter involved the introduction to several small assault boats, which worried two of the Sqn's non-swimmers, **LCpls Dave Montague** and **Dave Shaw**. In addition, the Sqn was introduced to the relatively new Combat Support Boat. This gave the troops plenty of thrills and hair-raising moments, as they were shown the vast manoeuvrability and speed of the CSB on the water.

After everyone returned to camp, some a little wetter than others, it was time for a quick change of clothes and into some clean and dry kit. The troops then sat down to the Sqn's traditional Christmas meal, brilliantly prepared by the chefs, **Sgt Gary Wildsmith** and **Cpl Stu Adams**. After the meal came the presentations. This year the Sqn Comd's shield went to **Sig John Ruddock**, for being the best Signaller in the last year, and **Sig Damon Magee** was promoted to LCpl.

Once the presentations were over, all retired to the bar for drinks and party games. This year saw all the Sqn donning fancy dress headgear, ranging from Santa hats to much more attire that is non-traditional. All enjoyed the weekend, and it was encouraging to see how many people were there this year, especially the many new recruits. Many thanks go to all those who made this year's COLD COMFORT possible.

EXERCISE AQUA MARINE

EX AQUA MARINE was held at Swynnerton Trg Camp from 07-09 January and consisted of a series of activities, including FIBUA, watermanship and a CFT. It was the first time that we had been given FIBUA trg, and after several practices, each team carried out a successful attack on the building.

The watermanship involved the two teams constructing a raft, to hold all ten members, from barrels and planks. Each team had to paddle to the other side of the lake, climb out, get back on to the raft, and then paddle back. Apart from some wet feet, everyone stayed dry!

After completing a CFT, a nightnav ex was next. This consisted of the testing of basic nav skills, such as marching on a bearing and measuring distance. Saturday morning saw all the Sqn taking part in the combat trail at Swynnerton. This time, the job was against the clock. After changing out of wet and muddy clothes, there was then a range session on the SAT range.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) KP Innes**

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Whalen**
PSAO **Capt LT Jordan BEM**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Horton**

JANUARY CADRE WEEKEND - *by Cpl Simmons*

Starting with our Battlefield first aid test (we all passed) my group then went onto the range for our APWT. Unfortunately, zeroing was not up to much, but 40 rounds later it was much better.

Later, as two of the group required NBC trg, we popped in to the respirator testing chamber to get gassed. After being gassed, we went to the Trg Wing for Recognition, with **LCpl Ben Hales**. Everyone passed, and then it was back to the block to change for basketball.

Later that evening, and by way of celebration, most of the lads and lasses went to Harrogate, resulting in a few sore heads when the junior ranks did Law of Armed conflict on Sunday morning. For those who needed, it the weight went onto our backs, the rifle into our hands, and the CFT commenced. One hour later, we were all finished, and as a bonus, most of us were then qualified for Bounty. After a shower, it was down to the sports field to watch the Tug O' War and then back to Sheffield to clean up and go home. A very successful weekend.

INTER-SQUADRON BASKETBALL COMPETITION
– by Lt S A Stacey

The Regt deployed to Devlin Bks in Ripon for the final Cadre Weekend of the year, knowing this was the last opportunity for regimental personnel to gain their Bounty qualifications. However, for the members of 64 Sig Sqn, the Bounty payment was inconsequential compared with the opportunity to win the Inter-Sqn Basketball Competition.

On the Saturday evening of the weekend, crowds began to flock to the Devlin Bks gymnasium, where the Competition would take place. 46 Sig Sqn were the hot favourites, with a team who consider basketball a bigger hobby than the TA itself. Close on their heels was HQ Sqn, whose team revolved around **SSgt Jase Wood**. This year the competition would be a good one.

Members of he victorious 64 Sqn Basketball Team

The initial contact saw HQ Sqn standing up to the impeccably dressed 46 Sqn. And while 46 seemingly dominated the game, **SSgt Wood** just couldn't miss the basket. It was a frustrated 46 that left the court in shame. The second semi saw us, 64 Sqn, made up of **Capt Dan Milnor**, **Sgt Darren Owen**, **LCpl Andy Moores**, **Lt Hamish Fell**, **LCpl Ben Hales**, **LCpl Phil Monk**, **Sig David Cadman** and myself, **Lt Steve Stacey**. Against us were the solid defence of 87 Sqn. The game proved to be tight, with hardly any baskets scored. However, it was 64 Sqn who managed to maintain a narrow lead and claim victory.

The final between HQ and 64 Sqns again proved tight, but 64 Sqn managed to claim victory, with **Sgt Darren Owen** shooting an excellent three-point hoop from outside the D. Maybe next year, boys and girls.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S TROPHY - TUG-OF-WAR COMPETITION – *by Capt Andy Powell*

The odds were on HQ Sqn walking (or pulling) away with the Trophy for the annual Tug of War. As ever, they seemed to be fielding the strongest team and had the requisite experience (OK so they are all old!).

46 Sig Sqn turned up, as ever, dressed in the best team kit, and 87 Sig Sqn seemed to be putting the most War-like team on the field. 64 Sig Son were therefore panicking a bit when, three minutes before the first pull, their 2IC, **Capt Andy Powell** had still not decided who was in the team. A straight weight tactic was employed (i.e. who weighed the most got in the team). The team consisted of **Capt Andy Powell** (Captain), **Capt Dan Milnor** (Anchorman), **Lt Hamish Fell**, **SSM Phil Horton**, **Sgt Dave Hineson**, **Sgt Daz Owen** (Coach), **Cpl Karl Shaw**, **LCpl Andy Moores** and **LCpl Ben Hales**.

The first pull for 64 Sig Sqn was against the favourites, HQ Sqn, so imagine our surprise when we won the first pull. With their dander up, HQ Sqn then got serious, and the second pull seemed to go on forever. Just as 64 Sqn were starting to tire, the HQ Sqn team gave way, 64 Sqn won the pull, and were through to the final. With us facing old rivals 87 Sig Sqn, the final gave the spectators

The victorious 64 Sqn Tug of War Team

something to shout about, and 64 sqn, with some tactical pulling by the coach, went on to win the Trophy and a valuable four points in the CO's cup.

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JP Ahern**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) S Coburn**

CADRE WEEKEND

2005 started with a bang with our first Regtl cadre weekend in Ripon. A small handful of Sqn members completed their ITD trg for that all-important Bounty, and two of our recruits were put through their paces on the Recruit Selection Weekend. The rest of the Sqn was to do 'continuation trg' in Ripon Parks. We thought this would be a little on the dull side, but how wrong we were! The first indication that this was going to be no ordinary day was when battle noise and gunfire started booming across the park. After a few people had taken cover in nearby bushes, they realised it was just a PA system, but it had woken them up! Our first stand was BCDT and involved evacuating casualties under fire. It was the first time that some of the younger members had experienced this, and they soon realised how difficult it was to communicate and carry casualties out of danger whilst being fired at. Three members of 23 SAS Regt joined us for the weekend and demonstrated a number of different rifles and weapon systems that they use. They also talked about Selection and the types of trg they carry out (and more importantly the exciting places they get to visit). Considering that our syndicate was largely female, their target recruiting audience was small, but they definitely sold the idea to a few of the keener, greener members who we had 'borrowed' from 46 Sig Sqn. An NBC stand followed, with plenty of scope to practise getting into kit quickly, and decontamination drills in a contact situation. And then, just as we were beginning to get cold, we arrived at the bayonet stand. Now, in the TA, opportunities like this don't come along very often. After what seemed like an eternity of vigorous PT to psyche ourselves up (courtesy of the QM), we were let loose on the targets for real. The adrenaline pumped through our veins, and even the quietest members of the team turned into screaming killers for half an hour. After about four runs through, the remaining few decided enough was enough and the QM then had the job of calming us down. This was certainly an eye-opener for both the young and the older members of the Sqn and rounded off an excellent day of activities.

Two rounds of the CO's Inter-Squadron Cup also took place this weekend. Despite losing the basketball competition, it was almost worth the defeat to see members of the Sqn flailing around on the court. I think we managed to put in the most uncoordinated effort (no surprise there as none of the team had played basketball before!) Special awards go to **LCpl Brendan Aylward** (who, despite being 6 ft something, still couldn't master it), and **LCpl Ant Clark** (who was slightly disadvantaged after his glasses got broken). The Tug of War was more successful, and we came second after a fantastic effort by the boys, helped by the fact that once **Sig Jez Clarke** had the rope, it couldn't be shifted.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Hatton**

The Christmas break has come and gone and the New Year starts with, yes of course, Burns Night! A joint function this year saw members of both the Offrs' and SNCOs' Messes combining with the Wardroom and Senior Ratings' Mess of *HMS Flying Fox*.

It was a fabulous night of attacking the haggis and reeling about the dance floor. From the dance floor, we once more hurl ourselves into the year's trg, looking forward to AT in Austria, Germany, Wales and of course England in addition to the mainstay of mil trg throughout the year.

HEADQUARTER (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Gus Loverridge**
SSM	**WO2 Simpson**

EXERCISE WESSEX WARRIOR 3 – *by Cfn Parsonage*

With April approaching fast, EX WESSEX WARRIOR 3 saw the final chance to obtain outstanding ITD qualifications for the HQ element of 39 Sig Regt.

14 January brought a cold, wet Friday evening, and the long journey south to Willsworthy Camp. Joined by 57 Sqn carrying out a comms test for the forthcoming 10 Tours, we arrived in the late hours, straight into a briefing before retiring for a swift nightcap.

Saturday morning brought an earlier than expected start. With reveille scheduled for 07.00hrs, it was an unexpected surprise to hear the fire alarm screeching at the unlawful time of 06.00hrs. We all stumbled out in to the dark murky depths of the camp car park for nominal roll-call, before retiring for our remaining hour's sleep. An altogether un-amusing event. If a real fire had flared up, it would almost certainly have done so at a more respectable hour.

Following breakfast, it was straight into the day's program. 57 Sqn deployed out onto the moors, and, no sooner had they set foot outside the door, the heavens opened. The age-old saying of it ain't raining it ain't training sprang to mind, possibly not a sentiment shared by those venturing out onto the barren hills of Dartmoor.

HQ Sqn remained in the warm and dry sanctuary of the camp, to carry out three of the four remaining ITDs, NBC, First Aid and Recognition. Three syndicates were selected, and before we knew it, the day's trg was drawing to an end. All that was left now was to relax and enjoy our belated Christmas party.

Then Sunday morning was upon us, and so was the CFT. With numerous moans and groans from every corner of the dormitory, we all climbed out of bed and prepared for our 4-mile march across the peaks of Dartmoor.

Arriving at the start point, we assembled into a squad and set off. With only three steps taken, the command 'double time' came from the PTI, and we were off running down the hill. Did we really have another 4 miles of this? A reminder for next year, buy the PTI more beer the night before.

Fifty minutes later, we crossed the finishing line with aching limbs, sore feet and no dropouts. After a quick warm down from our friendly PTI, we all climbed aboard the transport and headed back to camp. With a final tidy up of the accn, we were all ready leave and on our way back to Bristol, marking the end of an enjoyable weekend.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Clive Dawes**
SSM	**WO2 Hall**

A WEEKEND IN LEEK - *by SSgt Don Garner*

After being rudely awakened at 03.00hrs on 15 January, the soldiers of 5 Sig Sqn
departed for Leek Trg area. When we arrived, the fog was thick, with visibility down to around 30m.

The first day consisted of a series of CPs ranging from basic map reading (in the fog) to section/personal battle skills. Pity was taken on the troops, and lessons on the orders process and recce patrols were given in the relative comfort of a farmhouse. The troops then left for their harbour area and got into harbour routine, with the return of the recce patrol coinciding with the DS attacking their loc.

After a good long (5-hr) rest, it was the troops chance to get their own back and attack the farmhouse.

The attack was videoed and revealed some budding actors in the ranks, **Lt Mike Curtis-Rouse**, best enemy actor; **Sig Simon Machin**, for best friendly actor; and best supporting drama to **LCpl Morris** and **Sig Julie Gilmore** for their 'We will get over this fence – eventually' Sketch.

Some valuable lessons were learned over the weekend, and on the whole, it was a great success.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mike Lansdown TD**
SSM	**WO2 Lambert**

EXERCISE YEOMAN SHIELD

It was a dark and winter's night and nothing was stirring, apart from 30 Middlesex Yeomanry Troopers, their rifles and their erstwhile green fleet mounts.

The scene was set – Bramley was under threat from insurgents backed by both nearby Readingly and Basingly. 47 Sig Sqn had been called in to reinforce overstretched Regular Forces, and provide security for the local inhabitants against the Readingly And Basingly Insurgent Disciples (RABID).

The Sqn arrived at Bramley Trg Area unscathed, thanks to our new arrival and pathfinder, **Capt Roger Knox**. We established a foot on the ground immediately upon arrival at the patrol base. Meanwhile **Sgt Ian Lane** embarked upon the first of many covert foot patrols - and this time not a public house in sight.

First light saw an end to routine. After a rather large egg banjo, HICON, alias **Capt David Gibson**, commenced the int flows. The immediate result was a sudden increase in the number of problems faced by the Sqn on the ground.

Following a rather sumptuous bacon sandwich, HICON int passed on rumours of a shallow grave. 2 Section, under the comd of **Cpl Chris Atkey**, was sent to investigate.

Unfortunately the rumours were true and the discovery of a body necessitated an immediate call-out of the local constabulary. En route to the scene of the crime, the convoy came under fire. In true Yeomanry style however, the covering force (1 Section) duly returned fire. As dictated by the rules of engagement, minimum force was used, and 11 magazines later, the lone gunman was forced to withdraw.

During the ensuing debrief, HICON's devious mind once again kicked in to overdrive. Not only was there a sighting of a suspicious package close to the main Readingly – Basingly railway line, but the local MP had pitched up to berate the Sqn for its alleged 'excessive' use of force in the earlier skirmish.

The local MP, attired remarkably like our Hon Colonel (walking stick, flat cap, *Hunter* wellingtons and *Barbour* jacket, and all), was coolly, calmly, but firmly dealt with by the acting OC, **Capt Mike Smith**.

Whilst discussions with the local MP were under way, the Sqn Ops Officer, **Capt Rod Hook** was busy briefing 1 Section for the task of dealing with the suspected IED near the railway line. **Capt Hook** and 1 Section departed at high speed, and quickly cleared and cordoned the device they found. EOD was summoned and HICON, in the midst of a packet of liquorice torpedoes, duly reported that they would be there in one hour.

Out at the railway bridge, the op was running smoothly and int was being reported. Gunfire was heard and reported in. When asked by the SCP where the gunfire was coming from, **LCpl Manny Gandhi** exclaimed over the PRC320 'Over there.' 'Over where?' came the reply from the SCP. 'Over there to my left,' replied **LCpl Gandhi**. Following a more accurate sighting report, 2 Section was duly sent to investigate.

They left the patrol base eager to engage the remnants of RABID. An engagement they got, and what ensued, can only be described as a high speed pursuit in the style of *America's Most Wanted*. Unfortunately for the insurgents, 1 Section made sure that the escape attempt was as successful as OJ Simpson on a Los Angeles highway, by herding the insurgents into the waiting arms of 2 Section. Duly collared, the two surviving members of RABID were handed over to the local constabulary, in the guise of the Sqn SPSI, **SSgt Dave Rimmer**.

Upon returning to the Patrol base, both Section Comds were again summoned to the SCP as a result of yet more int from HICON – the sugar from that bag of liquorice torpedoes having an obvious effect. A C130 Hercules had been brought down over the trg area and the pilot was believed to be in danger. 1 Section was assigned the task and, with the aid of tactical radios, the lone female pilot was smoothly extracted.

The pilot was so grateful to the Sqn for her rescue that 15 minutes after leaving our loc with the medics, bound for Hampshire Royal Infirmary, she was back wearing yet another hat (and body armour) as a journalist for the *Bramley Gazette*.

After a well-earned hot meal, cooked by stand-in chef, **LCpl Danni Bagnoli**, the Sqn was once again ready for action. Once again, HICON was busy inundating the SCP with more int and sighting reports. Confirmation had been received that the Green Jackets had mopped up all resistance cells outside Bramley Trg Area, and that the final cell, at Sherfield Farm, was our responsibility.

Orders were quickly distributed for two CTRs to be performed on the loc to ascertain the most covert route in and most efficient way of assaulting the Farm complex.

The first 10 mins of the CTR went by without incident. However, a chance foray by the insurgents along the same route taken by 2 Section led to a quick, but fierce firefight and withdrawal by both parties. As suspected, the back door route to the Farm was not an option. More success was found to the north with 1 Section.

Their covert approach went completely unnoticed by the insurgents who had, by now, settled down to a rather uncouth night of Stella and meatballs with pasta.

Upon returning with their report, **Sgt Lane** and **Cpl Clark** commented on the state of the enemy's dress and eating habits – confirming to one and all that they were no match for the professional, well dressed and cultured troopers of the Middlesex Yeomanry.

The planning for the morning's op got underway, despite pictures of ammo factories and elephants in the recce reports. Several hours and many cups of coffee later, the acting OC had formulated his plan, which to his dismay involved giving up his Landrover and driver and getting his boots dirty.

Nevertheless, the O Group went by without a hitch and the Sqn deployed for the final assault.

Capt Knox once again led the way – map and compass in hand – and to nobody's surprise we were in the right place at the right time. The gun group under the comd of **Sgt Bob Young**, got in to position with the speed of a thousand gazelles, and on cue, engaged the target. To the shout of a grand 'Hurrah,' the assaulting sections were sent in and the Farm complex taken.

With the task complete, the insurgent problem removed, and the local populace celebrating, the Sqn packed up and retired to its peace time loc; once more showing that military precision combined with a little dash and élan will always carry the day.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM **WO2 Mike White**

The second weekend of January saw the Sqn deploy to Willsworthy Camp on Dartmoor. The aim of the weekend was to trial the Airwave comms system prior to 43 (Wessex) Bde's annual Ten Tors Exercise in May.

The comms worked well, but the lack of Green Fleet vehs had a notable effect on mobility and capability. On the Saturday evening, the Sqn sat down together to a late Xmas Dinner.

Refusing to get out of his uniform, **Capt James Bloomer** has been leading a team from 39 Sig Regt, clearing out the recently declassified Quarry Operations Centre (QOC) in the mines and quarries below JSU Corsham.

Other members of the team were **LCpl Nick Thompson** from 5 Sig Sqn, along with **LCpl John Clarke** and **Sig Sandeep Sanghera**, from 47 Sig Sqn.

Their troglodyte existence should take them well into February (and beyond if they get lost in the sixty miles of tunnels).

The following members of the Sqn are shortly to deploy on OP TELIC 6: **Sgt Dave Jones**, **Cpl Dave Kane**, **LCpl Cassie Downs**, **LCpl Chris Walker** and **Sig Kerry Jones**. We wish them well and look forward to their return in October.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC **Maj Debs Simcox**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Joe Krikorian**

PISTOL RANGE DAY, 13 FEBRUARY 05
- by Capt Jason Fensome

The trg programme at 1 (RBY) Signal Sqn (SC) has been very busy of late, but Comms Tp found time to slip a range day at Chicksands into the programme as preparation for CORPSAAM in April 05. Under the able direction of our SSM, **WO2 Joe Krikorian**, 10 firers and 2 range staff made the short trip from Bletchley to Chicksands. The day got off to an inauspicious start, when the SSM managed to inadvertently activate the magazine alarm. This little local difficulty over, we were able to collect the 9mm ammo allocated to the day and crack on with the programme.

The day consisted of three details of four personnel, with the 2IC, **Capt Jason Fensome**, and **SSgt Mark Gott** also assisting with coaching and range safety. After an initial grouping and zeroing practice for each detail, the actual shoots from CORPSAAM were thoroughly rehearsed. There were some excellent shots in evidence, the best being **Sigs Paul Hooper** and **Ben Clutterbuck**, and **LCpl Anna Yates**. **Cpl Gareth Clarke** was also a force to be reckoned with. Some valiant attempts were made by others, not least **Sig David Weeks**, whose first attempt it was, and **Sig Tony Moran**, who struggled initially but later scored a perfectly respectable 44.

All in all, it was a good, fun day on the range, despite the biting cold, with some promising results. Hopefully, the Sqn can maintain this standard for CORPSAAM. We will see all colleagues from 2 Sig Bde there in April.

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Steve Roden**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Singers**

The Sqn welcome back our intrepid Balkans Trio, **LCpl Fiona Scott**, **Sig Maggie Kelly**, and **Sig Dave Scott**. We hope you enjoyed your tour - not too many war stories in the bar please. Congratulations to **Cfn Lindsay Goetz** on receiving the Meeking Trophy, which is awarded to the junior soldier who has made the most improvement in the year. Well done!

BURNS SUPPER

The Offrs SNCOs Mess recently held a Burns Supper in the Mains Castle Dundee.
The Principal Guest was the Bde Comd, **Brig Mike Lithgow CBE**. There was much dancing and consumption of the local firewater, which led to the Brig leaving with a good taste of Scottish hospitality.

LAD FORGOTTEN SOLDIERS

2 Sig Sqn REME workshop; who are they? you may ask. They are in fact the hub of the unit, the people who keep the wheels in motion, the engines purring - each man and woman tuned to perfection

Run out of fuel? **Sgt Rod Hamilton** is anybody's for a jar of coffee. Bogged in? **Cpl Dave Lyall** enjoys swamp water; he is the original Swamp Rat. Body damage. The post came out of nowhere! **Cfn Lindsay Goetz** loves her hammer. Blew all the lights did we? Well, **LCpl Smith** will assist.

FM Montgomery once said, 'Who are these men who wear the red beret? Every man an emperor.' We would say, 'The REME beret; every man and woman an ambassador to the Corps.'

Cfn Lindsay Goetz receiving the Meeking Trophy from the OC

Being serious, we are very lucky to have a quality team of tradesmen in our Unit. Of the 5 REME on establishment, **LCpl Smith** has done a TELIC tour of duty, and **Sgt Hamilton** and **Cfn Goetz** are soon to be deploying to Afghanistan. **Sgt Hamilton** has also recently returned from EX AFRICAN SUNSET in Kenya; he is now Bedford master.

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj AE Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) ML Walsh**

Sqn HQ has been busy practising their skills on the new BOWMAN equipt that has finally arrived. **Sgt Zoe Dolan** organised and led the Sqn Cross Country Team to Blandford for the Corps Championships. Special mention must go to the Women's Team (**Sgt Dolan**, **Capt Loxton** and **LCpl Watson**) who ran away (excuse the pun) with the Minor Unit's Cross Country Award)

We must say farewell to **WO1(RSM) M Walsh**, who leaves the Sqn, and the Army, after 22 years' loyal service to the Royal Corps. **RSM Walsh** had a very distinguished career, and his potential as an RSM was recognised at an early stage. We wish him and **Linda** all the best in North Yorkshire, as they begin a new life. Watch out in Catterick, **Martin's** on your patch!

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G Middleton**

The period after Christmas started at running pace for the Tp. The ongoing saga of BOWMAN continues, but with the initial classroom based trg now complete, we still await the return of the armour from Mönchengladbach. However, we have now received our full compliment of FFRs, which allows us to deploy a HQ of sorts, and play with the new kit. Trg for OP TELIC 7 is now kicking into full gear. As always, sports and competitions have also kept us busy. In the Comd's Cup the Tp has represented the Sqn at Volleyball, Cross-country, Triathlon, Aquathon, Auathlon and extreme Ironingathon. Our performances in all these events mean that we have secured the competition will ease (and points to spare).

The troop even found time to release **Capt Fi Loxton**, **Sgt Andy Morris** and **LCpl Chris Lord** to the Corps Ski Camp in Zell-am-Zee. **Cpl John Harris** from Bravo Tp completed the team. **Sgt Morris** congratulates **Capt Loxton** on beating him in every single race. Well done, Ma'am (*Don't forget, the Tp Comd always gets final copyright, Sgt Morris*).

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt A Rea**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J Giddens**

It seems the troop hasn't stopped since returning from Christmas leave! All the FFRs are now back and fully BOWMANised, along with 2 of our armd fleet. This is giving us plenty of opportunity to get hands on with the kit, and to refresh ourselves with det drills. We have had several plug-ups, and even managed to deploy into the field for a week in support of the RA on EX SHELLDRAKE SPEAR. This was a combined comms Tp effort, and was a good first ex to start a busy trg year. Just a pity about the cold though! Our apologies go to the Bde Senior Chaplain, **Padre Jim Aitchison**, for not refuelling his heater properly when he visited for a night. A prayer for warmth next time, Padre!
Despite commitments to BOWMAN trg and plug-ups, **SSgt Giddens** and his team of DMIs found the time to run a very successful AFV Comds' course. This included mechanical lessons and a spell of cross-country driving on the boggy terrain of the trg area. The best part was commanding the veh whilst battened down. If the 'force' exists, it was certainly used here!

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt (QM) S Lawes**
RQMS **WO2(RQMS) A Maylett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt B Revell**

The Tp had been working hard towards its LSI, which was held on the 7 December. All the hard work paid dividends, with the unit being awarded an Effective Plus (20 Bde are you reading this?).

On returning from leave, the Tp has been preparing to deploy on a Combat Service Support ex at Sennelager, which will be our only chance to train with the Bde Supt Gp before we deploy on OP TELIC 7 in October 2005. Courses have been grabbed while the opportunities are there.

Sig Firbank completed his UBRE op's course, and **Sig Wroe** the All Arms Storemans' course at Deepcut. The MT section has been loaded en masse onto a CLAIT course, which will cause the instructor no end of problems, as they are not exactly academics!

Sig Matthew Mollett arrived in the Unit in August 2004, and has spent a large part of his time at Leconsfield on his driver trg, which he has successfully passed. On his return to the unit he received his Class 3 Certificate of Merit from **Capt Sean Lawes**.

SQUADRON RECRUITING EFFORT

Over the past 3 months the Sqn Recruiting Team has been out and about in the Tayside area, spreading the word of 2 Sig Sqn to the local populous. The effort has produced 30 notes of interest, from which we now have an intake of 6 starting in February.

DII ROLLOUT COMPLETE

The month of January saw the roll out of the much-awaited DII terminals onto our desks. The system is superb, and will allow the passage of info around Hohne Camp (and eventually the world) to be a lot simpler than previously.

All personnel had to attend a ½ day of trg session before being allowed to access their accounts. The only disadvantage is the amount of e-mails being generated instead of the old phone call!

BRIGADE COMMANDER'S COMMENDATION

On Monday 10 January, **Cpl John Ryan** of Alpha Tp received a Bde Comd's Commendation from **Brig PC Marriott CBE OBE**, the newly-arrived Comd 7 Armd Bde.

The Bde Comd completed his introductory visit to the Sqn by presenting the Commendation to **Cpl Ryan** for his superb work in leading the regeneration of the Welfare Centre, and more specifically, the Sqn bar. Following the flooding of the centre in December 2002, **Cpl Ryan** and a team of dedicated workers, spent considerable time and effort in refurbishing and totally redecorating, and making it one of the most popular and prosperous bars on Camp.

CORPS SKI CAMP – SNOWBOARDING

The Snow Boarding team left Bergen on Friday 26 November with excitement and eagerness, bound for the wintry wonderland of Zell–am–Zee. After a cultural weekend, we started the trg week in groups, each with an assigned instructor. The instructors made the trg fun and enjoyable, but nevertheless, it was extremely physical, and at the end of every day, all we wanted to do was sleep!

The following Monday saw the start of Race Week and the Seeding Day on a Slalom course. **Capt Ed Swift** started as he meant to go, put in 2 great races, and was seeded second for the next day. He continued to put in a great performance, and finished the week, second place overall for the Competition - an awesome display of snowboarding – or so he tells everyone!

Cpl John Hall was seeded 31st after the first day. He didn't stay there long, moving up after the next Slalom race to 24th. Not satisfied with this, after the Giant Slalom, he found himself pushing for the top ten placing. Unfortunately, he was knocked out by the 4th seed in the first race. Well done, **Cpl Hall** for a sterling effort. **Sig Drew Nelson** found the first day's racing very challenging, and found himself 48th.

The next day didn't get any better for him, as he had a wipe-out in the first race that didn't help his seeding. He ended up 48th out of 65 competitors. A good first attempt, and not for a lack of effort!

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj M Dooley**
RSM **WO1 Forrester**

The *WIRE* entry for 209 Sig Sqn in this edition takes on an added importance, as the title 19 Mech Bde will no longer be used. As of January 2005, we reröled to 19 Light Bde.

The end of 2004 saw a busy time for the Sqn as we carefully squeezed the exs into the programme, without them affecting the vital rush and congestion of Christmas social events. The culmination of the latter was an excellent Sqn party organised by **Cpls Lyon** and **Wicks**.

Prior to the festivities, **Sgt Al Henderson** and MT dept laid on a plethora of different driving courses to ensure that the Sqn is ready to meet any new challenges that the conversion to the Light role produces. Courses were run for Cat C (HGV) and C+E (HGV with trailer), conversion courses for the Wolf Landrovers and Pinzgauers.

To ensure that the Sqn entered the Christmas period in the best of physical fitness, the advanced combat fitness test was undertaken. For those unaware of this test, it is a twoday event, cover ing over 12 miles each day, carrying weight and with decreasing time periods. As a final flourish, three combat fitness tests must be achieved, in our case, 150m jerry can carry, 4 Ton truck climb in and 100m fireman's carry.

All of those who participated gave their all, with special mention to **LCpl Daz Cummings**, who pushed himself to his personal limit, with no small amount of assistance from **Cpl Anthony Grimes**.

PANTHERS ON THE CHARGE – *by Sig Thompson*

In late October, the Sqn deployed to Catterick Training Area (CTA) on EX PANTHER'S CHARGE. The purpose of the ex was to test all aspects and Depts of the Sqn, by rapid movement and resupply of the two armoured HQs.

Day one was spent in camp with a round of PACE EX tests and kit inspections. As darkness descended, the various troops dispersed themselves to their designated hide locs. For the next twenty-four hours, the tps were solely under the comd of the Tp Comds, to ensure that their own houses were in order. All formations were practised, from hides to hasty HQs, to leaguers, and time was made for Sup Tp to demonstrate the rolling replen.

With the Tp phase over, the Ops Team took the reins, and proceeded to bounce people from loc to loc. However, it was still unsure as to whether or not B Tp were ordered to turn their BFOT into a huge kite. Luckily, nobody was hurt, and all egos have been repaired without too much work. By the time the Sqn made it to breakfast on the final morning, everybody felt thoroughly exhausted, yet suitably exercised.

EXERCISE PANTHER'S LINK – *by LCpl Lutkin*

Having practised the Sqn as a whole, early November was dedicated to the radio tps practising their core trade skill of comms. To ensure that they were suitably challenged, B Tp were deployed to Garelochhead and A Tp to Warcop Ranges. Each Tp conducted its own localised VHF and RRB trg, combined with long range HF and Strike Comd Integrated Comms System (STCICS (The facility to allow a user to access the phone network, via an HF link)). B Tp was split down into a number of small crews, with a round robin of tasks to achieve. With a demanding timescale, each Det was asked to set up a remoted radio room, a RRB and also operate a veh in a hide and an active loc. The long-range comms worked well, and with STCICS being achieved from a 320 radio, all were pleased with their efforts. The simple rotation system ensured that everybody learned something new, whether it was a tech or personal advancement.

FOOTBALL TEAM GOES MARCHING ON – *by LCpl Whitham*

The last two games the Sqn Football Team have been involved in, were the Signals Cup and the Army Cup. In the first draw of the Signals Cup, we drew 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Sqn at home here in Catterick. The game from the start was fast and very hard, as 3 (UK) Div were very well organised, especially in defence. Throughout the game, there were chances at both ends, with both goalkeepers having the bulk of play. The playing surface did not help either team, especially when trying to win the ball. In the last five minutes, both teams could have won the tie, with a hatful of chances going begging. Full time came and went, with no team finding an opener, so unfortunately, a penalty shoot had to separate the teams. Both goal keepers saved spot kicks each but

The successful 209 Sig Sqn Football Team

209 Sig Sqn was victorious with a 4 2 win; **Cpl Casledene**, **Cpl Cairns**, **Sig Chesworth** and **Sig Middleton** scoring from the spot.

The only blip on the score sheet was **Sig McGuire** shooting wide, which was even worse for him, as his father had travelled down to see the tie. The week after, we were involved in an Army Cup tie with 5 Bn REME in the prestigious Catterick Garrison Stadium. Both teams played a good standard of football throughout the tie. Only the work ethic of 209 Sig Sqn broke the defence, and three goals resulted from good hard work off the ball.

Our first team goalkeeper being injured (**Cpl Opie**), our trusty **YofS Pollitt** stood in and played well. From the first whistle, we always had our noses in front; and we came away with a 5 3 victory, with goals coming from **Cpl Cairns**, **Sig McGuire** and **Sig Neilson**. In summary, as a minor unit, the Sqn Team has been punching well above its weight.

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Richard Spencer**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Phil Hay**

There has been a marked change of focus in the Sqn over the past two months. BOWMAN trialling has now been completed from a Sqn perspective, with the mantle passing to 7 Armd Bde. 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn's attention is now firmly fixed on the up and coming TELIC 6 deployment in April 05. Preparation is now well advanced, with excellent trg packages being provided across the Bde. The decision on whether we are to deploy with BOWMAN is yet formally to be taken, though we are hopeful of a positive result and the opportunity to use the equipt that we have been trialling for so long in an operational theatre. Final Confirmatory FTXs are running in late February through to late March to prove the Bde's readiness for the deployment.

We have also had a change of RSM. Welcome to **WO1(RSM) Phil Hay** and farewell to **WO1 Marsh**. **RSM Hay** has had to hit the ground running, in what has been a particularly busy period for the Sqn, and he has been quick to make an impact.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Zoe White**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Stu Foster**

TEAM MEDIC'S COURSE - *by Sig Pardoe*

With OP TELIC 6 looming ever closer, the trg regime at 12 Mech Bde is starting to become more intense by the week. With the PT up to five times a week, OPTAG trg, cascade trg, two final confirmatory exs and a team medic's course to fit in before we deploy in April, you can start to see how hectic life has become! The first week back from Christmas leave saw us start the Team Medics course. This started with three days of theory, most of which was death by view foil (not even the PowerPoint glow to keep us warm) before we were allowed to get hands on with the med packs and each other.

The third day was the mock exam day with a written test and a small practical exam to ensure everybody had taken on board sufficient information about the basic life support skills we had been tested on. Friday was the big day, with the battle ex practical exam. We were split into three sections and briefed on the casualty situation, and then it was up to comds and individuals to control the scenario and, hopefully, mend their casualty! Each section patrolled up to their casualty, cautiously checking for danger as taught, but had little time to examine or treat wounds, because of the simulated mortar fire and bags of smoke. A lot of determination and effort was shown, and **Sig Kerr** nearly drowned in a sea of **Sig Jenkins'** blood as he battled to stop the bleeding.... **Cpl Brittain** single-handedly carried his casualty to safety under the admiring eyes of the RAMC DS. **Cpl Chapman** and **LCpl Graham** both showed good technique when treating wounds, and **Sig Fox** clearly had the sharpest eyes, when her section failed to see the fourth casualty, who was unconscious in the tree line. As each section passed through, the DS concluded with a debrief to let each person know how they had done with the individual casualties they treated, as well as providing top tips for the future.

OPERATIONAL RANGE PACKAGE - *by LCpl Stewart*

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) deployed on an OP TELIC 6 pre-deployment range package over the period of 16-21 January at Cinque Ports Trg Area. The package formed part of the mandatory OPTAG package required for the deployment, and was all the more necessary as the Sqn's hectic BOWMAN conversion programme had left relatively few opportunities to keep on top of mil skills trg.

The range package, co-ordinated by **SSgt Donnelly** in the Sqn Trg Wing was actually delivered by 1 Royal Anglian. The syllabus included live firing ranges, which catered for all scenarios likely to be encountered in Iraq. It certainly improved my confidence in my shooting ability, and was well received across the Sqn.

The Minimi shoot

The ranges included urban close-quarter battle shoots, top cover/anti ambush drills, and the use of the LMG. The top cover/anti ambush shoots were new to most of the Sqn, and proved to be a particularly testing range. Although we were unable to obtain SNATCH vehs for the range, we were able to adapt soft-top GS rover for the purpose to make the trg as realistic as possible. **Sig Washington** proved to be the best shot with a score of 15/20. The LMG familiarisation also proved interesting. I found many of the drills and working parts similar to the GPMG, a fact that made life a lot easier for many of the armour trained personnel - although some drills varied and caused confusion.

Our time at Lydd and Hythe was useful, interesting and enjoyable. We had plenty of free time in the evenings, which most of the married personnel took full advantage of; whilst others were so tired from the day's events, they thought early nights were in order. I think everyone in the Sqn would agree that they all got something out of the range package, and were able to identify the areas that they needed to brush up on.

OPERATION TELIC 6 PREPARATION – AN LAD PERSPECTIVE - *by Cpl Jacobs*

A New Year, and a new challenge is under way in the Bde and the Sqn - the rapidly approaching deployment on OP TELIC 6. The timelines have been tight for the pre-deployment trg and the whole unit has been hard at work with individual admin and preparation of kit required for the tour.

The unit's vehs are all undergoing their normal yearly tasks in the next 6 weeks, bringing all servicing and MEIs up to date. It seems a never-ending task now, but it will lighten the workload for the initial arrival in theatre. The remainder of the unit's veh holdings are simultaneously undergoing the same maint programme, ready for their long overdue rest in CHE.

Military trg under way within the unit lines has been co-ordinated by the Trg Wing. The staff have been hard at work developing a trg programme containing all the mandatory requirements required for deployment. The tactics taught have been new to most, and a welcome refresher for some of the older and bolder members of the Unit.

One of the more controversial decisions made by trg staff is the PT programme. This has increased to early morning sessions Monday to Thursday, and a lunchtime lesson on a Friday, completion of which usually signifies the start of the weekend. Variety has improved, with the inclusion of more Battle PT sessions and the incorporation of casualty evacuation, self defence and section battle drills lessons. The level of fitness is steadily increasing, and the instruction has been of significant benefit.

The standard OPTAG package was delivered over a two-day period at Tidworth and Knook Camp on SPTA. The information was presented in the form of briefings on current situations in the country, politics, history of the region, security, and mine awareness. A series of demonstrations was laid on to highlight lessons learned from previous tours, demonstrating possible reactions to various scenarios – including those involving suicide bombers.

The OPTAG package gave the Unit a good starting point from which it launched into a week-long range package at Lydd and Hythe Ranges. The week consisted of team and individual shoots, based around some of the particular situations that will be faced by personnel in theatre. Shoots included veh anti-ambush drills, individual top cover shoots from the rear of a Landrover and CQB in sections of four. The Baton Gun, and Minimi shoots were new to many of us, and there were some very interesting results! The Baton Gun's effectiveness was highlighted when **Cpl Chapman**, a member of the range safety staff, was hit in a sensitive region by a re-bounding rubber bullet.

Altogether now! Public Order duties training

Following the live firing of the ranges, a day was spent trg in Public Order duties. Without a shadow of a doubt, this seemed to be the one that everyone got the most excited about. One of the more memorable moments came during a demonstration of riot control equipt and drills. **LCpl Johnson** exhibited his skill as a rioter when he executed a perfect karate kick, which propelled **Sig Hazel** through the air, leaving him a heap on the ground. Thanks must go 1 Royal Anglians, who supported the whole week, providing range safety and demo troops. The Unit gained immensely from the advice of the professionals, as was proven by the enhanced level of our own skills. Everyone learned a great deal from the trg, and enjoyed the experiences. Now we are as ready as possible for the challenges ahead, and we all now want to get out to theatre and get the job done.

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJS Allen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) AB Lothian**

Whilst BOWMAN remains the Sqn focus in 2005, we are also concentrating on achieving our trg goals and preparing ourselves for High Readiness in July this year. This includes Bde-level exs, such as EX LOG VIPER, a four week ex that will not only test the Sqn to the full, but will also demonstrate our capability and professionalism – all attained by hard work by all in the latter part of 2004. We also have Bde HQ CAST exs, which will again keep the Sqn busy.

That said, there is definitely a healthy mix of work and play in the Sqn, and this has not only included League Football matches, but also a 10-day Skiing ex in the South of Germany, which went extremely well.

EXERCISE WINTER TIGER II – *by Sigs Homes and Oliver*

We arrived at the REME ATC Lodge in the early evening, and were sorted into groups based on ability, issued with our equipt. The following morning, we went out onto the mountain. Seven members of the Unit took the gondola to the top of the mountain for a ski down before the lessons started. Unfortunately, **Sig Oliver** ended up falling every 10-20m. He also managed to crack his goggles with, what was probably the worlds best face plant. He then got demoted to the Beginners' Group, to learn the basics of staying up, and more importantly, stopping.

Now that our group had learned some of the easier manoeuvres, still doing the snow-plough to stop, and turn left and right, we went to one of the easier courses on the slopes to ski down. We even managed to get in two runs before lunch. At the end of the

EX WINTER TIGER II. At the Middle Station

day, we all managed to ski down the same slope, admittedly some slower than others.

The next day was the first day on a new course. Starting right from the very top, we took it slowly to begin with, and learned to do parallel turns, so we could turn faster and easier. By the end of the day, our beginner group managed to ski from top to bottom, with not many falls. That said, **Sig Lloyd** still liked to hit all slopes at speed, and must have had the most falls of the week. He must have been made of rubber though, because he was always back on his feet within seconds, and on his way down again.

We were now getting to the good part of the week. Everyone had managed to grasp the basics, although Maj Allen was still airing on the side of caution. All the groups were now skiing must faster and with more control, which meant that we were all working much harder. We had to make the most of this day as we were due to be assessed on our skiing ability on the last day and this was our last chance to practice.

The last day was the best day's skiing. It included our assessments, which meant putting all of what we had learned over

Sig Oliver and Sig Lloyd pondering which route is harder

the week into practice, and then be given an overall grade. We were given a number of tasks to perform, such as parallel turning, jumps, snow ploughing etc, and then were given a grade. We all finished, and then joined together as a Sqn team for a good half-day free ski. This was really good, as it was the first time we were all able to ski down from the top of the mountain as a Sqn, and we even had a small race at the end of the run. When we got back to the lodge, we were awarded our certificates. We all had a really good time, and certainly both of us are looking forward to the next chance we get to hit the slopes. Our thanks on behalf of the group to **Capt Fi Hargreaves**, for organising this excellent AT trip.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

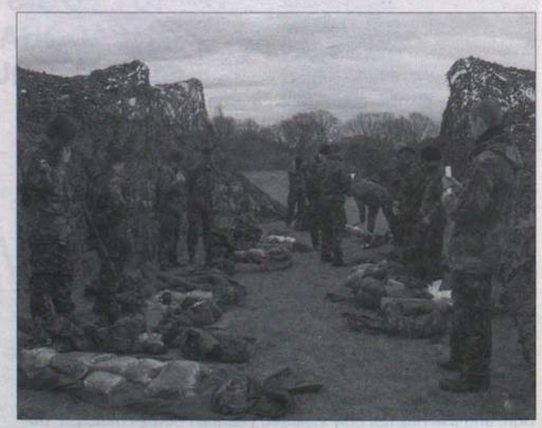
OC	**Maj J P Hazlewood**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) R C Douglas**

EXERCISE WIRELESS HALBERD 1 - *by SSgt Shuck*

After some well-earned Christmas leave, A Tp was ready to embark on its Class 3 – 2 Trade ex on the Achmer Trg Area. Many points on the exercise brief were initially covered in the comfort of the garages, and essential kit, such as maps, CEI and instructions were issued. In particular, **Cpl Andy Potts** worked tirelessly on the serials, ensuring that the lads would have plenty to do once they had arrived in loc.

On arrival at Achmer, the dets set up and then carried out comms checks. For one det in particular, the cam net became a mammoth task in itself.

The next hurdle for the students was the dreaded kit check, which everyone prayed **SSgt Shuck** was going to pass on by. Not so lucky, the kit check was done and personnel soon found themselves doubling around a lone tree several hundred metres away. It's amazing how there is always a tree positioned in exactly the right place for education purposes!



The calm before the storm

Locs were given out, and as everyone thought they knew the area well, no real attention was paid to the maps. It was not until RADCON had heard nothing for 2 hrs that a search party was deployed to where the dets had been told to move to. We eventually stumbled on **LCpl Cunningham's** det, which had been driving around all the areas. When questioned, the det seemed to be confused by the map, and even more so by the scale. There is a difference between 1:50,000 and 1:10,000!

LCpl Steve Joyce's det seemed to be clued up and found the loc in a slightly quicker time. They were looking the part, and pulled up short of the proposed loc to carry out a foot recce. After setting up in record time, they decided it was time to send a LOCSTAT back to RADCON.

Sig Cath Lewins forgot to encode her grid, so they managed to fit in another move in the same hour! **LCpl Joyce** was also given 'The Golden Sleeping Bag' award for the ex, as he took advantage of every available minute of the day to squeeze in 40 winks! **LCpl Scott Dickinson's** det was found to be thinking for itself, and decided at one point to set up camp totally off the beaten track. Nice one guys, however the result was that yet another move ensued, although they obviously found a scapegoat in **Sig Emma White**, who had just arrived from the factory.

LCpl Joyce using up his Det's daily sleeping allocation

LCpl Fearn's det did not avoid incident either, and unknown to them, whilst setting up in the dark on the second night out, the DS decided to listen into the student's conversations and ascertain morale levels. **Sig Farigu** and **Sig Rachael White** were certainly having a good grumble, decided that the ex was a total waste of time, and did not understand the benefits of moving so many times in one ex. However, they were all smiles once they had some fatherly and comforting encouragement from **LCpl Fearn** after he had heard their concerns!

All in all, the ex was a tremendous success and the Tp is looking forward to the next one in May 2005.

EXERCISE JOINT VENTURE 04 - *by Cpl Gobie*

It all started on the morning of Thursday 11 November 2004, when the majority of the Sqn, deployed on a coach from Gütersloh, for the sunny resort of South Cerney. After travelling a good 14hrs, we arrived at our 5-star accn in South Cerney, and in the interests of efficiency, quickly endeavoured to get acclimatised. After a cracking night's stay in our 30-man room, every one mucked in and built Main HQ in a record-breaking 4 days. To reward us for our hard work, **Lt Wartemberg** gave us the privilege of a lesson in moral values and discussions on how to improve the British Army!

Once the Staff arrived, the ex got into full swing. Because of a shortage of personnel, **Sgt Jim Pearsall** was poached from us, and spent most of the time working with the main server run by 2 Sig Regt. This shortfall meant that **Cpl Gaz Watson** and **Sig Danny Lewis,** were also asked to assist 2 Sig Regt for the duration of the ex. **Sgt Joe Smith** had the difficult task of looking after the accn at West Down Camp, as there were very few bed spaces available in South Cerney. This left **Cpl Gobie** to look after the entire fleet of JOCS computers, a feat that could not have been managed without the simply brilliant radio sys ops who were a terrific help.

Barring a few problems (the server crash at South Cerney and then a bigger crash at PJHQ), the ex was a flying success. The scenario apparently ended up in a peace treaty, which I am sure will be broken in time for JV 05, where we will undoubtedly once again cover the Sqn in glory.

EXERCISE SNOW WARRIOR 05 - *by LCpl Charnock*

On the 20 January 2005, 6 members of 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (262) deployed from Gütersloh to the Bavarian Alps to take part in EX SNOW WARRIOR, a 10 day skiing package that would teach us to either ski or improve on skills we already had. As expected, the trip down there took 10 hrs, which turned out to be approximately 9 hrs 55 mins too long.

On arriving at the lodge, we were split down into our respective groups, depending on the amount of skiing previously done. It was no surprise that 75 percent of us were placed in a group that would later be referred to as 'Group Mong.' On our first day on the slopes, we tried to master the well-known and somewhat underrated skill known as stopping. Unfortunately, this didn't happen, and the instructor knew he would definitely have to earn his money. Led by **LCpl Ian Round**, we decided to adopt our own methods of stopping, which was throwing yourself on the ground, and seemed to do the job quite well!

The days themselves were long and hard, but everyone improved as the hours passed, and definitely enjoyed the experience. The ex itself was split into two phases: alpine skiing and ski touring, both of which were highly enjoyable and very beneficial. At the end of the ten-day package, 'Group Mong' finally came into its own, and was now able to crash at very impressive speeds! Even members of the other slightly more advanced groups were learning new things. The instruction itself was second to none, and everyone enjoyed the experience.

LAND INFORMATION ASSURANCE GROUP (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Alan Evans**
SO1 Tech	**Lt Col Chris Barrington Brown** RA
SO1 Mgt	**Lt Col Mark Smith**

SANGCOM SAUDI ARABIA

A small LIAG team visited the SANGCOM project in Riyadh to complete an IA review of their office LAN, and to offer advice to SANGCOM on bringing a various ICS systems into the Saudi National Guard. As well as the LAN review, the team gave briefings on suggested IA management structures and procedures to the Royal Signals team, the prime civilian contractor, and the Saudi National Guard Signals, including meeting their SOinC. The team were made very welcome by the extended project team ex pats in Riyadh especially Col Geoff Cary and his wife. LIAG is looking forward to the return visit.

The team out in the Saudi Desert - Maj John Bosley, Maj John Pringle, Lt Col Mark Smith

AFGHANISTAN

A LIAG team consisting of **Majs John Pringle** and **Phil Hatton**, and **Capts Jack Gavigan** and **Geoff Guy**, visited HQ British Forces Afghanistan in Kabul and the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Mazur-e-Sherif (MeS), to conduct the InfoSec element of a PJHQ Compliance Review. The day-visit to MeS involved a Hercules flight, which could best be described as tactical flying (though that might have had something to do with the Minister for the Armed Forces and his entourage being on board the aircraft at the time).

BATUS CANADA

A two-man LIAG team, consisting of **Capt Matthew Pemble** and **Maj Tom Fairfax**, deployed to BATUS to conduct a review of information systems. The task was an interesting one, and though the initial tasking was to conduct an IA review, we spent considerable time on additional enabling tasks in both technical and management spheres. Our hosts in BATUS were extremely kind, and managed to include Gazelle prairie trips, barbecues and a ladies' dinner night in the itinerary.

On the return trip, unplanned delays in flights left the team with a spare evening to visit the Calgary Stampede, before a tortuous trip back to Brize Norton via Germany.

591SU (RAF) VISIT

In the summer, LIAG visited its colleagues in 591 Signals Unit at RAF Digby, an RAF Regular unit with a similar, if expanded, role to that of LIAG. We were entertained royally by our light blue cousins, and spent the weekend discussing technical strategies for compliance checks, joint task planning, the roles of the units and general IT Security networking.

On Sunday, 591 showed us around the excellent preserved RAF Ops room at Digby.

Capt Jane Chappell goes back to her RAF roots

CYBER DEFENCE WORKSHOP, UNITED STATES

The first International Cyber Defence Workshop was held at West Point, in July 2004.

Teams from 5 countries, took part in the two-part event, with technical and legal streams. **Capt Alan Woodroffe** represented LIAG, with LIAG's **Capt Geoff Donson** acting in his civilian role.

The 4-day workshop involved configuring 12 systems to provide a working electronic office environment and defending it from attack by a red team. National representatives were split across the defending teams, so that each team had a range of skills. The workshop provided useful feedback to the organisers that can be used both to feed into live systems, and to structure next year's event.

BALKANS

Maj John Burnage and **Capts Rachael Stammers** and **James Vaughan** departed in July 04 from Brize Norton to Pristina in Kosovo. LIAG started working immediately, making contacts and getting familiarised with the area and key personalities.

Whilst in Kosovo, extensive testing was completed on ISIS, Business Internet and Welfare Internet machines, as well as some stand-alone systems. **Capt Vaughan** produced a testing script to

Maj John Burnage load tests an SFOR helicopter

allow the 'less technically minded' members of the team to gather all relevant data. **Capt Stammers** completed a review of the SyOPs for the ISIS systems checking compliance against the JSP 440 required information.

IRAQ TASK

The LIAG team comprised **Lt Col Chris Barrington Brown**, **Maj Phil Hatton**, **Capts Andrew Linn** and **Alan Woodroffe**. The task was led by **Flt Lt Nick Berry**, 591SU.

The team deployed from RAF Brize Norton to Basrah, living in tented accn during temperatures of around 50°C, tolerating temperature swings between the outside sweltering heat and the variously air-conditioned tentage, messes and office areas.

The task involved visiting the many and varied units within the MND(SE) and Shaibah Log Base. Useful consultancy, information and advice was provided both to the in-theatre staff and, via the report, to PJHQ.

ARRCADE FALCON 04 GERMANY

Maj John Ellis led a small team to look at a deployed CIS at ARRC MAIN and to HQ 1 (UK) Armd Div to complete a similar role. The task also enabled our newer members to see deployed large HQs. They also bumped into fellow LIAG member, **Lt Col Mark Smith**, who had been attached to HQ 12 Sig Gp for the ex.

The task allowed the team to enjoy northern European field conditions – it was a bit damper and windier than other places the unit has visited recently.

UNITED KINGDOM LANDING FORCE COMMAND SUPPORT GROUP (3 COMMANDO BRIGADE)

OC Comms Sqn **Maj Holmes** RM
SSM **WO2(SSM) Chris Hill** RM

Based at the RM Bks Stonehouse in Plymouth, UKLF CSG's (and therefore Comms Sqn's) mission is to achieve information superiority within assigned battlespace by all available means, and contribute to component and joint information activity, in order to enable 3 Cdo Bde ops.

To aid them in this mission are 10 Royal Signals soldiers, whose job it is to provide the more specialist technical skills. The Cipher cell, which is responsible for the issuing and tracking of all cryptographic material, comprises **Sgt Jim Stuart**, **Sgt Mat Coverley** (commando medal recipient) and newly arrived **Cpl Taff Morris**. Next to them is the tech workshops consisting of myself, **Sgt Alfie Davidson**, **Sgt Phil Chadwick**, **Cpl 'Gilly' Gillard** and **Cpl Dave Allen**.

Sgt Stu Wilkinson, who is also a tech (currently serving in Iraq) works with Y Tp, who provide the EW and Sigint capability for the Bde, and **Sgt Stu Carter** provides crypto support to 29 Cdo Regt RA, and so is based with them at the Citadel. **WO1 (FofS) Ski Sharpe** provides top cover (when he's not running across some country on another competition that is) and is based in Bde HQ.

All but about 2 of the Royal Signals personnel have arrived within the past couple of months and so have been busy finding their feet as well as getting to grips with Navy speak and how they do things.

The tech wksps provide tech support to the two 501 dets that the Sqn has. They also provide tech support on a wide range of other matters not covered by the Royal Marines Tels Techs, such as power, generators and basically whatever else comes their way. Admittedly, the past month or so, with the run up to Christmas, was pretty quiet, so that enabled **Cpls Gillard** and **Allen** to accompany other members of the sqn to Scotland for a 10-day mountain trg package. Fighting against the atrocious Scottish weather they practised nav skills, admin, living in the field and, of course, the great RM favourite of yomping. You'll be pleased to know the Pongos acquitted themselves well.

One of the things that takes a bit of getting used to in this Naval environment is the language. Language here more or less revolves around being on a ship. If something for example is said to be 'hoofing' then it doesn't refer to what we might commonly know as a minger you pick up on a Saturday night, but instead refers to someone or something that is great or outstanding. If something is said to be 'chad' then quite simply put, it's pants. Going for a brew becomes 'going for a wet;' having scoff in the cookhouse is the same as having 'scran in the galley;' going on the razz is 'a run ashore;' and best of all, our favourite, early knock off on a Friday is known locally as 'clearing lower decks.'

There were many runs ashore in the weeks leading up to Christmas leave, one of which was the Sqn run ashore, which involved being dropped off at the local pub in a rigid raider provided by 539 Asst Sqn (hoofing). This was quickly followed by a full-scale assault on Union Street.

2005 for us and for the unit promises to be a busy one. Vehs have gone to be fitted for BOWMAN, and in January we start the long awaited BOWMAN trg, in which every man and his dog will be involved. Hopefully, by the middle of 2005, we will be able to see for ourselves the full capability of BOWMAN when we start exercising with it. **Sgt Chadwick** and I were supposed to be on the level 2 maintainers course in January, but we were taken off at the last moment. Instead I will be joining **Cpls Gillard** and **Allen** in Norway on cold weather warfare trg.

There we look forward to getting extremely cold and wet, yomping with skis, and of course, the dreaded ice-breaking drills. If we are successful, then we might get a chance to do some downhill skiing at the end. We also look forward to an ex in Africa later on in the year, and hopefully a ship-based deployment for a month or so to exercise the 501's.

The aim is that by 1 April 2006, UKLF CSG will become fully operational, and ready at a moment's notice to serve anywhere in the world. If it has been anything like the past 2 or 3 years, then the Unit can expect to be very busy indeed.

There is no doubt that to serve with RM is a unique opportunity for any Royal Signals soldier. Not only are we outside mainstream Army, but we also get to see how another Service operates. At present only three of the guys are commando trained, but we do hope to get at least another two or three through the all arms Cdo course this year, time and work permitting. Hopefully, this brief introductory write up on UKLF CSG will be the first of many, and as things begin to happen during the year more will appear in *The WIRE*.

Manning and Records are always looking for volunteers to serve with 3 Cdo Bde, so if you're a Sys Eng Tech or an RS Op and looking for a challenge, then why not put your name forward. There is no requirement to do the AACC, but it does help if you are physically fit and can pass a BFT (not BPFA) and CFT.

SPORT

BOXING

INTER- REGIMENT TRIANGULAR BOXING COMPETITION
- by WO2 (QMSI) Philpott APTC

30 Sig Regt began trg in September, with a squad of 22 strong, including 5 female soldiers. Trg was hard, and included evening and weekend work.

The squad worked to their maximum, and at the three-week stage, **WO2 (QMSI) Philpott** APTC had to make some difficult decisions to cut the squad down to just 12 potential boxers. Trg continued, and soon all boxers were at their weights ready to compete. Although the under-dogs, the mood in the 30 Sig Regt camp was electric, and judgement day could not come soon enough!

On Monday18 October 04 the squad set of for York, where we were to meet our opponents, 2 and 14 Sig Regts, whom we knew were eagerly awaiting our arrival. Our squad spent the evening relaxing (some a little hungry!) trying to anticipate what tomorrow would bring. The atmosphere in the group was still as confident as ever, as the team had now come together totally. We were a team; there were no individuals.

At 19.00hrs on Tuesday 18 October, the time had come, and **Sig Birtwhistle** entered the ring for the first bout of the evening. He gave it everything, but after three standing counts, the fight was stopped in the third round, and 2 Sig Regt had won their first fight. The next bout was a female contest. **Sig Loftus** gave a brave performance, but was just out-pointed, and it was 2 Sig Regt's second win of the night.

The crowd were now firmly behind the favourites, the home side, 2 Sig Regt. 30 Sig Regt now needed a boost, and the man to do this was the Regt's Captain for the night, **Sig Hardy**. This was the first time he had ever boxed, and with nerves put aside, he gave an outstanding performance, stopping his opponent in the first minute of the first round. This gave the 30 Sig Regt supporters something to cheer about, and with 14 Sig Regt winning their bouts, it set the scene for **Cpl Whelan's** welterweight clash. This was a hard fight, which went the full distance. **Cpl Whealan** was the winner, and 30 were back on track; the competition was wide open.

Following the break, the next bout was a middleweight contest. Representing 30 Sig Regt was **Cpl Russell**. He was one of the most experienced boxers in our team, and had helped a great deal in the trg of the squad. A lot of pressure was on this boxer, and he didn't fail to deliver, stopping his opponent in the first round.

The atmosphere around the ring was now at climax pitch, with supporters from all three Regts on their feet screaming and cheering. 30 Sig Regt now had victory in their sights. **Sig Saroj** was the next to box. His task was formidable, as he was a small heavyweight who had never boxed before. He needed to beat his opponent from 2 Sig Regt for 30 Sig Regt to win. Defeat could see either 2 or 14 Sig Regt clinch the competition. **Sig Saroj** had clear instructions: 'Put your body on the line.' In true Ghurkha fashion, this is exactly what he did. It was an outstanding bout, with both boxers giving it their all.

At the end of the third round, both boxers were almost out on their feet through exhaustion. The fight was decided by a majority points decision, and the little warrior had won. 30 Sig Regt were Champions for the first time!

SNOW SPORTS

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 8 - ROYAL SIGNALS SNOW SPORTS CHAMPIONSHIPS *- by Capt Michele Worden*

The Royal Signals Snow Sports Championships took place again this season in the Austrian resort of Zell am See. Teams from all over the Corps, both Regular and TA, made the long journey to take part in the event in both Alpine Skiing and Snowboarding. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the COs and OCs of all the teams for giving the Offrs and Soldiers the time away from their busy schedules to participate in these Championships. Over 180 soldiers from across the Corps took part in this competition, and their efforts and behaviour are to be commended.

This year on the glacier (3,000m), the weather was as usual…cold. Fortunately, snow conditions were good, and only two days trg were lost, due to high winds and poor visibility.

For the Alpine skiers, the trg started in earnest on 15 November. After a morning of 'getting their legs in', they were split into ability groups, and an instructor from the Corps was allocated to each group. This was the start of three weeks' intensive race trg, aimed at introducing the competitors to race technique, gates, Slalom and Giant Slalom.

During the last two weeks of the Camp, the snowboarders arrived, and had a week's race trg, followed by the Championships themselves. Several ski teams also arrived, and therefore only took part in the final two weeks of the Camp, which meant only 3½ days' trg before the initial seeding race. A point to note for the future for all budding team captains, is that the teams benefit greatly from a full four weeks in resort, as the instructor-student ratio is vastly reduced.

After a lot of hard work by the racers (skiing) and the instructors, the Championships began with the Seeding Giant Slalom. This positioned the racers for the first Championship race; the Individual Giant Slalom.

Capt Si Lord, 16 Sig Regt in action

Individual Giant Slalom was the first of the Championships, with Capt Si Lord of 16 Sig Regt putting in an excellent time to win the event, closely followed by **WO2 Neil Pollitt** of RSS. The female title was won by **Capt Kerry Larsen** of RSS, with **Capt Fi Loxton** from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn a close second.

The next race was the Team Giant Slalom, which as usual for a team event, saw team planning going straight out of the window after a few of the top seeds failed to complete the course. After a fiercely-contested race with some setbacks, the winners were RSS, followed by 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, and 7 Sig Regt in third place.

The third race saw the top technical skiers battling out for the Individual Slalom prize. The race was deservedly won by **WO2 Neil Pollitt** of RSS, 2nd was **Cpl John Howe** 16 Sig Regt closely followed by **Cpl Thompson** of 7 Sig Regt.

The Female event again saw **Capt Kerry Larsen** put in an outstanding performance to win, with **Capt Fi Loxton** finishing in second place.

Capt Kerry Larson negotiates a gate during the Individual Grand Slalom

The final race of the Championships was the Team Slalom event. The course was set slightly easier than the previous day, but again with the pressure of a team race, there were a few fallers. 16 Sig Regt put in a storming performance to pip RSS at the finish, and 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt came through into third place.

The Prizegiving Ceremony was held at the Grand Hotel, with **Brig T Inshaw**, Chairman of Corps Snow Sports, presenting. The overall Corps Champion Trophy went to **WO2 Neil Pollitt** of RSS. Second place went to **Cpl John Howe** of 16 Sig Regt; and in 3rd place was **Cpl Thompson** of 7 Sig Regt.

The overall Female Champion Trophy went to **Capt Kerry Larsen**, with **Capt Fi Loxton** taking second. In first place for the junior title was **2Lt Anderson** of 16 Sig Regt, closely followed by **Sig Bell** of RSS. And for the old boys, the Veteran Title went to **WO2 Neil Pollitt**, with **SSgt Jay Saunders** of 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt coming in second place. The overall Team Combination event was taken by RSS, with 16 Sig Regt finishing second, and a sterling performance saw 3(UK) Div Sig Regt finish third.

As usual, this event could not of happened without the hard work of certain key players. The event organiser, **Capt Michele Worden** of 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, was ably assisted by **SSgt Frank McGuinness**, ensuring the smooth running of the Camp. A special note of thanks to the Chief Instructor, **SSgt Andy Dawson** of 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt, for organising the equipment and instructors both before and during the Camp.

SSgt Andy Dawson would like to thank personally all the members of the instructional team and officials for their hard work and professionalism during the trg week and during the Championships. He would also like to thank **Maj (Retd) Paul Ford** for again coming to the Camp to act as Technical Delegate.

EX MERCURY GLACIER 9 will again take place in Austria. Dates for the diary are 11 November – 9 December 05, with the Snowboarding taking place during the middle two weeks, and the Army Competition will follow on afterwards. The Warning Order will arrive in Units in May 05 addressed to the Snow Sports Officer. Any queries regarding the event should be addressed to **Capt Worden**, Adjt, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt.

ALPINE SKIING CHAMPIONSHIPS

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS AT THE ROYAL SIGNALS ALPINE CHAMPIONSHIP *- by LCpl Kerry Hopkinson*

The RSS Alpine Skiing Team met on the 26 November 2004 for a long drive to Zel Am see in Austria to defend our title at the Royal Signals Alpine Ski Championships. We had two teams, **Capt Adam Corkery**, **Capt Kerry Larson**, **WO2 Neil Pollitt** and **Cpl Dave Honeywill** made up the A Team. The B Team members were **Capt Liz Pointon**, **LCpl Damian Shepherd**, **LCpl Kerry Hopkinson** and **Sig Tom Bell**.

Monday 29 November was our first real day on the glacier. We knew we had a ski-off in the afternoon to decide which ability groups we would be put into, so the morning was spent on trg runs, giving each other tips on how to improve. And I needed it more than most! **Capts Corkery** and **Larson**, **WO2 Pollitt** and **Cpl Honeywill** were automatically selected for the advanced group. **Capt Pointon** was also selected for Group 1, **LCpl Shepherd** Group 2, **Sig Bell** and I, Group 3.

Our first day found most of us practising on slalom poles and techniques. The top group seemed to fly through them (and the air for some of them), and made it look easier than it really is for us first time racers. Our minds were then on the first seeding race, so with courses becoming badly rutted, we went onto the piste to try out some Giant Slalom turns.

The next day looked like being a complete washout, with high winds and no lifts open, but by lunchtime we were skiing in fleeces and sunglasses in the glorious sunshine of the Schmittenhohe for an afternoon of free skiing, all except the top group, who never let up on their trg.

2 December turned out to be busy, with lots of trg for the seeding Giant Slalom race on the morrow. That afternoon we were shown how to tackle the trick gates and verticals that make up the courses; most of us left looking confused, but a brief by our team

WO2 Pollitt on the Grand Slalom

captain, **Capt Corkery** gave us all confidence. But I was still a little nervous, when I realised that in the morning, I would be racing for the first time.

The following day started early for us, as we were on duty team. This meant we had to set the course. By 10.00hrs, we had inspected the course, side slipped it, and were getting ready to race. **Capt Corkery**, **Capt Larson**, **WO2 Pollitt**, **Cpl Honeywill** and **Capt Pointon** did the first run as they were all out in the top 20. The rest of us cheered the team on. Unfortunately **Cpl Honeywill** had a spectacular crash, and he came off with a badly bruised hand and bent ski. The Team's performance looked set to put us in good seeding positions for next week's racing.

After a restful weekend, we were ready for the individual Giant Slalom. The weather was clear but cold, and with their good times from the seeding race, the first 2 skiers out the gate were from Team RSS. **Capt Corkery** went out first, followed by **WO2 Pollitt**, both looking aggressive. Close behind was **Capt Larson** at 9th, **Cpl Honeywill** at 11th (but a stray skier crossing his path required a re-run) **Capt Pointon** at 19th, **Sig Bell** 35th, **LCpl Shepherd** 51st and myself 57th.

Everyone managed to complete their second run, leaving the overall positions as **WO2 Pollitt** 2nd, **Capt Corkery** 4th and **Capt Larson** the first lady to finish at 9th. **Capt Pointon** and **Cpl Honeywill** were 20th and 24th respectively. **Sig Bell** finished 37th, **LCpl Shepherd** 48th, and me in 57th place. These results set the A Team up to win the team GS race, with our B Team taking a respectable place with a 'Hawk on Corps' team.

The next big test was our first Slalom race, with the individuals' taking place on 8 December. **WO2 Pollitt** looked nervous and explained that it wasn't his favourite discipline. He went on to beat all other racers by 2 seconds, to come out top Slalom racer!

Capt Larson chased him, again being the first lady to cross the line in 5th place. **Capt Corkery** was in 14th place, despite a slip on the second run. **Capt Pointon** provided inspiration to the B team, and was placed 20th with Sig Bell 29th. I managed to come in 42nd. **Cpl Honeywill** and **LCpl Shepherd** were two of the many higher seeded skiers who crashed out on the tricky course. Next day, the team slalom race went just as well, but even better

The successful RSS Team

for 16 Sig Regt, who put in some fast runs, edging in front of us to win the Team Slalom race, with our A Team holding on to second place. And so ended a good week of racing for RSS. All that was left was for the Individual and Combination Awards to be announced at the prize giving night.

The top award for Individual Combination went to our **WO2 Neil Pollitt**. **Capt Larson** was 5th, **Capt Corkery** 6th, **Capt Pointon** 17th (go B team!), **Sig Bell** 26th and myself 39th. Unfortunately, the other team members were out of the listing, because of their falls earlier on in the championship.

The A Team was announced as Team Combination Champions, with the B Team coming 8th. Veteran Champion went to **WO2 Pollitt**, and **Sig Bell** was shocked with a well-deserved Runner-up in the Junior category. **Capt Larson** won a trophy for being Top Lady. RSS put in some good races, and came back with excellent results. On behalf of the Teams, I would like to thank **Capt Corkery** and **WO2 Pollitt** for organising the trip.

SKI RACING SEASON

ROYAL SIGNALS ALPINE SKI RACING SEASON
- by Capt Adam Corkery, 11 Sig Regt

One of the other officers waiting near the start hut said to me 'This is without doubt the scariest thing I have ever done!' He is 28 years old, an Infanteer, and he meant it.

We were stood, shivering, at the start of the Downhill course at the Army Alpine Ski Championships 2005, a closed black piste in Serre Chevalier, France. 2 days of course inspection and trg runs

Capt Adam Corkery in action

had preceded this moment, and we all knew every turn by heart. At a speed of 100kph (and most racers skied well in excess of this at points on the course), it takes 0.4 seconds to ski 10 metres. Thus, the need for such total familiarity with the course, combined with the ability to initiate turns with literally split second precision, is clear. In turn, we all shuffled forwards awkwardly into the start hut, with our enormously long and heavy downhill skis. Each racer took a few moments to compose him or herself, before launching forth - a few skating steps and vigorous pole-plants, before sinking down into the tuck position. What followed was a minute and a half of extreme exhilaration, mixed with terror and fatigue. The finish was crossed, the emotions faded and the mental and physical preparation for the next race commenced.

It has been a good year for Royal Signals alpine skiing, with a record number of skiers qualifying for the Army Championships. This year saw representation by full teams from the RSS and 7 Sig Regt, as well as individuals from 15 and 16 Sig Regts and 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228). Despite this, we had only one skier in the top 15, and were never seriously in contention for a medal of any colour in the Inter-Corps Championships. The reason for this is simple: we as a Corps do not take alpine skiing seriously enough, in terms of both time and resources. For a sport that develops so many good military qualities (and those of courage, teamwork, leadership, fitness and administration are just a few of many), this is a real shame.

Despite budgetary pressures, plans are progressing for next season. The Corps Championships will take place in November and December 05, involving between 70-100 skiers.

The Land Command (UK) Championships and BF(G) Championships will run concurrently in January 2006, each one with about 130 competitors; and are followed by the Army Alpine Championships for those who qualify (the top 110 or so in the Army).

There is an aspiration to raise the profile of alpine skiing in the Corps, both to attract and encourage new racers, and to train better established racers. And options for ways to effect this are currently being investigated. In the meantime, Regts are urged to encourage their young officers, in particular, to lead teams to the Corps Championships and beyond, and their COs are warmly invited to visit at any stage of the Season to see for themselves the merits of the sport. I am sure they will return with renewed enthusiasm and support!

SNOWBOARDING

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER, ROYAL SIGNALS SNOWBOARD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 5th Royal Signals Snowboarding Championships, 30 November – 12 December, saw the largest turnout of snowboarders since its introduction in 1999.

With the popularity of the sport growing due to its appeal to young soldiers (and the odd veteran), there were 73 riders battling it out to become the best boarder in the Corps.

As usual, there was excellent tuition on hand by Dutch snowboarding school, Ripstar, and by the end of the first week most of the people could manage to link a few turns together. So in good old Army tradition, they were then thrown down a few race courses in Week 2. Come race week, everyone was up to for it.

First race of the week was the Slalom race. With only 2 seconds separating the top 10, we had some of the closest and best racing. Results were **Sig Gaz Hilton** 628 Sig Tp in 1st, **Capt Ed Swift** 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn 2nd, and **Capt Si Gough** 5AAC 3rd.

The Giant Slalom was one of the hardest courses of the week; with 25 gates, it was designed to test the technical ability of all the riders. Many of the top riders fell victim to the course, and this enabled many of the middle of the field riders to do well.

The Dual Slalom (one of the most popular events), pitted each rider in a straight knockout contest. The field was spilt into 2 halves, top 32 and bottom 32. This was to enable closer racing, and to give a better atmosphere. For the final races **Brig T Inshaw** was present, and witnessed some of the closest racing of the week, **Sig Hilton** winning by the smallest of margins, with **Capt Gough** in 2nd place.

The final event of the week was the now famous King of the Hill contest. With nearly 50 riders taking part this year, it was the biggest yet. The race, which is a top to bottom of the mountain ride, tests the stamina and endurance of each person. The eventual winner of this race was **Capt Gough**, who proved to have a total disregard for any skier in his way.

A big thanks goes out to all who helped the smooth running of the Snowboard camp, **Capts Ed Swift** and **Pete Jones**, for making sure the timing system actually worked; **SSgt Cindy Meller**, for being such a stats guru; and **SSgt Andy Fisher** and his amazing fur jacket, for being the morale when the weather got very cold.

EXERCISE SNOW JACK, ARMY SNOWBOARD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Army Snowboarding Championships were held at the Stubai Glacier from 12-21 December 04. A total of 80 riders from all Arms were present.

The Championships were held during one of the coldest weeks in history on the Glacier with the temperature on occasions hitting –35°C. Still being the Army, the show must go on. This year there were 6 individuals competing as part of the Corps Team. Unfortunately due to work commitments, many of the top riders were unavailable.

The courses set for the week were much harder than that of the Corps camp held the previous week, and many of the riders found it hard to adapt to this. Because of this, we all had rather disappointing seed race results. Not to be disappointed, and after a night analysing where we went wrong, it was back out to prove ourselves in the first race, the Giant Slalom. It was a much better day on the whole, with **Cpl Berry** finishing 14th, **SSgt Graham** 20th and **Capt Gough** 34th. Still, the results did not reflect the hard effort put in the previous week, so it was again back to the apartment to see where we could improve.

Next race up was the Dual Slalom. This race involved everyone being timed over 2 runs on identical courses with, the top 16 being selected for the finals. **Capt Gough** finished 10th, and SSgt Graham 16th.

The Boarder X Race was held on the Thursday. The course involved a 300m long course over bumps, banks and the odd jump. Each race includes 4 racers in a head-to-head, with the fastest 2 going through to the next round. **Capt Gough** and **Sig Milne** showed they were hard to beat, finishing 3rd and 7th respectively.

The final event was the newly-introduced Big Air contest. With a holiday to the USA on offer (courtesy of Nissan), it was every man for himself, as people risked life and limb to win. With some dodgy marking and dubious refereeing, **Capt Gough** just missed out, finishing 2nd.

Our overall placings were: 7th **Capt Gough**, 13th **SSgt Graham**, 15th **Cpl Berry**, 24th **Sig Milne**, and 40th **SSgt Meller**.

Overall, the Corps did well at these Championships. We managed to improve as the week went on, and at least get amongst the top 16 riders on most races. With a full trg programme planned for this year, we hope to bring back some trophies next year.

NOTES FOR ALL SNOWBOARDERS/ LINE MANAGERS

Last season there was a big change in the way the Army Snowboard Association runs qualification for the Army Championships. From next season, Royal Signals snowboarding will fall in line with qualification for the DIVS and Army's held in December 05 (dates TBC).

Units and individuals who show interest in competing at Div/Army level, are encouraged to get prior clearance through their respective units to be released for the duration of all 3 competitions.

Due to the lack of Royal Signals personnel attending previous Army snowboarding events, Line Managers, COs and OCs are encouraged to release individuals to attend. For further information on Royal Signals Snowboarding call **SSgt Dom Graham** on 94916 3756/3594.

ADVENTURE RACING

THE NEW ZEALAND COAST TO COAST

– by Maj Matt Crow RNZSigs

The Coast to Coast is the premier multi-sport event in New Zealand. It traverses 243 km of the South Island, from Kumara Beach on the West Coast to Sumner Beach on the East Coast, and involves running, scrambling, kayaking and cycling through some of the roughest countryside found in New Zealand. 2005 was the 23rd year of the event, and there were over a thousand competitors in the one- and two-day races.

After watching the 2004 Coast-to-Coast, I made the commitment to compete in this year's event. I wanted to set myself a personal physical challenge.

Preparing to compete in the Coast to Coast requires a large time commitment; balancing a trg programme around heavy workloads at HQJFNZ proved difficult. Additionally, I had to learn white-water kayaking skills to Grade 2 Certificate level to meet the event entry requirements.

In my nice clean kit, ready for the start. How did I get into this madness?

After an early morning start on 4 February to set up equipt, we competitors left Kumara Beach at 07.00hrs on a hot and cloudless day. Sprinting the first 3 km to the start of the first cycle leg, I made good time to get into the second bunch, where I managed to stay for the 55km run.

The temperature had risen into the 30s by the start of the run, and the numerous river crossings were very welcome as we clambered up Deception River valley to the highest point of Goat Pass (1,070m). From the pass, the run down led into welcome shade of bush tracks, until the last 7 km of the run, which was in the open, running over river stones. By this stage, temperatures had soared to 39°.

The next section was the 33 km mountain run, and although times were slower than expected, I finished the day well placed (23rd) in the Men's Open Category, with a time of 6 hrs 23 mins.

Making a splash during the ascent to Goat Pass

Day two started at 07.30hrs, with competitors starting in groups of 10 at one-minute intervals, according to their race numbers. The 15km cycle ride was a short, fast wake up, with several steep climbs. Once off the bike, we pushed our bikes 700m down a gravel road to the kayak section. Mist limited visibility, as we started the 67km kayak leg, but it quickly cleared to another beautiful day, which thankfully, was not as hot as the previous day. The river level was low for this leg, but still provided plenty of excitement, with some challenging rapids. The paddle took under 5 hrs, and gave the legs a nice rest.

Some rapids were just a little challenging

Out of the kayak, it was a short run up and then off for the final 70km cycle, battling a headwind to Sumner Beach, east of Christchurch. On crossing the finish line, competitors were handed a medal and a cool can of Speights Beer (Speights were the sponsors), which they downed whilst waiting for everyone to finish, and results to be calculated to determine places.

I was pleased to find that I had finished 28th out of 128 in the Individual Two-Day Men's Open Category, in a time of 14hrs 6 mins, and 36TH overall.

The Two-day Individual event attracted 300 competitors in total, across all categories. I am now considering a return to the coast for a crack at The Longest Day (TBC) in 2006.

I would like to thank my support crew for the hard work they did behind the scenes, and NZ Army Recruiting for the provision of Army Brand merchandise and race clothing.

Another similar event in New Zealand is Southern Taverse. For more information on Adventure Racing in New Zealand visit www.sportzhub.co.nz or www.SleepMonsters.com.

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 CP Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr PJ Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

Branch News **Ian McKay**, Secretary of the Edinburgh Branch has moved to: Pentland Roadhouse, Dryden Terrace, Loanhead, Edinburgh EH20 9JL.

Newsletter The RSA newsletter for Spring 2005 can be viewed on our website: www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa If you have an E-mail address (and we don't yet have it), may we invite you to send it to us. We can then send you future newsletters electronically – you get it sooner and we save postage.

If you belong to one of the 69 RSA branches or 28 affiliated associations, your secretary should send you a copy, either by e-mail or by post.

2005 Reunion Full details (including order forms for meals and vehicle passes) may be downloaded from our website.

2006 Reunion 'Heads up!' In order to include the White Helmets in the programme, it is necessary to move the 2006 annual RSA Reunion from the last weekend in June to the first weekend in July: 1-2 July.

Past Postings We are pleased to have helped many a member get in contact with a former friend through us having the details of Members' past postings. Once we have your postings, we can send you the list of all those RSA members who served in your units at around the same time.

All we need is the unit titles and the from..... to..... years at each (or use the e-form on our website).

Postings are being added to the database every day, so if you received a list some time ago, why not ask for an updated printout?

'Lost Contact' Internet Page I am pleased to report that several old friends have been reunited through the RSA's 'Lost contact' page. A letter from one member said: '..although I didn't find the person I was looking for, I was contacted by old friends who served with me in 28 Sig Regt in Germany, so the outcome was good, and just shows that the page works in more ways than one.'

New Life Members We welcome the following recently Enrolled Life Members:

Rank/Name	*Service*
Cpl Daniel Pampel	1967-80
Sig Andrew (Wally) Walton	1971-82
Sig Geoff Thompson	1972-82
Sgt Nigel Cathrew	1981-05
Pte Carol Birch (Morris)	1967-70
Sgt Bill Birch	1960-84
Sgt Tony Chard	1961-76
SSgt Tim Bishop	1989-date
SSgt Andy Cannadine	1982-date
Sig Simon Roome	1984-97
Sig Peter Woods	1949-51
LCpl Lesley McGuffie	1989-98
WO2 Danny Warwick	1979-98
SSgt Richie Gathercole	1981-05
WO2 Glenn Kitchen	1981-05
WO2 Andy Gilpin	1983-05
SSgt Wain Ratcliffe	1984-date
WO2 Dave Patch	1953-76
LCpl Marcus Lobb	1990-98
Sig Geordie Adamson	1972-80
Sig Jack Mount	1939-47
WO1 Jim Kerr	1966-92
LCpl Kevin Johnson	1988-02
Cpl Scouse Makin	1991-date
Sig Dale Kerry	2000-05
Sig Vic Croucher	1961-73
Sgt Mick Goor	1971-94
Cpl Paul Lindsay	1996-04
Sig John McKie	1948-66
Sgt Bob Sandy	1966-82
Maj Phil Baker	1987-05
SSgt Gareth Hicks	1983-98
Sig Andy Reid	1979-84
LCpl Ben Battey	1989-99
WO2 Steve Woollard	1974-97
WO2 Kevin Robinson	1976-00
LCpl Chris Bridge	1997-04

Sig Mark Mitchell	2000-date
Sig Christian Kersting	1996-99
LCpl George Dempster	1956-58
Sig Hugh Markham-Lee	1959-61
Sig Darren Burns	1990-99
Cpl Mac McAlpine	1996-04
Cpl Stephen Bowley	1970-92
Sgt Neil Bladen	1987-99
Sig Gerald Williams	1953-54
WO2 Bernie Rigby	1982-05
Sgt Gary Fletcher	1978-82 + TA
Sgt Paul Standing	1990-date
Col Jim Evans OBE	1970-04
LCpl Simon Clarke	1989-99
Cpl Mike Boisse	1960-71
Cpl Jackie Carvill (Warhurst)	1968-72
Maj Rhys Griffiths	1944-58
Sgt Nigel Cathrew	1981-05
SSgt Paul Beattie	1981-05
SSgt Paul Wareham	1974-98
Sig Mark Will	2004-date
Cpl Adrian Squires	1971-81
WO1 David Simpson	1965-87
WO1 Keith Walters	1981-date
Sgt Adrian Costello	1981-94
Cpl Tom Frederick	1980-90
Sgt Alan McDonald	1982-date
Cpl Neil McCormack	1976-93
Sgt Paul Dedman	1979-03
Sig John Cookman	1955-57
Sig William May	1963-67
Sgt Lee Glaves	1991-date
Sig Brian Derricott	1954-56
Cpl John Shaw	1954-56
Sig Roy Wilson	1949-51
LCpl Mark Jones	1984-98
Cpl Chris Lane	1982-88
SSgt Brian Green	1979-05
Sig Derek Ellwood	1944-48
Sig Emma McKenna (Fendyke)	1995-99
Capt Neil Ferris	1981-05
LCpl Fred Fuller	1959-61
Sig Eric Watts	1945-47
LCpl Andy Weaver	1988-99
WO2 Steve Elsworthy	1977-99
Sgt Gareth Hinton	1986-99
Sgt Mick Blythe	1962-85
Sig Charlie Stanley	1939-46
WO2 Carl Strefford	1971-95
WO2 Paul Holmes	1981-05
LCpl Peter Verral	1978-88
LCpl Andrew Edge	1993-99
LCpl Geoff Mills	1957-59
LCpl Mark Robinson	1997-05
Sgt Mark Shrives	1979-date
Sig Michael Pelling	1992-97
Maj Carl Storey	1966-05
Maj John Norris	1986-05
Lt Col John Mullender	1967-05
Maj John Standen	1972-05

DONATIONS

Glossop and District OCA	£30.00
Eastbourne Branch members and friends, in memory of **Jim Law**	£115.00
Mrs ML Britt	£25.00
Bournemouth Branch, in memory of **Mr V Parker**	£10.00
Maj (Retd) John Green, in memory of **Col John Agar**	£15.00
Mr GH Cox	£25.00
Ron Larby	£3.00
JR and **S Simmons**, in memory of **Derek Swann**	£20.00
Mr D and **Mrs DM Soughton**, in memory of **Derek Swann**	£20.00
Janet and **Dave Tupper**, in memory of **Derek Swann**	£30.00
Mr D Sawyer	£10.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Tayside and Fife Branch	£40.00
In memory of **Charles Smart**, cheques totalling	£211.23
Lincoln Branch	£50.00
Terry Wickens	£25.10
Exmouth Branch	£50.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Reg Ayres	£20.00

CHESTERFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Mr K Silcock**
Secretary **Mr D Croot**

We can report of a very happy and vibrant branch here at Chesterfield. We are getting new members at nearly every meeting, thanks to local press adverts and by word of mouth from existing Members.

At our December meeting our Chairman **Doug Naylor** presented the new style Life Membership Cards and Badges to our latest recruits **Graham Wain** and **Mick Bower**. Their wives, **Margaret** and **Jean** were made Associate Members.

Also at the December meeting, we enjoyed an excellent Christmas dinner prepared and served by the ladies of our Branch. We also had the usual quiz and a game of *Play Your Cards Right*, organised by **George May**, who also made the props. The raffle/tombola raised over £80, which kept our Treasurer duo, **Gerald** and **Joan Spencer** happy.

We now look forward to a successful and eventful 2005, and have several exciting proposals for our soon to be published Events Diary, kicking off with a Branch Sunday Lunch at the end of January. I can also report that we have nearly filled the coach for our summer holiday to Bournemouth, taking in the Blandford Reunion Weekend. Just a few places left.

President, Doug Naylor, presenting LM Cards and Badges to Graham Wain and Mick Bower

Members enjoying the Branch Christmas Dinner

In December, a number of us visited the Sheffield and Rotherham Branches, where we made the acquaintance of the RSM **WO1 Kevin Innes** and members of his team of SNCOs from 38 Sig Regt (V). They have promised to come and visit us in Chesterfield in 2005. We shall hold them to that.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) JB Greenwood**

Our last event of 2004 was an invitation to Sunday Lunch in the Sgts Mess of 36 Sig Regt, to which we have been invited by **WO1(RSM) Mark Giles**. This event turned out so successful, that it was repeated again on the 13 February 05, and no doubt there will be further occasions during 2005 where we have joint events with the Regt. Preparations are now well advanced for our Formal Dinner and Dance on 19 March 2005, which has a special significance this year, as it marks the Eightieth anniversary of the formation of our Branch. This will of course be reported in full in the next issue of *The WIRE*.

Our website has recently been updated with forthcoming events for the rest of this year and can be found at 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, Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36 Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

The 7th Annual Burns Supper night arrived and proceeded in the usual format, now well established by the Burns enthusiasts of the Branch. **Bill McNamara** was the leading light behind the arrangements, and acted as compere. Ex Branch President **Bill Taylor** and his team of helpers saw to the arrangements at the venue.

The top table, comprising the Branch President, **Lt Col AS Petrie**, **Mrs Norah Petrie**, **Capt Graham Reith**, **Miller Frondigoun**, **Jim Flockhart**, Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan** and **Mrs Isobel McMillan** entered the room to the sound of the pipes, with the company clapping to the music. The Branch President welcomed everyone and recited *The Selkirk Grace*, after which The Haggis was brought in, held high by the chef, accompanied by Pipers, **Bill Cleezy** and **Willie Park**. **Capt Reith** then made the *Address to the Haggis*, which he did this in fine style. If anyone was not awake they were now. Near the end of the Address (fortunately, with no one too near him) he waved a wicked looking cavalry sword around his head, as a finale.

The meal was served with great efficiency by volunteer waiters **Jim Cook**, **Sharon Whiteford**, and **Angela** and **Eric McWaters Jnr**. There was a choice of Haggis or Scotch steak pie, prepared by the Chefs **Cpl Debbie Carruthers** and **LCpl Christine McCormack** of 32 Scottish Sig Regt. At the end of the meal, **Miller Frondigoun** recited *The Immortal Memory*. This included his singing verses from some of Burn's writings. It was then time for a few tunes played on the pipes, and the company clapped in time and then applauded the efforts of the pipers.

A *Toast to the Lassies*, given by **Jim Flockhart** was amusing, and we all awaited the reply, which would surely be required to express strongly the female view. Meantime, **Bill McNamara** gave his version of *The Holy Fair*. As expected, the response to the *Toast to the Lassies* by the Branch Secretary **Ivana Muir** was an explosion against male chauvinists, and the females in the company were all nodding there heads and clapping in agreement.

Bill McNamara, dressed in a nightgown and nightcap with a lit candle in a holder, recited *Holy Willie's Prayer*. Everyone then joined in the singing of *The Star O' Rabbie Burns*. The Branch President, in his vote of thanks, paid tribute to the Chefs and the waiters, thanked the performers for their efforts, and CO 32 Scottish Sig Regt for the use of the Officers Mess. Unfortunately **Lt Col Sutherland** and **WO1(RSM) Ironside** of 32 Signal Regt were unable to attend, because of service commitments. Joining hands, *Auld Lang Syne* was then sung by the company. With the whisky and wine lubricating the tonsils, it was a great way to round off the evening.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs A Grainge**
Secretary **Mr R Grainge**

December saw two events, the first being our Christmas party held on Saturday 4 December in the Sgts Mess, with approximately 36 members in attendance. The evening's entertainment consisted of a quiz, bingo, prize draw and two horse races. The latter was ably run by **Ken Jackson**, and the wining syndicate was the bar staff **SSgt Cairnes**, **Sgt Silk** and **Cpl Selby** and their trainer, **Phyllis Padley**. It also proved to be a fitting time to present **Margaret Dadson**, our outgoing Secretary, with a gift and bouquet of flowers as a mark of our appreciation for all her hard work on our behalf over 16 years in the post.

The second event was a trip to an alleged Genuine German Market (that's how the advert in the newspapers described it) being held at POW Camp 93 at Harperly, and organised by **Dave Lyons**. The trip took place on Sunday 12 December, and our intrepid explorers set off from the TAC at Brambles Farm, looking forward to genuine German faire. On our arrival at the Camp, there was disappointment all round as, apart from a couple of German stalls, there was nothing to write home about. Poor **Dave** could do nothing but apologise. But our intrepid members would have none of it, as until a visit had been made, no one was to know what it would be like, and could only say never mind, we can't get it right every time.

So we are looking forward to our next mystery tour in the warmer weather. The next highlight of our calendar year will be our AGM at the end of March, with our usual Pie and Pea Supper, followed in April by our Annual Dinner Night.

NOTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Brown**
Secretary **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

The Branch, as usual in December, had a short meeting followed by a social evening. This took the form of a series of quiz papers produced by Secretary, **Ian Wolfe**, for which Members and guests present divided into a number of teams. This was quite a test of everyone's general knowledge I don't think I should tell you just how the writer fared. The hard brainwork was afterwards rewarded by a very welcome array of tasty snacks provided by **Ian** and **Debbie Wolfe**.

Once again our incapacitated and elder Members and Widows were visited with Christmas gifts. This was once more organised

by Welfare Member, **John McAreavey** (although not too well himself), ably assisted by other volunteers. We have always found that it is the visit that matters rather than the gift.

January was a normal Branch meeting, with little to report, however we will hold our AGM as usual on the third Wednesday of February. Unfortunately this is one day after the deadline for articles to reach the Editor, so it will be the June edition before you will have a report of our AGM.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller or ex-WRAC Member at Clonaver TAC, Belfast on the 3rd Wednesday of each Month. Check out our website for further information.

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) HJB Wall MBE TD JP**
Secretary **ND Wamer JP**

The Shropshire Branch held its annual Christmas Luncheon in Shrewsbury on 7 December last year. Some twenty-five people enjoyed lunch, and had a great time swapping stories and recalling their past service. Our guest of honour was **Lt Col Ken Smith**, who has always been a great supporter of the Branch, and as usual. He brought his own inimitable brand of humour to the occasion.

These events have proved to be so successful, that the Branch is currently investigating if they can be repeated two or three times during the year, with a good Speaker, as an aid to recruitment.

YORK BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Spray**
Secretary TBA

Due to ever increasing business commitments, **Bob Cook** has been obliged to resign as our Secretary. **Bob** and **Claire** are proprietors of the Adams House Hotel, York, the running of which demands a great deal of effort on their behalf. **Bob's** special talents will be sorely missed. Chairman **Tony Spray** voiced his regret at losing a capable and efficient member of the Committee and looked forward to **Bob's** continued support as a Member. A unanimous vote of thanks for his sterling work and contribution to the Branch was recorded in his absence.

The stampede of volunteers for the post has now subsided, and it is hoped to confirm a new Hon Sec at the February meeting. Our website gives details of current temporary contacts and will be updated in March when the post is filled on a permanent basis.

We are in negotiations with Higher Authority (RHQ 2 Sig Regt.) for another series of the interesting presentations on today's Army that they afforded the Branch in 2004. The outcome is eagerly awaited.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

We now have a total of 217 members, of which 176 are Life Members of the RSA. But although we are still trying to get the remainder to become Life Members, this has so far been to no avail.

On a sad note, at the end of October 2004 we received a telephone call from an exboy from 1951, **Colin E Jeffries**, known as **'Wag'**. He then sent a letter describing some of his experiences during and after his service. He said he would be 70 next birthday. We sent him a Newsletter, but did not hear from him again. Through a number of phone calls, we recently discovered that he had died on 20 November, approximately three weeks after joining us.

One of our members, **Peter Harris**, joined 6 (Boys) Trg Regt at the age of 15 in 1951. He came from Jersey and when he left the Corps in 1975, he emigrated to Australia. He has not forgotten from whence he came and is coming home for the 60th Anniversary of Liberation Day on 9 May, which apparently is going to be the last one. We hope to see him on 5May at the Guernsey Branch Dinner, which several members of BEBA will be attending.

CORRESPONDENCE

51 HIGHLAND DIVISION IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

From: **Richard Doherty** FIRSO MRHistS
27 Hillview Avenue
Prehen
Co. Londonderry
BT47 2NU

Dear Sir
I am seeking the help of your readers, as I am presently researching and writing a history of 51st (Highland) Division during the Second World War. The finished book will be published by Spellmount Ltd in 2006.

As part of my research, I am keen to contact veterans who served in the Highland Division, or who were attached to it at any time. I would also welcome contact from the families of Highland Division soldiers who lost their lives during the War, or who have since died.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who served in the Divisional Signals units of the Division in the Dunkirk, North African, Sicilian and Northwest European campaigns. What I seek are personal memories, letters that may have been written during the War, photographs, and other memorabilia, as these will add a more human touch to my history. Documents, photographs and other items lent to me will be scanned and returned as soon as possible.

I look forward to hearing from many of your readers.

Yours...

57 MIXED SIGNAL REGIMENT – AUSTIN CHAMP 11 BF 36

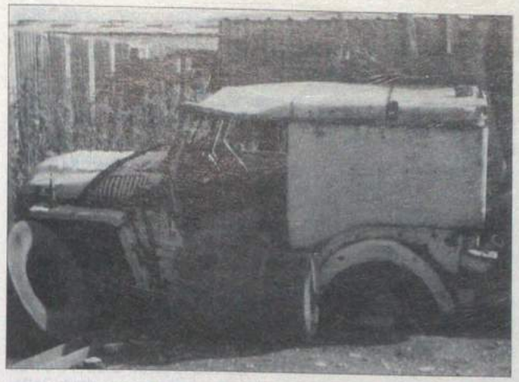
From: **Martin Fuller**
Lindsell House
Chatteris
Cambs
PE16 6BH
Martin.fuller@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir

I wonder if any of your readers could help with tracing the history of my ex-Signals Austin Champ.

Its military registration is 11 BF 36, and it entered service in January 1956. The vehicle still has its original insignia (under several layers of paint) and it was with Southern Command (Mixed) Signals Regiment (TA).

The bonnet badge is the blue/white corps colours of the Royal Signals and painted in red along the top of the badge is: 57th MIXED SIGNALS REGT (TA). I understand that Southern Command (Mixed) Signals Regiment (TA) was re-designated 57th Mixed Signals in 1959.



11 BF 36 was sold by the MOD in May 1962, and in August 1962 (after a few modifications and change of colour) it was road registered as OEB 44. It was owned by a local farmer, from whom I bought it several years ago. As you can see from the photo, the elements have not been kind to it!

Is there any ex-Signaller who remembers the vehicle in service, or could tell me a little more about what 57th Mixed Signals Regiment did? The name DEREK is scratched underneath the steering wheel, but there are no other identifying factors on the vehicle.

My Champ was designated FFW when in service (meaning Fitted For Wireless), so any information on what wireless sets I should be looking for would also be much appreciated.

Yours...

SERGEANT TED DAWES MM

Malcolm Jarvis, who left the Corps in 1975 to join the Nottinghamshire Police Force, retired in 2001 to join a team set up by Nottingham City Council to visit victims of burglary.

One such victim turned out to be former **Sgt Edward Henry Dawes MM (Ted)**. During a visit, **Ted** had spotted **Malcolm's** British Legion tie, and the conversation went from the Army to the Royal Corps of Signals, and then on to his lost medals. Through **Malcolm's** efforts, **Ted** now has a replacement set of medals, a Corps blazer badge, a cap badge, an RSA Life Membership card and lapel badge.

Ted joined the Corps in 1935 when he was 18 years old and trained as a Lineman. He was then posted to 7 Armd Div Sig Regt when the Unit sailed to Freetown, Africa. The Unit then returned to UK, was kitted out in khaki and sailed to Alexandria. **Ted** was in the Qattara Depression, where he was involved in a battle before moving up to Tripoli with the 8th Army.

On 23 October 1942, he was with 7 Armd Div, when at 22.00hrs, the Div Arty opened up with 25-pdr guns on the German Panzer Bn during the Battle for El Alamein. As **Ted** says, 'The balloon had gone up'. He then went forward with the Infantry, laying telephone lines and telephones for them at the battlefront. He also helped relay targets and information back to HQ on the build-up by Rommel and the Afrika Korps. He was actually positioned right under the British barrage to give these locations. He stayed under the barrage until the main units arrived, and by 06.00hrs he says, El Alamein was taken. For his gallantry during this action, **Ted** was awarded the Military Medal. Asked what his weapons were at the time, Ted replied, 'a telephone and a pistol.'

Ted well remembers the Salvation Army in the desert, serving tea and issuing cigarettes. After Africa, he had a spell in Italy for 12 months before moving to Nijmegen prior to the advance into Germany. He was part of the push right into Germany.

After the war, **Ted** returned to England and later married **Sarah**. Sadly, **Sarah** died in 1970. **Ted**, who still lives in Bilborough, Nottingham, is shown in the photograph proudly showing his medals and his first copy of *The WIRE*.

ERSKINE VETERAN MEETS THE PRINCESS ROYAL

An Erskine veteran found history repeating itself when he met the Colonel in Chief, **HRH The Princess Royal** on her visit to the Erskine Home near Bishopton in January.

Jim Shields, aged 95, from Glasgow, who served as a Lt QM in Royal Signals, 15 Scottish Inf Div, had met the previous Princess Royal and Colonel in Chief, **HRH Princess Mary**, near Newcastle in 1942. She had come to inspect the Unit as they were preparing for mobilisation, and **Jim** organised a lunch for her at Mitford Hall near Morpeth, HQ of 15 Scottish Inf Div Sig Regt.

'I mentioned the connection to **Princess Anne**,' said **Jim**, 'and suggested that **Princess Mary** was probably her great aunt. She replied that she was and said: 'It would appear that I am being recycled.' I said that was a good word for it, given that they were both Princess Royals and both Colonels in Chief of the same Corps!'

Jim was involved in the D-Day Landings at Juno Beach, and in OP MARKET GARDEN at Arnhem. After the War he emigrated to Canada. He moved into Erskine's care in 1988, and is one of the oldest residents at The Erskine Home.

The Princess Royal was on her first visit to the Erskine Home to meet with many of the 180 veterans who are residents for respite and long-term nursing and dementia care. Over 70,000 veterans have been cared for by Erskine since it was founded as an independent charity in 1916. She had opened Erskine Mains Home, with 34 residents, in April 2000; and Edinburgh, with 40 residents, in March 2002.

Her Royal Highness sat at tables with veterans in the Recreation Room as they played dominoes, and the horse racing game Totopoly. She had a cup of tea and chatted with residents before meeting schoolchildren from local schools.

Jim Shields, meets HRH The Princess Royal at the Erskine Home

At the end of the visit, **Col Gibson** warmly thanked **The Princess Royal** for visiting the Home in 2005, the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War 2. He presented her with a pine bed, a gift from Erskine Pine Furniture, and invited her to sign the Visitors' Book.

Erskine Pine, along with Erskine Print and Erskine Garden Centre, operate under the Jobcentre Plus-sponsored Workstep programme, providing employment for disabled workers, including ex-Service men and women.

Erskine has recently launched the Erskine 2010 Appeal, to raise £3m towards the cost of a £5.4m specialist dementia care home to be built in the grounds of the Erskine estate at Bishopton. For further information visit www.erskine.org.uk.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

MRS INGRID SYMONS

RHQ is trying to trace **Mrs Ingrid Symons**, the widow of **SSgt Leslie Symons**, who died in July 1981 while serving in 8 Sig Regt.

We would be most grateful if anyone who is in contact with her, would ask her to contact the Regimental Secretary on 01258 482081.

TAFFY GUNDERSON

Bob Yarnell is seeking the former **WO1(RSM) AFJ (Taffy) Gundersen BEM**. He served with **Bob's** father in Longmoor Camp in the late 1950s.

Anyone who can help is asked to call **Bob** on 0179 7364061.

REUNIONS

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION REUNION

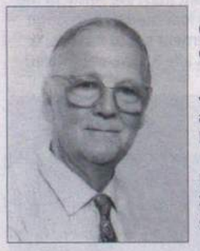
Our next Reunion will be held on Saturday, e October 2005 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Watford.

Contact **Tony Hull**, Tel: 01202770261
Email: anthony.hull@ntlworld.com

LAST POST

Alsop - CplML Alsop	*Served* 1991/00	*Died* 21/12/04
Arnold - Sig LJ Arnold	*Served* ????/??	*Died* ??/02/05
Beale - Lt Col EJ Beale	*Served* 1940/76	*Died* 21/12/04
Bond - EJ LCpl Bond	*Served* 1983/90	*Died* 06/01/05
Brunyee - LCpl EB Brunyee	*Served* 1966/80	*Died* ??/01/05
Camp - Capt HCW Camp	*Served* 1934/55	*Died* 16/11/04
Campbell - Maj JC Campbell	*Served* 1953/70	*Died* 27/02/05
Cole - Maj LC Cole	*Served* 1928/48	*Died* 20/02/05
Cox - Sgt RW Cox	*Served* 1950/72	*Died* 19/02/05
Cropp - Maj AC Cropp	*Served* 1940/67	*Died* 20/02/05
Ellingworth - Sig DR Ellingworth	*Served* 1938/46	*Died* 18/01/05
Harkin - Sgt A Harkin	*Served* 1942/47	*Died* 16/01/05
Honor - Maj VCT Honor	*Served* 1928/60	*Died* 18/12/04
Isom - Sig GF Isom	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 24/12/04
Johnson - Lt Col AP Johnson	*Served* 1939/62	*Died* 10/12/04
Jones - LCpl S Jones	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 20/01/05
Krinks - Sig HG Krinks	*Served* 1941/46	*Died* 04/02/05
Larder - Dvr G Larder	*Served* 1941/46	*Died* 09/12/04
Lindsay - Sgt J Lindsay	*Served* 1963/85	*Died* 18/01/05
Lowe - Lt Col GF Lowe	*Served* 1939/82	*Died* 14/02/05
MacCormac - Sig JH MacCormac	*Served* 1949/50	*Died* ??/01/05
Mackenzie - Sgt T Mackensie	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 24/01/05
Mansergh - Brig PES Mansergh	*Served* 1937/71	*Died* 16/02/08
Markham - Sig WF Markham	*Served* 1945/48	*Died* 04/01/05
Marsh - Sgt DW Marsh	*Served* 1943/59	*Died* 16/02/05
Middleton - ?? SJ Middleton	*Served* 1940/45	*Died* 20/12/04
Patrick - Dvr BG Patrick	*Served* 1946/49	*Died* 02/02/05
Price - Maj W Price	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 02/02/05
Prophet - Col BEM Prophet	*Served* 1948/78	*Died* 10/12/04
Robinson - Sig A Robinson	*Served* 1945/48	*Died* 01/02/05
Serjeant - Sgt AC Serjeant	*Served* 1936/46	*Died* 04/01/05
Shalliker - Cpl R Shalliker	*Served* 1960/76	*Died* 16/11/04
Smart - LCpl CW Smart	*Served* 1944/48	*Died* 12/12/04
Smythe - Cpl R Smythe	*Served* 1951/56	*Died* ??/12/04
Turner - Col KG Turner	*Served* 1960/92	*Died* 25/12/04
Turner - Cpl F Turner	*Served* 1939/57	*Died* 28/12/04
Whitelaw - Cpl E Whitelaw	*Served* 1930/52	*Died* 05/01/05

OBITUARIES



CONGDON - Lt Col John Noel Congdon died on 1 November 2004.

John enlisted in the Royal Signals shortly after WW2, having served with the Royal Marines during the War.

His wife, **Angela**, having died in August 2003, he is survived by two sons and four grandchildren.

LINDSAY - Sgt Alistair Lindsay (Al) died on 18 January 2005.

Al Lindsay transferred from the Royal Sigs Tech trade to Tele Op (Spec). Following trade training at Garats Hay in 1970, he was posted to 9 Sig Regt. Next came a posting to 13 Sig Regt, where he served for four years.

Obviously, one who enjoyed the sun, **Al** posted back to 9 Sig Regt in 1978, where he was promoted to Sgt. A good tradesman who enjoyed his work, **Al** assisted in the development of the younger soldiers he worked with. A dour Scotsman with a sharp sense of humour, he was good company. He was an occasional unit level cricketer and hockey player, and enjoyed the social involvement of these sports.

On leaving the service, **Al** joined GCHQ, where he quickly gained a high reputation for his trade skills.

BROWN - Sig A Brown (Arthur) died on 2 January 2005.

Arthur and his great friend, **George Boyden**, were teleprinter operators in the GPO before the War. They enlisted in a LofC Sig Regt and were teleprinter operators at Calais when 1 and 10 Panzer Divs stormed the town in May 1940. Like myself, an operator with 12 WT Section, they soon became Riflemen with the Queen Victoria Rifles, the Kings Royal Rifle Corps and the Rifle Brigade Bns. Both were taken prisoner, **Arthur** being imprisoned in North Poland, and **George** in South Poland and later, Czechoslovakia.

Arthur escaped from his prison camp and was given refuge by a Polish family until the arrival of the Russians, and eventually reached home, via Odessa in April 1945.

George was released by the Russians, and many of the Czechs were very kind to him. He reached home via Pilsen, on 24 May 1945. **Arthur** wrote to me, 'It still took me a long time to get home through Poland and the Ukraine to Odessa, then on the *Duchess of Richmond* to Naples and Gibraltar. After six weeks leave, I was back in the Army, but during that time I met my wife-to-be who was in the WAAF. I tell her I fell for her uniform!'

The Three of us met at Dunkirk at the 50th anniversary of the Battle in May 1990, and again at Dunkirk in May 1998 at the re-dedication of the Royal Green Jackets war memorial by the South Mole.

After the War, **Arthur** and **George** returned to Poland, where they stayed with the family with whom **Arthur** was in hiding when the Russians arrived. The two were united by strong bonds of comradeship forged in battle and imprisonment.

To **Arthur's** widow, **Barbara** and their son, **Geoffrey**, and to **George** we send our deepest sympathy in their great loss.

- by Col Leslie Wright TD DL

JONES - LCpl S Jones (Steve) died on 30 January 2005.

LCpl Steve Jones was born in Portsmouth on the 8 May 1979. Raised in Fareham, near Southampton, he was the son of **Trevor** and **Elizabeth Jones**, and the brother of **Paul** and **Tracey**.

On completion of his GCSEs, and having served as a Cadet NCO in the ATC, he applied for enlistment in the TA. He joined 63 Sig Sqn (V) on 10 October 1995. Whilst serving with this Unit, he completed his Basic Military Parachuting Course, the Long Range Recce Patrols Course, and Arctic Ski Survival Trg. He deployed to Bosnia in 1998, and was based in Banja Luka with MND(SW).

On 8 May 2000, he was accepted for FTRS and posted to 264 Sig Sqn, deploying to Cyprus in 2001.

On 2 July 2002, he transferred to the Regular Army and was posted to 30 Sig Regt, with whom he deployed to Afghanistan on OP VERITAS. During this operation, he worked with a US Civil Affairs team operating in the local area. On his return to UK, he completed his Mountain Leader Course, in pursuit of his love of the outdoors. He subsequently deployed in Spring 2003 to Sierra Leone.

In January 2004, he was posted back to 264 Sig Sqn. In September 2004, he completed civilian freefall parachute trg in the US, a sport for which he quickly developed a huge enthusiasm. In January 2005, he deployed to Iraq.

Steve Jones had an infectious zest for life that extended well beyond his work, whether it was climbing a mountain or parachuting. He was popular and highly regarded by his colleagues. His ability to raise a smile amongst those around him, whatever the situation, was his trademark. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him, and forever in the thoughts of his family to whom he was committed.

ADVERTISEMENTS

RUNNERS, ST DUNSTAN'S NEEDS YOU!

St Dunstan's is calling on runners to Run, Remember and Rejoice with the British 10k London Run on Sunday 3 July 2005, to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE day.

The race date coincides with the start of a week of events celebrating the 60th Anniversary of VE Day. St Dunstan's is one of the Service Charities involved in the race, with a special VE Day Team taking part. With over 20,000 runners expected, the scenic course runs through central London, passing London's major landmarks en route.

If you would like to join the St Dunstan's Running Team, please contact **Clare Furnival** in the Fundraising Department on 020 76167966, or email fundraising@st-dunstans.org.uk. All St Dunstan's runners will be given full runner support, fundraising kits and St Dunstan's T-shirts.

ROYAL SIGNALS WINDSURFING

Windsurfing courses and racing events are run at various locations throughout the year. For more details, visit the Royal Signals Windsurfing Web site at www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/sailing/rsyc/windsurfing/index.htm where you will find links to windsurfing events, courses and training.

Dates for your diary:
The Blandford Regatta: 9 – 13 May 05.
The Royal Signals Regatta: 4 – 8 Jul 05.

Both of these events will include various levels of training, and will conclude with some racing towards the end of the week. All standards of windsurfer are welcome, no matter if you are a complete novice or an expert.

The Royal Signals Windsurfing Team needs you!

Now is an excellent opportunity for windsurfers of all levels to get involved in Corps Windsurfing, and compete at numerous competitions throughout the year. For details on any matters regarding windsurfing, contact the RSRC or RS Secretary (Windsurfing).

Rear Commodore: **Capt Fradley**
Email: john.fradley@btinternet.com
Tel: Blandford Mil: 2898
Secretary: **WO1 (FofS) Curtin**
Email:bert@kpcurtin.freeserve.co.uk
Tel: Blandford Mil: 2282

MATERIAL SOUGHT FOR NEW WW2 MAGAZINE

In October 2005 Great Northern Publishing are launching *The Second World War - 1939-1945* magazine, a 68-page, bi-monthly magazine dedicated to recording the stories and experiences of those who served or lived through that conflict.

The magazine will be a sister publication to their successful *The Great War –1914-1918* magazine, which is about to enter its fifth year of publication. Both magazines tell the stories of the ordinary men and women from all nations who served, or lived through those conflicts. The publishers are now inviting submissions for *The Second World War* magazine and require stories of between 300 and 6,000 words (they will consider longer submissions for serialisation).

They are not seeking fiction, nor do they want academic tomes on the whys and wherefores of the Second World War. They want personal stories, anecdotes, letters, diaries, books, snippets, photos, postcards etc. The magazine is intended to provide a place where people can tell their own stories and relate their own experiences. No area or subject is excluded; they have an open door editorial policy. Submissions on all theatres and areas are welcome, including the land, sea and air wars; all military units and aspects; the home front; females at war; animals at war, etc.

If any *WIRE* readers have such material and would like to be involved in this new project they should contact the following:

Mark Marsay
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Great Northern Publishing
PO Box 202
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO11 3GE
Tel/Fax: 01723 581329
E-mail: books@greatnorthernpublishing.co.uk
Website: www.greatnorthernpublishing.co.uk/the-second-world-war.htm

THE AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

All those who provided ground comms for the RAF are invited to join the Air Formation Signal Regiments Association. This invitation is extended to all who served in WW2 and, in more recent years, with 21 Sig Regt (BAOR and UK), 261 Sig Sqn (Cyprus and N Africa) and, after the amalgamation in 1975, 259 Sig Sqn. Others served with 222 Sig Sqn (Aden), 638 Sig Tp (UK), in Hong Kong and Gibraltar and on Christmas, Gan, Falkland and Ascension Islands.

The Association issues a newsletter three times a year, holds a national reunion (in Solihull on 7 May this year) and supports the widows of Members. The Association, in conjunction with 19 Sig Regt Association and 21 Sig Regt (AS) have created a living memorial to all Air Formation Signallers at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, in Staffordshire. No joining fee or annual subscription is required. For more information, contact the Membership Secretary, **Chris Collier**, 32 Mason Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4DU. Tel: 01902 338662.

SELL/BUY YOUR UNIFORM

Have you any unwanted Army uniforms cluttering up your accommodation? or
Have you outgrown your present uniform and wish to upgrade?

Then please contact me:
Major (Ret) John Barrett MBE
Corps Uniform Sales/Hire
Headquarters Officers Mess
Royal Signals
Blandford Camp
Dorset DT11 8RH

Tel: Mil: 94371 5081 or 5000
Civ: (01258) 485081 or 485000
Fax: Mil: 94371 5166
Civ: (01258) 485166
Home: (01963)23375
Mobile: 07770958870
Email: jbrectory@aol.com

We also hire accoutrements for Weddings, including: Swords, Silver Scabbards, Sash, Sword Sling, Gold Knot, White Gloves, Epaulettes.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER NEEDED TO JOIN FAMOUS EXPLORER TO NAVIGATE THE MAJESTIC BLUE NILE, ETHIOPIA

The Scientific Exploration Society seeks a communications expert to join its forthcoming expedition to Ethiopia. The team will navigate the Beschillo (a major tributary of the majestic Blue Nile) voyaging on down to through some of the most spectacular gorges to be found anywhere.

The black gorge and western cataracts play host to several Grade 4-5 white water. The voyage will be completed in four Avon Professional inflatables.

The team will conduct biological inventory and survey work in conjunction with representatives from Addis Ababa University.

Geologists will compile data and cartographic information on the area that will allow us to develop a GIS (Geographic Information System).

We are seeking an individual to coordinate the IT and communications requirements of the river party and re-supply party prior to and during the expedition.

Dates: 12 October – 6 December 2005.

Members have to pay a contribution towards the cost. This varies from £2,600 - £3,000 depending on time involved, and covers international travel, transport, rations, the briefing weekend plus comprehensive insurance.

To register your interest contact Expedition Base on +44(0)1747 854898 or Email: fiona@ses-explore.org

YOUR MUSEUM NEEDS YOU

Can you spare six weekend days this year to enable the Royal Signals Museum to open to weekend visitors?

Past members of the Corps living in the Blandford area are invited to join the Volunteer Guides, those volunteers who welcome our visitors and man the shop. Volunteer Guides work in pairs. Training is given, and new volunteers work with experienced guides. Volunteers are also needed on weekdays to assist the Curator and Archivist.For more details, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, **Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward**, c/o The Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH or at home on 01258 860647.

DON'T LOSE TOUCH - JOIN THE TERRITORIAL ARMY

During your Regular service, you will have developed considerable professional and military skills that could be of huge benefit to the Territorial Army. 35 Signal Regiment, based in the Midlands, has vacancies for Royal Signals soldiers who are intending to settle in the following areas:

Birmingham, Coventry, Rugby, Shrewsbury and Newcastle under Lyme.

We can use your technical, communicating and administrative skills, and can offer you an attractive financial package, based on your Regular salary, with an entitlement to a TA annual tax-free Bounty.

If you are interested, want to know more, and can commit at least 27 days of your spare time each year, then please call 02476-673405 for further details. Alternatively, look us up on our website: www.35sigs.com, or
Email: 35sigregt-rhqraowo@tanet.mod.uk

CASTLEMARTIN ADVENTURE TRAINING CENTRE

Located near Pembroke, South Wales, Castlemartin Adventure Training Centre is available to all military Units, Regular and TA

Activities offered include Climbing
Scuba Diving
Kayaking
Trekking
Sailing
Windsurfing
Land Yachting
Power Boating

Excellent accommodation and catering facilities available

For an information pack, contact SSgt Roberts on: Mil: 94361 4284 Civ: 01646 662284
Email: atw@14sigs.com

VICTORY PROMS

60 YEARS

Saturday 14th May
The Lighthouse
Poole
Concert Starts 7.30 pm

A Charity Fund-raising Concert
Organised by the Royal Signals Museum
In aid of The Royal Signals Museum Education Trust and The Army Benevolent Fund

IN COMMEMORATION OF VE AND VJ DAY

Featuring
The Massed Bands and Pipes & Drums of
The Royal Corps of Signals
with appearances by
The White Helmets Motorcycle Display Team
Singalong with Soprano Cherril Ashford
and Irish Dancing

Get in the Mood with 1940s Glen Miller swing sound and experience the Pride, Passion and Pomp in this rousing Proms Night

Auditorium ~ £7.50 - £10.00
Balcony ~ £5.00 Adult, £2.50 Child

Further Tickets may be purchased from the
Box Office Hotline - 01202 685 222

THE wire

June 2005

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE WHITE HELMETS OPENING SHOW

The weather was rather miserable at Blandford on Saturday 23 May when The White Helmets gave their Opening Show.

Although the heavy rain during the night had ceased, there was still a fine Scotch mist, and, more importantly, the surface of Hawke Square was very wet!

The Opening Show is probably the most important event on The White Helmets' calendar. It is the time when all the hard training during the previous three months is put to the test. On this occasion, the Team must convince the SOinC(A) that their performance is good enough to represent the Corps for the whole of the season.

It is also the time the new members (this year 9), having demonstrated their merit (which includes the mandatory Fire Jump), are presented with their coveted white helmets by the SOinC(A). So, despite the wet and dangerous surface, nothing was going to stop the Team from giving of their best. And what a great show it was. From the Opening Ride right through to the final Six-bike Fan, it was an immaculate performance.

The spectacular Fire Jump. All newcomers must do it to qualify for their White Helmets

LCpls Stephanie McGinn and Julie Jones relax after having qualified for their White Helmets

The spectacular Six-bike Fan. 21 soldiers on 6 bikes. No one can do it like the White Helmets

This year, for the first time, The White Helmets team have two female riders. **LCpl Stephanie McGinn** from Staffordshire, and **LCpl Julie Jones** from Lancashire have qualified for the riding squad. Having completed the same difficult selection procedure as their male teammates, they will perform all the tricks and stunts just like any other member of the Team.

Among the many invited guests this year, were **Cpls Michael Brennan** and **Neil Heritage**, the two soldiers who were seriously injured in Iraq in November last year. (See page 33 of February 05 issue).Together with their families, the two were welcomed by the SOinC(A) and given VIP treatment. It was great to see them back, and to see the progress they are making.

Team Captain, Capt Matt Mallett receives his White Helmet from the SOinC(A) Brig JT Thomas MBE ADC

Honoured guests. Cpls Mick Brennan, Neil Heritage, Debbie, Callum and Clare

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Established in 1920

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Contributors
Deadline for August issue is 15 June.
Please refer to *Guidelines for Contributors*.

Subscribers
All enquiries regarding subscriptions/ despatch should be made to:
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The Wire

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Editor Maj (Retd) BL Redshaw
Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER

For the first time, The White Helmets have not one, but two female riders. Though somewhat smaller than their male team mates, **LCpls Julie Jones** (front) and **Stephanie McGinn** are just as skilful at handling the big Triumph 750s.

BACK COVER

At any one time there are 70+ Gurkhas on Blandford Camp – and, as we can see, they get just as hungry as their Brit comrades! For their evening meal, they are treated to pukka Gurkha food, cooked by pukka Gurkha chefs.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

CORMORANT IS ANOTHER STEP CLOSER...

CORMORANT was seriously tested on 2 Sig Regt's EX KEY FLIGHT, and both the new kit and its operators passed with flying colours. In the Unit's article on page 187, 214 Sig Sqn report: 'We still have a way to go, but this ex certainly put us on the right track, and sets us up perfectly for the future. 214 Sig Sqn now has its state of the art comms system, and really is the place to be.'

...AND BOWMAN TOO

101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261) report on page 210, their use of BOWMAN on EX LOG VIPER. Alpha and Bravo Tps provided Bde Main and Fwd HQs respectively on the ex, and gained useful hands-on experience with the new kit. 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) report on page 208 that they too are BOWMANised.

A TA SQUADRON COMPETES IN THE FALKLANDS

1 (RBY) Sign Sqn sent a team to the Falklands to compete in EX COMMANDO CHALLENGE, an event run by FIDF to commemorate the yomp made by 45 Cdo from San Carlos to Stanley in 1982. Pitted against 8 other teams, including three RM teams, they did well, and are now motivated to return in 2006 to do even better. In the spare time that they had there, they experienced a variety of other activities, including playing enemy for a FIDF ex and a 3-hr low-level patrol flight in a RAF C130. Read more in 1 (RBY) Sign Sqn's account on page 205.

SOME SERIOUS ARCTIC TRAINING

Members of 244 Sig Sqn, 21 Sig Regt (AS) deployed to Norway on EX CLOCKWORK 05 to get some cold weather trg. And cold it was. Their activities included living in a snow cave, pulling sledges, and ice-breaking with real ice. During the latter, they said that breathing was greatly reduced, as were other body parts! Their story is on page 175.

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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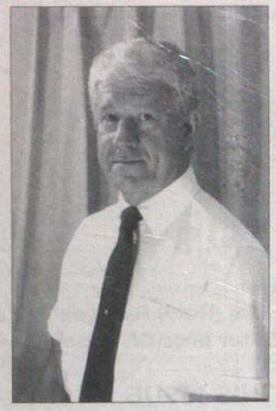


EDITORIAL

After much thought and deliberation, I have decided that it is time for me to return to my native New Zealand. My last edition of *The WIRE* will therefore be the February 2006 issue.

It has taken me a long time to come to this decision. In the end, it was the need to be with my family in New Zealand that decided me. Not that I discount in any way my other family, the Corps family. To me, this family is also precious.

It has been a great privilege to be the Editor of our magazine. My time here has been both happy and fulfilling; I have made many friends in the Corps family, both Serving and Retired; and the job has given me the opportunity to share experiences with many serving soldiers in Iraq, the Balkans, Germany, Northern Ireland, the Falklands, and in UK. I have greatly valued these experiences, and I thank everybody involved for arranging for me to join them on these occasions. I also thank the many others who have given me the help and ideas to bring about improvements in *The WIRE*. Together, we have done a good job.

However, the time for my departure is still 9 months away, and there is much to be done in that time to effect more changes to maintain the magazine's position as the best Corps magazine. There is also the task of finding a replacement - someone who can build on what I have managed to achieve, and take *The WIRE* forward. We shall be running an advertisement in the August issue.

The TA's contribution to operational deployments is well known. The preponderance of recent campaign medals worn by TA soldiers bears witness to this, and we have read about many individual operational experiences in TA Regts' contributions to *The WIRE*. What is less well known, is the extent of their contribution, and that these deployments are ongoing. So far, some 620 Corps TA and Reservists have deployed to augment Regular units, mostly in Iraq and the Balkans. And a lot of effort is required to get them all into their host units, and deployed, ready to go. Augmentees must receive pre-deployment trg, and a lot of admin needs to be attended to. The two main bodies involved in this are CVHQ at Corsham and RTMC at Chilwell. We ran a story on Chilwell in the June 04 issue of *The WIRE*; on page 156 in this issue, we have an overview of TA mobilisation, CVHQ's role, and information for TA personnel who may be thinking of volunteering for operational service.

Also included are few recollections from TA soldiers who have deployed. Two main themes come out: they all felt well integrated and accepted by their Regular counterparts, and they all derived a huge amount of satisfaction from the contribution they were able to make. Further, their TA units have all benefited from the operational experience they have brought back. So, if there are any TA soldiers out there thinking about broadening their military experience by performing their roles for real, CVHQ wants to hear from you.

In my Editorial in the February 2005 issue, I commented on how extensive and challenging adventurous training has become '...from long distance trekking in South America to Trans-Atlantic yachting...' Now the yachties are going a stage further – a round-the-world sailing event. EX MERCURY CHALLENGE 2006 will not only follow a globe-circling course taking in both the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn, it will also include competing in the world-famous Sydney to Hobart race. They will use Challenge 67, and the 14-strong crew will change with each leg, allowing some 50-70 Royal Signals personnel to take part. Participants don't have to be experienced sailors; full training will be given to those selected. Further details can be found on the inside back cover of this edition.

And finally, awareness of *The WIRE* has spread as far as China. We have just received an email from the Hebei Sheng Lun Corporation, saying: 'We have received your details from the Chamber of Commerce of China, and we know you are needing wires. We can supply various kinds of wire and wire mesh...' I'm not sure how we are going to reply to that. Any ideas?

OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND COMMENDATIONS

The following Operational Honours and Commendations were announced on 18 March 2005:

OPERATIONAL HONOURS

Northern Ireland
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

Capt MJ Fayers	RSS
Cpl CJ Craven	39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213)

Miscellaneous Operations
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)

Cpl R Clayton	c/o HQ SOinC(A) Blandford

JOINT COMMANDERS' COMMENDATIONS

Iraq

Capt GD Hume	2 Sig Regt
SSgt(FofS) PF Hughes	2 Sig Regt
SSgt MJ Hunt	1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215)
Cpl RH Lewis	1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215)

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE – SALISBURY PLAIN

From 4-6 March, 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, to enjoy some spring sunshine, whilst pitting their wits and physique against each other. With nine Royal Signals Units providing stands, and Military Leadership Gp RSS organising the Final Race, the Competition looked set to be a great success.

The arrival of teams began early on Friday afternoon, and carried on well into the night, with the Scottish fun bus arriving before midnight for the very first time ever! Fortunately, the 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 John Shepherd** and **LCpl Tim Tyler** began their weekend of appearing in different guises, with excellent performances as bartenders. The two-day event saw them acting as drivers, tea and doughnut delivery boys, tent erectors, equipment distributors, admin co-ordinators and competition advisors.

Southampton UOTC Team run the dreaded Log Race

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 (Para) was to be early on their agenda of activities. By some small miracle, all teams made the start point in time for **Maj Alex Clixby** (SO2 Officer Recruiting) to wish them all good luck. As they attempted the unit stands throughout the day, the enthusiasm shown by all teams 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 the Final Race, which involved the moving of pieces of equipment over various obstacles, raising a unit flag, and getting comms in - all to adrenaline-pumping music.

Exeter UOTC emerged as overall winners, leading the field by over 10 points. A close-run Final Race was won by Southampton 'A' Team, with Thunder Sqn (Southampton DTUS) closely on their heels. The fight for second and third place in the overall competition was a closely-fought battle, with Southampton 'A' Team edging ahead of Sheffield by just two points. The Speckled Jim Prize for the team showing the best morale, but not necessarily the best scores, was awarded to Exeter UOTC, although the SORLS team gave credit to Bristol UOTC for the bunny ears.

The Tayforth UOTC Team try their hand at putting the 501 petals together

Partying after the competition was done in style this year, with the use of the Blandford HQ Officers' Mess for a Black Tie and Mess Kit dinner night. The Royal Corps of Signals Band showed their talent by getting music out of a dustbin, kitchen sink and road cone. The disco that followed, allowed many 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. The ten units below supported the event, and are all thanked for the huge effort put into preparing and running excellent stands.

The winning Exeter UOTC Team

2 Sig Regt
3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
14 Sig Regt (EW)
30 Sig Regt (Gurhka Sig Sqn)
1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215)
19 Lt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209)
39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213)
16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216)
264 Sig Sqn

Blandford Garrison is thanked for their support, with the guard force generously supplied by 11 Sig Regt, and Military Leadership Gp organising the Final Race. **SSgt Mark Chivers** is personally thanked for being the exercise SQMS, and for ensuring the workings of the Camp ran smoothly. Thanks also go to **Capt Will Taylor** (SO3 Officer Recruiting) and **Capt Steve Knight** (ex SO3 SORLS, now 2IC 214 Sig Sqn) for organising such an excellent event; and to **Capt Irene Gordon** (SO3 SORLS) for a superb dinner night. As the largest Royal Signals Officer Recruiting event of the year, the continued support of external units and key elements of the Garrison is vital to its ongoing success.

TERRITORIAL ARMY MOBILISATION

- By Maj PJ McElwee SO2 CVHQ

OVERVIEW

Since January 2001, CVHQ Royal Signals has been the focal point in the Corps for mobilisation of Royal Signals TA and Reservists. To date, we have processed some 620 TA and Reservists into mobilised service. Serving world wide in support of their Regular counterparts, the figures shown below highlight the significant contribution to operations that the TA has made over the past four years.

OP TELIC 1 (2002)	171
OP TELIC 2 (2002)	171
OP TELIC 3 (2003)	25
OP TELIC 4 (2004)	82
OP TELIC 5 (2004)	35
OP TELIC 6 (2005)	55
OP OCULUS/VERITAS	27
97 Sig Sqn (Pan Balkans Sig Sqn) (2004)	54

CONDITIONS

Mobilised service for TA personnel is governed by the Regional Forces Act, 1996 (RFA 96). Currently the majority of TA and Reservists mobilised to serve in Iraq, do so under Section 54, of this Act. Under this, a Reservist can expect to serve for a maximum of twelve months, although most serve for a period of nine months. During these nine months, a Reservist will spend up to 14 days at the Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC) Chilwell, going through the acceptance process and brushing up on ITDs 1-6.

Time is allocated for pre-deployment familiarisation in the Regular receiving Unit lines, and once deployed, he or she can expect to spend six months in theatre.

At the end of a six-month tour, they are entitled to the same POTL and annual accrued leave entitlement as their Regular counterparts.

On demobilisation, most leave RTMC with at least four weeks paid leave to enjoy.

For the Balkans it is slightly different. Reservists have to volunteer and have their employers backing, to deploy on mobilised service to this theatre. They will serve under the terms and conditions of Section 56, RFA 96.

From a reporting date at RMTC Chilwell, a Reservist can expect to serve for up to nine months under Section 54 of RFA 96. This time comprises pre-training, Unit familiarisation, six months in theatre, and leave.

Currently, there is a strict limit on time spent in service. Those serving in Iraq can serve for a maximum of only twelve months in any 36 months. Those serving in the Balkans can serve for a maximum of only 9 months in any 27 months.

This does not mean it is impossible for a Reservist to carry out subsequent deployments once they have been demobilised.

Most are demobilised well within the maximum time limit, and consequently, have what is termed Residual Service, i.e. a number of days/months left on their original contract that would bring them up to the full nine or twelve month period.

Reservists in this category may volunteer to serve again, and will normally be accepted if they meet the criteria for the post or appointment they wish to serve in.

Reservists can ask for an extension of their tour up to a maximum of is six months. Those granted extensions must take a break for leave, and carry out continuation training at the RTMC.

HOW CAN YOU SERVE?

Those wishing to volunteer for operational service, and who meet the criteria below, should apply via your Sqn OC, PSAO or Trg Maj. The criteria require that you must:-

Be a volunteer

Be prepared to sign on if you have less than 12 months to serve;

Be over 18 and under 45 years old;

Be medically and dentally fit;

Be at least class 3 CEQ.

Desirably, hold a driving licence;

Have no known welfare or employer's issues that would give rise to problems with your being away from home or workplace for an extended time; and

Be what is considered FFR.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THIS YEAR

Iraq Trawls for OP TELIC will start in May 05, with Call Outs commencing late July/early August.

7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn will require individual replacements to fill a range of trade and admin posts. As with previous mobilisations, there will be opportunities to serve in Other Arms appointments and posts.

The Balkans Throughout the year, CVHQ processes volunteers for the Balkans. 2 (NC) Sig Bde with 31 Sig Regt (V) as the lead Regt, will be providing a composite Sig Sqn to deploy to the Balkans from May to November 06.

OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCES

TA personnel have had a huge range of experiences during their operational deployments. Many of these have already appeared in *The WIRE*. Here are a few more.

Staff Sergeant Bennett of 36 Signal Regiment
It's been nearly two years since I was mobilised for OP TELIC 2. I was one of about 150 Royal Signals TA augmentees attached to 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) for the duration of the op.

The main body of the Sqn were based at Basrah Palace with outdets at the BG locs around the AOR.

After the initial flurry of activity during the handover/takeover, things settled into a sort of 'normality'. The normality was that no two days would be the same! T

he tasks we were involved in ranged from routine patrols in the immediate area around the Palace, to river patrols on the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, to replen trips to the outdets, and the introduction of commercial comms equipt across the AOR for the BGs.

There were other jobs too that were linked in with the ops carried out by the Bde. One in partícular, was co-operation with US Marine Corps as part of an anti-smuggling op. In this, we helped

Jobs can range from cabling...

...to Top Cover...

with the comms arrangements between our Bde Comd and the USMC Comd.

My work ranged from IS support to the Bde, ops support, assistance to the local Iraqi telecomms service and commissioning of commercial comms systems. It certainly was varied, and this brief article doesn't cover even a third of it! We even recovered the headstones from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery in Basrah.

I certainly met some great characters and made new friends – people I'll never forget. It was a unique and challenging time. We were there during the oppressive summer heat and in a hostile environment, but I would never have missed it.

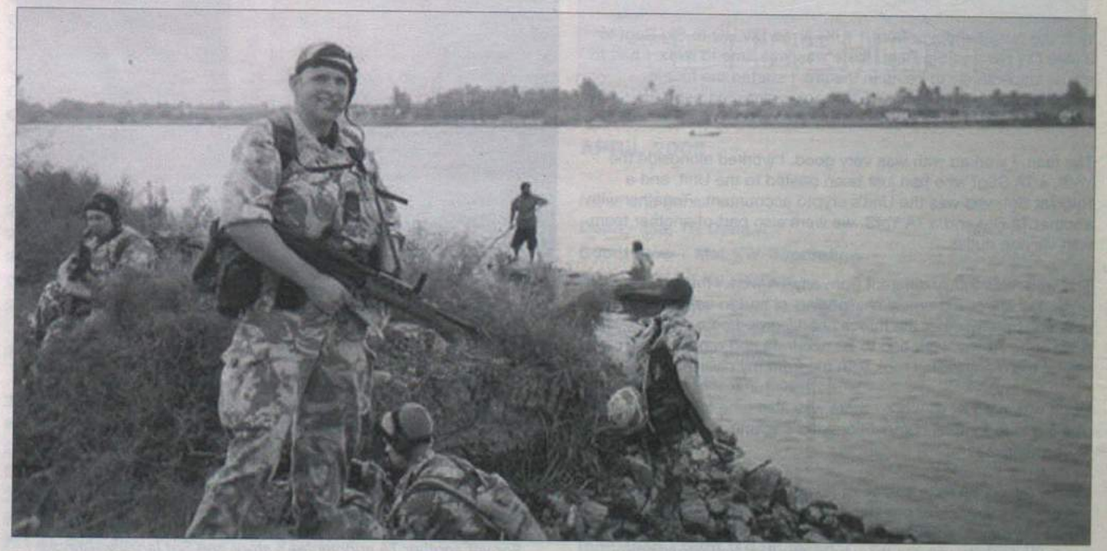
Signaller Sherwin of 31 Signal Regiment
I was mobilised a month and a half before deployment. During this period, we had to carry out all our ITDs at RMTC Chilwell and went on to complete OPTAG trg at Risborough Bks in Folkestone. From there, we began our journey to our units in Germany. I was to be posted with to 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204).

Altogether, the transition between being a civilian and a soldier was an easy one, and it was not long before we felt part of the Unit. The Regular soldiers were both welcoming and enjoyable to work with, and Osnabruck provided a lot to do at the weekends.

On 19 October, the main body, which I was a part of, deployed to complete the RSOI package at Shaibah Log Base (SLB), and then finally moved on to Basrah Air Station (BAS), which would be my home for the next 6 months.

I was a member of Tigris Tp, the mobile tp of the Sqn. Right away, we had to unpack and check the kit in our vehs to make sure they were ready to be deployed on ops. Along with this, we had to carry out various escort duties to help the RAF police to secure the supply of aviation fuel. In December, I went to SLB to be an op with the Danish Bn (DANBAT) as part of a 3-week rotation. We had to provide comms for liaison between the Danish and UK units on the ground.

This was both interesting and rewarding, as it offered the chance to carry out my trade in an operational theatre. During January, I was sent to OSB to man a det that provided secure phone lines throughout the Bde for their role during the elections. My mobilisation was an excellent source of experience that I can use throughout my TA career.



...to waterway patrols

Sergeant Hazel Trotman from 33 Signal Regiment

I deployed on OP TELIC 2 with 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt from June to Dec 2003 and was based at Basrah International Airport (BIA). I was employed in theatre as a crypto accountant, in the Area Distribution Agency (ADA), for the Multi-National Division (South East) (MND(SE)).

Sig Hazel Trotman in a warlike pose

With the busy handover from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ to Sig Regt to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, there was little time to relax. I had to adjust immediately to being in theatre. I started the tour in temperatures of 30°C with a 5-day acclimatisation period in Kuwait, then straight to work at BIA.

The team I worked with was very good. I worked alongside the YofS, a TA SSgt who had just been posted to the Unit, and a Regular Sgt who was the Unit's crypto accountant. Together with another TA Sgt and a TA YofS, we were also part of another team with varying duties.

The work was totally different from any TA work I have previously done, but it was extremely challenging - I had to call on all reserves to remember the things I had learned on a course taken 5 yrs ago. All my work had to be accurate and organised. This is one of the many skills I took with me from my civilian job.

But it was not just all work - there was also time for play. I joined in a 5 a-side football competition, and became a goalkeeper extraordinaire.

On my return, I was in charge of administering and distributing the crypto required for our Unit for Camp 2004 in Germany. It was a big responsibility, but my experience gained on ops helped me to cope very well. On the whole, my deployment was a unique experience with lots of pleasurable moments.

Corporal Andrew Newson from 36 Signal Regiment

10 March 2003 is a date that is imprinted on my mind forever. This was the day that my 'dessie' boots first touched Middle Eastern soil.

Seventeen years earlier I thought my dreams of serving my country had been forever dashed, when the Army rejection letter dropped on my mat wishing me luck 'in some other career.' It was two days before my 35th birthday when the TA eventually afforded me the chance to fulfil this lifelong ambition and serve my country in Iraq.

Naturally, leaving home was emotional. Saying goodbye to my wife and family was gut-wrenching, and I was apprehensive about what to expect. Would the TA trg really be enough to equip me with the necessary skills to work alongside Regular soldiers? This was the real deal - not just trg, not practice - the real deal.

And what do I remember? I remember a heat like no other. Wind and sun bursting into a speeding Land Rover, like a hairdryer being held too close to my face. Sandstorms which lasted for hours, leaving grit in my eyes. Lack of fresh food, showers, toilets...sleep. I remember the fear when the sirens screamed out, warning of NBC attacks - this time for real, not a drill, no second chance.

But also I remember first crossing the border and seeing, at first hand, the conditions that the Iraqi people had been forced to live in. And then I knew, despite any negative media coverage back home, that this war was justified. And the cheering and clapping that greeted us in Basrah hours after the liberation, confirmed that the Iraqi people also thought that this war was justified.

I remember meeting the Prime Minister and having my photo taken, a photo that proudly sits on my mantelpiece today.

Prime Minister Tony Blair with Cpl Andrew Newson

In one of my childhood war books, there's an old Army recruitment poster: a son sits on his father's knee and the caption reads, 'Daddy, what did you do in the Great War?'

In the future, I hope that my son will ask me a similar question about the second Gulf War. And, with pride, I'll be able to tell him, 'Your dad had Iraqi soil under his TA Boots.'

For yet another TA augmentee's story, see Sgt Ian Townsend's report in 35 Sig Regts contribution on Page 190 - Editor

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, APRIL 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col AR Blackwell	7 Sig Regt
Lt Col Edwards	Western European Lang
Lt Col BP Gilfether MBE TD	AFPAA W D
Lt Col AG Hill	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Lt Col DB Hudson	BATCIS IPT 3
Lt Col GR Norton	DPS (A)
Lt Col G Smith	D11 Service Management SM6 EMS
Lt Col Somerville MBE B SC	DI OPS
Lt Col PR Towers	DCBM(A) Prog Branch
Lt Col RK Wilkinson	HQ SOinC(A)
Maj WEH Adsett	33 Sig Regt
Maj AL Hayden	2 Sig Bde
Maj HA Jenkins	HQ ARRC
Maj DS Raleigh	AMD (Army)
A/Maj KE Roach	Royal School of Signals
Capt EF Brooks-Smith	37 Sig Regt
Capt M Freemantle	G6 HQ Land
Capt B Williams	DCSA Service Operations
Capt DM Wright	18 Sig Regt
Lt S Howe	ATR Pirbright

OFFICERS, MAY 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col GJ Cary OBE	AC CIS C-E MDG
Lt Col AL Pearce	SHAPE Regional Sig Gp
Maj JS Hiorns	30 Sig Regt
Maj J Rowley	Theatre and Formation Comms IPT
Maj PA Smith	SHAPE
Maj JJ Torrell	Royal School of Signals
Capt A Balsdon	Jungle Warfare Wing
Capt JT Cauldwell	7 Sig Regt
Capt KE Cochran	Cyprus Communications Unit
Capt MA Fleming	Army Foundation College
Capt CF Hynas	JSSU (CYP)
Capt GR Johnson	30 Sig Regt
Capt MC McCorry	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2Lt BL Addison	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2Lt RA Boardman	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2Lt JVT Boyden	CCU
2Lt E Cameron	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
2Lt RJ Coles	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt DGJ Finch	30 Sig Regt
2Lt TEF Gardner	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
2LT MP Hunston	2 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
2LT SJ Hunt	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2LT A Jeyes	39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2LT MW Joiner	7 Sig Regt
2Lt JA Kitson	30 Sig Regt
2Lt LS Matthews	30 Sig Regt
2Lt CS Moody	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
2Lt KL Oldridge	7 Sig Regt
2Lt JM Osterloh	16 Sig Regt
2Lt MS Rai	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
2Lt NJA Reynolds	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
2Lt FG Tedby	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn

WOs and SNCOs, APRIL 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO1 CN Hughes	DCSA JSUC
A/WO1 J Reid	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 AV Gill	30 Sig Regt
WO2 G Steel	34 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 DR Taylor	UOTC London
WO2 GS Clapham	CCU Cyprus
WO2 PA Mayer	30 Sig Regt
WO2 MA Oliver	600 Sig Tp
WO2 MP Riley	16 Sig Regt
WO2 G Thomas	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 LP Hopkins	21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/WO2 JW Pritchard	7 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RP Shields	71 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 JM Swanston	11 Sig Regt
A/WO2 MD Wilford	30 Sig Regt
A/WO2 GE Dunstone	36 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 DW Dunbar	21 Sig Regt
SSgt J Crowton	15 Sig Regt
SSgt LP Hopkins	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt KR Ingley	HQ ARRC
Sgt LJ Francis	20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt CW Kama	16 Sig Regt
Sgt PW McDougall	14 CTT
Sgt N Sutton	15 Sig Regt
Sgt RD Turnbull	238 Sig Sqn
A/Sgt OA Trimble	11 Sig Regt
A/Sgt AP Williams	ATR Litchfield

RETIREMENTS

APRIL 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Dean - Maj TA Dean	09 Apr 05
Goodfellow - Maj KW Goodfellow	29 Apr 05
Graham - Maj KJ Graham	03 Apr 05
Knightly Brown - Capt R Knightly Brown	08 Apr 05
Parsons - Lt Col KKW Parsons	09 Apr 05
Phillips - Capt T Phillips	03 Apr 05
Goodfellow - Maj KW Goodfellow	29 Apr 05

MAY 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Dalton - Maj BJ Dalton	24 May 05
Tomlinson - Capt G Tomlinson	01 May 05
Wilson - Lt Col RP Wilson	01 May 05

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt M Mallett**

TRAINING CAMP RAF SEALAND, FEBRUARY – MARCH 05

During our annual trg camp at RAF Sealand, the Team has been working on perfecting the show for the forthcoming 2005 Season.

Members in their second year have been learning to reverse ride, and the newer members learning many tricks - some of which they have never done before, and some completely new.

We have been practising for all the rides, with tough competition to get a place in the Show. The jump ride trg saw some people doing excellent jumps whilst others – **Sig Gavin Poole** trying too hard and flipping his bike.

The jump ride also saw one first year rider, **LCpl Gaz Stewart**, make the grade and be selected. Members of the Team have also been learning how to wheelie the Triumph Tigers, with **Sig Mark Dixon** trying too hard and having a spectacular crash, which resulted in the bike free-wheeling across the airfield, with **Sig M Dixon** in hot pursuit. We have also been able to build the six-bike fan for the first time in over a year.

Our time at RAF Sealand culminated with a show for the employees, Service personnel and local schools. It was a great success, with no-one falling off - which meant that **Cpl Damian Laws** had to keep his black peak.

8 March saw the arrival of Ant and Dec at RAF Sealand, to train for their challenge for their television show *Saturday Night Takeaway*. They were to go under the jump boards, go on top of the tableau, and attempt the fire jump. But their first challenge was learning how to ride a bike.

The trg went well; they started with the jump boards and the tableau, and all was going well. Then it was time for the fire jump, with Dec going first. Unfortunately he forgot what he was taught, and flipped his bike. Ant was therefore stopped from doing the fire jump, so they called their challenge a draw.

Since returning from RAF Sealand, the Team has been extremely busy preparing for the SOinC(A)'s Opening Display on Saturday 23 April 05.

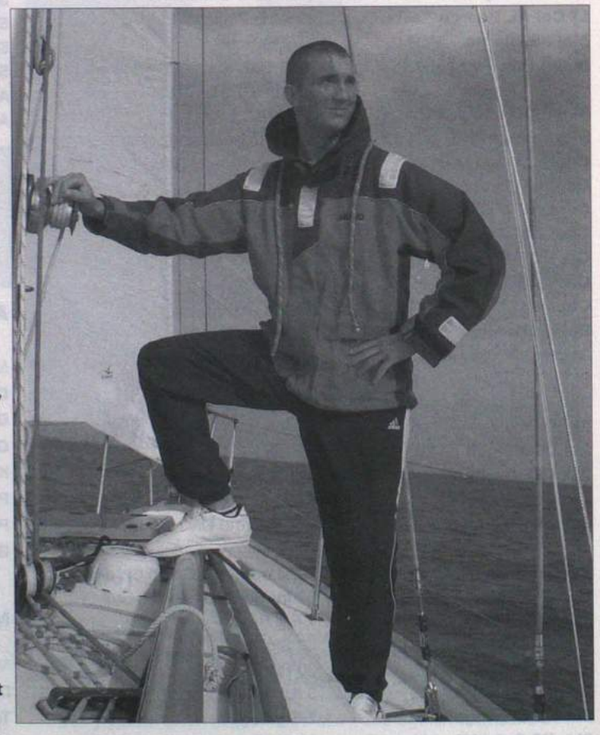
Training has been going well, although there have been a few falls, with **LCpl 'Chip' Mooney** breaking his arm (again!) falling off one of the tricks.

A great life!

EXERCISE FIERY WHITE DRAGON

In April nine members of the Team deployed to JSASTC on EX FIERY WHITE DRAGON.

They were joined by **Lt Col Alf Thomas**, from HQ SOinC, **Capt Erin Brookes-Smith**, from ATR Lichfield and **Maj Fiona Galbraith** from HQ LAND. **Maj Galbraith's** uncle was a White Helmets Team Captain many years ago.



Poser Sig Mark Dixon looking for a Musto modelling contract

The aim of the ex was to expose Team members to novice offshore sailing, as well as to achieve the aims of AT. Divided between two yachts, the passage plan included a trip to the Isle of Wight and sailing as far as Weymouth, a total of 165 miles.

Participants practised many sailing manoeuvres along the way, including man overboard drills, where we were sadly lacking volunteers to take the plunge, and had to practise with a fender! Most were seasick, including the Team Capt, **Capt Matt Mallett**.

But none was as bad as **Sig Dave Kitchen**, whom we can safely say will not be applying for a transfer to the Royal Navy. A good time was had by all, with **Sig Dicko Dixon** now waiting in anticipation for a modelling contract with *Musto* clothing company!

The participants would like to pass on their thanks to the skippers: **Lt Col Alf Thomas** and **Maj Fiona Galbraith**, and also to **Capt Erin Brookes-Smith** as first mate.

WHITE HELMETS VACANCIES

TEAM SNCO

If you are a former White Helmet and are a SNCO or selected for promotion for SNCO and you think that you might have what it takes to become Team SNCO in January 2006, contact the OC White Helmets on 94371 2405 to register your interest.

WHITE HELMETS

If you are interested in becoming a White Helmet, an induction course will be held 31 October to 11 November 05. You can apply at any time in the year, and your application will be kept on file. Interested parties should look up SOinC(A) PD 204, available from your Unit Registry. Alternatively, you can contact the Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team - The White Helmets, direct on Mil 94371 2365, Civ 01258 482365.

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Tony Unwin**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Neil Pollitt**

SYSEX TROOP – *by Cpl Rob Jones*

The first few weeks in January saw us preparing our vehs for our 1st line technical inspections. The troops on the shop floor put in a solid effort and a few late nights to achieve some very creditable reports. We then went on to prepare for our first EX FINAL FLIGHT of the year with the Potential Yeomen of Signals Course. 21 Sig Regt provided a TN from 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, whose troops gave one hundred percent to ensure that the ex was a resounding success. A big thank you to them, from all of us here.

The troop also had a visit from the nice people of RSIT, and once again, the Tp knuckled down and managed, in a short space of time, to prepare its vehs to a good standard to gain some very good reports, with only the slightest amount of flapping.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Noddy Baugh**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Bob Lawrence**

A small reorganisation has taken place within RSG since our last article. BOWMAN System Management Section and Operator Section have now all come under the watchful eye of **Capt (Tfc) Phil Tonks** as OC BOWMAN Operating Wing. This means that the capability to deliver BOWMAN trg now falls into one Wing within RSG.

In January 2005, Scotton Hall officially opened for business, with the first course commencing on 28 February. And so began the start of steady state BOWMAN System Management (BSM) trg at RSS. The course's first arduous period was an introduction from **Maj 'Noddy' Baugh MBE**, **Capt Phil Tonks** and the Wing YofS. The courses were then quickly despatched to ISG for their introduction to Data Comms. JSBR 04/001 was programmed to last for 18 days of intensive trg, culminating with the students preparing their own BOWMAN Comms Information (CI) Plans, based on the students own Unit ORBAT.

Once the School has undergone BOWMAN conversion, the course is envisaged to increase to 20 days, culminating with the students preparing CI Plans that can then be tested on live equipt.

BSM Section is currently undergoing the process of validation after the first course, and changes to the programming and content are being implemented prior to the start of JSBR 05/001, which will commence on 25 April, with all the lessons learned from 04/001 having been actioned.

On a lighter note, the Section would like to take this opportunity to wish all the best to **Mr Mick Altham** and his family on his retirement. For the last 9 months **Mick** has made a substantial contribution to the Section in the transitional period from CLANSMAN to BOWMAN.

OPERATOR SECTION – *by Sgt Taff Skey*

The section is currently going through transition, with most instructors not just BOWMAN trained but BOWMAN instructor trained too. Courses working their way through the group are now getting two weeks BOWMAN trg. These courses are being delivered at Management level and to Class 1 and Class 3 Rad Sys Ops, with all courses earning a recognised CATAQ. The day of digital radio is dawning, and the Museum beckons for CLANSMAN.

SSgt Steve Bartleet will be leaving us for Civ Div, and **SSgt(YofS) Dave Martin-Woodgate** to 20 Armd Bde on promotion. We would like to wish them good luck for the future.

POWER SECTION – *by SSgt Guy Padfield*

Power Section is going through a major transitional phase, with instructors changing and new equipts coming on stream. The 500-watt Onan charging engine has had its final strip down in the SI/CI engines phase of the Electrician Basic Course. It has now

been replaced by the 1500 watt; this has been brought about by the inclusion within steady state trg of the new 2kW Lightweight Field Generator (LFG). Eventually the LFG will be used in this phase of the course, with the demise of the spark ignition engine from general use.

CORMORANT is arriving, and the trg of the 4 kVA and 20 kVA is scheduled to start in the fourth quarter of 2005. To achieve this, the Section will be taking over 2 bays and a classroom in the Whitby Building.

The planned merger of Area and Radio Systems Gps will see the electrician element of Sysex Tp joining Power Section. They will all work under control of **SSgt Padfield**, and continue to support SYSEX exs. So another three new faces will be joining the Section: **Sgt Balaram**, **Cpl Sherwin** and **LCpl Shirkey**.

RADEX TROOP – *by LCpl McGinn*

A busy month for the guys in Radex this month. The main event for the Tp was the deployment of eight newly-trained BOWMAN Advanced Signallers (Systems) on EX LOG VIPER with 101 Log Bde, a 3-week ex around the Midlands.

Whilst half the guys short-toured it with only 2 weeks out, the remainder did the full 3 weeks along with Bravo Tp, 261 Sig Sqn, and were glad for it too. All in all, it proved to be a valuable ex, which gave some excellent on the job trg. Many thanks to all at 261!

Finally, congratulations to the 'Radex Rangers' who play in the local 6-a-side football league, on their best season to date. 2 wins, 1 draw and 3 losses. Give yourselves a pat on the back guys, especially **Sig Adam Toner**, who is the Team's top scorer, with 8 goals so far.

EQUIPMENT SECTION

In general, the Section has had a quiet couple of months, the calm before the storm with BOWMAN pending. We welcome back **Sgt Tony Livsey** from a long period of courses, which means he can now actually get some work done in the classroom, where he will be assisting one of our civilian stalwarts **Mr Duncan Mason**. We welcome **Sgt 'Billie' Beaumont**, who has joined the team from CCU Cyprus.

COMMAND SECTION – *by Sgt Stu Engleby*

The past few months has seen a busy period for Comd Section. Tp Comds Cse 60 was put through its paces on the all-new EX SEARCHING GLANCE.

Sgt Jacko Jackson spent most of his penultimate SEARCHING GLANCE either in the LAD or up to the axles in mud. TC60 decided to change the ex further by turning it into a NAVEX rather than a Comms ex. On completion, they had the delights of 2 weeks BOWMAN ICS trg that was painstakingly put together by the Yeoman and **Sgt Engleby**. On completion of this trg, the newly qualified Tp Comds were released back into the wild to fend for themselves.

Yeoman Cse 58 is currently in the Gp, and by the next issue, will hopefully have successfully completed their course.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S Hadley**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RC Sigs
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K Overton**

EXERCISE BURN BOVINGTON

All packed up and ready to go, we headed to Bovington for another excellent 1 Sqn ex. We divided into two platoons and deployed to two separate harbour areas; this time we were against each other.

The ex started straight away that Friday evening, with our actually firing within the first hour. We deployed to our harbour area and then set up an ambush and lay waiting to attack the other platoon.

The ambush was successful, and not many of the enemy escaped alive! Back in the harbour area, we settled into routine and then the joy of stag. However, it wasn't to be a quiet evening; the enemy patrolled nearby in a rover, firing off random rounds at us.

As soon as morning arrived, we tucked into a luxury bag of beans and sausage. The first task of the day was a river crossing - **Sgt Mann's** bright idea. It was refreshing, but the sun was out to warm us up.

The final night arrived, and we joined together for another battle. H-Hr was at 06.00hrs, so it was an early start. Once we had finished the enemy off, we tabbed back to the pickup point, where we had a Palm Sunday Service, and then back to Camp.

Overall, the ex was cracking, and everyone enjoyed it. Thanks go to **Cpl McCrone** and his 2IC, **Cpl Yeomans** for organising it.

This is where we need Moses to do his Red Sea trick

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Carter**
SSM **WO2(SSM) C Marlowe**

FEMALE HARROGATE CUP FOOTBALL COMPETITION
– by Sig Gillespie

Not having a sporting bone in my body, I was as surprised as anybody to find myself volunteering for the Female Football Team for the Harrogate Cup competition. Under the tuition of **Cpl Reynolds**, we began training in the gym. I decided to play in goal, because I've got two left feet. Apart from **Sig McNally** the ex-Everton footballer, most of the team were a mix of experience, but with a few handy coaching tips from **Cpl Reynolds**, we began to get a grip of the game. I didn't even let a goal in! One trg session was held on the astro turf pitch, and held a big surprise for everyone. The male hockey team were watching us train, and **Cpl Reynolds** decided to up the ante, so he asked them to play against us - something about 'team building and getting a sweat on!' Against all the odds, we won 5-3! We finished trg tired, sore and wondering how big the lump on **Sig McNally's** leg was going to get (golf ball size if you were wondering!).

The Team was picked, shin pads handed out, and the rules explained (an education in itself!). The Regt flooded the gym to watch, which just added more pressure and tension to the competition. **Cpl Reynolds** was also refereeing, which meant we didn't get any coaching during the games - unlike the other teams, who were being screeched at constantly. It also meant he had to be pretty strict so that no one could accuse him of bias.

Two teams had been selected, and my team played 1 Sqn first. I kept a clean sheet, and we won 2-0. Inevitably, our two Sqn teams met, and it turned into a goal fest! With **Sigs Kirsty McColl**, **Taylor**, **McGonigle** and **McNally** scoring, as well as **Sig McDonald** who was unforgettable as the sulky sub, we won again 5-0. Some say we cheated, but **Cpl Reynolds** said we peaked!

The games continued, and everyone was amazed at the way the girls played. We drew our last game 0-0, which meant we'd won the competition. Due to the complexities of the Harrogate Cup scoring system, although we were the most successful team, we didn't gain the most points toward the Harrogate Cup. We all received a trophy for our endeavours, and had the satisfaction that we never got beaten.

The unbeaten 2 Sqn Team

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Jones**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) T Ward**

EXERCISE HARROGATE ESCAPE – *by Cpl Jules Dolan*

EX HARROGATE ESCAPE saw the deployment of over 100 Phase 2 soldiers to Caerwent Trg Area in South Wales, on an Escape and Evasion weekend pursued by a Hunter Force. The aim of the ex was to get around the 25 different CPs over a 24 hr period without getting caught by the Hunter Force.

The ex commenced with the arrival of Chinook Helicopters to transport us from Blandford, to a pre-designated HLS in the middle of the Welsh wilderness. Unfortunately the RAF failed to find it, and landed us where they wanted! On arrival, we were split into 22 groups of five, and placed in a survival area overnight. The first task was to assemble our shelters, using the surrounding natural foliage, for what could have been a very cold and wet evening.

The next morning, the groups were woken by the sound of automatic fire and mini flares, as they were bumped, and crashed out to their respective start points. They were then released into the wild to evade the formidable Phase3 Hunter Force, led by **Cpls Dan Bird**, **Lindsay Thorburn**, **Lee Oxenham** and **Ferris Baldwin**.

All in all, only one group managed to evade capture. Congratulations to **Sig Shevill** and his team, who successfully managed to get all the way around the course without capture.

ARMY JUDO CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 11 Sig Regt Team, consisting of **Sgt Sherlock**, **Cpl Griffiths**, **Sig Pritchard**, **Sig Marsh**, **Sig Talbot**, and **Cpl Dibbert**, ventured to the Army Judo Championships in Aldershot on 18 – 19 February.

The first event was the team event, where all the team members did the Regiment proud, gaining two silver medals and two bronze medals. The individual events started off with a dislocated shoulder - **Sgt Sherlock's** opponent, with his gaining the silver medal in the under 81kg weight category. Then it was muskets at dawn between **Sigs Pritchard** and **Talbot**, with **Sig Pritchard** just edging a hard fought fight and winning bronze.

Next up was the under 73kg competition, with **Cpl Griffiths** and **Sig Marsh** a force to be reckoned with. The final event of the weekend was the open. This was a chance for every fighter to show their worth. **Sig Talbot** faced **Tpr Narty** (1 RTR) in the final, fighting with courage, skill and determination. Here we had a young Sig facing a fighter who had previously represented his country (Ghana) in the last Commonwealth Games. Be proud of your silver medal, **Sig Talbot**.

BLANDFORD SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj J McKay**
SSM **WO2(SSM) N Roberts**

REGIMENTAL RUGBY CLUB - *by Capt Andy Burdge*

The Regimental Rugby team has had a very successful season, providing no less than 9 players for the Corps, 5 players for the Army U20 Team and 3 players representing the Army 1st XV during the season. Under the management of **Capt Andy Burdge**, **WO2 Nige Roberts**, **Cpls Jon Marshall** and **Shaun Ablott**, and with the support of the Regtl hierarchy, the soldiers in 11 Sig Regt have been able to play regularly on Wednesday afternoons.

CORPS RUGBY 7s CARDIFF 18 MARCH

After a successful season of 15s, the Regt entered a relatively young and inexperienced team for the Corps 7s. The Team was led on the pitch by **Sig Nakanalagi**, supported by several more of his fellow Fijian countrymen and **Cpl 'Reg' Perrin**. **Capt Burdge** and **WO2 Roberts** were expecting a possible semi-final place. After successfully beating 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and 30 Sig Regt, there followed a closely-contested match against 15 Sig Regt, where **Sig Bibi** ran in a try with the last move of the match, to win the game. A quarter-final match against 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt beckoned, which the Regt comfortably won 24 – 0. The semi-final was to be against 21 Sig Regt (AS). Both teams demonstrated excellent 7s skills, and the match was in itself a spectacle. At the beginning of the first half, we did not touch the ball for four and a half minutes, as 21 Sig Regt dominated possession and demonstrated excellent retention skills. The Team finally gained some possession, and coming from behind won the match 14 – 12. The final against 2 Sig Regt was possibly a game too far for our young team, and the experienced team from York dominated the game both physically and mentally. But our Team were not to give up easily, and the

final was yet another excellent game to watch. 2 Sig Regt ran out winners 28 – 14. Yet another surprise at the presentation, was that **Sig Nakanalagi** had been voted by the Corps Committee and the officials as Player of the Tournament, a well deserved award.

Sig Nakanalagi receiving his 'Player of the tournament' award from Col Richardson MBE, President of Corps Rugby

ARMY RUGBY LEAGUE 9s COMPETITION, ALDERSHOT

After a successful Union season, the Rugby players of the Regt changed codes to League for the first competition of the League season. Expectation was not too high; we had an inexperienced league team, of which only 4 players had played league before. However, with the attitude of 'same shaped ball - can't be that hard', the lads set about their task. Led by **Cpl Rob Latham** and supported by **Cpl 'Mick' Jagger**, the Team narrowly lost to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt 10 – 12, and 1 Para 8 – 10. However, they scored a resounding victory over the KOBR, 24 – 0 to proceed into the Plate Competition, where they were to play an RLC select team in the semi-final. After a close and hard fought match, the Regt rubbed of the green, and scored with the last move of the game, **Cpl Rob Latham** using all his experience and skill to create something out of nothing. In the final, we were to meet the KOBR again, but nothing was to be taken for granted. Players were fatigued, and we were playing on a bigger pitch. But after an entertaining final, the Regt ran out comfortable winners.

Cpl Latham receiving the Plate Shield from Lt Col Bothell, Chairman Army Rugby League

ARMY

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

1 (TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj MP Parke**
SSM **WO2(SSM) L McGrail**

As usual it has been as busy as ever in ATR Lichfield. The Sqn has seen 5 new arrivals: **Lt Griffiths**, **Cpl Andrews** and **Cpl Dowson**, **Cpl Keith**, PARA, and **Cpl Collins**; and has said farewell to **Capt Hill**, **Cpl Lea**, **Cpl Slade**, **Sgt Cosgrove** and **Sgt Kama**.

During the last few months, the Sqn has upped its stakes in the Inter-Sqn competition, winning the Rugby and Regtl SAAM, showing the Sappers the true meaning of the word 'winners'!

MATHER TROOP CMS(R) COURSE, NOVEMBER 04 – FEBRUARY 05

Tp Comd **Capt Staples**
Tp Sgt **Cpl Hughes** PARA

The course assembled on the 15 November 04, 30 recruits strong. 14 weeks later, after various losses and gains of personnel and the Christmas leave period, Mather Tp passed out with a total of 28 recruits, including 2 Sappers. This was the first time that the trg team had worked together. The results were:

Best Recruit – **Sig Underhill**
Best Shot – **Spr Toynbee**
Drill and Turnout – **Sig Tait**
Best PT Results – **Sig Cole**
Most Improved – **Sig Nelson**

Overall, the course went well resulting in a first class pass out parade, which impressed even the RSM!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF ATR LICHFIELD - *by Cpl G Collins*

With my wife, unborn child and dog in tow, I arrived at ATR Lichfield just before Christmas to take over my married quarter. After a couple of weeks over the break relaxing and enjoying the silly season, I started my course at the Initial Trg Gp Instructor School on 10 January. The first week was good - a lot of new information to take in, mostly on coaching and the mentality of today's recruits, which I have since found extremely useful. Week Two consisted of a couple of days on ex, and being assessed on lessons, ranging from Fieldcraft to Alcohol and Obesity. Overall, I found the course hard work, but a good grounding on which to move forward into my first Tp, Waters Tp, 1 (Trg) Sqn.

Waters Tp were in Week Three of trg, so unfortunately, I had missed the majority of the Skill at Arms lessons. So my first week in work was spent trying to find my feet, but with help from the other NCOs in the Tp, I settled in nicely. Over the next couple of weeks, I simply watched and learned, observing how things were done, asking questions when I was unsure - and of course, getting a few things wrong. I was in the fortunate position that there were three other Section Comds in the Tp, and I could shadow each of them, taking what I thought was good from each. Some people, when they arrive, do not have that luxury.

It is now 4 April, the Tp had their Pass Off Parade on Thursday, and the time has flown by. With time to recollect, it has been extremely busy, and the hours very long. However, it has most certainly been fun. Helping recruits slowly but surely turn into soldiers is a very satisfying, if not tiring, job. If I were to give any advice to anyone thinking of asking to be posted to ATR Lichfield, from my short time here, it would be this. You are under the microscope whenever you are near any of the recruits, therefore you must be a role model for them and set the highest standards of turnout, and instruction at all times. If you are here, you must be prepared to put both the time and effort into your Section; if not, you are not giving your recruits the best start to their career and therefore, you are letting them down. Finally, enjoy it. If you are determined not to, it will be a long two-year posting for both you and your family.

CORE VALUES – *by Capt Staples*

As well as teaching the recruits the practical side of soldiering, one of the aims of ATR is to get the recruits to embrace the Core Values as described in ADP5 Soldiering – The Military Values. 'Core Values?' I hear you question, 'I remember hearing something about that...' In case you can't remember, here is a quick synopsis taken from ADP 5:

Selfless Commitment Upon joining the Army, we accept an open-ended commitment to serve whenever and wherever we are required. To a degree, this imposes certain limitations on individual freedoms. Selfless commitment is reflected in the wording of the Oath of Allegiance, in which we agree to subordinate our own interests to those of our Unit, the Army, and the Nation.

Courage There are two types of courage, physical and moral. Physical courage is the courage required to carry out an allocated task whilst you or your comrades are in personal danger. Moral courage is the courage required to do what is right, even though it may be unpopular, and insisting on maintaining the highest standards of decency and behaviour at all times. Both types of courage create the strength upon which fighting spirit and success on operations depend.

Discipline Discipline is what holds soldiers together when under pressure. 'At its best, it is instilled and maintained by pride in oneself, in one's Unit and in one's profession; only at its worst by fear of punishment' - *The Good Soldier*, **FM Earl Wavell**. In training, we aim to teach the recruits self-discipline. **Integrity** All forms of deceit and dishonesty constitute a lack of integrity, and therefore, call into question whether an individual can be relied upon. Trust is balanced carefully upon integrity, and any demonstration of a lack of integrity can result in tension between the team, thus reducing its effectiveness.

Loyalty Loyalty goes both up and down the rank structure, and is what transforms individuals into teams. The Military Covenant describes the loyalty obligations of the system to the individual, of those in authority to their subordinates and the requirement for subordinates to be faithful to their leaders, their team and their duty.

Respect for others Along with the responsibility of bearing arms and using lethal force, comes the necessity for all soldiers to act properly under the law, and to maintain the highest standards of decency and a sense of justice at all times, and to all people, even in the most difficult of conditions.

The best way of getting the recruits to take these values on board is through their instructors living, breathing and aspiring to the Core Values - which is what we aim to do.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

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) B Gillies**

THE RUGBY SEVENS

After an indifferent 15-a-side season, where we had played 17, and won 5 matches, the Regtl Rugby Team decided to try its hand at 7-a-side competitions instead.

The NI Sevens at Limavady RUFC on 16 March, and the Corps Sevens on 18 March in Cardiff looked like the perfect competitions to redeem ourselves. So we used the NI Sevens as trg and prep for the main event in Cardiff. The first two games were against 2RRF and 2RGJ. We lost both, which gave the Team excellent trg at standing under the posts. Armed with the knowledge gained after these two games, we then played 2RIR and 5AAC, winning both. All team members now had a much clearer idea of the positional and tactical play of seven-a-side Rugby.

After administering ourselves back in Lisburn, and collecting the female team, we embarked on the long journey to Cardiff, beginning with the overnight ferry to Liverpool. Being rocked gently to sleep on the ferry, our first stop was for a meal.

Everyone agreed that we should take full advantage of the Pizza Hut lunchtime buffet offer, in preparation for the matches ahead.

In Cardiff, the Corps Sevens kicked off with pool stages, our Team narrowly losing two and winning one match.

This placed us in the Plate Competition, and having won the Quarter-finals and the Semi-finals, we were in with a chance against 21 Sig Regt (AS) (B) in the Final. After a hard-fought game, we won the Plate Competition, 12 points to 10.

The other Regtl representatives at Cardiff were the Female Team captained by **LCpl Nikki Horton**. Their first game was against 2 Sig Regt, and with the girls winning 15 points to nil, this placed them in the Final. 21 Sig Regt (AS) were the opponents to beat, but they had a lot more experience than 15 Sig Regt.

It was a well-fought battle, and 21 Sig Regt (AS) came out as the victors, 15 points to nil. However, all was not lost, as the girls had gained a lot of experience from the competition.

The Men's Team. Back Row: Sig Bolton, Sgt Powell, Sgt Smith, LCpl Morris, Sig McLeod, and LCpl Howe. Front Row: SSgt Miller, Cpl Trimble, LCpl Mclachlan, and SSgt Lawer

INTER-TROOP FOOTBALL - THE MCKELVIE CUP

On 1 April, Romeo Tp entered a team into the annual Sqn Football Competition as part of the McKelvie Cup. As commitments are high, it took a lot to scrape a team together, but finally **Cpl Paul Smith** managed it, even though the back five had a combined age of 250, (which is only ten short of last years team!) The team tried their hardest, even allowing **Cpl Nikki Harrison** to show all the boys how to play, and almost ending the football career of **Sgt 'Flan' Flanighan** before it ever started!

After taking an early lead beating India Tp 2-1, our winning streak stopped dead; we went on to loose the next two games, to Tm Tp (1-0) and to NCC (2-1). Tm Tp were the eventual winners (hats off to them). Unfortunately Romeo Tp managed to pull off only third place. Never mind guys, there's always the Athletics!

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AR Fawcett**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) MJR Wakeling**

EXERCISE INVIERNO BLANCO – SKIING IN ANDORRA

EX INVIERNO BLANCO was 15 Sig Regt's AT Exped held over the period of 19 February – 06 March 2005. The ex was conducted in the Pas De La Casa resort of Andorra. It consisted of two one-week packages, the aim of which was to introduce Regtl personnel to Alpine Skiing and complete the Basic Ski Proficiency (BSP).

On Day One we were split down into our groups, one novice group and one intermediate group. We then continued to carry out the admin that inevitably comes with any military activity. We were shown to our rooms in The Residence Hotel Catalunya, a deluxe hotel with two- or three-man rooms.

The facilities included a restaurant, café and of course, a bar, with Sky TV for the important Champion League games.

At breakfast each morning we 'borrowed' croissants for our lunch. We were then fitted with our ski equipt and then straight onto the slopes. For the majority of us, this wasn't for the first time. Some great demonstrations of how not to ski came from the Intermediate group. Apparently turning is an integral part of skiing, and going fast and straight down the hill is just dangerous. Most of us mastered the basics by Day Three or Four. However, there were a few wipe-outs.

By the fourth and fifth day, we were building up our abilities and confidence, and even a few of the beginner groups were plucking up the courage to tackle the black slopes. On the last afternoon, all groups met up to try a few jumps and to take an opportunity to ski together. We went on to the freestyle park and kickers jump. Most people wiped out. We did a second jump, which if you caught it right, gave some good air.

I would like to say thanks to **Capt Abigail Parkinson**, who showed us how to party, and **Sgt Sharman**, who both helped organise the exped and instruct the beginners. Also thanks for the excellent tuition received by all the instructors. It not only gave the beginners an insight into skiing, but also improved the skiing levels of the intermediate skiers. Overall, a thoroughly enjoyable and excellent exped.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Hanby**
SSM	**SSgt(SSM) C Chambers**

THE 24 HOUR ROWATHON - *by Capt K Bermingham*

A few months ago, **Cpl Carl Lamonby** and **Capt Katie Bermingham** were tasked with organising a sponsored 24-hr event in aid of meningitis research. With everyone back from Christmas leave carrying an extra stone or two in weight, we decided on a Rowathon. **Cpl Lamonby** and **Capt Bermingham** began organising everything, from the venue to collection pots and advertising.

The day of the Rowathon came, and the twelve rowers were set, rowing four 30-min stints throughout the 24-hr period. The CO kicked us off in the gym, setting a distance to beat of 7,816km. It became everybody's personal goal to beat this distance. **Sgt Powell** came closest with 7,493kms. It got to the 12 hr point, and still the CO led, so **Sig Grant** and **Sig Beesley** decided to row fifteen mins each in the thirty minute period.

Two young fit lads, no problem. But between them, they managed to cover only 7,345kms, which was not even good enough to beat **Sgt Powell's** effort. He was delighted that two people nearly ten years his junior could not beat him, even when they combined their efforts. With most of the rowers already on their third or fourth stint of rowing, it was clear that the CO was not going to be toppled from his perch.

Another shock result was that **Sgt Wade** managed to out row **WO2(YofS) Goodenough**, much to everybody's consternation and mirth.

The final total raised was in excess of £800. It was presented to **Marianne** from the Meningitis Research Foundation at the Peake Inn, where everyone enjoyed a well-earned drink to recover.

40 (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col SD Hodges**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Abson**

THE 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE YOUNG OFFICER STUDY WEEKEND – *by Lt Cara Girvan*

31 Sig Regt organised an excellent Young Offr Trg Weekend at Longmoor Camp. One Young Offr and 3 OCdts attended from 40 Sig Regt (V), and all thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from the busy weekend.

The first morning consisted of a number of briefs, including a thought provoking discussion on the Officer's moral contract. After lunch, we headed outside for some sword drill. After this physical activity, it was back into the warmth of the lecture theatre for a talk by **Richard Noble**. This was a very interesting account of how the British Team outshone the Americans through their excellent teamwork.

Next was the Capability Demonstration; many TA units had come down to Longmoor and set up their equipt. Unfortunately it was rushed, and we probably didn't take in as much as we would have liked. Then it was into the Officers' Mess for a chat from none other than **Kate Adie**. She was an excellent speaker, and talked about two things – Women in the Army and Media Today. She was quite controversial, and provided plenty of fuel for debate that evening at the Mess Dinner. Being sensible, we were all in bed for around 01.00hrs, in preparation for the morning's activities, which rumour had it, would involve a log run. The rumours were true!

In two teams, we ran a couple of miles out onto the trg area, where we picked up the logs and ran them back in. The aim of the task was to build a gun and fire it, so once back on the drill square, we received maps and instructions to go back out to the trg area to recover the remaining parts of the gun! Hard work, but good bonding and teamwork, and the sun was shining. Unfortunately, the four NI members had to sneak off early to get our flight home. This was probably our incentive to finish the task quicker, as we happened to be in the winning team!

Thanks very much to 31 Sig Regt for putting on the excellent weekend.

GUN PULL– EXERCISE EXECUTIVE STRETCH REHEARSAL *– by Maj Ian Craig*

This year the Regt has been tasked by HQ 107 (U) Bde to organise EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH. Naturally, a rehearsal weekend was required. Teams of eight soldiers from TA units across the Province assembled on a cold and blustery weekend (no surprise there) at Magilligan Trg Camp, to participate in the weekend's activities.

The weather was no deterrent to those who had made the effort, and all gave their best efforts in each of the stands - even the raft race! There were some dodgy looking vessels constructed that would certainly not get a seaworthiness certificate, but none were to sink - very much. If construction skills were not in abundance, then neither was command and control. A bit of left-right confusion provided some entertainment during the blind Landrover push, where instructions needed to be passed to the unsighted driver to enable the team to complete the course.

A similar event was the comd task, where the Team was blindfolded, leaving just one person to control the build of a 12x12. Again, some good entertainment was evident, especially from **Cpl James**, who competed in a parallel competition on his own, chasing a 12x12 over the ranges as the wind carried it away, leaving bits and pieces everywhere.

One of the more popular activities was the Casevac scenario, probably because of the abuse heaped on the unfortunate casualties in the name of treatment. The final evacuation was via a Puma, kindly provided by the RAF, who pitched up and gave everyone an aerial trip around the Camp.

The Regtl Team deserves a mention for their efforts at clay pigeon shooting. Cartridges were awarded for skill in a memory game. Our Team won 35 out of a maximum of 40 cartridges, the best in the competition, but their marksmanship did not live up to their earlier success, leaving them well down the list in this event. They fared much better when it came to the comms stand, much to the relief of the CO and Trg Maj.

Landrover Pull. The 40 Sig Regt team in the final competition, trying different ways of bump starting the green fleet

The final event was a gun pull. This was necessarily staged on the Sunday morning after suitable Saturday evening socialising. The guns, looking suspiciously like snatches, were pulled by the teams through an obstacle course as quickly as possible. Some teams were disadvantaged by the dubious driving ability of 85 Sqn's SQMS, who, judging by the number of three point turns he seemed to need, must have thought he was driving an articulated lorry. All teams enjoyed the event, with the team from 204 Field Hospital (V) being the winners.

EXERCISE FINN McCOUL ADVANCE 2005 – *By Sgt Palmer*

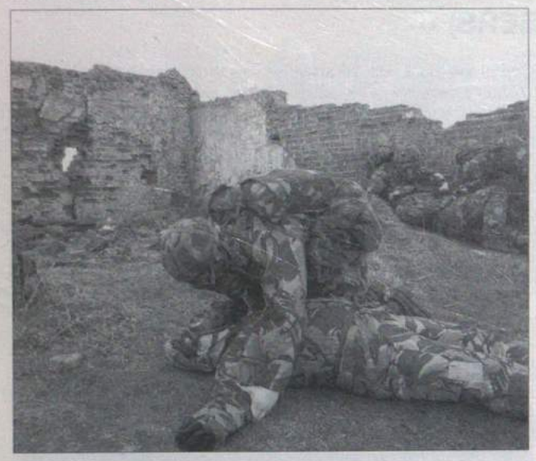
40 Sig Regt know they are in for extra hard trg when **SSgt Witham** is left to organise the weekend - and true to fashion, he did not let us down. The weekend was a combination of bounty qualification and a march and shoot competition for the XL Trophy.

Friday night and all day Saturday was weapon handling, ranges, first aid, NBC and recognition. The organisation of the weekend, and the chosen instructors, made the trg very interesting for all, and the day seemed to fly by. It wasn't long before the trg had finished, and we were all in the Officers' Mess for a Regtl get together with a very successful quiz run by **WO2(YofS) Wolf**.

Sunday was a different kettle of fish. No time to relax or hang around - it was competition time! With the stands ready to go, it was time for the teams to start the march and shoot.

First up was a Mil Skills quiz, which 69 Sig Sqn won, even with **LCpl Black**, a Corps piper not knowing the name of the Corps March. It was then a march with full kit to the next stand, First Aid, run by 85 Sig Sqn. This stand was well laid out, and proved

to be a challenging task for all. We put our heads together and managed to pull off our second win of the day, with all the casualties treated and evacuated to safety.



Checking NBC casualties during the March and Shoot competition

Then it was back on the road for another march to our next challenge, an NBC stand run by 69 Sig Sqn. Not much pressure here - or so we thought! Again, the stand was well laid out, and proved to be as, or even more challenging than the First Aid stand. With a set time limit, we had to be in full NBC kit, rescue 3 casualties, and retrieve a box of documents. The Team would like to thank **SSgt Ritchie** for the extra weight he put in the box. Your kind gesture will not be forgotten - watch your back. This stand gave us our third win of the day, which only left the shoot.

After another march, it was on the range for a six-round shoot. Targets will fall when hit - only not in our case. With 3 wins under our belt, the task of making it 4 out of 4 was too much, and we managed to hit only half of our targets. Thank you to the team members who did manage to score

The weekend finished with a parade where the final scores were given out. 69 Sig Sqn managed to get 1st place by 1 point from 85 Sig Sqn, with 66 Sig Sqn coming in third.

READY, STEADY, COOK! – *by Mary Hodges*

Jamie Oliver sent his apologies, but the local Rector, **Rev John McDowell**, and the CO tried very hard to be 'pukka' chefs in his place.

The Cooking team. The CO, Siobhan O'Connell and Rev John McDowell of St Mark's Church

On Saturday 2 April, the Regtl Supporters Club helped to organise a 'Ready Steady Cook' night as entertainment for the guys and girls who were working for the weekend. Of course, there was the side order of raising cash too.

A cookery book called *XL at Cooking* was produced and was hot off the press, full of excellent recipes, all of which could be prepared and cooked in less than half an hour. So after weeks of planning, the stage was set by the Irish Livestock and Meat Commission, and many members of St Mark's congregation were sitting in the Drill Hall waiting to watch.

With some trepidation, the Rector and CO donned their whites (in this case, green aprons), and the cookery started. The first dish to be prepared was ravioli and meatballs.

There was some fierce heat, both from the participants and the cookers that had been brought into the hall, but the fun and jokes blended easily. With garlic cloves flying, they were on to the second dish, beef stroganoff. To much cheering, and in no time at all, the studio audience was invited to taste the creations, and all too soon, it was time to wash up.

Given that the Rector had extra help on his side, and despite Hell's Kitchen, the two trainee chefs acquitted themselves honourably, and no one felt ill after eating the samples. The whole episode was recorded, so stand by for excerpts being sold at huge prices on E-bay.

Jamie might not have been there in person, but he would have been proud to see such healthy food being created and promoted by the Army and the Church.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

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

MONRO CUP 2005

Suddenly, without warning, the dull beep of yet another incoming e-mail drew my attention to the monitor, and there it was, 'Warning Order Monro Cup 2005.' At last, some good mil trg to get stuck into. However, as with all things, it soon became apparent that getting a team together was going to be slightly more challenging than first thought. The FofE showed that the Unit was also going to be simultaneously deployed on three exs, as well as manpower being required to provide all the G4 support, in addition to setting up the event and manning the Stats Tent. After some quick planning, it seemed the easiest thing to do was to hand the problem over to a SNCO, and absolve myself of all responsibility. With **Sgt Rouchy** firmly at the helm, ably assisted by **Cpl Pears**, a programme was put together, and the search for 30 'volunteers' began in earnest. As the event approached, the final RSM's inspection revealed that, with half a dozen soldiers called in early from leave, superb support from **WO2 Connaughton**, and stripping the Sqn bare of all able bodied WOs and SNCOs, the Team was ready to attack the Monro Cup. **Capt Alex Senneck**, just back from his three weeks in New Zealand on a CS cricket tour, volunteered as the only officer in the Team, and was ready to lead us into battle.

213 Sig Sqn's Monro Cup Team on the march

With 17kg in our Bergens, the event began with a fi-mile jog to the first event, a sand bag carry of 100m. The stronger members of the team collected two sandbags each, with **Capt Senneck** leading the way. As we all formed up back on the track, the OPsO was heard to whisper 'Give me 100m, RSM, as I had the heaviest sand bags!' After the OPsO had recovered, the pace was picked up, until we reached the dreaded beach. This proved to be particularly energy sapping, especially as we had an extra Bergen to carry due to a soldier already suffering at this early stage of the competition - not a good sign. **WO2(FofS) Walsh** and **WO2 Connaughton** decided that the best option was for them to carry the Bergen between them for most of the way, and ran on ahead to join **WO2(RQMS) Sheard**, who at this stage was practically carrying the weary soldier.

With **Cpl Pears** setting the pace, and the WOs leading from the front, the team eventually made it to the next stand, the tyre flip. 10 tyres to be flipped a distance of 50m after the sapping sand was challenging for some of the team, especially on the lower back. However, this task was completed with relative ease, and a short jog brought the team to the next stand. This was a run of 1km with 5 stretchers, at this stage, the stronger members were beginning to come to the fore. With the OPsO and the RSM providing extreme vocal motivation, the team finally made it in good time to the final stand of the march, a 100m leopard crawl in full kit. No one was looking forward to this one! With the RQMS completing the crawl faster than an actual leopard, it was left to us remaining 29 mortals to struggle through. **SSgt James** and **Cpl Pears** showed good form, completing the crawl quickly, with the RSM using his 21 years of March and Shoot experience, playing to the Referee and getting away with the very occasional baby crawl, rather than the textbook method. With **Cpl Fisher** and **Sig Wilbor** displaying real grit and determination, the task was completed in 15 mins, leaving a short recovery tab to the finish. The shoot phase of the competition again demonstrated the Unit's lack of time on the ranges, especially when trying to compete against Inf units.

This competition again provided good experience for the younger soldiers to build on for the future, brought home when **Sig Wilbor** was heard to comment to the OC, 'Ma'am, that was the hardest thing I have ever done!' The RSM retorted, 'You need to get out more, Son.' That is certainly the plan for next year.

MERCURY CUP TOUGH GUY COMPETITION – *by Sig Kingan*

11 March saw the start of the Mercury Cup Competition in NI, with the opening event, the Tough Man. The event was held at Thiepval Bks, Lisburn, on a traditionally overcast NI Friday morning.

The event itself consisted of a Landrover push for 20 mins around the bks, followed by a bleep test, then a 2fi mile stretcher race carrying a 90kg stretcher, and the final event, a 30-min (as many laps as you can) swimming marathon.

The Team unfortunate enough to be selected was **Lt Halstead**, **WO2(RQMS) Sheard**, **Cpls Darlington**, **Pears**, **Moffat**, **Smith** and **Milevsky**, and **Sig Kingan**.

The first event started at 10.45hrs, with the Rover push. The Team's strategy was to split into two teams of four, and push in turn. Surprisingly, the strategy not only worked, but saw us win the event by a good 50 metres.

The Team then moved on (slowly) over to the Air Hall for the bleep test. Just before the event started, the RQMS laid down the challenge: the first person to drop out would buy the beers at the end of the day! This was hugely inspiring, and the Team pulled out all stops, to do well. **Cpl Pears** volunteered for beer duty, with a respectable level 8 achieved, while **Cpl Darlington** made 'Jimmy' proud, with a stunning level 11.

In between collapsing and putting on their boots, the Team was bussed to the Leisure Centre, where they were to start the stretcher race. Questions must be raised as to what was in the Team's water supply, as they destroyed all opposition, finishing 30 secs ahead of the other teams.

The swimming event took place in the Indoor Pool, and involved teams completing maximum laps per person in 30 minutes. There was also a burden to be taken along (a dummy), and each lap with it was worth extra points. The final event showed the Team's determination to do well, with each individual digging in to do their best. **Cpl Moffat** deserves a mention, as he spent most of the 30 minutes on the side of the pool with cramp!

The presentations took place that afternoon, where it was announced that the Team had won the first and third events, and had come second in the second and last events. This proved to more than enough for 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) to take home the Trophy.

EXERCISE FREEZING FINN – *by LCpl Street*

We left the camp at 19.00hrs on 4 March 05, under the leadership of **Cpl J Russell**, chief organiser for the ex. We were all set for the 2,000-mile round trip to Hinderlang, Bavaria, for what was for some participants, their first chance to try down-hill skiing. The journey was to take us to Birkenhead, to Dover, to Calais, to Brüggen for an overnight stop, then straight to Hinderlang.

Arriving at 17.00hrs on the Sunday, we went to be fitted with skis and boots. We met our hosts, **Chesty** and **Tina**, and then settled down for dinner and a good night's sleep before the next days' events.

On Monday, we headed straight for the slopes and divided ourselves into two groups. One group would have lessons with

The 213 Sig Sqn group cooling it in the snow

Andy Smith, while the other group would go and recap on what they already knew. The group with **Andy** was then taken through the very basics of skiing. With every one in the group making good progress, we headed for lunch at 11.00hrs. After lunch, the slopes were a little quieter, because all the Germans have their lunch at 12.00hrs. After a few more lessons on things such as turning and stopping, we were sent off on our own to consolidate what we had learned through the day.

At the end of each day, we had dinner at 18.00hrs, and then the evening was ours. The bar was run by **Chesty's** son, **Matt**. He made us feel welcome, and suggested a few good places down town that we could go to relax after a hard day on the slopes.

By Wednesday, we were all skiing really well, and decided to go off-piste. This turned out to be one of the most memorable days, as the powder was sometimes deeper than we were tall. We proceeded to spend much of the day either gliding over, or buried under the snow, depending on ability levels. All injuries were minor, and all spectacular crashes were, of course, entirely deliberate.

Thursday was the red run day. As we had been on only green and blue runs for the first three days, we now had a chance to sort the boys from the men. At this point, the injuries started coming in thick and fast, but we all ploughed on (or in), and enjoyed ourselves.

On Thursday evening, the group went night skiing. Not many incidents, but all was enjoyed. On Friday evening, **Andy Smith** told us which level we had obtained in our ski proficiency. Everybody managed to get the Basic, and a few people the Advanced. With the skiing finished, we headed to a neighbouring town to take in some of the local culture for the last time. A good time was had by all. We handed in our skis, and then headed back to the buses for the trek home.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DP Sheerin MBE**

MERCURY CUP TEAM PHYSICAL CHALLENGE COMPETITION - *by Cpl Thorpe*

Due to heavy work commitments, trg for this year's TOUGHMAN Competition began only three weeks prior to the actual event. The activities in the competition were the Land Rover Push, Bleep Test, Stretcher Race and Endurance Swim. Each activity had to be completed back to back, so it was not an easy competition to prepare for in the given time-frame.

With the volunteers who came forward from the Sqn, it became apparent that we were quite a small team, and were not built for pushing Land Rovers! So, being a bunch of whippets, it was decided to focus on the strengths the team had, which were the Bleep Test and the Endurance Swim.

This theory paid off, as the overall standard from the team improved over the three weeks. With a little strength trg in the programme as well, the Team was ready mentally and physically for the Competition.

On the day, the team comprised **Lt Reid**, **Sgt Matthews**, **Cpl Thorpe**, **LCpl Hawkes**, **LCpl Potts**, **LCpl Rankin**, **LCpl Walker** and **Pte Ball** RLC.

We turned up in Lisburn fired up and in the right frame of mind. The Team put in an excellent performance, coming first in the Bleep Test and joint second in the Endurance Swim, with an overall position of third out of five teams.

Only the team that came first received a trophy, so we couldn't take anything back to Ballykelly to show off our achievements. However, the Team should be commended for their efforts throughout. Well done!

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt AK Reid**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Love**

Following another hectic period for the Tp, it looks equally as busy for the April period. Despite the massive workload, we still managed to emerge undefeated from the OC's Shield Volleyball Tournament, and are now looking forward to the next event (Hockey) in April.

We are finally beginning to approach full manning, and warmly welcome **Sgt Burr** fresh and **Cpl Crooks** from their Class 1 Courses. We also welcome **Sig Higgins** from 14 Sig Regt (EW). Also a big congratulations to **Cpl Donaldson**, who has successfully completed the 1 RBY Sig Sqn course. He will be a sad loss to the Tp, but we wish him all the best for the future.

We would also like to thank **Cpl Banes** and **Sig Ward** from 15 Sig Regt for contributing to the Tp during their one-month attachment.

This was during the busy March period, and they certainly made a difference. Good luck to **Cpl Banes** for his marriage to **Sgt Gilmour** in May, and all the best to **Sig Ward** on his golfing career!

Sig Sheenan now has his arm in a plaster cast, and is having a word with himself after recently attempting his own version of the Royal Signals White Helmets selection course. We wish him a speedy recovery!

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt JD Landreth**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fitzgerald**

We say goodbye to **Cpl King**, posted to Cyprus, **Cpl Margrie** and **Sig Beasley** to 7 Sig Regt, and to **LCpl Humble** to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. We are happy to welcome **Sig Reynolds** who is posted into the Tp straight from the Factory.

MT TROOP

MTWO **WO2 A Stronach**
MT SSgt **SSgt S Williams**

MT life remains as busy as ever. As we go to press, the Sqn has just completed a Battle Camp ex, on Catterick Trg Area. I am sure that all the funny stories will be out for the next edition.

Congratulations to **Sig Bryant** on his marriage to **Katie**. We welcome **Katie** to Northern Ireland and wish them good luck for the future. It seems that just as Z Type accn is introduced, everyone rushes off to get married, with **LCpl Axtell** and **Sig Jones** due to tie the knot in the next few weeks.

Congratulations to **LCpl Steel** on his recent promotion to Cpl, and to **Sig Axtell** on promotion to LCpl.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

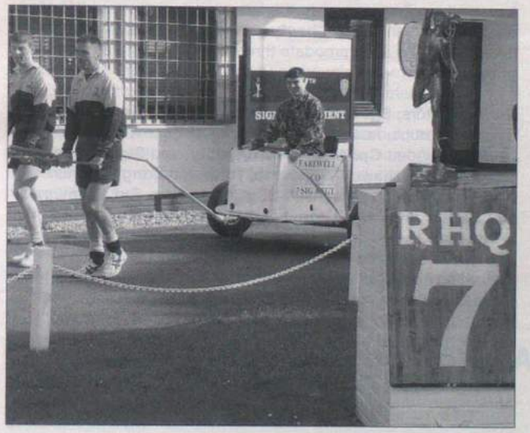
CO **Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

7 Sig Regt has started its operational deployments for the year, with a Tp from 232 Sqn already in Shaibah, and with further reinforcements to 12 Mech Bde and Sig Sqn in Basrah. 229 Sig Sqn are completing trg and preparation for their deployment to the Balkans, whilst remaining elements of 232 Sig Sqn round off their trg prior to their tour in Baghdad.

HQ Sqn took the lead in organising this year's highly successful Brüggen 10 road race, and the Regt remains committed to its high levels of participation and excellence in the sporting arena. The Tug of War Team are training for this season's major events and the Football Team are in the Army Cup semi-finals.

The past few months have seen some new faces arrive in RHQ, **Lt Col Graham Norton** has handed over to **Lt Col AR Blackwell**. Just to ensure he left with a flourish, **Lt Col Norton's** last day was marked by an enthusiastic (and slightly uncoordinated) aerobic session for the Regt.

This was followed by an address from the outgoing CO, during which he presented a number of medals and one overdue Christmas card. The Regt then lined the route, as the Regtl Tug of War Team pulled **Lt Col Norton** out of Maresfield Lines on a 'chariot'. We wish him all the best in his new job at Upavon.



Lt Col Norton leaves in style

We also bid farewell to **WO1(RSM) AH Manktelow**, posted on commissioning to take on the job of RCMO in York. **Capt Manktelow** will be sorely missed throughout Javelin Bks, particularly by the Regimental Tug of War Team, after his two years in the chair. The Regt extends a warm welcome to **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin** and his wife **Jenny**, posted in from 15 Sig Regt. We hope you enjoy your tour here in Elmpt.

The Brüggen 10 mile road race, hosted by the Regt. Saw over 700 runners, including a number of fancy dress teams, competing in both the junior race and the main event, with money being raised for charity. **Sig Haggi Chepkwony** from 21 Sig Regt (AS) was the overall winner, with a time of 50 mins 40 secs, which is only 1 min 8 secs outside the all-time course record. But he ran on a windy course and on an injured leg!

The Baton is passed, WO1 (RSM) Manktelow hands over to WO1 (RSM) Lappin

ELMPT STATION CADRE COURSE (ESCC)

After months of planning and preparation, the ESCC finally started. On a brisk February morning, the student's first parade was with full BCFT equipment. The QMSI stepped out of the gym to conduct the mandatory weigh in, and two hours later all the students successfully crossed the finish line and the course had well and truly begun.

Day Two started with an inspection by 16 Sig Regt RSM, **WO1(RSM) Renshaw**. Those students not up to standard were

Students enjoying a relaxing stroll through the woodland on Week 1 of the course

introduced to the SNCO IC drill, **Sgt 'Mo' Morrison**. The troops then continued with the day's trg and then they paraded for their first battle PT session. This was ideal for the DS to identify the fitter and more natural leaders, but it was also a stark reminder for the students of what was to come over the next couple of weeks. The remainder of the first week was completed with the entire course vastly improving their military knowledge, leadership and physical stamina.

Week Two started with the deployment from Elmpt Station to ATA Haltern/Lavesum for EX SHAKE-OUT. This ex was designed to do exactly what it said on the tin, and also allow **Lt Stubbs** (Pl Comd) and **Sgt Doyle** (Pl Sgt) to pass on their knowledge in a more belt-buckle environment. After 36 hrs of instruction and cold weather acclimatisation, the course returned to ATA Haltern/Borkenberge for some much-needed turn-around.

After turnaround, the temperature plummeted in readiness for EX FIRST STEP. The students went onto prepare their orders and deliver them back to the DS, after which, the troops deployed onto the ground. Pl HQ had already established a snap ambush where we were expecting the sections to RV. Eventually the sections started to trickle in, having forgotten all passwords and code-words, infuriating the Pl Sgt and four already very frustrated Section Cpls. Later that evening, the harbour was established and the routine began. The following morning the temperature was -10° C.

That evening, we managed a complete extraction of all personnel and equipt in a very competitive time. The course then went on to complete more patrols, gaining sufficient info to be able to launch a deliberate attack on the enemy. The potential Top Field Soldiers were made section comds for this attack, to prove their metal. The final attack went very well, and after the re-org, the casualties transformed from humans to our metal friends – the stretchers. There was then a 1.2km race to the HLS for a heli-bedford pickup and ENDEX was called.

Upon return to camp, the students rehearsed for their Pass-off Parade, under the ever-watchful eye of the drill instructors. The Parade went very well, with Comd 1 Sig Bde inspecting the Course and promoting the Top Student, **Sig Morrison** to LCpl. That evening, the end of course dinner was held in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess and the following awards were made:

Top Student	**LCpl Morrison** 16 Sig Regt.
Top Field Soldier	**LCpl Morrison** 16 Sig Regt.
Most Improved Student	**Sig Holmes** 16 Sig Regt.
Best Section	1 Section

Well done to all the above on their achievements, and a massive well done to all the students on completion of a very difficult cadre course.

EXERCISE OMAHA JAVELIN 2

Exercise Omaha Javelin 2 was a three-day Battlefield Tour of Bayeux, Normandy Beaches and Arnhem.

Participants departed Elmpt Station at a very early hour on a cold Tuesday morning and started their very lengthy journey to Bayeux. Upon arrival, we dropped off our kit, and were soon off to the Memorial Museum. The atmosphere was one of humour until the events of OP OVERLORD began to sink in.

After the tour of the Museum and a few photos, we made our way to the Memorial Cemetery. I personally found this a very sobering experience, and I was quite taken aback by just how many young people sacrificed their lives during the Operation. From the mood upon departure, I think this feeling was reflected by everybody else.

The following day started with a visit to Gold Beach, the scene of the British landings on D-Day. We all watched a 20-min film of the landings, and this really did make everybody silent. After a visit around a few gun positions and a walk on the beach, it was then time to head for Arnhem.

Members of the Training Wing outside the Memorial Museum at Bayeux

After a brief stopover in Brussels, the team arrived at Arnhem late on the Thursday morning. We spent a good few hours walking around the Airborne Museum, where we looked at the intricate planning that went into OP MARKET GARDEN and pondered the thought of how a similar operation would be conducted with our modern day army. Eventually, time got the better of us, and we had to leave for the short journey back to Elmpt Station.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MR Bever**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) G Dixon**

RADIO TROOP SKIING TRIP - *by Sig Docherty*

An excited bunch left the Bistro at 09:00hrs on Sunday, 20 April, bound for Bavaria and the much-anticipated week's skiing, organised by **Sgt Stu Stanway**.

It was a long 7-hr journey to the lodge, and we were greeted by our host – a man called **Chesty**. We were put into shared billets, large enough to accommodate three of us, and with a great view of the slopes.

Our instructors, **Sgt Matt Thomas** and **Cpl Jo Freeman** split us into 2 groups, based on our previous skiing experience. The novices included **Cpl Mee**, **LCpl Chaisty**, and **Sigs Archer**, **Atherton**, **Northam**, **Chesworth**, **Pitts** and **Long**; the more experienced group comprised **SSgt Chapman**, **Sgt Stanway**, **Cpl Richardson**, **Cpl Lyon**, **LCpl Moss**, and **Sigs Telford** and **Whittaker**.

The skiing itself was fantastic fun, after a few hesitant starts in some cases, and lots of falling over. We all gained quite a lot from the instruction, including how to turn properly by doing parallel turns, and how to balance on one ski. We were shown different techniques too, and were actually half-decent by the end of the week! We all really enjoyed ourselves and would easily go back again – next year?

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON

BAGHDAD TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt P Stubbs**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Hulse**

With the impending deployment on OP TELIC 6, Delta Tp was disbanded on 18 March and Baghdad Tp was formed in its place. With OPTAG trg complete, the Tp has 3 aims for its trg prior to deployment. Firstly to develop team spirit, secondly to continue on the OPTAG trg to create Tp SOPs, and finally to prepare for a worst-case scenario. The whole Tp is looking forward to the deployment and the chance to get out the garages for once.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col PW Glibbery**

238 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ian Dobson**
SSM	**WO2 J Cordery**

EXERCISE LONDON SABRE 4 – 7 FEBRUARY 05
- by Cpl Haworth and Cpl Rowland

On a bitter winter February weekend, the Sqn deployed to St Martins Plain for a few days of 'back to basics' trg. The weekend was to consist of such things as harbour drills, OPs and every soldier's favourite, section attacks.

The Pl Comd, **Capt Wilson**, briefed her troops prior to deploying onto the area, and gave everyone the morale boost they needed. A few hrs into the ex, our resident PTI, **Dave Brown**, fell victim to the arctic conditions. He was evacuated off the area, but he did return on the last day to join in on the final attack.

Despite section sizes dropping, everyone did their bit in the harbour area, and a two-hr lonely stag became default for the troops. That night came the first activity of the weekend, with six-hr OPs on separate locs. One OP, led by **Cpl Hallway,** came a little too close to the oncoming enemy for his liking. Thankfully, due to the knowledge he had gained from a lesson taught on the ITD camp previously, he was able skilfully to evade the enemy.

After the first night blues, everyone was ready for a full day's action on the Saturday. And what better way to start than a change of scenery, as we moved harbour locs from one side of the trg area to the other. As we had not come under any contact, and being nearly half way through the ex, there was a certain feeling that we were in for a scare.

Sure enough, the expected 'scare' came mid-afternoon in the form of an ambush. The platoon reacted immediately by returning fire, and giving cover for the advancing fire teams led by the Pl Comd. It wasn't long before the enemy could be seen withdrawing from the ambush, and victory was ours! As night fell, the majority of the Pl was sent out on high-visibility patrols and more OPs till the early hours.

On the final morning of the weekend, the Pl was given their final orders from the Pl Comd. The plan was to destroy the enemy's base loc and kill (but not really) any enemy soldiers. On the approach to the assault, there was an evident spring in everyone's step, as we were almost positive this would be the final action of the weekend.

However, the Pl still approached with the situation with the same importance as they had the day before. And as the day before, they destroyed the enemy and their HQ. After all casualties had been rounded up and ammo had been counted, ENDEX was eventually called.

Overall, the weekend was a complete success, and apart from a few blisters here and there, everyone seemed to have enjoyed it as we travelled back up the M20 to London.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Nik Beecher**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Pete Nealis**

A very busy time for all involved here at 251 Sig Sqn. We've split from those Civvy type people. The Ops room staff and the Tech Wksps now reside up the road in DOK Bks.

The stores personnel abandoned Gunhill before the building fell down on them, and are the first to occupy the Sqn's new home at Ordnance Bks.

Delamination has now reached its full fury, with the tech persons scattered to the four corners of our AOR. **SSgt Pete Nealis** is heading up the trg of the shooting team for the Corps SAAM, along with **Maj Nik Beecher** and using their 'get out of Delam free' cards is **Cpl Kev Hebenton** and **Cpl Rich Libby**.

Welcomes to **Cpl Mark O'Donovan**, wife and children, who join us straight from his Class 1 course in Blandford; to **Cpl Craig Poole**, from 1(UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. Farewell to **Sgt Judith Allsop**, who has had her last day in uniform after 22 years' service and was dined out by the Sqn on 27 January.

Congratulations to **Sgt Andy Dobson** and wife **Anne**, on the arrival of **Milly**; to **Sgt Judith Allsop** and husband **Larry**, on the arrival of **Stan**; and **Cpl Lee Barney** and wife **Gemma**, on the arrival of **James**. Congratulations to you all. Where do you buy your bottled water?

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col M Baines**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) J Renshaw**

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj John Collyer**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ben Batley**

TN 013

Tp Comd	**2Lt AP Foot**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt SC Swannick**

FORMING OF A NEW TROOP – *by Cpl Griffiths*

Since the reformation of the Tp on 31 January, we have all been very busy preparing our, less than ready vehs for battle-worthiness. A short break in the busy schedule saw several members of the Tp take part in the Inter-Sqn Athletics Competition. Congratulations to **Sig Larkin**, coming a close second place in the Shot Put. Well done to **LCpl Hay**, as a member of the winning 4 x 100m relay team! We're currently without our talented **LCpl Ball** and **Sig Chadwick**, who are both away representing the Regt at BA(G) Basketball.

Our congratulations to **Cpl Vickers**, for his recent promotion to Cpl; and we farewell **LCpl Yarwood**, who will be dearly missed as she transfers to RMP shortly.

We've had a slow, but steady, stream of new arrivals to the Tp; we welcome our new OC, **2 Lt Foot**, **LCpl Hay**, **LCpl Ball** and **LCpl Hodge** - all new to the Regt.

With a busy ex period ahead, we are very much looking forward to the upcoming Sqn Battle Camp, and winning the Inter-Tp competition that is rapidly approaching.

TN014

Tp Comd	**2Lt Sally Green**
Tp SSgt	**Jerry Baxter**

The Tp looks forward to more exs coming up: EX SHARP DAGGER at Hohne and DEPLOYEX back in UK.

We congratulate **Sig Tyrell** on his promotion to **LCpl**, and also welcome **LCpl Danny Muhl**, from JFC Brunssum and **LCpl Emma Pheasey**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. The Tp has now got time to get some important trade trg in with EX CELTIC SHOT, so that the newer operators can learn the ropes. We farewell **Cpl Matt Keighley**, who has transferred to RAMC; and to **Cpl Phil Green**, who goes to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. **LCpl Liam Miller** will finally complete his Class 1 Sys Op course in the summer.

TN015

Tp Comd	**2Lt J McDonagh**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt I Strachan**

EX COUNTRY TRAIL and EX ARRCADE GUARD went well, and now that Easter leave has been and gone, the Tp is preparing for a busy ex period extending well into the summer, with the majority of us deploying on EX WHITE JAVELIN on 05 April.

Congratulations to **Sig Ashley Kirkbride** who passed a Cadre Course on 04 March, and to **Cpl Ben Gildea**, who passed a PTI course on 11 March. We farewell **Lt K Bates**, **LCpl John Gilroy**, **Sig Reg Cook** and **Signaller Dave Townsend**, and welcome **2Lt J McDonagh** as our new Tp Comd.

TN016

Tp Comd	**Lt Ollie Lees**
Tp Sgt	**Sgt Parkinson**

February 2005 saw EX ARRCADE GUARD, a smaller ex compared with EX ARRCADE FUSION on Javelin Bks. During the next couple of months we will train up and refresh on other elements of PTARMIGAN equipts that we need to improve on. Then there are mil skills when we deploy on Sqn Battle Camp.

A scene from Battle Camp

We farewell **SSgt Finn**, **Sgt Luke**, **Sig Gilroy** and **Sig Dryburgh**, who have left us for greener pastures.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jones**

H TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Lyndsey Griffiths**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Craig Wilson**

2005 started off a cold year for H Tp, with several members deploying on EX AMBER GAMBIT. Temperatures were below zero, but thankfully H Tp suffered only 2 casualties. **Sig Larkins** departed first with a foot injury, and **Cpl Lee Green** departed 2 days later, after dislocating his shoulder. In February 7 members of H Tp went skiing on the slopes of Zell am Zee in Austria for a week's AT. **LCpl Passey** and **Sig Buley** picked up skiing very quickly, although they spent most of their time piled up in a heap. It was a great week, with a lot of fun being had by all both on and off the slopes!

Sigs Morrison and **Webb** attended the Elmpt Station Cadre Course, where **Sig Morrison** was promoted **LCpl Morrison** for being the best student on the course.

At present we have **Cpl Mick Lake**, **LCpl Wake**, **LCpl Kervell**, **Sigs Anderson**, **Brown**, **Stansfield**, **Nuptial** and **Johnson** on OP TELIC. **Sgt Al Walsh** returned from his latest Bosnia trip on which he had taken **LCpl Stephenson**, **Sigs Fuller**, **Lauder**, **McClarence**, **Meredith**, **Payne**, **Sheridan**, **Watt** and **Whitaker** on a 4 week jolly. And he's off with another team to Bosnia for 8 weeks in June and July. **Sgt Pope** has recently returned from OP HERRICK, where he led a team of **Cpl Buckingham**, **Cpl Partridge**, **LCpl Pearson**, **Sig Morrison** and **Sig Webb** in an exchange installation project.

At the time of going to press, we are in the throws of sending **Cpl Buckingham** and **Sigs McEwan**, **Miller** and **Payne** off for an installation task in Glencourse Bks. **Cpl Lake**, **Sigs Emmanuel**, **McClarence**, **Lauder**, **Sheridan** and **Webb** are all looking forward to 5 weeks in the sun on EX LION SUN 05 in June.

We bid farewell to **Lt Griffiths**, who has left us for ATR Litchfield; to **Sig Capron**, who goes 2 Sig Regt; to Sig **Smart**, who has left the Army; to **Cpl Mick Partridge**, who goes to 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; to **Cpl Rob Shubert**, to CCU; to **Cpl Lee Green**, to 30 Sig Regt; to **Cpl Craig Buckingham**, to 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; to **LCpl Goddard**, to 215 Sig Sqn; and to **Sig McEwan**, to 628 Sig Tp. We welcome **Sigs Emmanuel** and **Chadwick**, straight from the factory.

NETCEN TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Russell**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Davies**

This year seams to be full of new experiences. Firstly, there was a new format to Battle Camp, which concentrated on skills such as, defence of a comms site, rolling replen and site selection - a refreshing change. As with the rest of the Army our FFRs are away being fitted with the new BOWMAN equipt.

LCpl Ben Day is off to the Falklands in April, **Cpl Bill Waters**, **Sig Steven Griffiths** and **Sig Ian Riley** are off to Kenya in the summer and EX LION SUN in May. This year looks like a busy one for NETCEN Tp.

We say goodbye to **Sgt Paul Lomas**, posted to 628 Sqn; **LCpl Mark John**, posted to 216 Sig Sqn; **LCpl Phil Mulligan**, posted to JCUNI; and **Sig Michel Field**, posted to 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We welcome **SSgt Steve Davies**, **Sig Chapman** and **Sig Werret**; and say farewell to **SSgt Nige Howard**, who has been the troop Staffy since it was formed.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Harris**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Greenwood**

January saw a busy month for MAN Tp. Straight after Christmas leave, we deployed on EX AMBER GAMBIT, Regt's Inf and Comms defence ex. We saw temperatures drop to -9° C.

The test phase of the ex went extremely well, and the Tp was tested on stands such as First Aid, NBC, and Defence of a Comms site.

February saw the Tp deploy on EX ARRCADE GUARD, a 2-week static ARRC ex. The Elmpt Station Cadre course also took place during February and MAN Tp had a number of willing participants. **Sig Dan Vallelly**, **Sig Wendy Cunnington**, **Sig Andy Rea**, **Sig Worthington** and **Sig Vicky Fox** all took part, and passed the course, in what were very cold conditions - so congratulations to them all.

Congratulations to **LCpls Phil Whitney** and **Neil Gritt**, on their promotion to Cpl. We farewell **LCpl Grant Robertson**, who has left us to go to 1 UK Civ Div, to work as an Air Traffic Controller, before following his dreams of becoming a pilot. Also leaving is **Cpl Mac McKenzie**, who has gone to 2 Sig Regt; and **Cpl Neil Gritt**, who has moved to RSC Tp on promotion. We welcome **Cpl John Greenwood**, and **Sig Worthington**, who recently joined us from 21 Sig Regt(AS).

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

VISIT OF AIR VICE MARSHAL LUKER OBE AFC

In February the Regt hosted Comd Joint Helicopter Force (JHF), **AVM Luker OBE AFC**, who was treated to a capability demonstration of deployable comms assets. This involved all the Sqns, and was planned down to the finest detail. Inevitably, the CO carried out a full dress rehearsal, which was preceded by Sqn OCs' rehearsals, preceded by Tp Comds' rehearsals, etc, etc. Stop watches were monitored eagerly to ensure that nobody ran over time, and the dets were set up to ensure that should it rain, there was the minimum chance of anybody getting wet. In fact you might almost say it was planned with...military precision.

The demo also provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the new 506 Satellite Terminals, if only the Regtl Projects Team had managed not to break the HQ Terminal! Following the demo, the Air Vice Marshall was guest of honour at the Inter-Sqn Boxing Competition, before being moving onto the WOs' and Sgts' Mess where the Regt could at last have a drink – until the next visit.

AVM Luker is presented by the CO with a memento of his visit

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steve Morgan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Anthea Burdus**

EXERCISE TYROLEAN DRAGON IV - *by 2Lt Holly Dyer*

The end of January and beginning of February 2005 saw two separate weeks of arduous trg for the regular and TA members of 21 Sig Regt (AS), both on and off piste. The destination was Hochfilzen, near Kitzbuhl in Austria, where we stayed in a basic, but more than adequate, Austrian chalet. Each day, we were ferried out a short distance to one of the many resorts in the area. The skiing conditions were excellent, and the slopes were practically empty, leaving all the more space for all our acrobatic delights and banshee screams to accompany them. No let-up in the schedule, the severe trg continued every evening, whether in the form of ice go-karting, ice-climbing or simply pure unadulterated après-ski.

Both weeks culminated in all the ski groups taking part in a giant slalom race. There was a variety of times, ranging from 47 seconds upwards - and for a few, it's not the taking part that counts, but the finishing! At the end of the two weeks' instruction everybody had attained their Alpine Basic Ski Proficiency qualification and **WO1 Flather**, **Cpl Aitchison**, **LCpl Barlow** and **Sig Fuller** all achieved their Advanced Ski Proficiency. All those up for more stimulating experiences on next year's trip, form an orderly queue!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Bob Lovett**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Dave Taylor**

Firstly we say hello to the new Sqn 2IC, **Capt Frazer Keith**, who joins us from ATFC, via 4 months on a jolly in Borneo, getting close and personal with the leeches and eating something, which according to one local, was '...a bit like a cat, and lives up a tree'. We also welcome **Cpl Grayhurst** and **LCpl Cameron** fresh from OP TELIC. The Ops Travel Agency is working overtime, with sunny specials to Afghanistan and Iraq, and for those who enjoy winter sports, there are also the options of Norway, Canada and Antarctica. Congratulations to **Cpl McEwan** on her promotion, and to **WO2(YofS) Barker**, on his selection for promotion to WO1. Finally, we say a fond farewell to **Cpl Jones**, who is going to spend 6 months with the CDT Team.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Lloyd Golley**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mick Brown**

NORWAY DEPLOYMENT – EXERCISE CLOCKWORK 05
– by SSgt Mo Pay

On 4 January, 21 personnel from the Regt deployed on the 6-week tri-service EX CLOCKWORK. Comd CHF's intention was to have a cadre of cold weather trained personnel in CHF. The ex took place in Northern Norway at Bardufoss Air Station.

Personnel from each service attended a week-long Novice Survival Course (NSC), run by RM Mountain Leaders (ML). The course covered the principles of living in the field, tent group routine, survival shelters in the form of Quincy snow shelters, and safety elements, such as avalanche awareness and navigation.

Sig Cruttendon, tunnelling into a snow shelter

After the NSC, it was a quick turn around of kit and equipt and on to the 17-day Novice Ski and Survival course. The course also included 7 personnel from 4 AAC. This course involved teaching novices military cross-country skiing, starting with the basic diagonal gate techniques on the flat, progressing to downhill techniques. By the end of it, we were skiing with full kit and equipt, pulling pulks.

The course enjoying the delights of pulk pulling

Another part of the course was ice-breaking drills, which had to be demonstrated by myself. All was well initially, standing on skis briefing the course before taking the dip, then once in the water the muscles tighten and the breathing is dramatically reduced (as well as other parts of the body). Then it was the turn of the course, who nervously made their way to the water's edge, to perform some humorous if not memorable sights, but a sense of achievement was felt by all.

With the cold weather trg complete, the course progressed on to the Winter Warfare phase, a tactical phase, and the culmination of

Sig Bryan enjoying a chill-out

the ex. The final attack on the enemy objective drew the course to the end, which then included a visit from the DComd, **Brig Caplin**.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jason Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ganesh**

INTER-SQUADRON BOXING COMPETITION
- by WO2(SSM) Ganesh

The 2005 Inter-Squadron Boxing Competition was full of competitive spirit, with boxers battling it out to gain the points needed to decide the Champion Sqn. By early December, the Sqn Boxing teams had begun their training. Countless hours were spent in the gymnasium, as well as running just about every inch of the surrounding countryside. In addition, there was much sparring and quite a few bloody noses and black eyes.

Following the preliminary rounds on 7 February, the final took place on 10 February in the presence of **AVM PD Luker OBE AFC**, Comd JHF, and the rest of the Regt. After an exhibition match from two very brave and useful junior combatants from Bristol Boxing Club, the proceedings got underway with a Bantamweight bout. By the halfway point, it became clear that 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn was taking the competition by storm, with only 220 Sig Sqn posing a threat. However, after the last bout, 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn and 220 Sig Sqn were level on points. The champion Sqn was therefore decided by the award for best boxer. **Sig Prakash** was awarded this prize, and so 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn won the Competition.

Sig Prakash receiving the Best Boxer Award from AVM PD Luker

Sig Tirtha taking one on the chin for 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron from Sig Mackie

Overall, a big well done to all the boxers for their hard work, dedication and a spectacular show on the night.

EXERCISE RAW BEAUFIGHTER 2005 – *by Sig Chandra*

Like many other Regts in the British Army, 21 Sig Regt (AS) runs a CO's Cadre Course every year for potential candidates for promotion to LCpl. This year's course, EX RAW BEAUFIGHTER (6-25 February) began with a series of entrance standards consisting of a BPFA and tests in First Aid, NBC, Map Reading and Weapon Handling. This was followed by an in-barracks teaching phase at Crowborough Camp, a shake-out phase in Pippingford Park and Ashdown Forest, and a final ex on SPTA. Twenty-five soldiers took part in the course, of whom 9 were from 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn.

After completion of the entrance exam, the first phase began, each day starting with a hard session of PT followed by lessons - a format that would be repeated throughout the rest of the course. This was where we were taught about fieldcraft, tactics, map reading, defence of a comms site, NBC and BCDT. In addition, a range package was held at the Lydd and Hythe ranges in Folkstone.

During the shake-out phase, theories taught in the preceding phase were to put into practice under the supervision of the DS. The main point to note here was that, rather than focus on an infantry perspective, skills and drills were undertaken from a Royal Signals point of view.

The final phase was conducted in the snow of SPTA and focussed on the establishment of comms and the defence of a platoon harbour. It was hard work, especially in the cold, but everybody raised their game, and put into place the lessons that they had already learned.

At ENDEX, the DS announced the overall student rankings, with the top three places going to 248 Gurkha Sig, Sqn personnel: 1st - **Sig Chandrakumar Rai**, 2nd - **Sig Lewis** and 3rd - **Sig Kajiman**. In addition, **Sig Narendra** won the Best Endeavour award. All in all, it was another excellent performance by 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, and extremely rewarding experience for all those who took part.

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Hancock**

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JHN Harrington**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Tesharjang Gurung**

The early part of 2005 has seen the safe return of the Tp level deployment to OP HERRICK (Afghanistan). In addition, the Sqn is also busy maintaining ABTF and OP BASILISK/OP COMPASS capabilities and preparing for the arrival of new comms technology, CORMORANT.

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON

EX ARRCADE FALCON was a Bde-level ex involving both Regular and TA units, and was held in Detchersfield Germany.

Two dets, from 30 Sig Regt, including one VSC 501 Satellite Det from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, deployed to Germany. This Det was led by **LCpl Devkumar Rai**, assisted by **LCpl Netra Rai**, **LCpl Dipendra Gurung**, **Sig Hom Sunuwar** and **Sig Kirtipurna Rai**.

Our mission was to supply access into the PTARMIGAN network by supplying a PTARMIGAN Bridge. Although we missed the Regtl Golden Jubilee celebrations, the ex was an excellent opportunity to practise our trade skills in an unusual country, and with different units.

The intrepid Gurkha 501 Det

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CD Cook**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) MacPhee**

2005 has got off to a hectic start for 258 Sig Sq. Since assuming the Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTFHQ1) role in December 04, we have already experienced deployments to five different

countries (on OP GARRON in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia; OP DALMIN in Sudan; and OP CALICLE in Kosovo). Keen to maintain our mil skills, the Sqn also deployed on EX WANDERING BEAR, a patrolling based ex in Otterburn.

OPERATION GARRON - *by LCpl Johnnie Stray*

After taking over the JTFHQ1 role only in late December 2004, **Sig Dan Merrick** and I weren't expecting such a frantic start to the New Year. We took over the 4-hr NTM commitment on 29 December, with a possibility that we would be sent out to South East Asia in support of the Tsunami Disaster relief efforts.

Five hrs later, we were told we were deploying to Sri Lanka, and were off on the evening of 31 December. We certainly didn't expect to be on a plane on New Year's Eve! The blow of Hogmanay away from friends and family was softened by seats in Business Class - and a freebie glass of champagne!

We arrived in Sri Lanka on New Year's Day and set up voice and data comms in the British High Commission in Colombo - on the west side of the country. We settled into 12-hr shifts and continued doing this for the three-week deployment. - Meanwhile, other members of the Tp had also deployed. **Sig Trotter** and **Sig Moore** had gone to Thailand, **Sig Cornwall** and **Sig Robinson** had been sent to Jakarta, and were soon joined by **LCpl Neil Holdsworth** and **Sig Dean Turnbull** in Medan.

Late in January 05, **Sig Merrick** and I got the call to say we were going home. All too soon, it was time to board the plane and return to UK. We hadn't read the small print and were dismayed that Business Class and overnight hotel stays had been replaced by a C17 and accn on a runway under a Lynx helicopter.

OPERATION DALMIN - *by Sig Owen Ryan*

OP DALMIN was a Joint Force HQ deployment to Khartoum, Sudan from 7 February to 22 March 05. The op was in support of the UN to recce the existing infrastructure in the country. Specialist teams from RE and RAF surveyed ports, airports and roads around the Sudan. **LCpl Carl Lee** and I were deployed with the Operational Liaison and Recce Team (OLRT) to provide voice and data comms for the Staff.

As most of the Sqn's Light Weight Recce Node (LWRN) teams were used during the Tsunami disaster, rumours of long hours were rife amongst the various crews, so **LCpl Lee** and I had prepared ourselves for some long working days. This didn't turn out to be the case!

The average day started at 08.00hrs after breakfast in our five star hotel and finished by 16.00hrs. We were left with one choice – to spend some time at the hotel's swimming pool. Not bad for two likely lads from Liverpool!

After the initial recce phase was completed and most of the staff officers had returned to UK, the remaining JFHQ personnel and ourselves explored the various sights that Khartoum has to offer. We went to a league football match at the Sudanese National Stadium. Unbelievably, the atmosphere put the Everton/Liverpool derby to shame! Then, it was time for a quick trip to the little known Pyramids of Sudan (a brilliant photo opportunity!).

One of the last places we visited was the war graves memorial, where over 500 Allied soldiers were buried during WW2. The majority of the headstones belonged to people who had died before the age of thirty, and around fifteen of them were Royal Signals soldiers.

The sight of the rows and rows of spotless white headstones showing the names of so many people of different nationalities and various cap badges, was a very humbling and moving experience.

OP DALMIN was a terrific deployment, as we were fortunate enough to experience, at first hand, a culture that is so different from our own. And the luxury accn wasn't too bad either...

EXERCISE WANDERING BEAR - *by Sig Jones*

With low temperatures and heavy snowfall predicted, it was only natural for 258 Sig Sqn to head up to Otterburn Trg Area for a military skills competition.

We arrived at 01.30hrs, after a seven-hour journey from Bramcote, to be met by over a foot of snow and blizzard like conditions. Brilliant! EX WANDERING BEAR was designed to be a patrolling ex, with a few mil skills stands thrown in for good measure! As my section set off to the first RV, we passed one of the admin DAFs that had slid off the track and into a ditch. Things were not looking good!

The ex was meant to be physically arduous, with sections tabbing from point to point and completing different mil skills stands. These included NBC, First Aid, mine awareness, current affairs and weapon recognition. The stands were the easy part of the exercise - it gave us a rest from tabbing through the snow and, at times, hip deep drifts.

Just like Christmas!

On Day Three, the Met Office issued a severe weather warning for very heavy snow falls in and around the north of England. By now, we were the only Unit left on the ground, the hardened infantry units having called it a day. All of the sections still on the ground were told to tab to a certain grid ref and take shelter for the night. Lucky Section 3, however, were still at the ex CP and, much to the annoyance of the other patrols, were able to stay warm and eat bacon butties!

All in all, EX WANDERING BEAR was an excellent ex (an enjoyable experience?) that taught us a huge amount about personal admin and teamwork in harsh conditions. A big thank you to all the DS who helped to put the ex together - some of whom spent more time on the hills than we did.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Duckworth**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Coupland**

OPERATION TELIC 5 – *by Cpl Cave*

Six members of the Regt have recently been spotted masquerading as Desert Rats in and around Basrah Air Base. **Cpls Cave**, **Ingram**, **Bromhead**, **Lambert** and **LCpl Butterworth** have been sent to the desert to augment 14 Sig Regt (EW). Upon arrival, they found themselves promptly handed over to 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, where they are assisting in providing comms for both Bde and Div HQ. Arriving during the crucial preparations for the elections, the Techs were immediately spread between the two Tps of the Sqn and sent out to work on various dets.

Under the watchful eye of **Lt Fulthorpe**, **Cpls Lambert**, **Bromhead** and **LCpl Butterworth** were attached to Tigris Tp. Each soldier soon discovered the joys of 'armoured', being sent on deployment in the spacious SYNERGY Dets. **Cpl Bromhead** spent a couple of weeks with a SYNERGY Det in the troubled Al Amarah. Much to his relief, a move from Al Amarah Camp to a police station in the area was short lived. Four hours after arriving in loc, a patrol deemed the area unsafe to remain in, and the Det was withdrawn. **LCpl Butterworth** found himself deploying to 'somewhere in Basrah' along with **Cpl Lambert**. Meanwhile, **Cpl Bromhead** is manning a mobile det in the Norwegian lines, a mere stone's throw away from his Corimec in Waterloo Lines.

Elsewhere, **Cpls Cave**, **Ingram** and **Pratap** are attached to Euphrates Tp. **Cpl Ingram** is currently working in the tech wksps, following a three-week period manning the Internet machine on the night shift in Syscon. **Cpl Cave** is overseeing Syscon for the duration of the four-month tour, and has recently mastered the task of deciding which one of the five telephones on her desk is ringing, whilst simultaneously drinking coffee and writing these *Wire* notes.

Cpl Pratap is presently working in the tech wksps, having recently returned from manning the Osca Det at Umm Qsar. During the latter end of his deployment, a number of link problems saw him working extra hard to resume normal services.

With the second half of a dry tour to look forward to, the soldiers are currently putting their efforts into keeping up their fitness levels.

The 06.00hrs PT sessions three times are a helpful training aid. **WO1 (RSM) Lloyd** has put in place a four mile 'Gate Challenge' run every Saturday morning, during which the 30 Sig Regt Team have been giving their Osnabruck colleagues huge competition.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Ironside**

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andrew Thompson**

Sqn Trg Weekend (STW2) started out well, with a clear dry sky but it was a wee bit chilly! Wagons were rolling by 04.30hrs, and after some negotiation with RMP, **LCpl Mark Wiggin** got his Det set up and running at the Castlelaw site. Meanwhile, back at the ranch (Gordon Bks) we got down to the serious business of communicating. While the Castlelaw Det was busy setting up their masts and erecting a perfect dipole, the Sqn CP adopted Tp Comd 514's favourite antenna... '*Lads, put a box there and one over there, string up an end fed between them about a foot off the ground and Robert's your mother's brother...*' It was then pointed out that the antenna should not really work over the distance we were shooting. 10 mins and a quick tune later - strength 5! Comms remained good, and apart from a very scary moment, when the DS thought **LCpl Wiggin**'s Det was sat in the Castlelaw Danger Area, the ex was a success. On Sunday it was a quick pack-up and back to Camp for the second best Army breakfast ever, and the fun of cleaning all the equipt! All in all, a good ex and a big thank you to the guys and girls who turned out for the third weekend of trg in a row.

STW 3 saw the Sqn deploy to Black Dog Trg Area, just along the coast from our base at Bridge of Don Bks, Aberdeen, for an inf trg weekend. Enemy troops were provided by Aberdeen UOTC. Members of the Sqn were required to man an OP for 36 hrs, gathering int in order to plan, prepare and execute an attack on the enemy position. The weekend provided a good opportunity to brush up on the basics of soldiering, and also achieved the aim of keeping the trg programme varied and interesting. Unfortunately, the OP was compromised by a certain visiting and unnamed member of the Regt who seemed to have Forgotten the concept of Silhouetting – another lesson learned!

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Karen Swan**

In addition to just having received a new batch of YOs, and having several in-house promotions, we also have a new OC. We welcome **Maj Phil Donegan**, and hope that we will have as much or more fun with him as the last chap. We have also farewelled our PSI, **SSgt Gair Sorley**, who is posted to 19 Bde, and has so much leave saved up, that he'll be back in for only 3fi days before he goes. His shoes will be filled short term by our PSI (T) **Sgt Neil Anderson**, who has already shown himself by organising an excellent weekend at a local trg area.

Drill nights have been far from normal for the last month or so. With lots of VIPs visiting RHQ, we have been well used as rent-a-crowd. For the visits of GOC 2 Div and Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, the Sqn supplied both demo stands and bodies. We are also well into recruiting season, so with an extra 25 bodies currently around on a Wednesday night, we certainly notice the difference. This month also featured the first Comms Ex of the trg year, with the majority of the Regt descending on 52 Sqn's loc. This was an opportunity for some of the Sqn members to take on additional responsibility. **Sgt Phil Brown** acted as a very accomplished SSM, and **Cpl Craigy Douglas** again acted as SQMS.

Looking forward, we have a Race Night this coming Friday to raise money for Erskine Hospital, and the forthcoming Battlefield Tour. The Sqn will have firers competing in CORPSAAM, DIVSAAM and the Wapinschaw shooting competitions.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andy Bruce**

February might be the shortest month of the year, but it was certainly one of the busiest for the Sqn. NBC and basic inf skills were put to the test in a tough weekend in Otterburn, and our sharp shooting was under scrutiny during the RSAAM at Fort George later in the month.

EX TARTAN CHAMBER is the Sqn's yearly visit to Otterburn to practise our NBC skills in an inf environment. Arriving late on a Friday night to discover that most of the British Army's infantry and artillery were already there and had taken over most of the trg areas, some hot planning was required to make the ex work. Saturday morning started early, as troops were deployed by heli-bedford into the middle of nowhere to seek out and neutralise the enemy forces. Played by members of Edinburgh UOTC, the enemy were certainly up to task, and proved to be a tough opposition. As the day continued, numerous scenarios unfolded, including clearing a wood, laying demolitions on a bridge and comms pipeline, and finally a suspected NBC attack. All day long, artillery was being fired over our heads, adding an extra

touch of realism. A couple of veh ambushes and fierce firefight later, the Sqn finished the day off with a CFT back into Camp just in time for dinner.

'Blowing' the Bridge

Sunday morning had the troops in the respirator test facility after a game of tug-of-war, and then on to the infamous confidence course for one last time. With very few people finishing the course dry, it was a great way to end the weekend.

Later in the month the Sqn travelled further north than it had ever been before. Spending Friday night hosted by 51 Sqn's Elgin Det, it was up bright and early in time to travel to the ranges at Fort George for the annual RSAAM.

Split into two teams, the Sqn made its way around the various ranges, on what was quite possibly the coldest and windiest day ever. 61 Sqn's A Team (**Maj Bruce**, **Cpl Borland**, **Sig Nimmo** and **Sig Somerville**) won the APWT and moving target range, with **Cpl Iona Borland** winning the trophy for the best female shot.

Maj Andy Bruce and Cpl Borland receive their prizes at the RSAAM

March was almost as busy for the Sqn, with driver trg in Catterick and an ICP comms ex in East Kilbride. For the Regtl Trg Weekend in March, the Sqn headed west to Dechmont Ranges for an ICP ex. Upon leaving Edinburgh, most of the troops had no idea where Dechmont was - at ENDEX most still didn't know! The opportunity to test our new comms equipt continuously for over 30 hrs was fantastic, and all the troops involved learned something new. Whilst the Sqn Comd Team played at being Bde Staff Offrs, the troops established comms with the new Airwave radios, desperately tried to engineer HF comms to Aberdeen, and got to grips with the latest IT the Army has to offer.

Wednesday nights in March had the Sqn travelling through to Glasgow on most nights to help our Glaswegian counterparts put on comms displays for visiting dignitaries. The coming months will be very busy. The national TA Week will focus our recruiting efforts. A Regtl weekend, planned for the Isle of Arran, looks like a real winner, with the promise of activities involving helicopters and the coastguard.

We wish the best of luck to three of our soldiers who have been mobilised in the last month. **Sgt Scott Fair** is working with the Tiger Team at Land Command in Wilton, whilst **LCpl McRobbie** and **LCpl Sinclair** are preparing themselves for the heat of the desert in Iraq. We look forward to hearing their stories and hope the have a great tour.

EXERCISE SNOW LION

EX SNOW LION this year took on a higher priority for the TA, as it became the main All Arms Championship for the TA. In March each year, approximately 100 Army skiers and snowboarders congregate at Cairngorm for the week-long championship and make the Cairngorm Hotel both their official and unofficial base.

The usual suspects, again

The Championship was blessed with tremendous snow. Whilst this meant that we were frequently skiing in near blizzard conditions, at least the snow was good. The Championship went well, with all team members putting in good consistent performances over the week. The following results were obtained in the Individual Alpine Combination:

15th, **WO2 T Davidson**; 16th, **Maj C Payn**; 18th, **Sgt S Henderson**; 25th, **Capt I Davidson**; 44th, **2Lt J Kennedy-Lunde**; and 47th, **LCpl A McDonald**.

The Team was also awarded Overall TA Runner Up, finishing 2004/05's Alpine Season on a high. We are already looking forward to next years ski season and trying to recruit more skiers into the team.

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

CO **Lt Col W Adsett**
RSM **WO1(RSM) M Browitt**

FAREWELL TO LT COL DAVID SOMERVILLE

A short 2 years 3 months and 9 days after his arrival, saw the departure of the CO. His time with the Regt was marked with many highlights, including the mobilisation of 98 Sig Sqn to the Balkans, and involvement in OP TELIC and OP FRESCO. The Regt's goodbyes took a week to complete, and included at least four lunches and three dinners. The Regt finally came together at the end of a trg camp in York to say a collective 'thank you' for everything he has done during his time with us. We wish both **Col David** and **Fiona** all the best in the future, and we now welcome **Lt Col Bill Adsett** in to the Regt.

The Regular Staff drag the CO out of camp for the final time

42(CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DA Titheridge**
SSM **WO2(SSM) I Coburn**

Five days into the New Year saw the Sqn looking forward to a reasonably quiet start to the annual trg programme, with only a maintenance weekend in preparation for the RSIT visit at the end of the month. Then, with the inspection out of the way, it was time for fun, as the Sqn's annual ski trip party left for the slopes hard on the heels of the departing RSIT.

EXERCISE NORTHERN MANCUNIAN ENDEAVOUR

During the first week in February members of the Sqn, carried out a skiing AT ex in the Arlberg ski area of Austria. This aimed to teach TA soldiers to ski to a standard that would enable them to pass the Basic Ski Proficiency Course (Alpine. The ex was organised by **Capt Gerry Whelan**, the Sqn PSAO, with **Maj Dave Titheridge**, as exped Leader and the **Lt Glenn Martin**, as CI. We were accommodated at Walgau Kaserne, an Austrian Army barracks in Bludesch, and the ex was conducted at the St Anton and Klosterle ski resorts. Seventeen members of the Sqn took part, with **SSgt Dean Mackenzie** from 58 Sig Sqn being attached as the second ski instructor.

The party flew, courtesy of Swiss Air, from Manchester to Zurich, where hire mini-buses were picked up for the onward journey over the Swiss/Austrian border to Bludesch. After the fairly short ninety-minute drive on the autobahn, we arrived at Walgau Kaserne, where we were met by **Master Sgt Dur** of the Austrian Army, who gave a briefing on the area and the camp facilities, and settled everyone into their accn. Walgau Kaserne is used as a base for AT under the auspices of the UK/Austrian Bilateral Trg Programme. This is part of a reciprocal programme, which covers a broad spectrum of trg intended to establish closer working relationships between the UK and Austrian military. The camp offers comfortable barrack accn and excellent facilities, with saunas, a gymnasium and the use of the SNCOs' and ORs' Messes and bars.

The ski slopes of the Arlberg ski area are only a short trip from the camp, and the first day was taken up with the fitting of ski equipt, purchase of ski lift tickets, and the first tentative efforts on the St Anton slopes. The weather was overcast and bitterly cold (-14° C) for the first two days. This proved to be a torrid time for some members of the party, who needed to regain their ski legs and their confidence, and for the complete beginners who struggled with the trials and tribulations of unfamiliar equipt and the problems of staying upright for more that a few minutes. Unfortunately, **SSgt Brent Jefferson** was an early casualty, skiing into a post and having to be carted off in a stretcher to the local Krankenhause for treatment to his knee. His hospital bill came to about £600.00, so he was relieved that the PSAO had remembered to take out block insurance for the whole party, so that he could reclaim the expense.

On Day 3, now that the standard of skiing was getting better, we moved to Klosterle in a different part of the Arlberg area to take advantage of more suitable slopes. This proved to be a good move, and after a long gondola ride up to the top of the Sonnenkopf, the party emerged into a winter wonderland scene. A natural basin surrounded by the snow-covered Alps, with the sun shining from a blue sky and wide smooth slopes on which to practise. A rapid increase in morale was clearly apparent, as the sun tan lotion was applied, and suddenly the skiing did not seem quite so difficult after all.

By now, everyone had entered into the swing of things, and as the good weather remained and the instruction began to pay off, the 'wipe outs' became less frequent. Instead of looking forward to getting off the slopes and getting out of the unfamiliar ski kit, it was now difficult to get people to leave the slopes, even with the lure of the après-ski bars and restaurants beckoning from the villages down in the valleys at the foot of the lifts. Unfortunately, we suffered our second casualty that day when the SSM developed a chest infection and had to be taken to hospital. He was to remain in there for the remainder of the ex, and was lucky to be released on the last day to travel back to Manchester with the main party.

As the week progressed, most members of the party had graduated from snow plough turns to quite respectable skiing, and were able to negotiate their way safely down slopes they would not have dreamed of venturing on at the start of the week.

The more advanced skiers were onto the black slopes by this time, and were keeping up with **Maj Titheridge** in fine style.

On the penultimate day of the trip, it was time for the dreaded assessments, as each member of the group had to pass the eagle eyed scrutiny of **Glenn Martin** and **Dene Mackenzie** to earn their Basic Ski Certificate. Happily, there were no failures, which meant that the usual end of the day beer in *Bar Kilo* tasted that much better than normal, and the instructors were able to enjoy a few drinks from their grateful pupils.

Cpl Carl Sproston, Maj Dave Titheridge, Sig James Pearson and SSgt Brent Jefferson enjoy a spot of Aprés skiing at St Anton

All too soon, it was the end of the ex, and time to thank our Austrian Army hosts for looking after us so well; and, to mark of our appreciation, to present them with a plaque as a memento of our visit.

Then it was back on the autobahn to Switzerland for the return flight from Zurich to Manchester. The trip had been a memorable one, and the aim of the ex had been achieved. It is hoped to repeat the trip next year, when it should be possible to run an advanced course for this year's beginners, as well as another basic one for other members of the Sqn.

THE DERBY TROPHY

The Derby Trophy is an annual mil trg competition sponsored by 42 (NW) Bde, with the aim of testing the generic section-level mil skills of all OPCOM units.

The competition was held at Holcombe Moor Trg Area near Bury over the weekend 04-06 March 05. 33 Sig Regt (V) were tasked to provide Admin and CIS support for the competition, and a Regtl team took part in the event. The competition was run over 36 hrs, and the section teams had to navigate themselves around a number of stands.

The 33 Sig Regt team, led by **Capt Sophie Curtis** and ably assisted by **WO2 Frankie Hails**, had to negotiate 8 stands and take part in a night-nav ex. Each OPCOM unit was responsible for planning and executing a stand for the competition, and **SSgt Kirk**, the SPSI of 42 Sqn, had a chance to demonstrate his prowess by running the Regtl NBC stand.

The other 7 stands were quite varied, and included a 103 Regt RA artillery target indication stand, a 75 Regt RE minefield breaching and recovery stand, a KCR sniper stalk and final shoot stand, an LCV section F and M stand, a veh ambush stand by 156 Tpt Regt, a Signal CP and BCDT stand by Manchester and Salford UOTC, and a model-making stand by Liverpool UOTC.

The 33 Sig Regt team

At the end of an exhausting and testing weekend, the Regtl team achieved an extremely creditable third place out of the 11 teams entered. This was a great tribute to 'girl power' as Capt Sophie Curtis was the only female team leader and led the only non-infantry team!

OPERATION TELIC 6

As we go to print, three members of the Sqn are deploying with 12 Mech Bde for a six-month tour on OP TELIC 6.

Cpl Stu Green, **Cpl Dave Curtis** and **LCpl Tony Dolan** will be attached to 228 Sig Sqn, based at Waterloo Lines at Basrah Airport. **Stu Green** and **Dave Curtis** will be employed out of trade, and carry out Top Cover and escort duties for the Sqn, while **Tony Dolan** will gain 6 months valuable experience in trade as a member of the Sqn stores team.

They can look forward to some extremely warm conditions as the Iraqi hot season is approaching, and temperatures can soar to 50°C! Needless to say, all members of the Sqn wish them an enjoyable tour and a safe return to their families in October.

Cpl Dave Curtis and Cpl Stu Green show off their desert combats before departing to the Gulf

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Garry Hearn**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Paul McGarry**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Jones**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Harkin**

NORTH YORKSHIRE LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION

The annual Lord Lieutenant's Certificate Presentation for North Yorkshire was hosted by 34 Sig Regt on 25 January 2005 at Brambles Farm TAC. TA Regts and minor units throughout the region were represented by soldiers who had been selected for the prestigious award for selfless and long-term commitment to the TA. Recipients from 34 Sig Regt included OC LAD, **Capt Andy Black** REME, **SSgt Downs**, **Sgt Walker**, and **LCpl Wilkinson**.

LCpl Stainthorpe, R, wondering why he ended up in the Guard of Honour

The evening began at 19.00hrs, with the arrival of recipients, families and friends, and employers, and the march on and

LCpl Julie Wilkinson receives her Award from HM Lord Lieutenant, Lord Crathorne

inspection of the Guard of Honour by **Lord Crathorne**, HM Lord Lieutenant. Each citation was read out by the Adjt, and recipients marched up to be presented their Certificates by **Lord Crathorne**.

The evening was concluded with a delicious buffet and drinks for guests, recipients and their families in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Finch**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Carrick**

PSI's BONDING DAY

It was that time again – for all the Permanent Staff to get together for a bit of bonding. This time it was to say farewell to the QM, **Maj Brian Dalton**, who is not only leaving the Regt but also the Army. Also leaving us was **WO2 (RQMS) Rick Hannah**, who will be taking up his new post on the Long Service List. We wish them the best of luck with their new jobs.

With all the farewells out the way, it was time to take on the day's activities, horse racing and a smattering of ale tasting at Catterick Racecourse. With racing scheduled for the entire afternoon, there was plenty of time to taste the local delights.

Armed with a whole £2 **SSgt Dean Leach** went off to earn his millions! Sad to say, he won't be giving up his day job. The win of the day came from the team of **Hebblethwaite/McGarry**, who raked in a very respectable £120 on one outsider! With everyone having a good time at the races, and some losing more than others, it was time to go back to Darlington for tea and medals.

CHILDREN'S' EASTER PARTY

An Easter Party for 49 Sqn children and family members was held on Sat 19 March at Halifax Bks, Hull. This get together gave families an opportunity to gather with old friends, and hopefully to establish new acquaintances. Two newly born members of the Sqn family were also welcomed – **Michaela Openshaw** and **Estelle Ford**.

The afternoon was filled with fun activities for children of all ages. A very proud **Harry Openshaw**, aged 4, won the Fancy Hat Competition. A Team Treasure Trail was followed by magical entertainment and party games, with a well-earned buffet tea completing the festivities.

This event was made possible by the hard work and efforts of **Mrs Sara Eastwood** and **Mrs Emma Holdstock**, their third such undertaking. Feedback from the parents was very positive, with plenty of suggestions for future events. Long may they continue!

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Smith**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CA Phillips**

Congratulations to **WO2 (SSM) Phillips** on her promotion to WO2. Congratulations also to **LCpl Freddie O'Brien**, awarded the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Tyne and Wear for 2004. Welcome back to the 50 Sqn sandcastle building team, **Capt Paul Denning**, **Sgts Brack** and **Carr**, **Cpl Wilkes** and **LCpls Elsdon** and **Greatbatch**. Farewell to **Lt Shane Ferris** and **Sgt**

Paul Standing, both bound for 6 months of sunbathing! And it's finally goodbye to **Maj Jez Bailey**, previous OC, who is off to join 5 Comms Coy, after months of negotiation over the transfer fee (the Sqn is paying 3 beers and a large whisky).

EXERCISE SPRING FALCON 05

The first comms ex of the year began in traditional style, with bad weather and broken vehs. Thanks to the number of vehs VOR or awaiting spares, the annual TAC link up ex was slightly smaller than normal - but the effort involved was not. As ever, the Radio Relay crews worked tirelessly, and all the links were quickly engineered. The lack of roadworthy assets meant we were unable to do much to reconfigure the network, but everyone was kept busy. This ex also doubles as the Regt trade trg ex, and all this year's trainees were keen to prove they had mastered PTARMIGAN (or at least a little part of it). Despite his best efforts and trying to be in 2 places at once, **LCpl Iggy Paterson** was unable to confuse his crews, and nor were the other instructors. Well done to **Sigs Bainbridge**, **Howe**, **Nixon**, **Prothero** and **Saunders** who all completed the ex and passed their Class 3 test.

Not content with just relying on PTARMIGAN, the Regt is taking massive steps forward with a digitisation programme. With a classroom full of PCs and servers begged, borrowed or stolen from anywhere and everywhere, **Capt (TOT) Simon Land** and **Lt (Tfc IS) Paul Whitely** have strung together a basic network. This is intended to help us train and prepare our soldiers to be better equipped to deploy on ops with Regular soldiers – after all, the volume of COTS IT equipt in use on ops continues to grow, whilst the use of PTARMIGAN reduces. This programme will not diminish our PTARMIGAN capability, but will instead enhance our overall utility; and over the next few months, we hope to be able to start awarding IS Engr (V) specialist qualifications. Watch this space...

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Lenton**
SSM **WO2 L Stimson**

REGIMENTAL ITD WEEKEND

The recent Regtl ITD weekend, which managed to coincide with the first weekend of sunshine, was organised and run by 90 Sig Sqn. **Sgt Ali** provided the health talk on how to prevent cold injuries - when perhaps heat stroke and heat exhaustion may have been more appropriate.

On the Saturday, **Maj Lenton** presented **Cpl Kenny** with the Regtl Shield for the best-maintained det of the year, with an outstanding report from the RSIT team. Congratulations to **Cpl Kenny**.

GAMES NIGHT

90 Sig Sqn and HQ Sqn held a games night at the end of last month, with personnel mixed between the 2 teams. With a touch of massaging, **Lt Helen Baxter's** team managed to accumulate the most points. **WO1(RSM) McGarry** and **WO1(SVWO) Dixon** seemed to enjoy the electric buzzer game, along with **Sig Murphy**, **Cpl Belt** and **Cpl Pountain**.

LCpl Liddle taking a wild step in the dark

The aim of the game was not to have the slowest reflexes, because you then avoided the small electric shock! However, some people's pain threshold seemed to be much lower than others. **Sgt Ross** proved adapt at the hammer and nail game, with **LCpl Liddle** demonstrating the art of blind darts!

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) P Hall**

The month of March saw HQ Sqn undertake EX GOLDEN LION at the wet and boggy venue of Swynnerton Trg area in Staffordshire. Sqn personnel had a last minute chance to grab ITDs, but the bounty hunters would have to pass the tests within a rolling tactical ex.

After a thorough briefing by PSI LAD, **SSgt Dave James** REME, sections patrolled forward through an NBC environment, to be confronted by a bogged in Landrover, including casuaities, all of which needed to be recovered. Just for good measure, the sadistic Tiffy enclosed the whole proceedings in a minefield.

This month also saw the departure of **AQMS Dave Gautam**, who has left the TA after 23 years service, and was a founder member of the Sqn when the Regt first formed. We express our thanks for the years of support, and wish **Dave** all the best for the future.

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj AC Giles**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Web**

The Sqn has spent the spring concentrating on recruiting. A stand was held at the TAC, when the Squadron hosted a function for the Wales v England Six Nations rugby match. As surprising as Wales' win, a few new members were actually recruited. We have also been joining recruiting drives across South Wales, with a fair response. The Sqn hosted its annual St David's Day Dinner on 4 March. As always, it was hugely successful and first-time

Continued on page 201

NEWS FROM THE GULF

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj GN Addley**
RSM **WO1 Lloyd**

TIGRIS TROOP

Since the successful Iraqi elections in January, the operational theatre has been quiet, and life in Tigris Tp has become quite settled. But we are still busy, and plans are now advanced for the Sqn's redeployment back home to Osnabruck. The Multiple is now being tasked through the Sqn, and has been given a number of tasks, including escorts within Basrah City, changing round personnel at the outdets, and checking newly-fitted comms systems at Iraqi police stations. **Sig Baker** is often to be found in his element here, drinking tea with Iraqi police and buying ice creams from kids in the street. The SYNERGY Dets are deployed in support of a number of units, and the Tp has soldiers working with both the Danish and Japanese Bns. **Sgt Vakalala** has recently returned from Al-Mathanah as the rear link mediator between the communicatively-disgruntled QDG and the excitable Div Comms Ops. The Tp also mans a det providing movement comms across Southern Iraq at Safwan Hill.

Sig Baker takes tea with the Iraqi Police Service

Back in camp, Tigris Tp is working hard on the final preparation of the huge fleet of vehs and equipt that was brought out to Iraq, as well as finalising the admin plans for handover to the new Sig Sqn. Days to do are getting few, and when not greasing up the vehs, the Tp can often be found greasing themselves up for a last minute bit of panic tanning and beach volleyball. We continue to work with RAF, escorting their fuel runs, and we are still doing our fair share of guards and escorting locally employed civilians. Even **Sig Thomas** has been given a second chance as barman with his new database calculator after being named 'the human cash-machine' for giving more money in change than he was taking in.

EUPHRATES TROOP

Euphrates Tp has been busy with many changeovers at our outdets. **Cpl McCluskey** and **Sig Grice** replaced **LCpl Skingley** and **Sig Heardley** at Umm Qsar South Port, and up at JAPBAT, **LCpl Robertson** has changed over with **Cpl Phillips** and **Sig Spence**. **Cpl Walker** and **LCpl Anderson** have also spent 10 days at Camp Bucca, the American camp near the Kuwaiti border. They were sent on a rigging job up the mast at Camp Buuca, which is extremely high. They seemed to enjoy the det however, and were sad to leave the American 24hr 'eat as much food as you want' cookhouse – no surprise there.

Many members of the Tp have enjoyed a period of Operational Stand Down. This generally runs from a Tuesday to a Thursday, and allows groups of soldiers to spend a couple of day's normalisation down in Kuwait. One group managed to book themselves on a water sports package down there, and had great fun trying out various activities off the coast of Kuwait city.

In the middle of March, **Sgt Dawes** organised an excellent pool competition for the Sqn, the Waterloo Lines Camel Trophy, with the said Trophy manufactured by the LAD. After numerous weeks of games played between those on the pool ladder, the top 8 people were taken from the Offrs' and SNCOs' mess to play the top 8 people from the JNCOs'.

The Foreman narrowly squeezed into the top 8, much to everyone's surprise, but was well beaten in the first round! After an excellent evening of games, the winner was a JNCO, not even from the Sqn, but from the RMP!

It's not all fun and games though, and back in the HQ, it has been hard work for all. The Board of Officers and ECIs have meant a lot of work for all those involved. **SSgt Dear** and **Sgt Dawes** have spent numerous hours preparing both tech wksps for their inspections. Thankfully, due to the hard work of them and their teams, the inspections went well.

BLESMA CHARITY RUN

Easter weekend was the date set for the Basrah 10km Run organised by the RSM and in aid of the British Limbless Ex-

The victorious Girls' Team. L-R: Sig Marsh, Sig Buxton, 2Lt Nicklni, LCpl Archer and Cpl Cave

Servicemen's' Association (BLESMA). A great deal of hard work went into the organisation of the event, and numerous people were used as markers and water points. Lots of the Sqn took part, with our A and B teams coming in 1st and 3rd respectively. First position went to **Cpl Allen (**att from 14Sig Regt (EW)), with the Sqn's own **LCpl Dunn** finishing third. The prize for most amount of effort must go to **SSgt Smith**, who had the very demanding job of being in the rear safety veh, having to follow all the runners throughout the race!

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRAH

All members of Suppt Tp in the JSUB have been very busy recently with ECIs and LSIs falling either side of a Board of Officers prior to the end of tour. Nevertheless, the Tp has still found the time to make fun of **Sgt Sommerville's** efforts to get into the 300 Club. His mantra of 'Quality not quantity' with regard to press-ups was getting some stick from the QM with his attempts at head-bobbing on test day (he did do sufficient real ones to get into the Club though).

VISITS

The Sqn has recently hosted visits from the new GOC 1(UK) Div, **Maj Gen Cooper** and Comd 4 Armd Bde, **Brig Deverell**. The Sqn put on two fine displays, showing off the Sqn's work both on the JSUB and comms sides. **Brig Deverell** was particularly interested to see the new SYNERGY Dets. On coming up to the Det, the Brigadier said to **Capt Galloway**, 'So, are you the crew for this vehicle?" to which a very put out **Capt Galloway** could only reply 'But...I'm the Operations Officer.'

Sgt Haskell and SSgt Lawn listen as Brig Deverell chats to members of the Sqn Multiple

NEWS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

NEW ZEALAND SIGNALLERS CELEBRATE THEIR CORPS DAY IN AFGHANISTAN

– by Capt Michael Koberstein

The RNZSigs component of New Zealand's Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan began celebrating their Corps Day (St Gabriel's Day, 24 March) by playing the Maori song *Poi E* very loudly over the Kiwi Base's quaint voice system at 06.00hrs, much to the disgust of the remainder of NZPRT.

This was followed by a tear-jerking rendition of *Happy Birthday to Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals* sung by **WO2 Dods**. By this time, the Kiwi Base was well and truly awake and, after plastering the Corps colours and a Jimmy onto everyone's desktop, the Signallers made their escape on a day trip to Red City. All in all, it was a most excellent day.

In the photo, RNZSigs members of NZPRT unveil their OP CRIB V CIS Cell flag at Red City, an ancient fort high above the Bamyan Valley. Clockwise from the top left are: **Sig Jamie Irwin**, **Cpl Geoff Simonsen**, **Sig Paul Cocker**, **LCpl Haley Carstairs**, **LCpl Hayden Westbury** and **WO2 Jeremy Dods**.

Courtesy of NZ Army News

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Townley**

What a tremendous 3 months for the Regt. Firstly, the Sqns were out on Sqn exs, but this was merely the build up prior to the main Regtl event, EX KEY FLIGHT. This ex was the first occasion where CORMORANT has been taken out and used under near-realistic conditions. A number of notable firsts were achieved during the ex, including a link between component HQs of 67km, with the longest single section between bearer module nodes of 42km, all at 4Mbs. Although the ex achieved a great deal, it is clear we have a long way to go before we are fully conversant with the equipt, its capabilities and, just as importantly, our own procedures.

The Regtl Skill at Arms Meeting was held in February, and brilliantly organised by **Maj Krishna Gurung**. So much so, that he even managed to book the snow and freezing cold, just like the previous year! The key point to note was the clean sweep made by 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, who also picked up the first winning points for this years CO's Cup Competition.

On the sporting front, the Regt has had a fantastic time recently. The rugby team went on to win not only the Army Shield Competition, but also the Corps 7-a-side Championships. A full article on this season appears below. The football team also goes from strength to strength, and are now in the final of the Signaller Cup for the second year in a row. The ladies' football team has had a recent success by winning the 2nd Division 5-aside Competition. Special mention for that success goes to **LCpl Emma Anderson** and **LCpl Victoria Gurung**, who played outstandingly well.

The Iraqi tank outside RHQ

Another notable event has been the handover of RSM and the long-awaited unveiling of the Iraqi tank outside RHQ. In a memorable ceremony, the CO invited **WO1(RSM) Andy Dick** to unveil the tank, which he did with great aplomb. **WO1(RSM) Dick** then handed over his Pace Stick to **WO1(RSM) Paddy Townley**, who knows he has a hard act to follow. The CO then told the old RSM to remove his rank slide so that **Capt Andy Dick** could come in to the Officers Mess for a celebratory drink. There was however, one final twist to the day. The CO informed **Andy** that a surprise awaited him inside the Tank. On opening the turret hatch **Andy** was hugely surprised to find his former CO, **Col Stuart MacRostie** hiding inside! To finish the day off, a surprise welcoming dinner was held for **Andy** in the Officers Mess. We wish both **Andy** and **Jo** all the best for their future.

The HO/TO between RSMs

214 SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) McGaw**

EXERCISE KEY FLIGHT

After a great shake out on our own Sqn ex on the windy hills surrounding York, 214 Sig Sqn were off to Stranraer for EX KEY FLIGHT. The ex was run with a realistic op scenario, and built up over several weeks by the Regtl Ops Team. The NTM time slowly reduced during the week, and Viking Tp, under the command of **Lt Sarah Panting**, finally got the operational call-up in the early hours of Monday morning. They were well prepared and ready to support the Spearhead Land Element for entry in to the fictitious country of Nova Scotia. After a stop off at RAF Leeming to learn about preparing and sending dets by air, the Tp carried on to Scotland, arriving in situ some 14 hrs later! The initial CORMORANT network was professionally set up, and preparations were then underway to receive the main body of the Regt.

The main body got their orders to move and joined Viking Tp at West Freugh airfield some 36 hrs later. Orders were given from the Joint Netcen (Regt Ops) and the Sqn hierarchy were ordered to take on the responsibility of the Theatre Management Cell

(TMC). All of our assets were then split between 219 Sig Sqn and 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, who both had a Regional Management Cell (RMC) to command within an AOR. The TMC stayed firmly in loc at the main HQ, whilst the two RMCs were given their orders to deploy into Nova Scotia to support the notional Component Command HQs, who were 'conducting operations'. The 214 Sqn troops attached to the other Sqns fully enjoyed the interaction, and were pleased that they could provide a lot of technical knowledge and experience on the CORMORANT kit to their new chain of command.

There was a great deal learned in the TMC and out on the ground. It was a very taxing ex, and really pushed the boundaries of the equipt and the soldiers operating it. CORMORANT held up really well, and confidence in the kit is now sky high. Procedures are starting to get ironed out, and new working relationships between the Sqns are being forged. We still have a way to go, but this ex certainly put us on the right track, and sets us up perfectly for the future. 214 Sig Sqn now has its state of the art comms system, and really is the place to be.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Haughton**

EX SNOW WARRIOR - *by 2Lt T Kelly*

Early in January, after a vast amount of seeking for willing volunteers, **2Lt Kelly**, ably supported by **SSgt Bartliff**, set off for EX SNOW WARRIOR with seven other adventure seekers from the Regt.

The adventure wasn't slow in starting. Once all members arrived safely on foreign shores, the next obstacle became the transport, which in true military tradition broke down in Belgium. After having been forced to live in the lap of luxury for a night in Belgium, we made our way through the snow to arrive at the piste a day late.

One day behind the other groups did not prove to be of any significance, as under the expert instruction of **SSgt Bartliff**, **2Lt Kelly**, **Cpl Lyons**, **LCpl Blundell**, **LCpl Gilmour**, **Cfn Cooke** and **Pte Rafamoyo** surpassed their own expectations. This was especially true in the case of **Pte Rafamoyo**, who managed to launch himself off every mound he came across.

There were many comical moments that will cement the ex as a course to remember for its participants. **LCpl Blundell** managed to stop abruptly in the middle of the slope, at the worst time possible, causing one hundred percent casualties in a twenty-metre killing zone.

It wasn't all just fun. There was a lot of learning to be undertaken for us to gain the two qualifications. Firstly, it was our down hill ability that was assessed. We had to show that we could ski safely and defeat slopes with a difficulty grade of red. To gain the Tour Leading Qualification, we learned how to carry out avalanche drills, to find lost personnel, and we even spent a day constructing a snow hole. Although everyday brought new excitement and a host of comical moments, the serious undertones of how dangerous this sport could be were always present.

All members passed their Basic Ski Proficiency and Ski Tour training with flying colours. All who took part owe **SSgt Bartliff** a great many thanks for giving us all the opportunity to take part in the activities, and to share the experience. Unsurprisingly, this course comes highly recommended.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AJ Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

The first quarter of this year has been very busy. We have received the first tranche of CORMORANT equipt and we have deployed on two exs with it. Despite the best attempts of the weather to break the Sqn morale, the boys learned some invaluable lessons, and now know that CORMORANT can go tactical!

So what's coming up? From 18 April, the established dets will deploy for one month on EX JOINT VENTURE 05 in South Cerney. We have also recently received additional equipt - with the SQMS changing over there is much to do.

It is a busy time for the soldiers; we are hoping for some silverware from the Corps SAAM, where some of our boys are representing the Regt, and in Catterick, the young *bhai haru* are going through their paces on the CO's Cadre Course. All in all, we are enjoying 2005, but the pressure will begin to increase as we approach a declared operation capability towards the end of the year.

Finally the Squadron congratulates **Maj Ade Clewlow** and **Mafalda Memsahib** for the birth of their daughter, **Matilde** in March.

REGIMENTAL SAAM 05 - *by Sig Rajkumar Gurung*

2 Sig Regt SAAM was held from 21 - 25 February 05 at Strensall Ranges, York. Despite the freezing weather, each Sqn managed to field several strong teams. The first two days were practice days, where everyone had a chance to fire the matches in which they were to be involved.

On the first day of the Competition, 2 Section from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, shot Match 3 (Henry Whitehead Cup) and Match 4 (Association Cup).

The weather was so bad, it was extremely hard to see the targets at 200 and 300m, which made things difficult for the teams. Day 2 saw the chance to practise the Fire Team Assessment and the LSW Matches. Towards the end of the afternoon, the preliminary rounds of the Falling Plates Competition took place, and saw several of the 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn teams go out.

On the final day of the Competition, there was still all to shoot for, with very close scores between several Sections. Eventually 2 Section from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn forged ahead to win.

The final of the Falling Plates Competition was between 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn and 214 Sig Sqn. Although very young in terms of experience, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn Team eventually ran out comfortable winners. The winning team then had to shoot against the CO's Team, comprising the Regtl 2IC, Adjt and the RSM. The 246 team won this competition, and became the overall Falling Plates winners. Results from the competition were as follows:

Best Individual Rifle	**Cpl Akash Sunuwar**
Best LSW	**Sig Surajsing Gurung**
Champion Section	2 Section, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn
Champion Sqn	246 Gurkha Sig Sqn

GURKHAS MEET HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

In the week leading up to his wedding to **Camilla Parker Bowles**, **HRH The Prince of Wales** met up with a number of Gurkha soldiers from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn at Harewood House. The group was invited to be part of a private ceremony to consecrate a new Buddhist Stupa that has been built by **The Earl of Harewood's** son.

Also present were a dozen Buddhist monks from Bhutan, who conducted the religious ceremony in the presence of **His Royal Highness**. After 30 minutes, the Prince did a walk-about, where he spoke to members of 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, including the OC's month-old daughter, **Matilde**.

The Prince commented to **Capt Krishna Gurung** on how smart the Gurkhas were looking. He also spoke to **Cpl Dhan**, a chef

HRH The Prince of Wales with Capt Krishna Gurung

who assisted the monks when they arrived in the UK, and he shook hands with all of the boys in 246 before moving on. He said he wished he'd been wearing his Gurkha tie!

REGIMENTAL RUGBY – *by Capt Jim King*

This has been yet another outstanding season for the Regtl Rugby Club, as demonstrated by their recent retaining of both the Army Major Unit Shield title and the Royal Signals 7s Competition. The season did get off to a slow start, though, with narrow losses against 1 D and D and Royal Scots in the Army Cup. However, after these and one other setback, the Team has managed to remain undefeated since November 04. This run of victories is largely due to the size of the Regtl squad, which has allowed the Team to continue training and playing to a high standard, despite the other commitments that have arisen with the introduction of CORMORANT to the Regt.

Once in the Army Shield Competition, the Team had a difficult route to the final, not to mention a significant amount of time on the road. 7 AA Bn REME, 17 Port and Maritime Regt RLC, 39 Regt RA and ITC Catterick were all beaten by the narrowest of margins, allowing us the privilege of playing 19 Regt RA in the final at Aldershot. With the scores precariously balanced at 0-0 at half time, and 3-3 towards the end, you could not have hoped for a closer finish to the game. Spectators and players alike were gearing up for extra time, until in the closing minutes of the game, **Sig 'Rocky' Roqara** crashed over from centre, to score the only try of the game. The Regt was then forced to defend its own try-line against the big guns of 19 Regt, until the final whistle relieved the tension!

With one trophy in the bag, the Regtl 7s Team travelled to Cardiff, for the annual Royal Signals Tournament. First up were 21 Sig Regt (AS) (who were the finalists along with us last year) and following that in quick succession, were 16 Sig Regt, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, 37 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, 264 Sig Sqn and in the final, 11 Sig Regt. With a combination of dogged tackling and individual skills from the backs, most notably from **Sig Setta Raikoso**, the Team maintained an unbeaten record to return to York with the Title.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col C W Edwards TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) R G Dalton**

TRAIN, PAIN, GAIN

Waiting for the Sqn orienteering teams to arrive at Granville Country Park on a bitterly cold February morning, I tried to analyse what motivates the TA soldier to get out of bed on their weekend off, just to suffer the many discomforts of trg during the long Winter months. As I was adjusting my camera, With frost bitten fingers, I concluded that it does take a little more than just the persuasive efforts of our dedicated SPSIs and Permanent Staff.

The main focus for encouraging attendance at any event, centres on a well-organised, interesting, varied and well-publicised weekend to attract their attention to make that special effort to attend.

The CO presenting the Championship Award to SSgt Ray Blanchette

The weekend of EX SMART WARRIOR in early March was such an event. It was a cleverly structured weekend, organised by **SSgt Baz Ward** and **Trev Croxon**, combining management and leadership trg with an inter-Sqn competition - and a social evening the night beforehand thrown in for good measure. The event was won outright by 48 Sig Sqn, with **SSgt Ray Blanchette** proudly accepting the team award. They were closely followed by HQ Sqn.

FROM NETWORK RAIL TO DOGWOOD

– by Sgt Ian Townsend

Following the trg at the RTMC, I joined my Unit and, after a 24hr delay, we left Brize Norton on Sunday 4 July on a C17.
The flight was OK, but the landing was a bit hairy - lights out for last fi hr then a steep dive straight into Basrah. Then it was on to Shaibah Log Base to acclimatise and carry out further trg, especially on the range of weapons being used against us.

I still haven't got over the shock of arriving in the early hours of the morning and been shoved in a tent with temperatures in the 40s, and then been treated to a mortar attack the following morning. What a welcome, and a world removed from my normal job with Network Rail.

This was going to be a long six months - especially with an alcohol ban. During the first week in theatre, we deployed to the range in full body armour in unbearable heat. I just prayed I hit the target through the veil of sweat pouring down my face; and to cap it all a camel spider was crawling through my body armour. But I was lucky not to be bitten; unlike some of the guys, who were covered in sores. My initial integration was going well, and I got through the first week unscathed.

Because of my civilian experience, I found myself initially working with Iraqi engineers and with Radcon, with the occasional shift in the Comcen as well as doing VCPs. Late in July we moved to

Leftovers of incoming rockets in Camp Dogwood

better accn in Waterloo Lines - with real air conditioning. It's amazing what's affected with the heat; batteries lose their charge, so cameras, etc loose their memory in the middle of the day. Everything melts; shower gel is like water.

The next few months moved on swiftly, with a variety of jobs, including working with the Italians. This provided an interesting interlude while I began counting down the days towards my R and R.

There were quite a few hairy moments during August, when the insurgent activities increased, and we had to travel around Basrah in armoured vehs, as well as suffering a number of sustained rocket and mortar attacks. One of these nearly hit the ammo dump – scary. You try not to think about it and are thankful for all the letters and parcels from back home to balance things out.

It was also terrific to spend a few days R and R with my family and partner, **Jody** back in UK during September. I thought I'd seen enough sand, but we spent a few days at Wollacombe.

In October, I was posted to Al-Nasariah (west of Basrah) to work with the Japanese. I expected to be with them for two weeks and was looking forward to this, but 3 days later, I received a call telling me that I was off to Baghdad to work with the Black Watch and Marines.

This filled me with some trepidation, as the Americans were having a tough time in that area. Before I knew it, we had landed in Camp Dogwood, and were welcomed by a mortar attack with seven landing in the compound. Too bloody close (one struck the ground 30 metres away as I buried myself in the sand), and too bloody loud for my liking. I tried as best I could to get into a routine in Camp Dogwood working in JOCS, but the insurgent activity appeared constant, and I was forever running for cover.

This was unlike anything I had ever experienced before - Warriors and helicopters were being damaged, rockets were flying over our heads, missing people by inches, IEDs were being placed in dead cows, suicide bombings were on the increase, and regrettably we were also suffering casualties. But the BW were hitting the insurgents hard and effectively. During all of this excitement, I found myself bizarrely comparing some of the American kit with our own.

Their radio gear is very flimsy, but its small and light and everything is contained within the Humvee and powered by the engine and batteries - no gene no trailer no tent; rough but efficient. Their webbing and body armour is better, but the M16 is too long and cumbersome. All this took my mind off the chaos that was going on around me, and I soon realised this was real soldiering, and I was proud to be part of this frightening experience.
I hoped in vain that we would leave for UK at the same time as the BW and be home for Christmas, but as expected, I returned to my unit at Basrah on 19 December to work with the Telemechs repairing cables and phones. Compared with Camp Dogwood this was a piece of cake, and a fitting and relatively calm end to my unforgettable OP TELIC Tour.

AN UNFORTUNATE SERIES OF EVENTS

The Regtl orienteering team, comprising **Majs Tom Jeffries**, **Neil Turnbull** and **John Middler**, **WO2 Chris Smith**, **and SSgts Arnot** and **Richards**, began their trg in earnest this year, and have attended many civilian events in preparation for their assault on wide range of military competitions throughout the year. The first such event was the 5 Div Relay event, which took place in the Harewood Forest on 6 April. Unfortunately, the Team's best effort secured them only a 6th place and a broken toe for **Maj Tom**, who is now out of the running for a while. A week later, hoping to repeat their 2004 success at the 5 Div Championships, the Team descended on Sandhurst in fairly confident mode. But alas, without one of their strongest members out of action, and one or two team errors, they struggled and failed to secure a place. They are now beginning to concentrate their trg efforts towards the Army Championships at Sennelager in May, and are determined to put their current lack of success down to an unfortunate series of events, and to regain their reputation as a championship team.

FINAL ROUNDUP

To end our contribution on a light note, here is a round up of other events that have taken place recently. First was the presentation of the award of the Stockdale Trophy to the junior rank who has made the most significant contribution to the Regt during the past year. This year it was awarded to **Cpl Hayley Richardson** at a special ceremony held in 89 Sqn on 29 March. **Cpl Hayley** is a deserving recipient, balancing a demanding job with the Prison Service with her TA service. She completed a tour in Iraq last year, came second on her Det Comd's course, and provides PT support throughout the Regt during as well as carrying out her role as an SCRA Det Comd.

Cpl Hayley Richardson receiving the Stockdale Trophy

A special congratulation is also extended to **Cfn Pete Roberts**, **SSgt Kev Potts**, **Sgt Norm Hadley**, **LCpl Tony Reid** and **LCpl Jim Turner**, for their fund raising efforts during *Comic Relief* on 11 March. They manned a call centre in Coventry that received more than 4,000 calls and subsequently raised £100,000. They even donated a day's TA Pay during the proceedings. Finally the Regt bade a farewell to **Capt Glyn Ireland** and Chief Clerk **WO2 Chris Smith**.

ON THE ROAD WITH THE BAND OF THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

Like The White Helmets, The Band of The Royal Corps of Signals is often viewed by others as a plum and glamorous job; they have nice uniforms and they just play music every day. The reality is, it's a hard slog, working unsocial hours, long days and long coach journeys, to say nothing of the rehearsal times put in both learning and perfecting new pieces and drill movements. To examine this more closely, I went on the road with them for just two engagements.

At 08.00hrs on a dull Sunday morning in March, it's a hive of activity at the Band block. The coach has just arrived, its cargo lockers are opened, and bandsmen/women start loading blue crates of various sizes. Some containers are clearly instrument-shaped, others not. There are also the familiar small square black boxes containing the Busbies, as well as the glossy boots and spurs. In go the zip-up slips containing the uniforms - two for each bandsman/woman, because today's event requires them to perform in both ceremonial and concert roles. There is the inevitable cynical remark, as a couple of latecomers arrive to find most of the loading is complete.

Gradually, everyone takes their seats. Most have brought comfy cushions and MP3 players for the long journey to London. Bandmaster **WO1 Paul Wilman** checks his paperwork, as BSM **WO2 Barry Whitlock** does a final briefing check. 'Fanfare gear? Ceremonial gear? What have we missed? Everything packed? Everybody happy?' He gives the OK to **George**, the coach driver, who manoeuvres the vehicle out through the parked cars, and we are off.

Today's event is a large concert in the Royal Albert Hall, entitled *Dorset Live*. Practically every young musician in Dorset, plus a number from Dublin, Ealing and Normandy are to perform. Some 10 bands or orchestras, a choir of nearly 400, dancers and other performers - more than 1,000 young performers in all. For this concert, the Band is multi-tasked, in roles covering the whole of their repertoire - a fanfare, brass accompaniment to the organ and choir, a ceremonial march-on, a concert performance, extra voices for the choir, and extra brass, woodwind and percussion for the orchestras.

En route, **WO1 Paul Wilman** checks his paperwork once more, and runs through the scores of two pieces that he will be conducting. There have already been a number of workshops and rehearsals with some of the component performing groups, but today will be the first full rehearsal in the Royal Albert Hall before the concert this evening.

Rehearsals. Hurry up and wait. We'll be on soon – we hope!

Despite the prospect of severe traffic congestion in London, we arrive at the Hall at 11.00hrs, and the coach descends into the underground car park. 'Dressing Room 12,' says an attendant, and everyone pitches into the task of unloading and moving all the kit up there. We are supposed to be fed in the Victoria Room at 12.00hrs, and be ready to rehearse at 12.15hrs. Some manage to eat within the time, but most give up, and everyone is in the arena at the appointed time. Eventually, the Band starts rehearsing at 13.15hrs. The logistics of moving so many young people around, getting them on and off the stage, is beginning to be a problem. It's going to be a long day – lots of 'hurry up an wait.' Will it all work for real tonight?

Rehearsals. The Fanfare

Rehearsals. The Director of Music in action

Miraculously, all the rehearsals are through by 18.00hrs. Most of the Band head off to the Prince Consort Room for their 'lunch' before moving down to the cramped Dressing Room 12 to change. The first group is on at 19.00hrs to open the Concert with an impressive fanfare. And it is a truly entertaining Concert;

everything runs like clockwork, and all the young people (and the Band) give inspired performances.

The performance. Gear on...

...and ready to go

The Concert finishes at 22.15hrs, and it's everyone down to the Dressing Room to change, pack up the gear, and then load the coach. We leave at 23.00hrs and are back in Blandford at 01.15hrs. Then it's unloading the gear once more, and packing it back into the store.

Everyone is on their way home by 02.00hrs. Monday is a day off, but there's a heavy schedule for the whole of the rest of the week – a work experience programme for schools, beginning with 60 students from Trowbridge School on Tuesday, and ending with a concert at Sixpenny Handley on the Friday night.

Eight weeks and 17 engagements later (not to mention many hours of travelling and rehearsals), and they're off again, with me in tow. This time, it's to 36 Sig Regt for a Freedom of Ilford Parade, followed by a Medals Parade back at their TAC. The coach is loaded, and we leave Blandford at 05.30hrs, again on a Sunday morning. As before, the en-voyage technology appears – MP3 players and DVD players to while away the time on the long journey.

We arrive at Gordon Fields TAC at 08.45hrs, the coach is unloaded, and we make our way to 36 Sig Regt's cookhouse for breakfast. The Regt's RSM briefs BSM **WO2 Barry Whitlock** on the form and programme for the day, and the BSM in turn briefs the Band. They then return to the makeshift changing room in the 25m Range, where some last-minute polishing of buckles, boots and instruments is done before the change to uniforms. Then it's on to the coach again, and we're off to Ilford Town Centre for the big Parade.

Ilford. Some last-minute polishing

Ilford. BSM Barry Whitlock gives his briefing for the Parade

DOM Maj Paul Murrell salutes the Dais as he leads the Band through Ilford

The Freedom Parade goes off well. 36 Sig Regt is followed by the local ACF and Members and Standard from the East London RSA Branch, as well as many other WW2 veterans. The Band has been a major attraction, drawing much applause from the assembled crowd. Then it's quickly back to the TAC for a quick lunch before the Medals Parade. The latter takes some time to get assembled, as everyone turns an anxious eye to the threatening skies. However, it eventually goes ahead, whilst the Band plays accompanying music.

Ilford. Musical accompaniment for the Medals Parade

We all change again, the coach is loaded and we leave the TAC at 14.30hrs for the long journey back to Camp. Most are soon asleep, and we reach Blandford at 18.00hrs.

Monday is a day off for the Band, but the rest of the week is to be spent rehearsing for a big concert in Poole in aid of the ABF. From now on until the end of the summer, there will be little time off for them as they prepare for and undertake 65 days of further engagements. In more ways than one, it's 'be gone dull care' all the way. They're a hard-working bunch, the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals.

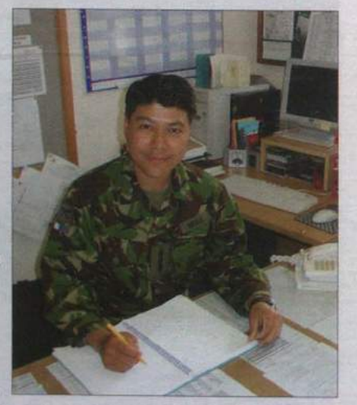
QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS IN BLANDFORD

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

When most people in the Corps think of Queens Gurkha Signals, they remember 2 Sig Regt, 21 Sig Regt (AS) or 30 Sig Regt, but QGS also have presences elsewhere, particularly in Blandford Camp. Having had this brought to my attention by the Gurkha focus for Blandford, **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh**, I did a little investigation. What I found was quite revealing. They are present in all units and depts in Blandford. I also discovered that, by tradition, a Gurkha is usually referred to by his rank and first name, hence **Sgt Rup Gurung** is called **Sgt Rup**, rather than **Sgt Gurung**. The reason – to avoid confusion. There don't seem to be many Gurkha family names to go round. For instance, the family name **Gurung** is more common than **Smith** and **Jones** put together for the whole of the British Army!

The senior QGS Officer in Blandford is **Capt (QGO) Nirmal Bhattachan**, who in addition to his job as 2IC Area Systems Gp RSS, is responsible for personnel and welfare matters for all Gurkhas on Blandford Camp. Currently, this comprises around 90 soldiers and 16 families, of whom 25 are permanent staff, and the remainder on long courses at RSS.

'As Queen's Gurkha Signals and as members of the Brigade of Gurkhas, we have a long and very proud tradition,' he says, 'and it's my job to see that this is maintained.'



Capt (QGO) Nirmal Bhattachan

Capt Nirmal has been in the Army for 22 years, starting as a Rad Tech. His first tour at Blandford was in 1998 as a SSgt Instructor at RS Gp. But among his various appointments, he is most proud of his appointment as Adjt QGS in 2002, the first time a Gurkha Officer had been appointed to this position.

WO2 (SSM) Surje Gurung

His right hand man is **WO2 (SSM) Surje Gurung**. **WO2 Surje** was quick to point out that, in his case, SSM stands for *Station* Sergeant Major QGS, rather than *Squadron* Sergeant Major QGS. As such, he is the first point of contact for G1 matters for all Gurkhas at Blandford. He started Army service with the Bde of Gurkhas in Hong Kong, and has since served in every UK Sig Regt where there are Gurkhas: 2 Sig Regt, 21 Sig Regt (AS) 30 Sig Regt, and 35 Sig Regt. A keen shot, **WO2 Surje** is a member of the Army 100, and wears his badge with great pride.

Cpl Rudra Ale...

... and LCpl Biraj Punpurja

Tucked away in RSG workshops, I found two Techs, **Cpl Rudra Ale** and **LCpl Biraj Punpurja**. Each was patiently working on a

Sgt Sun Bahadur Gurung

difficult equipment problem. In true Gurkha tradition, you could tell that they would carry on until the problem was solved. Also in true Gurkha tradition, the fathers of both had served in the British Army.

Sgt Sun Bahadur Gurung is an instructor in ASG. When I met him he was just preparing to instruct in the installation and operation of video conferencing equipment. He has been an instructor for 10 months. 'This is the first time I have had an instructor's job, he says. 'It's a whole new experience, but very rewarding.' **Sgt Sun** has been in the Army for 12 years, and has served in Hong Kong, Brunei and Bosnia, and with 21 Sig Regt (AS) and 30 Sig Regt. His father had also served in the British Army.

Sgts Rup Gurung, Vishal Pun and Raj Kumar Gurung

Sgts Rup Gurung, **Vishal Pun** and **Raj Kumar Gurung** are currently on FofS Course 75, from which they will graduate in April 06.

Successful members of this course now graduate with an Honours Degree, so they will be the first Gurkhas to attain this Degree. Between them they have seen service in Iraq, Brunei, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Turkey.

When I reached him, **Sgt Bom Gurung** was supervising an IT examination at ASG. He has been an Instructor there for 18 months. In his 14 years' service, **Sgt Bom** has had postings in 2 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt, and overseas in Brunei and Iraq. His wife and young son are in Blandford with him.

Sgt Bom Gurung

In the ORs' Cookhouse, I met Chef **Cpl Jaindra Rai**, a member of Queen's Own Gurkha Logistics Regt (QOGLR). Rather unusually for a Chef, he sports Para wings on his white tunic, having previously served with 2 Para for a little over 2 years.

Cpl Jaindra feeds his hungry Gurkhas

His role on Camp is to prepare Gurkha meals for all his countrymen in Blandford - all 70 of them. Having already served 16 years, **Cpl Jaindra** is looking forward to his retirement later this year. When I asked what he would do when he was a civilian, he said he would be in the catering business – making big money!

Cpl Ram Rana

Cpl Ram Rana has been an Instructor in Cable Systems Group for 1fi years. He has served with 2 Sig Regt, including operational service in Iraq. He was proud to show me some of his own handiwork in his Department, including a cable marking device, which earned him an award of £75.

How did he manage with Brit trainees? 'Quite well. They are the same as trainees anywhere in the Army,' he says.

Over in Military Leadership Group (MLG), **SSgt Dhir Pun** is an Instructor on the SNCO CLM Courses, of which there are 8 a year.

The early part of his 15 years' service was with 2/2 Gurkha Rifles. Since transferring to QGS, he has seen service in Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Canada and Austria.

When I asked his Brit Instructor colleagues what it was like to be working with a Gurkha in their midst, they all said that he was an asset in the Department, not only working with Gurkha students, but also with Brit students as well. **SSgt Dhir** also wears his Army 100 Badge with pride.

SSgt Dhir Pun

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) MA Giles**

EXERCISE EASTERN TREK

Just three weeks before 18 members of the Regt were due to travel to Nepal to conduct a Trekking exped, the political situation forced its cancellation. At short notice, the RSM managed to arrange a ski exped to Saalbach, Austria, where the Army ski team had been successful in winning the Tri-Services 2005 event. Six members of the Regt improved their skiing abilities, passing the Advanced Ski Proficiency under the tuition of **WO1 (SMI) Bob Price**, whilst another six novices gained Basic Ski Proficiency with **Capt Mike Wong**, 39 Sig Regt. With the best snow for years and plenty of sun, all made the most of this outstanding ski area. The highlight of each day for the Advanced Group was watching the RSM take his spectacular tumble. Likewise, the Basic Group enjoyed watching the exploits of **Cpl Richard Smoker** and **Sig Lewis Read.**

EXERCISE ESSEX GOOD SHOT – *by Sgt W Wright*

On 14 March, the Regtl Shooting Team departed for Hythe Ranges for two weeks of trg with 10 Sig Regt and 251 Sig Sqn for the TA Corps SAAM. The team were looking forward to working and training with the Regular Army, and hoping the weather would hold off so they could enjoy Folkestone. After the first few days, it was becoming apparent that the TA soldiers were holding their own with their Regular counterparts. **Sgt Rob Aldridge**, **Cpl Reggie Cullinbine** and **Cfn Matt Amey** were scoring well, and improving each day and achieving high scores on the pistol practices. The second week saw the arrival of the other half of the team. **SSgt Kev Elliot**, **Sgt Mark Yuill**, **Sig Phil Collins** and **Sig Go West** kept up the good standard set in Week 1, and the good old British weather did not let us down; fog, rain - and then sunshine for just one day. This proved another good week of trg, with all the Team members learning new skills and making new friends. We would like to thank 10 Sig Regt for hosting us.

WO1 Price instructing the advanced group

SERGEANTS' MESS SUNDAY LUNCH

The WOs' and Sgts' Mess held a Sunday Lunch on 3 April and hosted our friends from the East London Branch of the RSA and 4 Bn, Essex Regts Comrades Assn.

Also present were five in-patients from Chelsea Hospital, **Sgt Robert Taylor** (85), **Cpl Douglas Woolford** (85), **WO2 Jim McGovern** (69), **WO1 Wally Offard** (89) and **WO2 Stand Kendrik** (93). The lunch was organised by **Sgt Wright** and cooked by the Chefs under the supervision of **WO2 Norma Miller-Kight**. As always, the food was superb, and the raffle raised £200 for SSAFA.

The Chelsea Pensioners at the Sunday Lunch

44 (CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Rowson**
SSM **WO2 J Davis**

After the Christmas break, the Sqn was thrust straight back into our busy schedule by deploying on EX HERMEST TEST. As usual, there was a strong turnout, and gave us the opportunity to welcome our new PSI from Ilford, **Sgt Scott Witts**. The ex focused on comms, with driver trg and trade induction running in the background. **Sig Pearce** was successful on passing her C+E at the first attempt.

The ex also benefited **Cpl Barratt**, as he qualified as an Electrician Driver at the trade camp two weeks later. The whole ex passed smoothly until the recovery phase, when all arrived safely back to the TAC - minus the SPSI and PSI.

They had broken down at the tollbooth at the Dartford Tunnel, causing in a one-mile tailback. Congratulations to **Sig Parrack** and **Sig Thompson** for passing their Recruits course.

2Lt Freer happy with the way things are going

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DA Prince**
SSM **WO2 AS Osborne**

On 3 March we held a Supportive Employers' Dinner for Cambridgeshire. The aim was to thank employers who had released Reservists to recent ops, whilst forging partnerships with other employers' representatives' organisations in the County. Each was presented certificates of support, and we gave them an update covering current issues relating to Reservists.

The function was hosted by **Mr H Duberly CBE**, HM Lord Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire, and an after dinner talk was given by **Brig S Caraffi**, Comd 49 (East) Bde. He was ably assisted by **Capt Ros Collins** and **Sgt Trevor Webb**, who both spoke of their experiences whilst mobilised on OP TELIC.

The Sqn is now looking forward to the Regt's Freedom of Ilford Parade, part of the celebrations of the 60th Anniversary of VE Day, and the National TA Recruiting Day on 14 May, where we shall have stands in Bedford and Norwich.

45 (EASTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M McKenzie-Bell**
SSM **WO2 N Back**

February saw the Sqn deploy to the South of England, for what turned out to be an extremely cold few days.

Although the ground had frozen under our feet, we were all happy to spend some time driving earth pins into the ground – even the OC wanted to have a bash! Trg progressed well, as we felt the cobwebs of winter disappear and settled down for some serious comms work.

Thereafter, several members of the Sqn dispersed to all parts of the world. Seven deployed to OP TELIC, and two more fortunate groups to Austria for skiing and to Germany for a free-fall parachuting course. **SSgts Bennett** and **Elliott** have been selected for the US/UK exchange programme and are on their way in May and June.

We were looking forward to the summer when we can take life a bit easier. But April and May will be very busy, with the focus on the National TA Recruiting Day in May. When all this frantic activity is done, we will be preparing for our annual Regtl competition, The Mountvoy Trophy, for which we will be fielding a strong team this year.

THE BEST TROOP AWARD – 749 SIGNAL TROOP

749 Sig Tp, based at Southend-on-Sea, was awarded the Regt's Best Tp Award at the East London Branch of the RSA Annual Dinner and Dance on 19 March. This prestigious award is recognition of all the hard work over the past year by **SSgt Gordon Bathurst** and his Tp, which included fulfilling their role well and producing a surge in recruiting.

The Cup was presented by the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and in the presence of the RSA Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and Mr Peter Cuckow from RSA HQ in Blandford.

Gen Sir Sam Cowan presenting the Best Troop award to SSgt Monk and SSgt Bathurst

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj J Gunning**
RSM **WO1(RSM) K Weaver**

EX EAGLES FLIGHT 2005 – *by Capt Hawkins*

EX EAGLES FLIGHT is a 2 week long, annual 16 Air Asslt Bde air skills FTX which aims to teach, refresh and practise all sub-units in the variety of specialist air skills required to operate as part of the Bde. With Bde HQ acting as enablers, each sub-unit was given relatively uncontrolled freedom of action in terms of its Training Objectives. From a Sqn perspective, and despite being committed to providing the necessary Bde HQ infrastructure and life support, as well as providing the manpower for a BG CASTEX, the intention was to seize the trg opportunities on offer to practise the Sqn across the full range of its tactical air deployment methods. The programme for the 40 or so Sqn members taking part was progressive in design and encompassed parachute, heli and mil skills trg.

Sigs Lambswood and Smith establish comms on the DZ, whilst Cpl Giroux shuns the camera to get some more quality face time with the OC Sqn

The first week was parachute trg intensive, with the Bde's Para Tac HQ (manpack), Tac HQ (veh borne) and MPRs being put through their paces. First came the 'walk through, talk through' practices, followed by consolidation trg with a full tactical parachute insertion, carrying operational loads (all-up weight per parachutist being approximately 190lbs) with Bde Tac HQ being delivered to the Heavy Drop DZ on a Medium Stress Platform. 1-ton containers were also delivered by parachute to practise air resupply. Weather aside, a great deal was achieved and, whilst heavily committed elsewhere, the Sqn accounted for the most parachute slots taken by any Bde sub-unit. Concurrent with the parachute trg, CH-47s were used to refresh and practise

SSgt Newman pings LCpls Perkins and Woodward to be sniper magnets whilst conducting DZ rallying drills

LCpl Steel is briefed by Sgt Crouchman that hitting the target is far more effective than merely scaring it to make it keep its head down

the Sqn's qualified Landing Point Commanders and Rigger Marshallers, as well as to practise the movement of the Bde's Step-Up HQ.

After a successful first week, came an even more successful day-long FIBUA trg package, expertly delivered by **Sgt Roberston**. A round robin of stands in STANTA's Eastmere Village gave many Sqn members a new insight into the realities of conducting ops in urban environments. Particularly popular was the Molotov Cocktail stand. The evening saw the Sqn conduct a full-blown Coy assault onto strongholds that were defended by members of 30 Sig Regt. Some 2 hrs after H-Hr and many, many rounds later, the Sqn had secured its objective.

The second week of the ex shifted its focus towards helicopter skills trg. The aim was to increase the number of the Sqn's qualified Rigger Marshallers by means of a teaching package headed up by **SSgt Walker**. After 3 days and considerable time playing with CH-47s, 26 members of the Sqn gained their qualification.

Overall, EX EAGLES FLIGHT is one of the more popular FTXs on the Bde calendar, as it gives the Sqn and its members the opportunity to conduct tailored and realistic air and mil skills trg, whilst being largely free from the responsibilities of Bde HQ support. This year's ex proved to be hugely successful and served to act as a building block for further Sqn trg in 2005.

EXERCISE MERCURY'S CADUCEUS – *by Sgt Crouchman*

In March, the Sqn deployed to Hythe Ranges as part of a week long Range Camp named Ex MERCURY'S CADUCEUS. The aim of the ex was to take members of the Sqn out of the barrack environment for a week, and give them an opportunity to improve their weapon handling and marksmanship skills.

The week started with the basics, working through grouping and zeroing, elementary and advanced application of fire, before all attendees were given the opportunity to attempt an APWT. Concurrent with the main activity, everybody was also given the opportunity to fire a belt of at least 200 rounds on the GPMG under the tuition and direction of **Sgt Henderson**. For some of the newer members of the Sqn, this represented their first opportunity to fire this weapon system. The week culminated in a Falling Plate competition, with the winning team comprising **LCpl Hill**, **Sig Smith** and **Sig Heggie**.

EX MERCURY'S CADUCEUS was a very enjoyable week, and a great learning experience for all ranks that deployed.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE 2005 – *by 2Lt Agnew*

216 Air Asslt Sig Sqn was asked by SORLS to provide a stand of relevance to our specific role for EX LIGHTNING STRIKE 2005 - the biggest recruiting event in the Royal Signals calendar, which draws OCdts from all of the UOTCs across UK.

In keeping with the Sqn's air assault specialisation, it was decided that the stand should encompass both mental and physical aspects. After receiving a short brief and an introduction by Sqn members on the specialist equipt carried and used by the Sqn, the OCdts were introduced to the log!

Two UOTC teams were put head-to-head carrying their team's log over a muddy 2-mile course, finishing with correctly fitting a team member with a Low Level Parachute. For many, the stand proved

Members of East Midlands UOTC being put through their paces on the Sqn's Log Race

very challenging, with a number of OCdts being parted with their pre-competition breakfast!

However, the feeling was that the stand came as a welcome change from the other, more brain intensive stands, and served as a realistic and useful insight into the world of Air Assault Signals.

VISIT BY THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

On a cold and snowy day in February, 216 Sig Sqn was honoured by a visit from the SOinC(A).

After an office call to the OC and a brief presentation on the Sqn in its current guise, the SOinC(A) met with the Sqn's Officers and SNCOs over coffee whilst perusing the Sqn's vast collection of memorabilia in the Drummond Historical Room.

A whistle-stop tour of the Sqn's Tps and Depts, along with a glance at the Bde's Para Tac and Tac HQ set-ups provided by A Tp, was followed by the SOinC(A) presenting the LS and GC Medal to **SSgt Page** and the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal to **Cpl Oliver**.

After a short lunch, more presenting of medals followed, with many members of the Sqn receiving medals for service on OP TELIC 1 – 4. With the day drawing to a close, there was just enough time for the SOinC(A) to open officially the new 'Caduceus Centre' – comprising the Sqn's hugely successful PRI Shop, a barber's shop, a café and the Sqn's Welfare Office.

Before leaving, the SOinC(A) was presented by **Cpl Holland** with a memento of his visit in the form of a framed series of pictures that were taken during the day.

OP TELIC Medals Parade. Sgt Robertson briefing up the SOinC(A) with WO1(RSM) Karl Weaver inbound at Mach 3

Continued from page 184

attendees had the pleasure of taking part in the traditional Eat the (raw) Leek competition.

A sporting theme is running through Ty Llewellyn TAC this month, with brand new gym equipt being installed. The Sqn has also started a squash ladder, with **Sgt Tim Haughton** yet to be knocked off the top. This month a team is being formed and trained by **Lt Dave Barbara** to compete in the Army Fencing Championship. A special mention must go to **Cpl Nick Carter**, who braved Salisbury Plain in February, and despite suffering from hypothermia, managed successfully to complete his Det Comd's Course at Blandford Camp.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj KL Metcalfe TD**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Clark**

The main weekend of the month was EX VIXENS OUTING. This was a Bde CPX, and the Sqn deployed to 2 different locs, Kineton and Long Marsdon. All individuals got good experience on the kit, whether it being honing skills, or being introduced to the kit for the first time. No fewer than 7 new recruits came along too see what things are like in the TA. The weekend went well over all, and most people enjoyed a nice pint when they returned to the TAC after a weekend of not much sleep.

The 2 other things Sqn members were involved in were the skiing ex, EX VON TRAPP DRAGON and the Corps Rugby 7s. All who went skiing enjoyed it thoroughly and **Sgt Fleming** won the best tan competition. **LCpl Bonham**, **LCpl Sheard**, **Sig Swann** and **Sig Bennett** all got conned into coming along to the rugby competition at the last minute. They were all apprehensive, as they'd hardly ever played Rugby before. But they did the Sqn and Regt proud with their efforts, even though **LCpl Sheard** spent too much time tackling his own team mates.

93 (EAST LANCS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM **WO2(SSM) H Kenny**

Lynch's Trucks of Altham supported this year's SAINT ex over 26/27 February 05. Instead of the usual three SRVs used for the trg, **Sgt Jim Holmes** was reduced to just one that could move and one static in Blackburn TAC. The Landrover 110s used as prime movers are showing their age somewhat by blowing gaskets left right and centre. This did not stop some excellent trg being delivered to some of the SRV virgins of the Sqn. After initial trg in barracks, **Sgt Jim Holmes** took **Lt Gallagher**, **LCpl Whalley**, **Sig Cook** and the 67 Sqn SRV to the top of the aptly named Winter Hill. All being Lancashire born and bred, they hardly noticed the cold, but some did notice the SRV slightly shivering. With comms in within minutes of arrival, there was even time for **Sig Cook** to construct a very anatomically correct snow lady.

When not undergoing other trg, the fitter members of the Sqn are using their weekends in preparation for this year's Lanyard Trophy competition. **Cpl Greaves** can be found most Thursdays and weekends leading those gullible enough to believe that the Lanyard is not that bad, around the local hills.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt S Jenner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Bennet**

With several exs and plenty of training happening, the sqn has been very busy over the past few months. One such ex, EX VON TRAPP DRAGON, involved several personnel going skiing to Austria. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves on the pistes, although **LCpl Magee** decided to take a tumble on one of the slopes and ended up in an Austrian hospital with concussion. Any excuse to be tended by an Austrian nurse! Most people came back with a cracking sun tan, lots of war stories and loads of booze after the visit to an American PX shop!

EX MERCURY MOTORHEAD involved Sqn personnel being familiarised on the Series 3 Landrover and trailer at ATE Swynnerton. ITD trg was also laid on, so personnel could qualify for their annual bounty reward.

LEAVING OR LEFT THE REGULAR ARMY?

37 Sig Regt (V) has Sqns at Cardiff, Stratford-upon-Avon, Coventry, Redditch (HQ) and Blackburn, and is always looking for ex –regular Signals tradesman to serve in its TA ranks. For further details contact **Capt O'Gorman**, AO HQ Sqn. Mil: 94424 8804 Civ: 01527 599304.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col SJ Richardson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KP Innes**

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Whalen**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Horton**

During the weekend of 18-20 March 05, the Sqn held EX SPORADIC E – an ICS weekend covering both comms and mil skills.

We rotated through a round robin of stands, whilst a comms ex ran concurrently throughout the weekend.

The aim was to provide a relevant and interesting ICS based ex, in a tactical scenario. As can be seen from the photograph, the O Group for the weekend was attended by the key players in the Regt, although we can't explain the Ops Officer's long face!

Why the long face.....?

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Powell**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) S Coburn**

The Sqn welcomes the new OC, **Maj Andy Powell**, who takes over from **Maj John Ahern** (now otherwise engaged in sunnier climes). We wish **Maj Powell** all the best for his tour with 87 Sig Sqn, and **Maj Ahern** the best of luck in Iraq.

EXERCISE NORTHERN ICE RAM

This year the annual Regtl ski trip took place in Garmisch, Bavaria. With increased security measures, getting into our accn on the US Edelweiss Lodge Resort was more difficult than expected. Luckily the problems were resolved and we settled into our rustic cabins.

Our luck improved on the first morning, as it stopped snowing for the first time in weeks, and out came the sun, along with the shades and sunscreen. Everyone was keen to get going, so we divided into three groups led by **Lt Emily Clay**, **WO2 Andy Medley** and **SSgt Dean McKenzie** (on loan from 35 Sig Regt) and hit the slopes. Whilst the intermediate and experienced groups headed off to be put through their paces, the beginners began a morning of endless side-stepping and drag lifts on the nursery slopes. We managed to visit three different ski areas over the week; two in Garmisch (up the Hausberg and the Zugspitze) and one in Les Moos in Austria. By the end of the week, most of the beginners group were testing themselves on black runs, and a number of BSPs were awarded. The other two groups had also been pushed out of their comfort zone, and were definitely looking more stylish.

Sig Traynor and Sig Stevens on the Piste

Staying at the American resort did have its advantages, namely the PX shop (where many people pre-emptively spent their April bounty) and the $15 'all you can eat' buffet! Also a hit was the outdoor hot tub. **Lt Jon Lampier** introduced some arctic warfare trg, which involved rolling in the snow before entering the tub. Funnily enough, not many people took him up on his offer. Even though we were in Germany, St. Patrick's Day did not go unnoticed, and after celebrating in the two Irish bars in town, we managed to collect enough stupid hats/t-shirts to wear on the slopes the next day.

LEADERSHIP WEEKEND – *by Sig Marshall*

Many people see leadership as just leading a group of people, but this kind of ex not only did that, but it helped us to build up the teamwork and trust between one another with people we do not usually work with. During this weekend in March, we had five tasks to do, and we had to get to each one by going cross-country. Each task had a new leader, so we all got a chance to show our own leadership skills (or lack of them!). For some people like myself, who had never led a group before, it was challenging, there were always the ideas and resources of your group to help you out.

Sig Marshall trying to use 'The Force'

One of the tasks was to put a 9x9 tent up with respirators on, whilst trying to communicate without being able to see. It was quite an experience, particularly as most of us had never put up a 9x9 before. After we failed the task miserably, we took our respirators off to find we had blackened faces, and, in front of us a mass of poles showing no resemblance to a tent at all.

The long weekend came to a close, but morale between the groups was still high. In some ways, it is hard not being with the people you usually work with; but because of this, the more fun you had, and the harder you worked. It was definitely an eventful weekend, and it gave us all a good insight into leadership. The whole ex developed a lot of confidence and trust in people, and we had a fun time whilst doing it.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Hatton**

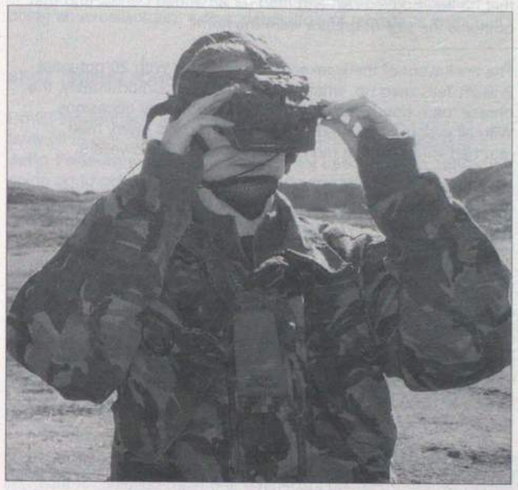
HEADQUARTER SQUADRON (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY)

OC	**Maj Gus Loverridge**
SSM	**WO2 Simpson**

HQ SQN DRIVING WEEKEND

On 11March HQ Sqn deployed to Fremington Camp with members of 57 Sqn and 243 Field Hospital. One of HQ Sqn's main roles is re-supplying. The weekend was organised by **WO2 Griffiths**, the MTWO, to improve our driving abilities ensuring we have the key skills to perform this role.

Night convoy drills were practised on the way down on Friday night, and in daylight, between stands and on the recovery to Bristol. Saturday was a round robin of stands including Manoeuvring Skills on the square, Cross Country Driving and HAZMAT Awareness trg. The Sqn Offrs enjoyed a rare chance to get behind the wheel of green fleet vehs, with the OC, **Maj Loveridge** clocking up some rather impressive times in the Bedford Reversing area. Cross Country was instructed by **Cpl Stanforth** of 1 Sig Sqn, with concurrent activities on NVG with the AQMS, **WO2 Peet** and the turf winch by our Recce Mec, **Cpl Phear**. We were lucky to have **Sgt Rendall** from 43 Wessex Bde Trg Team to teach HAZMAT, something greatly needed with all the stores we carry. Saturday Night was spent convoy driving cross-country using NVGs.



Can't see much with these NVGs

Sunday was competition day, when we were split into teams to do battle in driving skills, Matrix Testing and Hazard Perception. It a was close fought thing, with 243 nearly creating an upset, but the new trophy was aventually presented to **Pte Watson** representing Team 1.

All in all, good skills and experience were gained by all, and we look forward to future exs putting these new found skills in to practice.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Clive Dawes**
SSM	**WO2 Hall**

EXERCISE OXON DRAGON SLIDE 2

EX OXON DRAGON SLIDE 2, a skiing exped, took place in Kossen, Austria from 4 – 13 February 2005. The ex was led by **Capt Bob Sheldon** and **WO2 Robbie Hall**, who took 46 personnel (6 instructors and 40 personnel of mixed ability).

Once we were in Austria, booked into our accn and sampling the local hospitality, the long journey was soon forgotten. After fruitless efforts to find a TV with the Wales v England Six Nations Match, our two Welsh supporters **Capt Dai Jones** and **SSgt Lee Griffiths** relied on text messaging for results – well done Wales!

Early on Sunday, it was off to the St Jacob for equipt fitting and a ski-off. Talent or lack of it depicted which group you were allocated too. Evening brought the fun and excitement of tobogganing. Monday was off to another ski area, Steinplatte, via Winkloos Alm in Germany. The slopes were excellent and the skiing was great, but the journey was difficult and time consuming. Nevertheless, it was a good day's skiing, followed by a visit to a Fire and Ice Show. On the Tuesday the group went skiing at Steinplatte again, but this time from the Austrian access lifts – much more user friendly and less time consuming. The evening event saw us riding inner tubes down a man made snow chicane, followed by a Tyrolean Buffet in the *Hotel Post*. By this time, the proficient skiers wanted more demanding runs, and those fist timers were introduced to their first Blue Runs at St Johann. After a further exuberating and thrilling day, the time was ours to sample the local Ladies' Night in the *London Pub*.

Cpl Steve Bennett

After another early start at Fieberunn, the best skiing all week was followed by the Aprés Ski Night. On Friday was back to St Jacob for the final assessments and a group Slalom Race, won by **Sgt Claire Goodwin**. Sadly, the ski equipt had to be returned as the ex was almost over. In the evening an Austrian Buffet was laid on and prize giving took place. The Hon Colonels' Trophy for the most improved skier overall was won by **Cpl Steve Bennett**, with each instructor making an award to the best in their group, these were awarded as follows: -

Instructor	*Awarded to*
SSgt Karl Hayter	**SSgt Trevor Grant**, 38 Sig Regt
SSgt Peter Harris	**SSgt Lee Griffiths**, 36 Sig Regt
Capt Mike Wong	**Sgt Gordie Shields**, 5 Sig Sqn
Cpl Judy Dunn	**LCpl Lisa Green**, 5 Sig Sqn
Sig Emma Brook	**LCpl Mike Garrick-Green,** 36 Sig Regt

The whole ex was a tremendous success, the weather and snow conditions superb, the ski resorts top class, the extra-curricular activities entertaining, and on top of all that, a fantastic atmosphere shared by all those attending. But next time, we all want to travel by air!

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mike Lansdown TD**
SSM	**WO2 Lambert**

EXERCISE YEOMAN ADVENTURER

On a Friday evening in March, a group of 20 willing volunteers set out to Corfe Castle for a spot of rock climbing, high/low ropes, archery and mountain biking. We were split into two groups, being led by **Capt Rod Hook** and **WO2(FofS) Mick Jervis**.

First up, we found ourselves down on Dancers Ledge by the sea off the Dorset coast. Starting with an abseil down the sea cliff (reminiscent of a scene from *The Guns of Navarone*) we had to climb back up again. Having successfully navigated the 30ft course, it was on to another challenge.

I can see the pub from up here

The afternoon saw the, by now fearless, warriors embark on a high and low ropes course. Starting with a comd course, where **Sgt Jean Lambert** demonstrated veritable trapeze artist like skills, carrying a water jar by her teeth and a pair of rather large and unusual dice in her hands. Once that was done, there was little stopping the Everest-bound mountain troops. That is, apart from a MENSA-type puzzle involving seventeen milk crates and numerous harnesses and beelines. Having proved once again that being a member of the Yeomanry involves not only intelligence, but a certain amount of dash and élan, the day's energetic activities had come to an end.

Sunday morning arrived far too quickly and with a few sore heads from the night before, mountain biking through the un-flat picturesque countryside was to shake out even the most befuddled of Troopers. The instructor cunningly failed to mention that he had booked rain and mud for an added bonus, and that potholes the size of craters were the norm.

The final event of the weekend was archery. With 20 potential William Tells lined up, what could go wrong? Unfortunately, the phrase 'barn door' was muttered on all too many occasions. With all events completed, **Capt Hook** and his merry men returned safely to their more sedate lives as city dwellers.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM	**WO2 Mike White**

EXERCISE BRUNEL DRAGON

In the first week of March **SSgt Dave Langridge** (SPSI), accompanied by **LCpl John Iles** and **Sig Josh Seller**, took part in EX BRUNEL DRAGON, which was based at the Joint Services Adventure Training Sailing Centre at Gosport.

The aim of the ex was to introduce novices to the joys of offshore sailing, whilst promoting leadership and team building. It also provided the double bonus of being both cold and wet: important factors so often overlooked when planning TA trg nowadays.

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col H J Robertson TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) P R Curtis**

LONDON DISTRICT TERRITORIAL CUP FINAL

After many long hard-fought football matches, the final two teams, 71 (Y) Sig Regt and 144 Para Medic Sqn, were left to contend for the much-coveted trophy.

The two teams were so evenly matched, that after the allotted 90 minutes, the score was 2 – 2, both sides not giving an inch. A further 30 minutes was then played, but still no winning goals, and so came the dreaded penalties.

5 victims, (brave young men) then stepped up and proved themselves, by putting away 4 out of our 5 penalties, and with our new keeper saving 2 of the oppositions attempts, we finally beat 144 Sqn, 4 – 3 on penalties, 6 – 5 overall.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Michael Wood**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Bryan Malyon**

December and January have seen some exciting changes for the Sqn. With the departure of **SSgt(SQMS) John Fensom**, we saw the arrival of **SSgt(SQMS) Steve Shuttleworth**. **Steve** finished his regular service with the Military Correction Trg Centre (as a staff member, not an inmate!), before joining the Sqn as the new SQMS.

We also saw **WO2(SSM) Jim Swain** move to the Regtl Trg Team, and **WO2(SSM) Bryan Malyon** take over as SSM.

WO2(SSM) Jim Swain handing of to WO2(SSM) Bryan Malyon

The Sqn Christmas weekend was held at Crowborough camp. This brought an exciting end to the year-long inter-tp competition, with 882 Tp winning the weekend events, and 881 Tp winning overall. The dinner on the Saturday night was a great success and, with **WO2 Swain's** disco connections, everyone enjoyed the evening.

After the Christmas break, the Sqn prepared for the January weekend at St Martins Plain. The weekend was well attended, and the main aim was ITDs. It also saw the promotion of **SSgt(SQMS) Bryan Malyon** to WO2(SSM). The Sqn overall, is onward and upward, with healthy numbers attending both on drill nights and weekends. The recruiting NCOs, **Cpl Jack Stabler** (Chelmsford) and **LCpl Dino Honychurch** (Harlow), are also doing an excellent job, with a steady flow of recruits at both locs.

SSGT (SQMS) JOHN FENSOM

On 27 November 2004, the Essex Yeomanry Sgts' Mess said farewell to one of its longest serving members. **SSgt(SQMS) John Fensom** joined the Infantry Junior Leaders Bn in 1960, going on to colour service in 1962 with the Middlesex Regt (56th/57th foot). He stayed with this Unit through amalgamation, and completed his full 22 years service as RQMS(T) of 2nd Bn Queens Regt. In 1984 he came to 70 (Essex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn as our first ever NRPS SQMS. **John** has taken great pride in looking after the Sqn's kit over the last twenty years, and we were extremely pleased to be able to dine him out of the Army in style, with both serving members and invited guests. The dinner was held at 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216), and special thanks go to **WO1(RSM) Karl Weaver** for allowing us the use of his Mess. Everyone would like to wish **John** and his wife **Lesley** a very happy retirement.

WO2 (SSM) Jim Swain presents SSgt (SQMS) John Fensom with a bronze mounted Essex Yeoman on behalf of the Mess

For more information on 71 Sig Regt visit
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/71sigregt

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC	**Maj Debs Simcox**
SSM	**WO2 Joe Krikorian**

EXERCISE COMMANDO CHALLENGE - FALKLAND ISLANDS

Introduction – *by Capt Jason Fensome*

1 (RBY) Sig Sqn have a well-deserved reputation for travelling to some pretty far-flung places, particularly the Regular members in Ops Tp. This year was the turn of the TA members in Comms Tp. It all started when the SSM, **WO2 Joe Krikorian**, returned from a visit to the Falkland Islands in November 2004 to inform us that the Falkland Islands Defence Force (FIDF) were holding a competition in February 2005, and that we were invited to enter. Soon after Christmas, we decided to go for it, and Sq 2IC, **Capt Jason Fensome** was tasked with getting the G1 sorted out. At first, there were a few hitches, but Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Lithgow**, opened a few doors for us, and we were off.

The Team Manager's Perspective
– *by WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian*

EX COMMANDO CHALLENGE is an annual ex organised and run by the FIDF. The event commemorates the epic 'Yomp' made by 45 Cdo RM from Port San Carlos to Stanley during the conflict of 1982.

This year, teams included not only Falkland Islands stationed troops, but also 3 RM teams from 445 Cdo based in Arbroath, and a TA team from our Sqn.

The flight to Mount Pleasant Airfield (MPA) took us via Madrid and Santiago de Chile (for a 24-hour stopover). On arrival, we were met by the FIDF and taken to Hillside Camp in Stanley. With 3 days to spare before the event, there was time to continue trg and zero weapons at the local range at Rookery Bay.

The Team, led by **SSgt Mark Gott** and consisting of **Capt Jason Fensome**, **LCpls Nick Vernon**, **Anna Yates** and **Steve Stopforth**, and **Sig Jon Gray**, moved out on the Wednesday afternoon to the start point at Hope Cottage Farm. With 9 teams taking part, briefings and competition rules were given that evening by the FIDF's PSI, **WO2 Nick Watson** RM and CSM **WO2 Adam Cockwell**; this left everyone in no uncertain terms what lay ahead during the next 3 days.

The teams then attempted to get some sleep under the stars on a wet and windy night, and soon it was first light. After an early breakfast, we loaded up our 20-25 kg Bergens for the mass start, which consisted of a 500m run to where a log race of 2 km commenced.

After this, we headed off across the barren camp* on the first leg of the day's distance of 30kms. Apart from an unfortunate RAF Regt casualty, all teams arrived at the night stop at Malo Bridge. But before we could relax, there was a comd task consisting of a river crossing, so it was last light before we could basha up - and it was raining again.

The second day was a repeat of Day 1. Although the distance to cover to Murrell Bridge was slightly less at 24kms, the terrain was

* *'Camp' is the Falklands term for the open countryside*

The river crossing

far more difficult, and there were a few more hills. As the teams arrived at the final RV of the day, there was yet another comd task over water. But on completion, we were rewarded with a welcome ration of rum from the PSI.

The second day's yomp. Note the dreaded 'babies' heads' (on the ground, that is; not on the soldiers!)

Day 3 saw the teams starting off in the reverse order of their previous day's arrival positions, and we were first away. The route this time was out of the valley and up onto a feature known as Two Sisters (a heavily defended Argentine position which 45 Cdo took on the night of 12 June 1982). The teams then made their way along Goat Ridge and across the valley to Mt Tumbledown (taken during fierce fighting by 2 Bn Scots Gds). The final leg was through Moody Brook and along the road into Stanley. As the teams passed the 1982 Memorial, respects were paid with a salute and eyes right. It was then a final push uphill to the ranges at Rookery Bay (SE of Stanley), where the event was to finish with another log race and a falling plate competition. Unfortunately, because of high winds, the shoot was cancelled.

That evening saw all the weary competitors at FIDF HQ, where the winners were announced. Unsurprisingly, the first 3 teams were from 45 Cdo, with FIDF coming a very close 4th. After the prize giving by the HE The Governor, there was some serious fluid replacement and an excellent BBQ.

With a week to go before the Saturday departure, there were plenty of other activities to participate in. The first was a battlefield tour (generously conducted by a few veterans who now live on the Islands) of Goose Green, Darwin and Ajax Bay, finishing at the British Military Cemetery at San Carlos. Tuesday saw us flying out by heli to Sealion Island, where a vast assortment of wildlife is to be found. Before returning, the 2IC kindly bought us tea and cakes at *Sealion Lodge* to celebrate his birthday.

The next day, the team was again at MPA to join the C130 fishery protection patrol. Flying at very low level for 3 hrs was quite an experience, particularly for **LCpls Nick Vernon** and **Steve Stopforth**, who were given the opportunity to fly the aircraft. The final days were occupied by a visit to Fitzroy/Bluff Cove, a night ex with FIDF where we were taken across the sound in rigid raiders to act as an enemy force, and visits to the local shops, museums and, of course, *The Globe Inn*.

The Team at the Stanley Memorial

With many happy memories and stories to tell, we sadly left for the long journey home. The team must have made a favourable impression, because we have been invited back for future Commando Challenge competitions. We now certainly know exactly what to expect, and the TA members of the Sqn intend to return in November 2006 as serious challengers for one of the top places.

Falklands Reflections – *by LCpl Nick Vernon*

We were asked by FIDF to be the enemy for a home defence ex. Being happy to help, we arrived for a briefing at the FIDF HQ. **LCpl Anna Yates** was asked to the FIDF Coy Comd and to take charge of the radio, which she was happy to do. After some instruction on the handling of the Steyr rifle, we were taken to the public jetty and loaded onto a pair of rigid raiders. Reaching the other side of Stanley harbour at high speed, we got into position around the old fuel storage depot.

Before too long, the FIDF had landed and were advancing on our first position. The defender, **Capt Jason Fensome**, held that position for a very long time. **WO2 Joe Krikorian**, who was paired with me, went forward to bring the fight to the FIDF. FIDF did, however, outfox us and came along the beach, popping up to the right of our position. The SSM charged the FIDF, and was told that he was now dead; whilst I fired my last round in their direction before being taken prisoner. This left **SSgt Mark Gott**, **LCpl Steve Stopforth** and **Sig Jon Gray** for the FIDF to deal with. After a long fight, **Sgt Gott** was taken prisoner, **LCpl Stopforth** had to run to the hills to escape and **Sig Gray** was

wounded, but told to die by the DS. ENDEX was then called. All in all, it was a very good ex, aimed at developing the skills of the FIDF's junior comds. A lot was learned by all.

Conclusion – *by Capt Jason Fensome*

Here ends the account of our adventures in the South Atlantic. We were away for an unprecedented 19 days and travelled a total of 42 hrs getting to and from the Falkland Islands. As the SSM said, we all now know what the score is for next time. With that in mind, **SSgt Gott** has nominated himself for the role of Team Manager, a task at which he will no doubt succeed effortlessly.

Hopefully, other Sqn characters will be available. A final vote of thanks must go to all our friends in the FIDF, who made every effort to look after us at no little inconvenience to themselves. They even accommodated our wish to go penguin spotting on the outskirts of Stanley. We wish them all well.

The CORPSAAM Team

Sunday's events started at 08.20hrs with the falling plate competition, followed by the Combat Snap, with encouragement from OC Sqn. The final event was the prize giving by the Bde Comd, and although we left the 2005 CORPSAAM, without any trophies, we all experienced and enjoyed the return to the TA Competition. Armed now with the knowledge of what is required to win prizes, we can only improve with practice and determination for the CORPSAAM 2006.

ROYAL SIGNALS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING, 9–10 APRIL

For a number of reasons, the Sqn TA members have not participated in the Competition since 2000. As a result of the Bde Comd's visit in October, it was decided, (after a gentle hint from the Brigadier) to enter 2 teams in this year's event. Trg soon got underway, with at least one weekend a month on various ranges. Unfortunately, other commitments began to materialise at the last minute, and we had to drop down to one team and 2 individuals.

Unperturbed, we assembled at Brunswick Camp, Pirbright on the Friday evening for briefings by the organisers of the event 32 Sig Regt. After an early reveille, the team drew their weapons and moved to the first range of the day, for the Graham (FIBUA) Shoot, in Pirbright. We then moved to Ash Ranges, where different shoots took place during the day.

LCpl Yates, and **Sig Gray** achieved a good position, having practised the shoot only once the week before. **Cpl Gareth Clarke** found himself the top scoring Sqn pistol shot, with a score of 113. Hopes were raised on the Association Cup shoot, when **LCpl Anna Yates** scored 48 out of a possible 50 on the first practice, then lost her shooting eye on the second.

Also doing well was **Sig Harjeet Rai**, who has been a member of the Sqn for less than a year and who was press-ganged into the team only a week before the competition. Our 2 individual shots, **LCpl Vernon**, and **Sig Robertson**, also achieved some good scores.

SERVICE WITH SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) is unique in the British Army, comprising both a Regular and TA element, with service being on a voluntary basis. We currently have vacancies for Regular Rad Sys Ops (Class 2 and above).

Volunteers are required to attend a 5-day SC Assessment Course, with the next course being held in September 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 Rad Sys Ops, Sys Eng Tech, IS Ops and REME trades (up to WO2). There is also a vacancy for a Lt/Capt. Volunteers should contact the PSAO 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) on Mil: 94240 8512 or Civil: 01908 638512.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj Simon Spiers**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Andy Crawford**

200 SIG SQN RUGBY TOUR - *by Sig Harmer*

On 27 February, 200 Sig Sqn Rugby Team paraded outside the guardroom, all very nervous but revved up for the Army Rugby Union Semi-finals in Aldershot.

We were slightly confused when the Paderborn Basketball Team bus pulled up, but the driver assured us that it was ours. The drive to Calais was long, with very few stops, but we had a box full of DVDs to keep us amused.

We eventually arrived in Aldershot late in the evening, and made our way to ATR Pirbright, which was to be our accn for the duration of the tour. After a quick team talk from **Sgt Giffen**, it was time for bed, apart from those who went down the pub for a couple of well-earned beers. After a quick breakfast the following morning, we changed for a pre-match trg session, before heading off for our first match. Upon arrival, we changed into our infamous canary yellow strip, and after yet another team talk and

a stud check from the referee, we headed out to the pitch. After a quick warm-up the match got under way with some good rucks and mauling from both teams. In all fairness, 42 Cdo were better drilled and out played us in every aspect of the game, winning fairly convincingly. However, we learned a lot of lessons, and had a really good time. After a quick warm down and a thank you to 42, we headed for the showers and then into the bar for the third half. The prize for man of the match went to **Cfn Steve Jacobs**, and involved him drinking out of the infamous charger drinking vessel the for a Signals count of ten.

Our put-in

We did not let the fact that we were out of the competition stop us from having fun, and so we arranged a match with NICSS, who had come from NI to play their Semi-Finals match and had also lost. The match was a hard-fought contest, with some brilliant refereeing, which allowed the game to flow. We narrowly lost, but put in a much better performance; everyone came off the pitch with a sense of achievement. Later that day, we met in a local pub for a few Rugby songs with a few classics from our team coach and loose head prop, **Cpl Barritt**. The NICSS boys were good sports on and off the pitch, and the bar was full of good-humoured Rugby heroics well into the night.

The drive back to Germany was very quiet, with people reviewing both the game and their aching bodies. After many long hours on the coach, with delays at Folkestone for added fun, we rolled into Camp around 03.00hrs, ready to deploy on ex the next morning. Despite losing both our matches, we had an immense amount of fun and learned a great deal in the process. The tour left us with a lot of laughs and memories.

EXERCISE SNOW WARRIOR – *by 2Lt Nance*

At the beginning of January I deployed for 2 weeks' skiing to the Bavarian Alps on EX SNOW WARRIOR along with **LCpl Raku-Evans**, **LCpl Appleby** and **Cfn Jacobs**. The conditions on our first day were extremely icy, proving a challenge for non-professional skiers such as myself. The instructors patiently attempted to demonstrate how to turn slowly and under control, despite our overwhelming desire to fly straight down the hill as fast as possible.

Not sure who this is beside me

The rain over the next few days meant the pistes turned an alarming green colour, and to our disappointment, we were unable to ski. Instead, the lodge staff took us on an eye-opening visit to Dachau Concentration Camp near Munich. This gave us a welcome chance to rest our now aching legs and knees.
For the rest of the two weeks it snowed non-stop, and the temperatures remained well below zero. At times, our instructors seemed more excited about the chest deep powder than us, and often took us over the edge of seemingly vertical cliffs with a shout of 'Follow me!' The powder provided particular amusement when I flew off the edge of the piste and disappeared into a deep snowdrift at the bottom of a tree, later emerging with snow dreadlocks in my hair.

On the programme, it had stated that we were to complete some ski tour trg. My group were all dreading the rigours of skiing uphill, and were wondering why you would want to ski uphill when someone had installed chair lifts. Our instructor seemed to share our fears, so we ended up spending the whole fortnight downhill skiing. However, the beginner groups did complete this phase, and it wasn't nearly as painful as we had supposed; it was extremely enjoyable.

SNOW WARRIOR is a well-structured and well-organised course. The skiing is intensive and demanding, and we were all given ample opportunity to improve our skills. The instructors were thorough, although at times eccentric, and the accn is of extremely high standard. The best part of it is that everything is free, and all equipt is provided. I would definitely recommend this course to anyone who can spare the time.

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj AE Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Smith**

HEADQUARTER TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt E Swift**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A Lockie**

It's been another busy month in the Tp with the Wksp moving, EX RATS SUSTAINER, and the upcoming tech support for EX MEDMAN 1 in BATUS. Ex RATS SUSTAINER went well, with the Tech Wksps providing a BOWMAN FRT, comprising **Sgt Daz Smith**, **Sgt Zoë Dolan**, **Cpl Mike Morgan** and **Sig Ross Toshack**. More Tp presence was fielded at HICON, **Sig Egglestone**; and A2 Ech, **Cpl M-Needs**; **Pte Hemans** fighting the SHQ battle there. An FRT will be departing for Canada on 4 April to provide BOWMAN support for EX MEDMAN 1, with a swap-over in June to provide another FRT.

Welcome back and congratulations to **Cpl Henderson** on passing his PTI course in Sennelager, **LCpl Davis** on completing his Class 1 in Blandford, and **LCpl Lewis** on completing her stores course. Welcome to **LCpl Sarah Falcous**, who joins us from Blandford, and good luck to **Sig Steve Morgan** on his temporary posting with 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on OP TELIC 6.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt F Loxton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G Middleton**

As the snow melts and the sun comes out, life is gradually returning to normal here in Alpha Tp.

The move back into the garages started at the end of February, and the painting and decorating started. With **Sgt Al Clark** in charge of the Tp colour scheme, questions were asked as to how he ever passed the colour blindness test.

The armour is reappearing, and as it slowly trickles back from conversion, comes with it, the predication of a lot of work to bring it to a battle-ready condition. Time will be tight before exercising begins in earnest.

Welcome to **Sig Wilson**, **Cpl Dodgson** and **LCpl Nolan**; and farewell to **LCpl** Thompson and his wife, **Julie** to 14 Sig Regt (EW). Congratulations to **LCpl Carter** and **Sig Fletcher** on the arrival of their little baby girl, **Bethany** - not the ideal time for your family to move to 14 Signal Regt (EW), but all the best anyway!

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt A Rea**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J Giddens**

At long last the time came for us to move back into our beloved garages. Under the glint of the new roof, the Tp set about unpacking all the armoured kit and relocating it. The recent Board of Officers ensured that all the equipt was accounted for and that we weren't carrying extras. So with the relocation complete, and the armour almost fully converted to BOWMAN, we have our work cut out for us in the next few months of this already busy trg year.

Those members of the Tp who weren't involved in the relocation, were deployed in support of the Bde's CSS FTX, a 10-day ex in the freezer, known as SENNELAGER! This was another good opportunity to exercise the BOWMAN kit and practise det drills in often extreme conditions. Hopefully the next ex will be completely armoured and a little warmer!

We welcome **Cpl Burns** and his family from 7 Sig Regt; **LCpl Hicks** from 1 (UK) Armd Dive HQ and Sig Regt. And we farewell **LCpl Allardyce**, who is off to 30 Sig Regt.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt SF Lawes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G Revell**

Recently, the whole of Ech deployed to Sennelager on a Bde CSS ex. It was exactly what the Tp needed, as it has not deployed fully since last year, and has also seen a big change around in manning. All Depts worked well initially, but as the weather got worse the pack began to fold.

On the Monday evening, Ech packed up and began a 150km road move to Hameln, crossing the river by pontoons that the sappers had erected. Well sort of erected, as when the first packet arrived one of the pontoons decided to float off down the river! This put everything back by several hours, the packet didn't return to Sennelager until 03.30hrs the following morning!

On the final day after all the hard trg the OC, **Maj Percival**, and the new RSM, **WO1 Smith** travelled down to STC to see the A1 Echelon carry out an anti-ambush drill demo. After some fierce fighting, and a few blue on blues, the OC gave a hot debrief to the lads and ENDEX was called. We are all prepared for TELIC trg!

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj PEJ Drew**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PA Buckley**

Since returning from OP TELIC POTL, the Sqn has been exceptionally busy. As well as Bde HQ and Sqn exs, we have been required to provide a great deal of support for FTXs for 12 Bde units deploying on OP TELIC 6. There has also been a deployment to Malawi for those providing comms support to a PI Comds' Battle Course.

For some, returning to Tidworth has been a bit of a shock to the system. Whilst the accn is not yet the 4* standard we will soon receive, it is of a fairly good standard. Whilst we are waiting for single en-suite rooms, the QM, **Capt Webb**, has instigated a self-help plan for improving the facilities.

It was the OC's intention to get everyone in the Sqn away on a course of their choice on our return from OP TELIC, and in the past few months we have had an ever-growing number trained personnel returning with smiles on their faces. Not only have we had trade and military courses (such as Class 1s, PTIs, Skill-At-Arms, Range Management) but there have also been a number of other courses attended such as skiing, power boating, paragliding and parachuting. We have also had people deploy as permanent staff to BATUS for the summer, and are constantly getting trawled for support to ops.

The outlook for the rest of the year is interesting, and will require a good deal of work. We are due a large turnover of staff in the HQ and in the Sqn over the summer, which will make it more of a challenge, but the Sqn has an excellent backbone of knowledge and experience which will stand us in good stead. The highlight of the summer will be the deployment on EX LION SUN to Cyprus, and between now and then we have a good deal of trg to ensure we get the most out of the ex. There is also an ex in Malaysia in September, and we will be taking part in a multinational ex in Norway in November/December.

Just a point though: we are definitely remaining a mechanised bde for the foreseeable future, not re-roling as a light bde as reported in the front of the April 05 edition of *The WIRE*. Wire Editor: get the beers in!

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Herring**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Twizzel**

EXERCISE HAMBURGER HILL
- by LCpl Britton and Sig Anderson

After the rigours of OP TELIC in the heat of Iraq, and a series of exs in the cold of Salisbury Plain, everyone was in agreement that

a Tp do was well overdue. At **Capt Herring's** suggestion, 20 of us found ourselves at Stanstead Airport with return tickets to Hamburg, for the amazing price of just £27 each.

Hamburg is Germany's second largest city and is brimming with history, culture and some amazing architecture. It would be extremely difficult to visit without doing some serious sightseeing, but with a bit of determination we all successfully managed it. But the trip was not supposed to be about only culture and education, it was a chance for a bit of Tp bonding and that was exactly what we did - even with the friendly local Hamburgers! Predictably, we split into a number of different groups that ended up in various different establishments across the four corners of Hamburg. However, we had been instructed by **Capt Herring** to meet up for the official Tp function at a restaurant in the infamous St Pauli's district, and so at 18.00hrs we all had to make a move. Fortunately, Hamburg has an excellent tube network or U-Bahn.

St Pauli's is at the heart of Hamburg's nocturnal scene, and is where The Beatles famously played in the 60's. It certainly remains today an extremely vibrant area, teeming with clubs, bars and restaurants. Needless to say, everyone had an entertaining night.

Friday was spent exploring Hamburg's impressive shopping district. Four hrs later having trawled the busy streets of the city centre, our hangovers had finally lifted, and we were ready to go home.

EX HAMBURGER HILL was an awesome Tp do, and a much needed break from the routine of work back in Tidworth.

BENGAL TROOP - *by Sig Dillerstone*

Tp Comd	**Lt Yarroll**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Kelly**

The year started with a PACEX followed by a Tp level ex. EX FIRST RUN was designed to bring the Tp back up to the scratch and the high standards achieved in BATUS. This was then closely followed by a four-day Sqn ex, EX FIRST STRETCH, which involved the deployment of Bde Main), Bde Step-Up and Ech onto a very wet and cold Salisbury Plain. The ex proved successful, and climaxed with a visit from Comd 1 Mech Bde, **Brig APC Kennett MBE** and his Staff, them to take a closer look at the HQ they will be working in.

Congratulations to **Cpl Winzar** for passing his CLM course, and goodbye and good luck to him and **Sig White**, posted to 15 Sig Regt and 11 Sig Regt respectively.

SUPPORT TROOP

OC/QM	**Capt MA Webb**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt MJ Hunt**

Since the return from OP TELIC, Suppt Tp has been non-stop. What with the collection of vehs and equipt from Marchwood, accounting for it, and preparing for exs, the easy time we were looking forward to in Iraq is still around the corner. The troop has lost some of its valued members.

LCpl Carl Kidner and his wife **Gwyn**, go to 10 Sig Regt; and **WO2 (RQMS) Wayne Hayes** has finally left the Army for Civvy street. We welcome **LCpl Mick Kingston** and his wife **Rhona**, from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; and **WO2 (RQMS) Mark Morgan** from 21 Sig Regt (AS).

Not long after POTL, the Tp were out on ex supporting the Sqn in their Ech role. The QM, **Capt Miles Webb**, set the standard in Ech. Even though we are so far rear we could see the enemy behind us, trench warfare, clearance routines, and aggressive patrolling was the order of the day. His map reading skills were put to the test with the odd tactical U-turn! And he reprimanded the new Padre for visiting his loc without cam cream or webbing! Overall Suppt Tp put in a sterling performance on the ex, and is now busy preparing for future ECI and LSI inspections – no rest for the wicked!

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC	**Maj TJS Allen**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) AB Lothian**

The Sqn has been busy since the last edition of *The WIRE*, most notably the three-week Bde ex, EX LOG VIPER, which had been the main focus of the Sqn for some time. We as a Sqn are now involved in preparation for the Bde CASTEX, which takes place shortly, and will ensure that the Bde is prepared to take on a High Readiness role later this year. We also have several other activities to occupy our time, including EX AQUATIC TIGER BELZIE, which is a Sub Aqua Diving exped to Belize, allowing 20 members of the Sqn the opportunity to take up this exciting sport in a very challenging environment.

We also have preparations for the Bde Comd's Cup competition and EX US TIGER TREK, a three-week mountaineering exped to the Grand Canyon, as well as our hectic day-to-day maint and low-level trg.

EXERCISE AQUATIC TIGER COLERNE - *by Sig Magee*

On Saturday 19 February 05, a team of potential scuba ninjas from 261 Sig Sqn left Browning Bks, Aldershot, to take the first plunge into what could be, the most dangerous challenge of their lives. The objective of the weekend was to learn the theory and practical skills needed to dive safely in UK open waters, prior to deploying on EX AQUATIC TIGER BELIZE in April.

Sig Denny preparing to take the plunge

After a short introduction and a safety brief, we were taken to the pool and shown how to put together the scuba equipt. We were also shown how to check its functionality and, of course, how to breath from it, which some of us were to find difficult later on.

During our first few dives, we learned what to do in an emergency - for example, if our masks were to flood, or we had an obstruction or fault with the breathing apparatus. **Sig Webb** found it hard to stay upright, much to our amusement. There were also quite fast and intense lessons, where a lot of information had to be absorbed and a theory test at the end of the course, which we all found hard.

The second day was spent practising the skills we had learned previously; and we were also shown how to help out another diver in distress. The course is quite intensive, a lot more theory than I think any of us had expected. However, it was very enjoyable, and we would highly recommend any one interested in diving to get down there and give it a go.

Cpl Brown struggling to remember his mast trg

EXERCISE LOG VIPER

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt A Wardle**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Snape**

Alpha Tp's involvement in EX LOG VIPER was to establish and maintain the Bde Main HQ, firstly dismounted at RAF Stafford, and subsequently in a green field site at Abingdon. Following a challenging transition to BOWMAN, the Tp has adapted well, and the ex provided a great opportunity to gain plenty of hands-on experience. Particular credit is due to **Cpl Marshall**, our resident BOWMAN guru, who has tirelessly been used as a constant source of reference by the other operators.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt P Wright**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt D Mordecai**

Bravo Tp deployed early on EX LOG VIPER to provide a Fwd HQ for the Bde Staff at Nesscliffe, and subsequently at two green field sites in Abingdon and Barton Stacy. The ex was a great opportunity for the Troop to practise its SOIs and to enhance our knowledge of BOWMAN. It proved interesting, and provided challenges throughout, needless to say the Tp tackled all tasks with our usual gusto and enthusiasm. **Cpl Brown** did struggle when teaching how to erect WOTAN masts. You would like have thought that, after 10 years in the Army, he would be better at erections than that. We will make sure he gets more practice in the future.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Daz Mordecai** after being selected for promotion to SSgt.

Sgt Daz Mordecai settles in for three weeks on ex

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC	**Maj J P Hazlewood**
RSM	**W01 (RSM) R C Douglas**

EXERCISE MERCURY HALBERD

EX MERCURY HALBERD (21 February 04 March 05) was a two week 'back to basics' low level Sqn ex, aimed at honing individual det skills, and preparing the Sqn for wider deployments. The ex was divided into two phases, the first taking place at Princess Royal Bks, Gütersloh and the second on the Haltern Trg Area.

PHASE 1 - *by LCpl Russell*

Phase 1 of the ex was a learning week. More than half the Sqn learned how to navigate around the airfield on Princess Royal Bks. This was to attend a round robin of comms-related lessons.

Amongst the highlights of Phase 1 was **Cpl Paul Farrell's** lesson on digging out boggedin Landrovers with a turfer winch. Thoroughly educational for everybody, it ended up becoming another challenge to see who could hit the stakes in the ground harder/quicker than anybody else. We also practised a night move and a night rolling replen, which was a good trg opportunity for some of the younger members of the Sqn. The first week culminated in a best-effort tab in sections. The conditions for this were treacherous - as I found when face-planting after slipping on ice, but good fun was had by all.

PHASE 2 - *by Sig Tuite*

During the second week, we deployed to Haltern Trg Area (again!) where Alpha Tp was involved in visiting stands by day and maintain comms by night. The stands were well presented, and I thought the improvised antennae were extremely useful. Meanwhile, the personnel of Charlie Tp became well versed in defending a comms site, with the temperature at -11°C.

Cpl Lindley briefing the OC

I found the ex particularly useful, as it gave me an opportunity to practise both my driving and map reading skills. However, the rest of the Sqn were not best pleased with these remedial activities, especially when I got bogged in and then sent a completely wrong grid reference! It only took 4 hrs for the Sqn to rescue me - on an ex area the size of a golf ball. Who says it's only Offrs who can't map read?

The ex was an undoubted success, and was a good little shake out for the Sqn. We are all now looking forward to further exs, and keeping our fingers crossed for future deployments.

Cpl Gemson posing for the Winter Catalogue

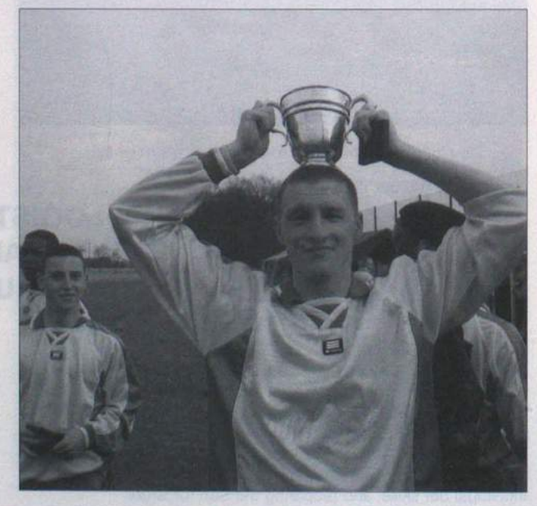
GO KARTING - *by LCpl Russell*

On a sad note, **LCpl Mark Dobson** left us in February, but not before the Sqn gathered to say farewell at a day of gokarting. All involved were split into four groups. The pace was set during warm up by **LCpl Adam King**, with a very quick lap time of 22.84 seconds. With the heats out of the way, the final race was slugged out, and after previous unsporting antics, all drivers agreed to play fair - until **Cpl Jenkins** rammed **LCpl Kilpatrick** off the road to take 1st place. The farewells continued at the Sqn bar, though after the speeches, it all became a bit of a blur...

BA (G) MINOR UNITS CUP FINAL - *by Sig Thomson*

The day started with our opponents, 1 Regt AAC, being strong favourites to take the title. But we started well, having most of the early possession. AAC battled hard to try and regain possession, resulting in a fierce midfield battle throughout the remainder of the first half. There were very few chances, but **Sig Issitt**, our goalkeeper, pulled off an amazing tip over from point blank range to keep the game level. Towards the end of the first half, there was a moment of calamity from the otherwise strong AAC defence when what seemed like a harmless cross from the right hand side by **Cpl Gemson**, was hastily cleared and was almost sliced into their own net. The halftime score was 0-0.

The second half started at lightning pace, with our retaining the majority of possession, and putting their well organised defence under extreme pressure. In the 58th minute, our hard-fought dominance finally paid off. **LCpl Kilpatrick** won the ball in midfield, and passed to **Sig Davies**, who let rip from 40yds with a shot that flew into the top left-hand comer of the net, leaving the AAC keeper clutching at straws. After this, we started to look comfortable, passing the ball well, and eventually putting together a spell that led to us going 20 up. **Cpl Harvey** got a lucky break with the ball bouncing off his shin to **LCpl Scott**, who miss hit the ball but got lucky as it bobbled en route to the goal and then trickled in. AAC pulled a goal back near the end of the match, but by this time, the game was already won. The final score was 21 to 262 Sig Sqn, capping what has been an amazing season for this newly formed unit.



LCpl Kilpatrick victoriously raising the Trophy

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY - DIRECTORATE OF THE CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

ENGINEERING OPERATIONS - *by Maj GM McCrindle*

DCSA's Directorate of the Chief Technology Officer (DCTO) was formed on 1 April 05, with **Cdre Whyntie** as its Director. DCTO consists of 4 distinct areas, ranging from policy to deployed operations:

Engineering Operations	**Gp Capt J Chapman**
Information Assurance	**Col R Evans**
Coherence	**Gp Capt T Boyle**
Whole Life Support	**Capt K Wilson** RN

This article aims to give an overview of Engineering Operations (Eng Ops), headed by **Gp Capt John Chapman**, a Tornado pilot whose feet are now firmly on the floor. With a Mission Statement of *'To deliver an operational engineering capability to the front line and IPTs with emphasis on named operations and Defence activities outside the UK,'* we regularly deploy Military and MOD civilian personnel worldwide on repeated, short duration, comms engineering tasks. There are 28 Royal Signals personnel in the Branch, ranging from Lt Col to LCpl, who are employed in a number of diverse roles.

Department	*Royal Signals Personnel*	*Location*
Operations Support Team	1 Maj (Tfc) 1 WO2 (SSM)	RAF Henlow
Communications Information Systems	2 Capt (TOT) 3 WO1 (FofS) 1 WO2 (RD) 1 Sgt (Inst Tech)	RAF Henlow and Blandford
SYNERGY Team	1 Lt Col 1 Maj (TOT) 1 Maj 1 Capt 1 SSgt (Inst Tech)	Corsham
Installation Team	12 Inst Techs (SSgt – LCpl)	RAF Henlow
Overseas Liaison Officers	2 WO1 (FofS)	Northern Ireland and Cyprus

We manage between 250-300 tasks worldwide at any one time, in support of PJHQ, Front Line Comds (FLCs), Integrated Project Teams (IPTs) and other UK Defence organizations. Until arriving here, I knew very little about DCSA. In the nine months I have been in post, I have been surprised at the professional approach to business, and the effort that goes into delivering effective comms solutions. If you would like a challenging post in a mixed service/civilian culture where you may find yourself deployed from Washington to Kathmandu, Port Stanley to Bandar Seri Begawan, why not join us? You may find yourself surprised.

COMPLEX PROJECT MANAGEMENT
- by SSgt 'Elvis' Hemstead.

On a cold day in November 2004, I reported for duty at the Complex Project Management (CPM) Team at RAF Henlow, to begin my new appointment. Three months earlier, I had received my posting order with a mixture of shock and horror; what is CPM and where does a SSgt Inst Tech fit in? After a few phone calls, I discovered that I would be working in a mainly Civil Service team, carrying out Project Management on behalf of Engineering Ops. The Team is headed by a civil servant, with an RAF Eng Offr, a second civil servant and myself. Together, we are responsible for the delivery of complex projects that require management, across multiple output areas of DCSA. We deliver Project Management in support of operational and non-operational tasks.

In the last few months I have deployed to Qatar, Germany and Cyprus. The Section has been involved mainly with Project SYNERGY (the commercialisation of comms in Iraq), although other installation engineering tasks are carried out when the workload permits. This work involves tasking, coordinating and liasing with a variety of other agencies, including PJHQ, HQSTC, contractors, other DCSA IPTs, RE planning staff, Works Service Agencies, CIDA and installation manpower from Installation Team at RAF Henlow, to name but a few.

Working with the Civil Service is a unique experience that takes a little time to get used to. They have their own language, a different way of doing business, and a fondness for form-filling. The job is both interesting and challenging, and demands a different approach from one you would use in single Service or Joint environment.

The variety of work and different locs in which we work, ensures that there is no opportunity to get jaded. Compared with working in a 'normal' Signals unit, the challenge of this job involves frequently working outside your comfort zone. You need good comms skills, with an ability to convince sceptics that what you are proposing is best engineering practice, and that you can deliver it on time and within budget.

PROJECT SYNERGY - *by Capt (TOT) Mick Solomons.*

Those who have recently completed tours of OP TELIC will be aware of the in-theatre comms system, SYNERGY. Some think that SYNERGY is provided by civilian contractors, but this is not wholly the case. Contractors are involved, but Royal Signals provide and install the entire cable infrastructure that supports the telephone and IT systems. This is done by a Joint Installation Team based at RAF Henlow as part of Engineering Ops. The 60-strong Team is predominantly RAF, with a 12-person Royal Signals Installation Technician contingent. Engineering Ops has a number of specialist CIS Project Managers, of which a small number are military and an even smaller number are Royal Signals (2 Capt TOTs and 5 WO1 FofS).

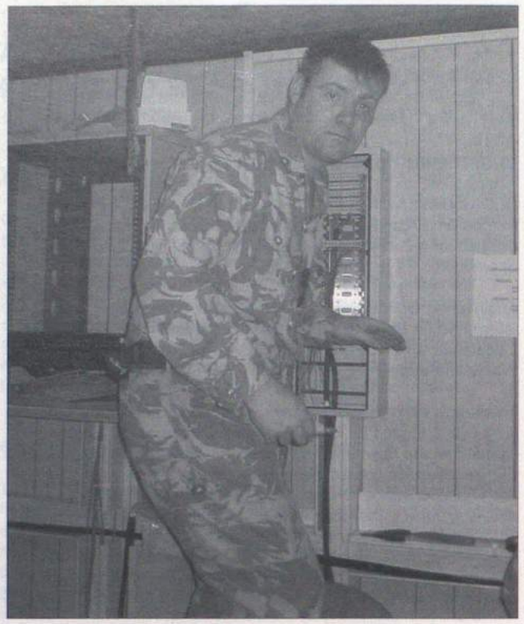
Capt (TOT) Mick Solomons and WO1 (FofS) Gaz Duffy get down to the spade work for the installation

Two days after Christmas, Engineering Ops deployed a 50-man surge team to Iraq to install a new SYNERGY comms node and its associated containment and cable infrastructure. This was extended to some 14 camps in the Shaibah Log Base, providing ICS for some 400 telephone and computer users. The Team installed some 45km of cable in 105 pits, as well as wiring 14 sub-camps to UK civilian standards. The Team from Engineering Ops comprised Project Managers from CIS Branch and Techs from Air Support Branch Installation Team, backed up by riggers from RAF Sealand and other units. The work was completed in 7 weeks from initial tasking to completion, with only 3 weeks on-the-ground installation work allowed. Successful completion of this task within incredibly tight timeframes and ahead of schedule, allowed surge Battle Groups and permanent Units to communicate during the very busy build up to the Iraqi Elections.

OPERATIONS SUPPORT TEAM - *by WO2 (SSM) Dave Wilson*

I was recently posted to Engineering Ops at RAF Henlow as Deployed Ops WO. My primary role is to ensure that all DCTO personnel who deploy outside the UK are correctly prepared. This includes trg, medicals and equipt for those who are deploying on ops to Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans. We deal primarily with MOD civilians, so the paperwork is rather more complex.

RAF Henlow is a small station in terms of military personnel. The camp itself is typically RAF, with excellent gym facilities, swimming pool, golf club, bowling alley and decent quarters. It is situated close to Hitchin, between the A1 and M1, and is only 35 minutes from London by train. We retain our Corps identity with PT and ITDs keeping us up-to-date with mil skills and RCMO visits/MCM Div road shows keeping us informed of what is happening within the Corps. During the last 18 months we have had a large turnaround of Royal Signals personnel, and in the Inst



Sgt Lez Welsh dancing with joy after a successful installation.

Tech world, word is getting out that Henlow is not a bad posting. There are excellent opportunities to use your trade and deploy to some interesting locs.

GOODBYE TO ASHCHURCH AND FTRS

- by Sgt Joanna Stevens

Some people know what the initials FTRS stand for, but from our experience little is known about what we did. For one group of us, it all started more than four years ago, one cold November day, when ten TA soldiers, employed on Full Time Reserve Service, arrived at 608 Sig Tp (later to become DSDC Ashchurch).

We had given up our civilian jobs and put our careers on hold. We came from all walks of life and had a variety of work experiences, but we all came to work as a team on a major Ptarmigan project. We were set to work on a project for Royal Signals' vehicles and installations, headed by **Maj Plumb** and the RSIT team, with **Maj (Retd) Hegarty** as Admin Officer.

The project went well, and all demands were being met. Then the war broke out in Iraq, and our workload, and that of many others, was to increase at an amazing rate. This was a worrying time, when we would be tested to our limits, working very long hours until late at night. We were getting equipment ready for issue to the Gulf and then delivering it to Brize Norton. But our work was not finished there, because all the vehicles returning from the Gulf had to go through 608 Sig Tp to be completely refurbished. The large majority of the Royal Signals' fleet of Ptarmigan vehicles and installations were refurbished in this way.

And the story does not end there. We also helped numerous other units refurbish and rebuild their Ptarmigan vehicles and installations. The sleepy hollow that was once 608 Sig Tp, became a vibrant place of work, and is now on the map thanks to **Maj Plumb**, the RSIT team, FTRS and S type personnel. Then last April, the British Army announced the end of S type and FTRS personnel. They seemed to have forgotten all that we had achieved the previous year.

So 31 March 05 was our last day at Ashchurch, and we have returned to our previous lives. As we look for new jobs, we have many different skills to list on our CVs. We are older and wiser, and have made amazing friends along the way. We also have the knowledge that we were able to make a difference, even though many people are still unaware of the work that FTRS personnel did in the Army.

1 NATO SIGNALS BATTALION

CO	**Lt Col Tony Burgin**
CSM	**SSgt Dave Kilgallon**

REMEMBRANCE DAY TRIP TO YPRES

It was that time of year again, and with a few new personnel now working in Maastricht, we decided to mark Remembrance Day with a visit to Ypres.

The long outward journey was eased with presentations by a few junior ranks, backed up by a brief overview from the CO, **Lt Col Burgin** – and we were there before we knew it.

The focal point of the day was the Remembrance Ceremony at Mennen Gate. People turned up in their thousands to be part of this special day. We moved on from the ceremony to join the Royal British Legion group, where we met some of those veterans who had been involved in the various battles around Ypres.

The next phase of our trip saw us move on to one of the more infamous battlegrounds, Hill 60, with more presentations on the actions there. We left this site well informed of the kind of conditions the brave young soldiers had faced.

The CO and members of 1 NATO Sig Bn placing a wreath on the grave of Pte Harry Woods

But for me, the most poignant part of the day was the trip to Larchwood Cemetery to see the grave of **Pte Harry Woods**, of the Dorset Regt, who died in 1915. We knew nothing of the family and origins of **Pte Woods**, but **WO2 Harrison** felt it would be nice to remember a soldier who had lost his life fighting for our freedom. We each took our turn to lay a poppy on his graveside and sign the Visitors' Book

The day culminated with a trip to Brandhoek Cemetery, and the headstone of one of Britain's most decorated WW1 soldiers. Here, with the help of **LCpl Cownie**, we learned a little more about the double VC recipient, **Capt Noel G Chavasse MC**.

It had indeed been a long day, but everybody had learnt a lot more about Remembrance Day and a little about those who had laid down their lives.

NORDIC SKI SEASON 2004 – 2005 - *by Cpl Connelly*

Once again I found myself qualifying for the Army/National Nordic Ski Champs as an individual. Unfortunately due to their being no Royal Signals female team, less money was available to aid my trg, which resulted in my missing the vital training at altitude. While the 7 Sig Regt Male Ski Team trained hard on snow in Norway for 5 weeks, I had to make do with roller-skiing on the airfields on Elmpt Station. I managed only one week on snow, compared with the 5 weeks every other female ski team in the Army received.

10 Days prior to the 1 Div Nordic Ski Championships I funded myself to train in Austria to gain at least some fitness on snow. Instead of celebrating on New Years Eve, I was in bed fatigued from the evening session of hill reps. Sounds sad, but I couldn't afford to waste even one day!

I arrived at the 1 Div Champs nervous and apprehensive. There were over 30 female competitors, all of whom had an advantage of extra snow trg. My first race was the 10km cross-county. This had always been my worst race, but I came 2nd. After competing in all of the races, I achieved second female overall.

This qualified me for the Army National Champs in Ruhpolding. Here I was up against GB and other national skiers. I knew I had a better chance in the Biathlon races, where not only do you have to ski well, you also have to shoot well - and I was shooting well. I gave my all, and I was ranked 4th for the British Biathlon Union. I was then told that I had been selected for the GB Development

Cpl Connelly working hard up a major climb

Squad. This is an opportunity of a lifetime, which I can't afford to waste. I know I have the potential to make the GB Team, but in order for me to make the grade, quality and quantity of trg is vital. Despite a shaky start to the season, everything seemed to fall into place.

*CO's Note: **Cpl Connelly** was identified as having the ability and potential to do well at this year's skiing meet. It was decided to give her the opportunity to train and travel to the meet to compete, to see how she fared. As her account details, she was entirely independent, and as a member of a NATO unit, suffered because of her inability to gain funding at short notice and as an individual. However her performance speaks volumes, and it is now hoped that she can continue at next year's meets, and train with The British Nordic Team throughout the year.*

628 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Kelvin Grice**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mal Pavier**

EXERCISE COBALT FLASH - *by LCpl Burton*

On 10 January 2005 the majority of 628 Tp deployed on EX COBALT FLASH at Maastricht. The first week entailed the complete set-up of the comms gateway shelter (CGS) equipt.

After the first day, all systems were rebuilt on the CGS4 platform to make sure it was up and running and ready to establish the link with CGS2 when the Danish element of the Bn brought it in. From then on, the main task for the CGS2 crew was to check over the kit and get the link-up with CGS4 (via the two satellite dets) that was located on the other side of Maastricht Camp. Fortunately for the CGS2 crew, the complex had been well maintained by the Danish crew, and was up and running by the end of the first day.

The second week was our opportunity to host the Germans and the Danish (who make up the rest of the battalion) at Javelin Bks. During the day, we were commuting to Maastricht, and the evenings saw various team building activities and games in the Tp families' facility.

On Monday night we all introduced ourselves. Tuesday night was games night, when our team was knocked out in the first round. Wednesday night was victory for us, with a win on the *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* game with £64,000, and second place in the singing competition, thanks to **Cpl Kidd**.

On Thursday during the day, each trade group separated and we went with the experts at Maastricht to discuss new systems and R and I procedures…riveting stuff! The evening saw a game of bowling.

Finally, ENDEX on Friday, and after tearing down the CGS, we all went our separate ways.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 04
- by LCpl Hilton

November and December saw the return of the annual Royal Signals Ski and Snowboard Camp and Champs. November also saw the final stage of the drawdown of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn to 628 Sig Tp. With people posted out every other day and others on tour, manning was tight, but with the help of **Sgt Thomas** and **Sgt Davies**, 5 people from the newly-formed Tp where able to get away to Zell am See, Austria. **Sgt Thomas** and **Cpl Freeman** left for the Austrian resort mid-November to instruct Royal Signals personnel in preparation for the Alpine Skiing race weeks in December. The remaining 3, **LCpl Hilton**, **Sig Catto** and **Sgt Davies** joined them at the end of the month for the Corps Snowboarding.

628 Sig Tp Snowboarders on top of the world!

While the first week of December saw the Alpine Ski Competition in full swing, the snowboarders got a week of expert tuition and race trg from the Dutch RipStar Team. After a weekend of free riding, relaxing and cleaning our boards, it was time to put it all to the test in the 4 days of racing that followed. Racing consisted of a short Slalom for seeding, a Slalom, a Giant Slalom, then to a short course for the gripping, head-to-head Duel Slalom on the final day.

There was no new snow during the 2 weeks we were there, so all the races took place around or above 3,000m on the Kitzstinehorn Glacier, where conditions where adequate, if a little cold and windy. Competition was strong but good-willed, with everyone sticking around until the last novices had painfully made their way to the bottom of the technical courses. On the final day, the prize-giving took place at the Grand Hotel in Zell am See. Most of the prizes went to Units based in Elmpt Station, with 628 Sig Tp coming 3rd in the Team competition, and **LCpl Hilton** winning the Male Corps Champion Title. We are all looking forward to next year's event, where we also plan taking a team for the Alpine events.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC **Maj Paul Anderson**
USM **WO2 Sid Barrass**

2005 will see major changes in JCUFI and J6 in the Falklands in general. The tri-service personnel in JCUFI are continually working hard in the provision of ICS capabilities to Comd British Forces Falkland Islands, and towards the impending transfer from PJHQ to DCSA South Atlantic Islands (DCSA SAI) planned for July this year. In addition, they are also identifying all the pre-deployment IT trg that will be required to upgrade the in-theatre LAN (BFFINet) under PROJECT TURING, currently planned for November this year.

As ever, due to the constant roulements, there has already been a significant change round of personnel this year. Fond farewells must go out to: **Lt Joe Long**, back to 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; **WO2 Mick McDonnell**, on his move to RSS Blandford; UQMS **SSgt Graeme Honeywood**, FRT SNCO **SSgt Don Brennan** and Radcon SNCO, **Sgt Buz Bury**. All will be missed; and good luck for the future.

We welcome **2Lt Rich Warmington**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt; **WO2 (USM) Sid Barrass**, from 21 Sig Regt (AS); **SSgts Chris Hoggard** and **Ambar Gurung**, **Sgts Chris Noviss**, **Paddy Partington** and **Jaman**.

MOUNT PLEASANT TO STANLEY EGG AND SPOON RELAY
- by Sgt Stu McCluskie

On Saturday 26 March 2005, on a breakaway from the normal 6-day week in the Falkland Islands, JCUFI held a charity event to raise money for BFBS's Wireless for the Blind appeal. It was decided that the event would be a relay race along the 37 miles from Mount Pleasant to Stanley, and it would involve all 3 services (whether they liked it or not!).

As the event was to be held over the Easter weekend, the theme decided on was an Egg and Spoon relay, with each participant carrying an 'Egg and Spoon' and handing it over to the next lucky runner, in the chain. It had puzzled many a runner before the event, how would we get from Mount Pleasant to Stanley without dropping an egg - until the USM **WO2 Sid Barrass** tipped up at 08.30hrs, brandishing 3 spoons that had been 'borrowed' from the Sgts Mess, along with 3 hard boiled eggs, which had been attached to the spoons with that old school boy trick – sticky tape. It was planned that the 37 miles would be split down into 8 legs, with each officer running 2 consecutive legs, and 2 ORs running at any one time with the officers.

It started at 09.00hrs, and first out of the blocks was the 2IC with **Cpl Lynn** and **SSgt Ambar**, who, with the aid of good weather, made good time, knocking 10 mins off of their 45 mins predicted time. This carried on throughout the day, and, unusually for the time of year, it did not rain. However the wind was picking up, which would have been a great help if it was from behind, but unfortunately was not. 4 hrs and 35 mins later, **Maj Paul Anderson**, **SSgt Graeme Honeywood** and **LCpl Kieron Armstrong** completed the final leg of the relay, greeted by a rapturous applause at Hillside Camp in Stanley.

Throughout the day **USM Sid Barrass** kept the rest of the Falkland Islands up to date on the day's happenings, via the sat phone being patched through live to BFBS, and thanked everyone involved for the support that had been given.

The run was gruelling, with each of the runners not only running into high winds, but also running on the rough ground and hilly terrain unique to the Falklands. Each of the runners coped with these difficulties well.

After the day's events, **USM Barrass** arranged an evening function in *Sharkies* (the Unit bar), which had entertainment thrown in by Mount Pleasant's band of the moment, *Atomic Funky Monkey*, which by some coincidence, has two of JCUFI's Officers in the line-up.

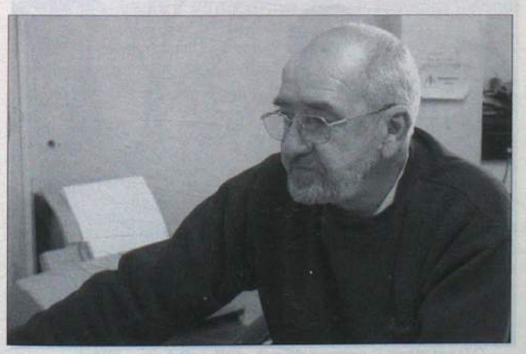
And to wrap up an excellent day, the OC ended up winning the Money Tree, and the Chief Clerk won third prize. With the USM organising the event, it wasn't long before rumours were being circulated.

MR JOHN NICOL - JCUFI MARCONI RESIDENT ENGINEER 1984-2005

John Nicol arrived in the Falkland Islands in May 1984 on contract from Marconi Communications Division, to take charge of the installation of the FI Trunk System (FITS). On his arrival, the system was only part built to serve the Hill top Sites, providing strategic links to the satellite station in Stanley – in those days provided by the Military.

John quickly took charge of the situation and, recognising that his work force was composed only of young inexperienced techs, he set about installing the complete network to a professional and workable standard. In effect, he was issued with the equipment in boxes, and it was his task to turn the contents of these packing cases into a working transmission network. Despite the hostile environment, the inexperience of his workforce both in the South Atlantic and with the provided equipment, and the short time frame in which to complete the work, he succeeded and proceeded to deliver the required grade of service.

Throughout the remaining 1980s and the early 90s, **John** continued to serve as the resident engineer, overseeing the network, mentoring a continuing stream of roulementing techs, and dedicating his time and effort in an unswerving way. During this time, there were several major changes to the network, including two re-locations of relay stations. **John** managed these as projects, with little direction or guidance from UK, and the network emerged from these traumas in better condition for his direction.



John Nicol, part of the furniture and fittings at JCUFI

With the introduction of the T101 radars into Theatre in 1997–2000, the system had to be digitised to meet the requirements of the RAP feed. **John Nicol** played a major part in the digitisation project, again demonstrating his tireless attention to detail and putting his duty first before all other considerations.

Late in the life of the FITS/DigiFITS system, it became apparent that the replacement network, FALCOM subsequently renamed LAMBETH, was to be substantially delayed into service, and this necessitated running on the existing network, both as an obsolete capability and unsupported. **John** was the major lynchpin of the SUSTAIN project to ensure that this was achieved.

It was through this period that his true worth and knowledge shone through, and often due only to his efforts that the network was maintained. Latterly, **John** has been engaged in decommissioning the sites, and despite coming to the end of his contract here, he has tackled this activity with the same energy and capability that has become his trademark.

In summary, for over two decades he has personally managed the Falklands transmission system. With immense fortitude and leadership, he has guided the servicemen and women and the network through the most testing of periods. His drive and dedication have been exceptional, and have marked him out as achieving a standard of work that has been an example to all around him.

In recognition for his efforts and support to The Falkland Islands over the past 21 years, and his close affiliation to all the Royal Signals soldiers who have roulemented through JCUFI, we, The Corps, would like to thank him for all he has achieved, and wish him the very best in his retirement from both Marconi and JCUFI.

THE FALKLAND ISLANDS COMMANDO CHALLENGE
- by LCpl Johnson

The Commando Challenge is a yearly event held in the Falkland Islands to commemorate the achievements of 45 Cdo's advance from San Carlos to Two Sisters and the subsequent battle on that feature. The competition covers a distance of approximately 50 miles, over quiet difficult ground, with a number of comd tasks along the way. The patrol consisted of **Lt Joe Long**, **Cpl Rob Everard**, **Cpl Ryan Jones**, **LCpl Jonno Johnson**, **Sig Alex Davies** and **Pte Q Borisi**.

The competition started at Hope Cottage on the morning of 24 February, and began quite abruptly, with a 2-mile, best effort, log run. After a half-mile sprint, we reached the logs and started the race, going over some very cheeky hills. 50% of the task done, and the DS were kind enough to put a water stop in, which **Lt Long** mistook for the end of the race. Realising it wasn't, we ran on, eventually reaching the real end, where our Bergens were waiting for us. We had a quick 1-minute break, before setting off again on the start of a very long and hard day, over some of the most challenging terrain to conduct this type of event.

Unfortunately, just before CP3, we had our first casualty, a case of severe cramp, which gave us a time penalty of an extra hour. Not disheartened, we cracked on until the end. At the final destination, we had to do a comd task, which entailed crossing a river in a dinghy and placing 9 logs into a land rover. The river was so shallow that our boat got stuck on rocks in the middle, so **Pte Borisi**, with a dashing display of sacrifice, and with the aid of two paddles, hopped from stone to stone to the other side, and started to shift the logs on his own. The rest of the team eventually got across the river to help with the log moving until the comd task was complete. Day One was finally over, and we had done well.

Day Two started with the team yomping - no log, although we suspected that we had not seen the last of them. The day started well, with our reaching the first CP in good time, overtaking another team. The ground was still the same as the day before - 'baby's heads' as far as the eye could see, with the occasional patch of soft ground that you sank into. Although the route was shorter than the previous day, it was just as hard due to the previous days exertion, but nevertheless, the whole team managed to get around the entire route with no major injuries. Day Two finished near the base of Two Sisters, at the Murrell River. We had started the day at 08.00hrs and got into the final loc at 15:00hrs, which was a good time. Once in loc, we were given another comd task, which was to get across another river, only this time using some rope. Using the rope and a pulley system, the whole team were able to shimmy across to the other side to complete the task. It went extremely well, and we put in a good time. Day Two was over, with only one final push to go. Day Three started in the shadow of the Two Sisters, the mountain the Royal Marines captured in 1982. Naturally as the competition was called the Commando Challenge, we knew we would be going up the mountain as the marines did. We reached the top surprisingly fast, but were exhausted. After a short break, we headed off, reaching the outskirts off Stanley in a good time. The final leg of the competition was to tab through Stanley to Rookery Range, where we would have to complete one last comd task. Yes, you've guessed it, another log race, followed by a shoot. We dropped off our Bergens and started the log race – surprisingly, only a kilometre long. We finished with every member of the team barely intact and prepared for the shoot, only to be told it was cancelled due to it being so windy. The

The JCUFI Team, led by Lt Jo Long

relief and satisfaction washed over us, with the realisation that the pain was over. Once all the teams had finished, we all returned to the Falkland Islands Defence Force (FIDF) Hall for the presentation. Out of 9 teams, JCUFI finished in sixth place, beating RAF Regt, QLR and 1 Sig Sqn.

Looking back on the competition, the whole back-breaking, knee-twisting, ankle-snapping experience was very enjoyable, and something I will not forget in a long time. Although it was very hard, it was an invaluable insight into what the Royal Marines did in 1982, and it makes you think how hard it must have been for them.

CADETS

CADET SIGNALS CADRE IS A GREAT SUCCESS

During the Easter break, some 40 Cadets from Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire ACF attended the annual Crossed Flags Signals Cadre at the Cambridgeshire ACF Cadet Trg Centre, Waterbeach.

After a long hard week, a 100% success rate was achieved. The Cadre is now an annual event, and proved very popular - so much that as a reserve list was drawn up.

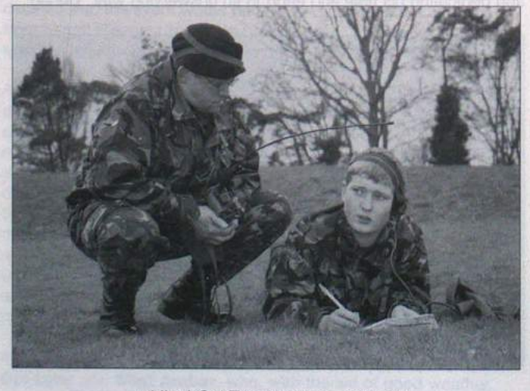
The Cadets undertake the Crossed Flags Syllabus, with a 'bit extra' thrown in. A HF ex on the Wednesday evening proved very popular, as some 9 NRN call signs were contacted. This was a really good demonstration for the earlier antenna theory lesson. We even managed to borrow a few PRR 343s from the Royal Engineers. When the time came to return these, the Cadets offered a two for one exchange with their PRC 349s. Sadly, the offer wasn't accepted!

Cpl Debell and **LCpl Trigg** from 46 (City of Derby) Sig Sqn carried out the VP instruction and assessment. Their support, and the FFR and VRC 321 they brought along, was much appreciated. A number of ACF Instructors from Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire also attended.

A final parade and presentation saw the Cadets receive Certificates and Badges from **Lt Col Roger Herriot**, Deputy Comdt, Cambridgeshire ACF. A Royal Signals tee-shirt for each cadet was kindly provided by the Cambs ACF Exec Officer.

'The Cadre was a great success, proving that Cadets enjoy and want signals trg as part of their APC trg.' said **Maj Mark Knight**, County Signals Officer. 'Several cadets have already asked about courses at Blandford, and we aim to repeat this next year.'

Cpl Debbell instructs an eager medic in voice procedure...



...whilst LCpl Trigg's trainee responds

UXBRIDGE ARMY CADETS DIG FOR VICTORY

17 Uxbridge Army Cadets from 191 (Royal Signals) Cadet Det paraded with shovels and spades at the Iver Nature Study Centre to help the environmental charity Groundwork Thames Valley build an air raid shelter and fill sand bags in preparation for the 'Dig for Victory' exhibition to be staged at the centre in April.

Centre Manager **Sally Munn** explained 'The exhibition is designed to show young people what life on the Home Front was like, as well as demonstrate how eating healthily and recycling food was a important part of wartime living.

The Cadets' enthusiasm and energy has given us a great start to the project which is due to open on 26 April.'

The Cadets worked from 10.00hrs to 16.00hrs digging trenches, as well as filling sandbags to build the air-raid shelter walls. Cadet leader **Peter Turner** explained 'Community work is just one part of our activities, and today will count towards the cadets community service section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.'

Anyone interested in joining the Army Cadets can visit the Uxbridge Army Cadets at the TA Centre, Honeycroft Hill, Uxbridge on a Tuesday or Thursday evening from 19.30hrs or www.armycadets.com for more information.

Cpl Michael Field (17) from Hayes and LCpl Kara Wallis (15) from Eastcote filling sand bags watched by Centre Mgr Sally Munn

SPORT

SWIMMING

ROYAL SIGNALS DOMINANT AT THE 2004 INTER CORPS SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

- by Maj Tim Langford

The 16th InterCorps Championships were held at Aldershot on 2223 November 04. The Royal Signals were once more the dominant Corps, demonstrated by the outstanding results that were achieved over the 2 days.

INTERNAL CORPS COMPETITION

The Internal Corps Competition was held at Colerne on 16 November 04, with the normal format of BA(G), Individual Training Organisation (ITO) and UK, contesting the medals and cups. The Corps displayed an amazing wealth of talent, with all 3 teams boasting Army and Combined Services swimmers. However, it was UK and ITO who battled out the swimming.

The individual events were very even, with both teams winning 4 events and BA(G) the 9th. In the relays, the depth of the UK team materialised, and they eventually won by 4 points, with ITO finishing second.

The Water Polo appeared well matched again this year, with all 3 teams fielding some good players. BA(G) played ITO in the first game, and after the first quarter, with both teams failing to score, it appeared it would be a close game. However, ITO built up a 3-1 lead in the second quarter, and then scored 5 goals without response from BAG in the third, to build up an 81 lead. The final score was 102, with **LCpl Ollie Smith** scoring 3 goals for ITO. BA(G) then played UK. **Maj Jenks Jenkins** and **SSgt Andy Carnegie** both scored 2 goals each in the first quarter, to secure a 4-0 lead for UK. The game was much tighter during the last 3 quarters, with the final score line being 10-6, **Maj Jenkins** scoring 4 for UK, and **Capt Ben Psaila** scoring 4 for BA(G). The final game was between UK and ITO, and proved a very tight contest. It was 0-0 at the end of the first quarter, and then ITO scored twice in the second quarter to a nil response from UK.

The third quarter was also a nil-all draw, so ITO were still 2-0 up. In the final quarter, UK pushed forward, but could not break down an extremely resolute defence and left themselves open to the break. Unfortunately for UK, the ITO tactics proved successful, and they scored 3 goals on the break to a nil response. ITO were champions, with a 5-0 win.

INTERCORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS PREPARATION

Again this year, selected individuals remained for trg prior to the Inter Corps, which were to be contested at the Aldershot complex. We utilised the swimming pool at RNAS Yeovilton for 2 days trg, as their pool was much larger than the Colerne pool. **LCpl Helen Stanyer** trained our swimmers this year, and **Mr Mick Flaherty** continued the development of our Water Polo Squad.

The Water Polo team had 2 warm-up games against RNAS Yeovilton. In our first game, we managed a 64 win and in the second game, we improved, to win 83. With some good trg behind us, we moved confidently on to Aldershot. We were defending Champions in the Male Swimming, and Male and Female Water Polo from the year before.

INTER-CORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

This year there were 6 trophies up for grabs: Male and Female Water Polo, Male and Female Sprint Relay Swimming, and Male and Female Individual Swimming - the last 2 trophies being included in 2004 for the first time. The Aldershot complex has an Olympic 8-lane 50m pool, and the Water Polo pitch is the maximum size of 30m x 20m.

The Championships were held over 2 days. Day 1 saw the heats in the individual swimming and the pool Water Polo games. In the individual swimming heats, all our swimmers went through to their finals. In the female Water Polo, only 2 teams entered, so the final was played on Day 1 instead of Day 2 as was the intention. Our girls were magnificent against an Army Nomad team that boasted 2 Loughborough University Water Polo players. **Cpl Sarah Hardy**, **Cpl Bev Thornton** and **Sig Zoe Phythian** all scored one apiece, to ensure our successful defence our title 3-1, and were crowned Champions for the second successive year. **LCpl Leslee Sunderland** was superb between the sticks pulling off some good stops obviously been watching **Capt Pete Griffiths**! **Lt Laura Fernand** was presented the Best Female Water Polo player trophy.

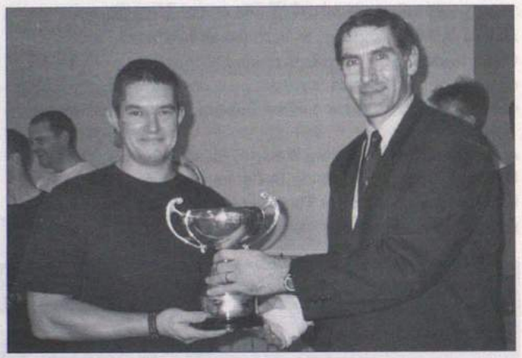
Lt Laura Fernand being presented Best Royal Signals Female Water Polo player by Capt Pete Griffiths

In the Male Water Polo, we again entered 2 teams. The B Team unfortunately failed to qualify from their pool, losing 4-2 to APTC, with **SSgt (YofS) Stu Park** and **LCpl Mussie Musgrave** both scoring one apiece. In their second game, they played a combined AMS and AGC team (they had 2 Combined Services players) and were beaten 5-1, with **2Lt Finn Aldridge** scoring our only goal. Their final game was against REME. They held the REME 2-1 with 2 quarters completed, with **Cpl Chris Yapp** scoring for us. The second 2 quarters saw REME finally win 6-2, with **2Lt Aldridge** again netting one for the Corps.

The A Team faired better. In their first game, they played a combined RLC and RE team. They won comfortably 7-0, with **Maj Jenks Jenkins** and **LCpl Ollie Smith** both scoring 2. The second game was against RE. Again, **Maj Jenkins** contributed 2 goals in a 6-1 win. The final pool game was against Int Corps. **Capt Pete Griffiths** with 5 goals, **Capt Gaz Johnson**, **WO1 (YofS) Tom Moran** and **LCpl Tony Davies** with 2 goals each, ensured a 13-0 victory. Overall, a good start to the Championships, with all swimmers into their finals and the retention of one of our titles, Day 2 had more to come!

The second day commenced with the SemiFinals and Finals of the Water Polo. We played APTC in our semi. We knew it would be a very physical game, and found ourselves l-l at the end of the first quarter. In the second quarter we built up a 3-1 lead. We ensured in the third quarter that we would be comfortable in the last quarter, and extended our lead to 7-1. The final score was 9-2, with **Capt Gaz Johnson** and **SSgt Bas Ward** both scoring twice.

In the final, we again met REME. In 2003 we required extra time to beat them; this year would not be any easier! In an evenly contested match, we built up a 2-1 lead at the end of the first quarter, and then 4-2 at the end of the second. In the third quarter, REME came back and made it 5-5 - extremely tight! They then took the lead at 6-5, and defended like demons. We managed to pull back to 6-6 with about 90 secs remaining on the clock. **Maj Jenkins** then swam like a dolphin to create space to bury a backhand shot, and win the game for us with about 30 secs to go - a little close! We retained our title as Inter Corps Champions, and our top scorers were **Capt Ben Psaila** with 8 goals and **Capt Gaz Johnson** with 7. **SSgt Bas Ward** was presented Best Male Water Polo player for the Championship.



SSgt Bas Ward being presented the Male Inter Corps Water Polo Cup

The finals of the Individual Swimming Championships commenced immediately after the Water Polo finals. We fielded one of the strongest teams, both male and female, that I have seen in my 10 years as Corps Secretary. Both competitions have 10 events. In the Male Championship, we achieved a first (**2Lt Finn Aldridge** winning the 50m Freestyle in a time of 26.63secs), 4 seconds and a third. We finished joint first with RE, but they took the Trophy on their individual medley swimmer finishing

Capt Catherine Jardine being presented the Inter Corps Female Individual Swimming Trophy

ahead of ours; extremely unlucky. The female team was outstanding. They achieved 5 wins, two seconds and 2 thirds out of the 10 races. **Cpl Stacey Fayers** won the 50M Freestyle in 31.80secs, **Capt Catherine Jardine** won the 50M Backstroke in 36.68secs, **Lt Louise Halstead** won the 50M Butterfly in 33.71 secs (a new Inter Corps record), **LCpl Michelle Scott** won the 100m Freestyle in 69.43 secs and **Sig Zoe Phythain** won the 100m Breaststroke in l min 27.20secs (a new Inter Corps Record). They were crowned Inter-Corps Champions.

Next off the blocks were the swimming sprint relays. The female event has 3 relays and the male 4 relays. Both teams were crowned Inter Corps Champions. Of the 7 events, we won 6 and finished second in the 7th. The male team started well, with **2Lt Finn Aldridge**, **Sgt Jez Greenlee**, **SSgt Andy Carnegie** and **Sig Gav Pearce** winning the 4 x 100mFreestyle relay in 4m 05.76 secs, some 6 secs ahead of RE, who finished second. We also won the second event, the 4 x 50mBreaststroke, in 2m 28.80secs. Our swimmers were **Cpl Dan Hine**, **Cpl Craig Chilvers**, **WO1 (YofS) Tim Williams** and **Cpl Sean Peart**. We managed to beat RE by 0.2secs in the 4 x 50m Medley Relay, with **LCpl Ollie Smith** (backstroke), **Cpl Sean Peart** (breaststroke), **LCpl Tony Davies** (butterfly), and **Sig Gav Pearce** (freestyle) recording a time of 2m 05.99secs.

The female sprint relay team won all of their 3 events. In. the 4 x 50m Freestyle, **Cpl Stacey Fayers**, **Lt Laura Fernand**, **Capt Catherine Jardine** and **LCpl Michelle Scott** set a new Inter-Corps Record, with a time of 2m 05.03secs. In the 4 x 50m Breaststroke, **Cpl Stacey Fayers**, **Cpl Bev Thornton**, **Sig Julie Richards** and **Sig Zoe Phythian** won by 3 secs, and only just missed the Inter-Corps Record (set by Royal Signals in 2002) by less than half a second. In their final event, 4 x 50m Medley Relay, the team of **Capt Catherine Jardine** (backstroke), **Sig Zoe Phythian** (breaststroke), **Lt Louise Halstead** (butterfly) and **LCpl Michelle Scott** (freestyle) set a new Inter-Corps Record of 2m 20.05secs.

LCpl Helen Stanyer being presented with the Inter Corps Female Sprint Relay Shield

I would like to extend my thanks to Units for releasing their Officers and Soldiers. Without their support, we would not enjoy the same level of success. As always, all individuals in the squad would like to thank **Mr Mick Flaherty** for his coaching, and to **LCpl Helen Stanyer** (nicknamed Rosa) who coached and selected the swimming teams. Both were innovative in their approach to the trg. My thanks also go to all individuals for their effort over a very hard week. Additionally, all members of the squad would like to thank Vados for sponsoring the Corps team this year. Anyone interested in representing the Corps should contact **Maj Tim Langford** on 94382 5839. The Internal Competition will be held on 15 November 05, with the Team Camp running until the Inter-Corps on 23/24 November 05. The Water Polo will again include a Female tournament, where we would welcome some new talent.

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT WIN WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

- by Sgt Bownam

After the success of the Women's Volleyball Team in winning the BAG Championships with very limited trg and with a team put together at the last moment, we started to prepare for the Army Volleyball Championships at Aldershot. Fortunately, MCM Div aided our preparations by strengthening our team with two extremely good players, both of whom having Army-level experience - which helped immensely.

We were able to complete a trg programme at Javelin Bks, prior to the Championships, so we felt we had a very strong team, and a good chance of winning some silverware. To give us an even better chance, we organised a trg camp at RAF Uxbridge a few days prior to the Championships. This turned out to be invaluable; it helped the Team bond, as well as to strengthen the skills of the players. It was probably the main reason for our success.

On the day of the Championships, we left early to ensure that we would arrive in Aldershot well in advance of the other teams. On arrival, we managed to secure a place in the gymnasium so we could get in some more practice, and size up the opposition. The draw was then made, and a very complicated playing schedule was drawn up; this would actually come to our aid later on in the tournament.

The first match was against 1st RA, which we won easily, dropping only 2 points over 2 sets, which helped to boost the Team's confidence. The next match, against 2 Sig Regt the previous Champions, was a close-run competitive game, in which we just managed to get a victory. DLO were the next victims, but they took us to the very end, with **LCpl Hay** serving the very last point to win in a thrilling three-set match. Next was 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, which proved to be a bit of a stumbling block as the Team, after a couple of heated discussions on court, lost concentration and lost their first ever match. However, due to the complicated ladder system, it meant we still had a chance to reach the final.

We had to play 2 Sig Regt again in the loser's semi-final, which 16 Sig Regt won and set up for a grudge match against 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. The final turned out to be a very different match from the previous semi-final they managed to win. Our Team pulled all their experience and skill together. They played one of the best matches they have ever played blowing 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt off court, and winning the Army Championships.

There was some very memorable memories from the Championships, with **LCpl Emma Pheasey** gaining 'The best player of the Final' award; and one of the most inexperienced players, **Sig Wendy Cunington**, serving in the final for the winning point. **LCpl Gemma Collins**, the Team Captain, held us together, and showed strong leadership in testing times. All in all, the women showed some really good skills, and importantly all played as a team, which was probably the main contribution to the winning the final.

The team consisted of the following:-

Sgt Bowman (Coach)
Sig Wilkes (Assistant coach)
LCpl Collins (Court Capt)
LCpl Ingledew
LCpl Pheasey
LCpl Hay
Sig Cunington
Sig Williams
Sig Turvey

38th ARMY TENPIN BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2005

- by Cpl Jones, 7 Sig Regt

Once again I was fortunate be able to enter the 38th Army Tenpin Bowling Championships at the AMF Bowl in Leeds. Over 120 competitors, made up of Serving and ex-Serving military personnel and their dependants, took part in the three-day event. All competitors bowl 5 games of singles, 4 games of doubles and 3 games of team (4 players); the total score (per individual) of all 12 games accumulates into the all-events category. The top 24 bowlers proceed to the masters and bowl a further 3 games, followed by the top 12 bowling 3 more times; and finally the top 6 of these proceed to a round-robin final.

On the afternoon of Thursday, 3 March, **Sgt Martin Middleton** (16 Sig Regt) and I set off to Rotterdam to catch the overnight ferry to Hull, where we met the rest of the Team, **C Mann** and **B Tedeschi**, both from Bielefeld. We made good time from Hull to Leeds and arrived a good 6 hrs before we were due to play our Doubles series. **Sgt Middleton** and I set down, expecting a good set, knowing that it would be very difficult to win. **Sgt Middleton** averaged 161.5, and I clocked up an average of 206. This placed is in the lead for a short while. After all the Doubles squads had completed, we ended up in 10th place.

After relaxing on Friday night, Saturday morning was the time for my turn in the Singles. With my confidence boosted by my Doubles score, I began the day with a large total to beat – **S Parrot** (TA) had already hit 995, a 199 average over 5 games. I knew that I was capable of beating it, but I didn't know by how much. After a couple of good games, 191 and 256, first place was in my sights. The following 2 games, 232 and 192, increased my confidence going into the last game. I was then able to relax, knowing that if I made mistakes I could cover them with my previous pin fall. I started well, with two consecutive strikes, and hit another on the third frame (having failed on all my previous attempts in each game). I breathed a sigh of relief, and hit 10 strikes in a row. By now I was becoming a little nervous. As I went onto the approach, the majority of the Bowling Centre had hushed. I let go of the ball, and immediately knew that it had gone a little wide. As the ball turned towards the pocket, I had a feeling that it wasn't good enough. Most of the pins flew off the lane but two stood there wobbling, teasing me – alas, they did not fall. My next shot was a solid spare, and gave me the high game of the tournament with 288.

I was lying in first place, knowing my score was good, but once everyone else had finished, I looked at the score board and realised that I had a score of 1,159 and an average of 231.8, beating the Army record. After a couple of drinks to celebrate, it was time for an early night, as the Team event started at 09.30hrs Sunday morning. Our original four travellers from Germany started to bowl in the Non-unit Team Division, with the pressure off me slightly, as I had a lead of roughly 170 pins for the All Events. My first game wasn't too bad, hitting 202, but as I started the second game, I got stuck in the ball, leading to a swollen thumb. I had to have the ball drilled out another 1.5cm so that I could fit my thumb in, and this took a while to get used to, and consequently, I hit my lowest game of 155, but recovered, with a last game of 191.

It was enough. I had won the All Events, with a total score of 2,531 and an average of 211 for the weekend. Once this had been confirmed, I found that I had retained my title as Serving Champion, and was the first Serving All Events Champion since 2000, when **Capt Alan Smith** won.

Unfortunately, with my thumb being too swollen, I retired and did not enter the Masters' event. There was some fantastic bowling, and at one stage I thought my High Game was going to go – but 279, twice, was the closest score.

COMBINED SERVICES CRICKET TOUR - FEBRUARY 05

- by Cpl Stu Houghton

Having been given the news back in October of 2004, that I had been selected to tour New Zealand with the Combined Services Cricket team it was soon time to meet up with the rest of the team in RAF Uxbridge. I had never been to this part of the world, and to find out that we were to be spending just over 26 hours on the plane came as quite a shock!

On our arrival in Queenstown, in the South Island of New Zealand, there was no time to get over the journey; we were straight into practice prior to our first game against the NZ Army. We were inspired by our surroundings, and went on to beat the NZ Army convincingly, by 6 wickets. To celebrate, we were allowed to sample the taste of victory in fine style. Unfortunately, the NZ Army were better drinkers than cricketers, though we did well in those stakes too.

Two more games quickly followed against Central Otago, which, on paper, should be good opposition as they are a Provincial cricket side. Amazing ourselves, we beat them in the first game, and went into the next day's play confident that a shock victory was nigh. But their best batsman, who had got 0 on the first day, scored 100, and the game was lost. To recover, we had three well-earned days off, and Queenstown lived up to the tour guides' description as being the party capital of the South Island!

The next week, the team moved up-country for our next fixture, and we stayed at Burnham Camp just outside Christchurch. Our next game, the last of our warm-up matches before the Inter-Services, was against Canterbury A. We knew that this would be the hardest game of the tour - their side is packed with professionals, and even guys who had played for the Black Caps. They were as strong as we had expected, and although we competed with the bat, our bowlers got smashed, and they chased our score down with ease. It was not a good day, but the team had to pull together and look forward to the next game, where we would play the NZ Combined Services cricket team in a three one-day series.

We then drove to Blenheim, our next stop, seeing some amazing scenery on the way. After 2 defeats, practice stepped up a notch, with our coach really putting us through our paces. The next three games were the big ones. To beat the Kiwis, we were going to have to start well, and early nights became the order of the day.

On arrival at Blenheim, we had an official Maori welcome, and they did the *Haka* for us. We knew the Kiwis meant business! By this time, the President of Combined Services Cricket, **Maj Gen RV Brims**, had joined the squad, and the words of encouragement he gave us worked. We demolished the NZ CS side in fine style, putting us in a great mood for the next two games. The next day, we achieved our objective with a repeat performance from the UK CS side. The series was won!

Leaving Blenheim signalled the home straight for the tour, and after a whirlwind visit to Wellington and Rotorua, we were on our way back to England. A great tour and a great opportunity provided by Services sport.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen AH Boyle CB

Association Office
RHQ Royal Signals
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 8RH
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

Welfare Secretary
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Tel (civ) 01258 48 2089
Membership Secretary
Tel (mil) (9)4371 2090
Tel (civ) 01258 482090
e-mail: rsa@rsignals.net

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col GN Donaldson OBE
Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col C P Conlon
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr PJ Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

BRANCH NEWS

Edinburgh Branch **Ms Jacqui Smith** has taken over from **Ian McKay** as Secretary and can be contact c/o 32 Sig Regt(V), TA Centre, 21 Jardine St, Glasgow G20 6JU. Tel: 0141-224 5042.

Darlington Branch After well over 30 years in office, **Cyril Cooke** has stood down as Secretary. This is an outstanding contribution to the Association by anyone's standard, and we owe **Cyril** our sincere gratitude for his devotion to office over such a long period. **Stan Wise** has been elected to succeed **Cyril**, and he can be contacted at: 8 Hickstead Rise, Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham DL5 4TP. Tel: 01325-300965.

York Branch **Mrs Heather Spray** is the new Secretary, and can be contact at: 5 Kensington Rd, Rawcliffe, York YO30 5XG. Tel: 01904-673202.

Peterborough Branch **Mrs Rae White** has taken over from **Brian Overland** as Secretary, and can be contacted at: 1 Orchard Lane, Woodnewton, Peterborough PE8 5EE. Tel: 01780-470678.

Aldershot Branch **Jane Knight** has become Vice President. **Mary Pagan** has succeeded **Jane** as Secretary, and can be contacted at: Hillside Lodge, The Drive, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1PD. Tel: 01483-421440.

East London Branch **Alan Turner** has succeeded **Barry Greenwood** as Secretary, and can be contacted at: 222 Staines Rd, Ilford, Essex IG1 2UW. Tel: 0208-2206319.

Aberdeen Branch **Margaret Muirhead** is the new Secretary, and can be contacted at: 9 Crookfold Gdns, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen AB23 8PR. Tel: 01224-706638 (PM only).

Our gratitude goes to all those new Secretaries for offering their services to their Branch and the Association.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Rank/Name	*Service*
Capt Steve White	1980-date
Dvr Thomas Hatton	1942-45
Maj David Hannam	1978-94
SSgt Tony Downing	1980-03
Sig Maurice O'Brien	1961-70
Sgt Leslie Brown	1964-88
SSgt Andrew Perkins	1981-05
Cpl Gordon Donaldson	1998-05
LCpl John Beesley	1974-83
LCpl Clive Lane	1963-69
Cpl John Espey	1960-69
Sig Scott Gildert	1992-98
WO1 Andy Harriott	1980-04
Cpl Tony Mee	1979-91
WO2 Archie Gemmell	1982-05
Maj Penny Wood	1996-date
Sgt David Campbell	1962-84
Lt Col Peter Riding	1951-78
LCpl Harry Roberts	1971-78
Cpl Ian Pollock	1986-98
WO2 Dave Fraser	1978-00
LCpl Kevin Devlin	1998-04
WO2 Neil Evans	1983-05
SSgt Michael Reynolds	1948-73
Sig Douglas McCutcheon	1998-05
Sgt Cliff Biddlestone	1939-46
Sig John Stevens	1941-46
Sig Darren Taylor	1992-97
Sig Mark Plunkett	1992-97
SSgt Brian Slavin	1960-85
LCpl Gordon Bland	1978-84
Cpl John Harris	1979-90
Sgt John Payne	1974-04
Cpl Malcolm Nicholson	1960-62
WO1 Richard Taylor	1972-95
Pte Liz Friend	1965-66
Cpl Graham Brown	1979-94
Sgt Pete Stidwell	1983-05
Sig Gary Edwards	1983-96
SSgt Mark Sala	1981-05
Sgt John O'Shea	1981-91
SSgt Tim Pellett	1983-date
Cpl Les Grabowski	1964-87
LCpl Martin Villiers	1986-91
Sgt Geoff Hunter	1972-92
LCpl Gary Pritchard	1983-96
Sgt Anthony Tranter	1988-01
WO2 Garry Wilson	1975-98
Maj Ray Briant	1956-89
LCpl Bob Bennett	1939-46
Dvr Peter Yates	1955-57
Sgt Martin Hazard	1991-05
Capt Rebecca Knightly-Brown	1998-05
Maj Tom Dean	1970-05
Col Martin Stretch	1970-05
SSgt Ivor Taylor	1981-05
Capt Troy Phillips	1981-05
Maj Ken Graham	1966-05
Lt Col Kim Parsons	1968-05
Sgt John Willis-Fisher	1972-96
WO2 Michael Mutlow	1963-86
LCpl Brendan Wilkes	1997-05

Cpl Rae Stewart	1966-70
Cpl Michael Greenaway	1955-58
Sig Kevin (Taff) Harvey	1967-76
WO2 Martin Stringer	1972-96
SSgt Frank Connor	1960-82
WO2 Trevor Potter	1972-93
SSgt Wes Wesseldine	1989-date
Maj Chris Lewis	1997-date
Cpl Chris Ball	1966-78
Sgt Martin Gear	1973-97
Sig Michael Brown	1988-96
Sig Mark Janson	1992-97
SSgt Anthony Brighton	1954-78
LCpl Sandy Middleton	1951-64
LCpl Roy Young	1969-78
Cpl Bill Buchan	1968-78
Sig Chris Dixon	2002-date
LCpl Barry Jones	1939-46
Sig Reg Woodman	1953-55
Sig Terry Hill	1950-55
Cpl Charles Herwig	1968-85
WO1 Dave James	1981-05
Sgt Tim Hopkins	1978-03
LCpl David Kerr	1992-00
Cpl Tony Ager	1979-89
Sgt Colin Ramsden	1983-date
Cpl Patricia Baker (Trickey)	1963-69
WO2 Colin Parsonage	1966-92
Sig Gordon Dukes	1947-49
LCpl Jack Finch	1942-46
Sgt Richard Lilley	1968-78
Sgt Mick Philpott	1981-05
Cpl Andy Monger	1981-05
Sgt Graeme Keith	1981-05
WO2 Kieron (Bill) Butler	1981-04
WO2 Phil Christie	1975-99
Sig Harold Stead	1945-48
Sig John (Geordie) Langan	1969-75
LCpl Chris Marshall	1996-01
Sig David Gardiner	1968-72
LCpl John Redfern	1960-63
Sig Gordon Clarke	1943-45
Sig Bill Alliss	1939-47
SSgt Brian Lauder	1971-93
Cpl Simon Stewart	1990-01
Sig Ken Bradbury	1939-46
Sgt Dave Watkins	1953-55
LCpl Ronald Ashcroft	1997-02
Sgt David McGreal	1943-55
Cpl Bob Williamson	1966-79
SSgt John Don	1955-84
Sig Jason Hunter	1991-95
LCpl George Walker	1951-55
LCpl Arthur Walters	1952-54
LCpl Stuart Cooper	1980-90
Cpl Paula Marshall	1991-98
Sgt Leslie Hair	1966-88
WO1 Paul McGarry	1984-date
Sgt Huw Jones	1985-date
Sgt Gary Besant	1986-99
WO1 Tony Coleman	1949-73
Sgt Derek Brown	1949-63
SSgt Tony May	1981-04
Sig Chris Lucas	1996-99
Cpl Alec Cave	1945-47
Sgt Mark Pryke	1985-99

DONATIONS

Simon Malik	£10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of **Brig PES Mansergh OBE**	£10.00
Huddersfield Branch RSA	£100.00
Richard Homes	£20.00
Raymond Durn	£5.00
Dave Smith	£5.00
Arthur Henderson	£10.00
Mr EJ Rawlinson	£10.00
Mr D Walker	£10.00
Mrs J Masser, in memory of **Brig PES Mansergh**	£50
Salisbury Branch RSA	£30.00
Alan Boot	£50.00
In memory of **Donald Ellingworth** cheques totalling	£115.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Peter Yates	£10.00
Manchester Branch RSA	£100.00
Middlesbrough Branch RSA	£50.00
Maj John Heard in memory of **Maj John Meehan**	£10.00
In memory of **Maj Arthur Cropp**	£172.45
Mr REG Bates	£25.00
Mr M Wiles, in memory of his father, **Mr R Wiles**	£50.00
56 Div Signals OCA	£50.00
Maj RJ Goddard MBE in memory of **Sgt Eric Sadler**	£30.00
Liverpool Branch RSA	£100.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
3 Div Signals Reunion Club, in memory of **Maj Gen MD Price CB OBE**	£10.00
Mr A R Ayres	£20.00
Willie Cameron	£50.00
East London Branch RSA	£200.00
In memory of **Patrick E S Mansergh**	£50.00
Maj (Retd) W E Lyske, in memory of **Arthur Cropp**	£50.00
Mr R N Rowland	£10.00
Estate of **Lt Col RJ Tyrrell Gray**	£5,000.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

With the festive season behind us, and having endured our annual doldrums period of lethargy and unenthusiasm for all things festive, the Branch was brought into animation by the serving Corps, when the Sqns entertained us in Buller Bks Sgts' Mess, to what in earlier times might have been described as merrymaking or a frolic. This was an excellent evening of great competition between teams, ably organised by the master of ceremonies, and strongly contested by the participants. After a jovial gathering and an excellent buffet, we retired in good spirits having enjoyed great hospitality. **Bob Webb**, who teaches music at the Gordon School, entertained us to a fine musical evening in March. A few years ago, **Bob** gave us an educative demonstration of wind instruments. This occasion could better be described as a musical performance, presenting a varied and most enjoyable programme of music on the instruments in which **Bob** very obviously delights. We have to thank **Joe Fairbaoirn** and the Garrison Mess Committee for the hospitality of their Mess.

Eldelgard Moss gives 'Out!' to some poor wretch at the Bowls event organised by 261 Sig Sqn

Last year when **Neville Lyons** arranged a visit to the Brooklands Motor Museum, it was **Bob Webb** who conducted our tour, so he has had a close association with the Branch, and at the end of the evening, the Chairman, **Noel Moss** presented **Bob** with his badge of Associate Membership, and welcomed him to the Aldershot Branch on our behalf.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Allibone**
Secretary **Phil west**

The first Branch meeting in 2005 was the AGM, at which a new Committee was elected, most of whom having served previously. **Tony Allibone** has taken over as Chairman, bringing much experience to that post, having been a Founder Member of the Branch thirty years ago. The previous Chairman, **Ken Brown** suffered the sad loss off his wife, **Alice** just before Christmas. The Branch is most grateful to him for his work during the last three years, and sympathises with him. **Ken** remains on the Committee as Vice Chairman. In March there was a fish and chip supper, which is always popular. This was well organised by **Michael** and **Ursula Lockyer**. Members seem to be able to obtain special dispensations from their dieticians for this occasion

The new Committee has issued a draft programme for the coming year, including all the most popular events, such as coffee mornings and pub lunches, but also introduces interesting new items, which it is hoped will be well supported. We continue to meet at the Brighton TAC, and membership remains stable, including members of 884 Tp based there, and loyal Members throughout the UK and overseas, but we always extend a warm welcome to new Members

BRISTOL BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Chick Cheetham**
Secretary **Mr Ray Rigg**

Welcome to all RSA Members. Time for an update of the Bristol Branch. We had our Annual Dinner on 7 October 04 again at the BAWA Club. The meal and wine were again excellent and everyone enjoyed themselves. The Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle** and his good lady, **Anne** paid us a visit at our monthly meeting in July and had a very entertaining evening at our new venue.

Due to refurbishment of the TA Centre, we have had to find a different meeting place until the refurbishment is completed. For the benefit of any visitors, our meetings are now held at The Unionist Club, 293 Gloucester Road, Bishopston, Bristol, and will continue to do so until at least March 05.

At our AGM in January the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer were again re-elected unanimously. Although we have not had as many visits this year as previously, we have had a skittles evening, and are planning a visit to the Imperial War Museum or similar venue in the near future. **Colin Vowles,** one of our members has passed on. Our condolences to all his family.

Finally, if anyone wishes to join us or visit us, they are very welcome to do so. We meet on the last Thursday of every month at 19.30hrs. The venue is The Unionist Club, 293 Gloucester Road, Bishopston, Bristol. (corner of Neville Road).

CHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mr DW Bell**
Secretary **Mr V Winder**

The Chester Branch celebrated its 59th Annual Dinner at the Upton Royal British Legion, and as usual, it was very well attended. Principal guests were **Col JD Bromley OBE** and **Lt Col DW Somerville MBE**, CO of 33 Sig Regt. **Maj JD Baldwin TD DL** presided over the evening.

Following an excellent meal, Toasts were made to the Queen, The Princess Royal and The Royal Signals Association. Branch President **Maj Baldwin** gave account of the developments of the year.

Col Bromley reminded the gathering of the importance of Chester during WW2, when Western Command played its part in the war effort. Communication is a vital commodity when hundreds of thousands of lives are at risk. This is where the Royal Signals excelled, by tight radio control, the National Comd System was kept informed right up to the minute.

The Col went on to relate how Signallers are still on duty today, all over the world. Iraq, Afghanistan, The Balkans, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland, The Falkland Islands, and other places. The electronic technology has become so significant that global communication is regular, and a vital part of the deployment of all arms. The evening concluded with a range of entertainment, much to the pleasure of all the guests.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

Our traditional Christmas Lunch was taken by 92 Members at our favourite watering hole, the Marine Hotel at Tankerton, overlooking the Thames Estuary. There would have been even more on parade, were it not for a nasty virus which had laid low a number of us. As ever, the meal was delicious, and as usual, the company and conversation, congenial, with **Marion De Rose** doing her usual thing with a Special Christmas Raffle, making a profit for the Funds of £194.00.

Our Secretary, who was Guest of Honour at the Gillingham Branch of the KVA Dinner reports that the lovely evening culminated in his having to sing for his supper. We trust that the KVA was not subjected to this in a literal sense, as anyone who has had the pleasure of standing alongside **Gen John** in Canterbury Cathedral during hymns, will testify to his lack of musical appreciation, which he compensates for by an increase in volume.

The Branch AGM was held in January, some Committee Members leaving, having done their time, being replaced by other worthies to continue running the affairs of the Branch in the manner to which they had become accustomed. This business being completed, we were entertained to a most interesting talk by **Col Peter Bishop**, late of the Queen's Regt and currently a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent. He spoke of the responsibilities of being in this position and of the Lieutenancy generally, much of which came as a surprise to a most appreciative audience. The usual first class meal supplied by the Marine Hotel rounded off another pleasant day. February saw 20 Members enjoying the artistry of the Russian Ice Stars at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury and came away breathless with appreciation.

The Princes Golf Club in Sandwich was the venue in March for a carvery lunch, and 52 hungry Members joined the queue. This was preceded by **Gen John's** presentation on 'Kent – How satisfied are you with it as a place to live?' There was an amount of debate - not, admittedly, to the standard of The House of Commons, but it created a lot of interest. Raffle? Of course! **Marion De Rose** made a profit of £157-50 for the Branch Funds, part of which pays for the Welfare Member's mileage to Members who have fallen sick or whatever end for stall gifts of comfort to them from the Committee.

And talking of Welfare, **Jack Dienst** is 93 years of age, and an ex-DR who spent six years with 5 Corps during the North African, Sicilian and Italian campaigns. He has recently suffered a heart attack, which prompted the Welfare Member to visit and listen to the re-telling of many war stories from **Jack**. **Jenny Horne** celebrated her husband's elevation to the Committee by going into hospital for a nasty operation, but is now well, and is rumoured to have arranged it so that the Welfare Member should present her with a Potted Plant. She should be so lucky!

And talking of the Committee, the traditional Dining-Out of the Time Expired Members went ahead at the Catering College in Broadstairs, to much chomping, savouring and sampling of the grape, to everyone's enjoyment. In the absence of the Chairman (who was chasing Bedouin ladies in Tunisia), **Donald Crisp** presented each of the Members who took part in the infamous sketch of *It Ain't 'Arf 'Ot Mum* during the Summer BBQ with a suitably inscribed cartoon of the event, and said a few words of appreciation.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

This year our annual formal dinner in March was an extra special event, as it was our Eightieth Anniversary year. More than 150 of us were packed into the Drill Hall for the event, unfortunately, with a reserve list of people hoping that somebody would drop out at the last minute. Hopefully, next year, the unlucky ones will make sure that they order their tickets much earlier.

With such a special Anniversary, we had distinguished guests from RSA HQ: the President and Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and the Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB**, both accompanied by their wives.

One other noteworthy guest was the Membership Secretary, **Peter Cuckow** and his wife. We think the guests all enjoyed the set course meal, but a remark was overheard from the top table: 'If this is the East London Branch, why have they not got Jellied Eels on the menu?' We might be able to arrange this for the October Supper Dance, if the guests wish to return for that.

We had addresses from **Maj Paul Fredericks**, 2IC 36 Sig Regt, who brought us up to date with what was currently happening in the Corps; and the Master of Signals, who told us amongst other things, that while we could trace our roots back to 1925 in Stratford, there had been mention in 1921 of an RSA group in Chingford. We are now looking to see whether we can actually link back to that earlier group, so that we can have our 85th Anniversary next year!

With the speeches over, and everybody retiring to the bar area, designated Committee Members leapt swiftly into action, moving tables and chairs to convert the dining area into a dance floor, with all the precision and timing of a military operation.

The music for the evening was provided by the excellent *Two's Company*, and this duo with an organ and combinations of vocal, saxophone and trumpet played music not quite covering the last 80 years - but near enough. The evening concluded in the in the traditional way, as our Standard Bearer, **Roy Bilby**, paraded off the Standard.

Thanks go to the Entertainments Committee, and in particular, to **Anita Keen**, who briefs everybody involved so they know exactly what they are doing. This included the Master of Signals, who had his instruction to keep his speech to seven minutes!

On 2 April, **Paul Burton**, **Barry Greenwood**, **Alan Turner** and **Ted Head** represented the Branch at the RSA AGM at the Victory Services Club.

One item that effected us directly, was the appointment of our new Area Rep. We are pleased to welcome and renew acquaintance with **Lt Col (Retd) Bill White**, who in a previous existence, was a tech in TM Tp when our Chairman, **Paul Burton**, was TA FofS.

We are now looking forward to a very busy summer, with not only the Blandford Reunion, but also various events and celebrations marking the VE and VJ 60th Anniversaries.

Our up to date list of forthcoming events for the rest of this year and can be found at
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon.

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 Sig Regt, Gordon Road TAC, Ilford at 20.00hrs on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **James Prentice**

The Branch regrets to announce that **Alexander 'Sandy' Glover**, one of the Founder Members, died at the age of 82, on Saturday 26 February 2005. A stalwart member of the Branch, he will be sadly missed. His obituary is published in this issue.

On Saturday 5 March 2005, Branch members visited the Millport Branch of RBL Scotland, on the Isle of Cumbrae, where they were met by **Andy Bryan**, Chairman of that Branch. **Andy** took them by minibus to the site of a Cairn, erected and dedicated to personnel of the three Services, who died and have no known grave. The Cairn will be officially dedicated in May of this year, allowing families who have lost loved ones, a central focal point to pay their respects and tributes. This area and the surrounding mainland, was a trg ground for all three Services in Combined Ops during WW2.

After promenading on the seafront on the clear spring day, our Members were then taken to the beautiful RBLS Club in Millport, where the hosts laid on an excellent High Tea, making the party very welcome. Having met up with some old friends, and making new ones, our Members left in the minibus, to Largs to catch the last ferry to the mainland for the final journey home.

On Sunday 6 March the RBL Scotland held the annual Standard Bearers' competition at Jardine TAC, HQ of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt. The aim is to select the best candidate to carry out duties in the area.

The winner is then entered into the Scottish National Standard Bearers' contest, and the winner of this contest, will carry the National Standard for one year. The contest is open to other Associations. Following an excellent display from all contestants, the RSA Glasgow Branch Standard Bearer, **Bill MacNamara**, was declared the winner of the Association Trophy. Our congratulations to **Bill**.

On Friday 1 April 2005, nine Branch Members attended a 'Jimmy' Dinner, the hosts being 52 Sig Sqn at East Kilbride. Organised by **WO2 Karen Swan**, Chefs **Jackie Main**, **Henry Rodger** and **John McGovern**, prepared the meal, which was enjoyed by all. After the meal there was a race meeting, and punters were informed that the proceeds of the evening were for charity, so they should loosen their purse strings and bet heavily.

After the last race the hall was set up for a Karaoke Night. It was now around 11.40hrs, and with an hour's drive home, it was time to say goodbye. **Karen Swan** thanked us all for coming to support the cause, and informed us that the proceeds from the evening were expected to raise £1,000. This would be split between the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, and to offset some of the expenses towards 52 Sig Sqn's trip to the War Graves sites in Europe, later this year.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mr RPM Taylor**
Secretary **Mr H Ferguson**

During 18-21 March, **John Stott** and this scribe were guests of the Herforder Association at their weekend get-together at the Grand Hotel, Gt Yarmouth. Despite the damp, foggy weather, the weekend went with a swing, with good old-fashioned live entertainment, good food, drink and excellent service from the hotel staff.

We would like to thank their Secretary **Jim Sloane** and all Members whose comradeship made it a very memorable weekend for both of us.

Branch members **Bill Bryning**, **Muriel** and **Terry Hearldon**, have been elected Chair, Deputy Chair and President respectively of MADLEA. We extend our congratulations and good luck in their deliberations.

Eight members of the Branch travelled to London for the RSA AGM in April. As always, the meeting and the hospitality, chaired by **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB**, were spot on; and a bonus for those of us who spent a few days in the Capital, was the lovely weekend weather.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs A Grainge**
Secretary **Mr R Grainge**

On the evening of Saturday 16 April, we held our Annual Dinner night held at the Marton Country Club with 31 members in attendance, including our newest members, **WO1 RSM Paul McGarry** and his wife **Karen**. The proceeding started with a minute's silence for a former Chairman of the branch, **WO1 SVWO John Robinson,** who passed away that very day. A card of condolence was signed by all and sent to his widow, **Rita**.

After an excellent meal, the Secretary, **Dick Grainge** proposed the toast, paid for by the kind generosity of the RSM, WOs and Sgts of 34 Sig Regt, who subsidised the evening to the tune of £100. Our guest and newest member, the RSM of 34 Sig Regt, **WO1(RSM) Paul McGarry** presented Honour Membership Badge and framed Certificate to **Mrs Margaret Dadson**, in recognition of her 16 yrs' hard work in keeping us all in order as our Branch Secretary. This was followed by a quiz, set by our Social Secretary, **Ken Jackson** resulting in a new nickname for the RSM, from now on to be referred to as 'China' as all his answers to the quiz were, you guessed it, 'China'. We now look forward to our AGM on Thursday 27 April, and the pie and pea supper.

One of our members, **LCpl John Grange**, 16 Independent Para Bde, along with a member of the Catterick Branch, **Sig Jeffries** 1 Airborne Bde, were invited by the RBL to attend VE Celebrations in Germany and Holland. They are to spend 3 days in Fallingbostel, and 8 days in the Arnhem area between 1 and 11 May.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Jim Reilly**
Secretary **WO2(YofS) Ian Wolfe**

The Branch AGM produced some changes in Officers. **John Brown** decided to relinquish the chair. The Branch is grateful to him for his contribution to Branch affairs during his term of office. **Jim Reilly** took his place, while **Jack Donaldson** took over the Vice-Chair. **Carol Cameron**, Asst Secretary, also took on the roll of Blandford Organiser. Other offices remain unchanged.

After some discussion at the Branch AGM, it was agreed that our much-used Branch Standard should be replaced, so the Secretary was asked to instigate proceedings with RSA/HQ. Our Standard Bearers, **Billy Dixon** and **Jim Reilly** will be pleased with this decision.

At the RSA AGM in April, the Branch was represented by **Lt Col (Retd) CN Lightfoot** and Secretary **Ian Wolfe**.

As always, we issue an invitation to all serving and ex members of Royal Signals, regular or TAVR to join us at Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month.

NORFOLK BRANCH

Chairman **Mr M Snowling**
Secretary **Mr SR Nobbs**

It is with great sadness that we report the deaths of two stalwarts of the RSA Norfolk Branch.

Mr Donald Ellingworth, 9 May 1920 – 19 January 2005. President of the Norfolk Branch for many years, **Don** joined up in March 1938, and served till the end of the war as a Despatch Rider.

Mr Rex Smythe, 11 February 1933 – 26 November 2004. Service Secretary of the Norfolk Branch, **Rex** joined the Corps at the age of 17 and served for 9 years.

Don and **Rex**, two of life's gentlemen, will be greatly missed by all the Branch members.

The Norfolk Branch of the Royal Signals Association was formed in 1991 and has a strong membership. Our members have enjoyed many outings and events over the years, and we would be pleased to welcome any new members. Our meetings take place on the second Saturday of each month, with the exception of August, when there are no meetings due to vacations. The meeting place is the TA Centre, Aylsham Road, Norwich. Why not come along you can be assured of a warm welcome.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

Our AGM was held in March, when we managed to clear up any outstanding business from 2004, and agree a programme for 2005. Branch Members were delighted that **Maj Gen Bill Macfarlane CB** has agreed to continue as Branch President, and he in turn will continue to keep an eye on the Branch Committee, which was re-elected, unopposed. The faces are still the same, just another year older, especially Treasurer and Branch Membership Secretary, **Alan Foot**, who celebrated a significant birthday (80) in March. Well done, **Alan**.

April 2005 sees the first anniversary of the layingup of our old Branch Standard, and the dedication of our new one. There are no formal celebrations in hand, but Branch Members, or any members of the Corps family, are encouraged to visit the old Standard, in St George's Church, Tilehurst, Reading to pay their respects.

Later in April, we are sending off a small expeditionary force for a foray in the Darlington area, led by our doughty Chairman. They will be disguised as tourists, travelling in a heavily camouflaged charabanc and plan to merge in with the local populace for four or five days, hoping that no one will notice their accents! Back for tea and medals before the end of the month, we look forward to the debrief and photos. Tin hats and buckets of sand will probably be the order of the day.

As for the rest of the Branch Programme this year, this can be found on the Reading Branch section of the RSA website, together with details on how to contact us. If you prefer to use the telephone, then do call our Membership Secretary, **Alan Foot**, on 0118 926 1952. Last but by no means least our congratulations go to Branch member **Brig Tony Very QVRM TD DL** on his appointment as a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Greater London. This obviously reflects, amongst other things, his contribution to the Reserve Forces in general, and the TA in

particular. Well done, **Tony**! In every soldier's knapsack there is a Field Marshal's baton and some of us remember him as a LCpl!

SOUTHAMPTON AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Chairman **Sidney Smith**
Secretary **Mr AAT Dear**

Our Branch AGM was held at our new venue, the Winston Hotel, Archers Road, on 1 March 05 March. Twenty-five members turned up on a cold wintry day and proceeded to make themselves at home in surroundings, which were a little more cramped than what we had been used to. However, it did result in it becoming more friendly, as everyone could talk to everyone else instead of the usual long tables, which isolated groups. The Hotel host made us most welcome, and did everything to make us feel at home. The meals provided were excellent. It was a consensus that this new venue will be a success.

Our President, **Brig Johnny Clinch OBE**, Chairman, **Sidney Smith**, and all officers and Committee were re-elected, with exception of **Norman Davies**, who stood down as Auditor in favour of **Hazel Sidey**. **Claire Littlecott** also stood down as Treasurer, and **Beryl Allinson** was elected to that position. A Skittle Evening took place at the *Ship Inn*, Redbridge, Southampton on Friday 11 March, and included an excellent ploughman's supper. The Branch played the WRAC Assn. In fairness, our Treasurer, **Beryl Allinson,** played for WRAC Assn, of which she is a member, whilst her husband, **Ian**, played for the Branch. The end result was a win of two games to one for the Branch. With their excellent buffet and goodies, we settled back into the routine of monthly meetings with a raffle, and looked forward hungrily to our AGM.

After a relatively uneventful two months, our AGM in March presented an excellent occasion, when **Sheila Ruff** did her stuff as Fish and Chip queen, ably organising this annual feast for the Branch. **Sheila** is not just an arranger of victuals. Mention has never been made of the fact that she is a very active member of the RBL Ladies' Section, and as such, is also a Standard Bearer.

Members the Annual Remembrance Day parade and Service at Winchester Cathedral

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj Retd RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

Having ended the year with our customary Christmas party, when our mammoth raffle is held and the Ladies' Section ensure the Branch is replete with their excellent buffet and goodies, we settled back into the routine of monthly meetings with a raffle, and looked forward hungrily to our AGM. After a relatively uneventful two months, our AGM in March presented an excellent occasion, when **Sheila Ruff** did her stuff as Fish and Chip queen, ably organising this annual feast for the Branch. **Sheila** is not just an arranger of victuals. Mention has never been made of the fact that she is a very active member of the RBL Ladies' Section, and as such, is also a Standard Bearer.

3rd DIVISIONAL SIGNALS REUNION CLUB

Chairman **Col R Bell**
Secretary **Mr CG Spencer**

Some 40 members and guests assembled in the Sgts' Mess, Picton Bks, Bulford for our 53rd Annual Reunion and Lunch. After a splendid meal, Branch President, **Brig Ronnie Stoneham** thanked the CO, **Lt Col David Hudson**, for inviting us to the Regt, and **WO1(RSM) Pete Griffiths**, for allowing us to use the Sgts' Mess. Thanks were also extended to **SSgt Newton** and his staff for our meal, and for generally looking after us so well.

Our Guest of Honour this year was the Regtl Secretary, **Col GN Donaldson OBE**. **Col Neil** said that as everyone talked about the Corps at large and the RSA, he had decided to talk about drains. It appears that because of budgets being imposed, maintenance of MOD estates had been somewhat neglected. Some of the estates had been sold and leased back, but the worry was what would happen when the leases ran out. **Col Neil** went on to say that two new Regts, 18 Sig Regt and 22 Sig Regt were about to be reformed.

Unfortunately, the CO could not be with us this year, and in his place the 2IC, **Maj Rob Gibson**, gave the Annual Shareholders Report. Operationally, it had been a quiet year, and trg continues as usual. However, it was a possibility that elements of the Regt would be off to warmer climes in 2006.

After the lunch and formalities had been concluded, it was time for Members and guests to join Mess Members in the bar for drinks.

MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ANNUAL DINNER

The Dinner Secretary **Maj (Retd) Christopher Reynolds-Jones TD** reports that 47 Sig Sqn hosted the Middlesex Yeomanry Association on Saturday 23 October at their 7th Annual dinner held in Uxbridge.

A total of 65 sat down to a sumptuous meal, cooked by their Master Chief. At the top table the Chairman, **Mr George Key** was joined by the president, **Lt Col** and **Mrs Simon Beazley** (a former CO when the Sqn was a Regt) The Hon Colonel, **Col** and **Mrs Don Grocott TD**, **Col Ted Scarlett**, and the Sqn OC, **Maj Mike Lansdowne TD**. The guest of Honour was the CO of 39 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Adrian Campbell-Black**.

The OCA were joined by serving members of the Sqn. 191 Det ACF cadets provided waiter service, under the watchful eye of acting SSM, **SSgt Cheshire**.

The following day was LAFONE Day and the usual service was held in St Paul's Cathedral.

OTHER STORIES

ARMED FORCES MEMORIAL APPEAL

– by Ron Larby

On 6 April 05, I was privileged to be one of a small group of members of the British Korean Veterans Association to be invited to the Imperial War Museum for the launch of the Appeal for the Armed Forces Memorial. Some 40,000 Service personnel (16,000 of them on active service) have died since WW2, and the Memorial, which will cost £4 million, will be a superb and fitting tribute to their memories. Work is to begin on the site at the National Arboretum, Staffordshire, later this year, and will be completed late 2006.

Amongst the assembled guests were the CGS, **Gen Sir Mike Jackson**, other high-ranking Officers, representatives of ex-Service Assns - and most poignantly, two little girls, with their mothers from the War Widows Association, whose fathers had recently died in Iraq.

At 11.00hrs we were all welcomed by the Chairman of the appeal, **Rear Admiral Sir John Dunt**, who introduced by video, an address by the Patron to the Appeal, **HRH Prince Charles**.

This was followed by a speech by BBC War Correspondent, **John Simpson**, who then chaired the proceedings. Firstly, an image was shown on the screen of the proposed Armed Forces Memorial design, accompanied by the Last Post and a lament by musicians of the Irish Guards. Then, after the Reveille, speeches were made by **Jenny Green**, Chair of the War Widows of Great Britain Association; Falklands Veteran, **Simon Weston**; Architect, **Liam O'Connor**; and **Ivor Caplin** MP, Minister for Veterans Affairs.

We then had an opportunity to view a model of the proposed Memorial, and to chat with other guests. Our BKVA group, which also included former Royal Signals Cipher NCO, **Pat Johnson**, were interviewed by a reporter from the *Daily Express*.

Being a former WW2 evacuee, I took the opportunity after the meeting to visit the *Children at War* exhibition, currently at IWM. It brought back memories of my going from the crowded streets of South London to the wide-open spaces, cliff tops and beaches of North Cornwall - three happy years in 1940-43; but I also remembered all those who were not so fortunate.

All in all, it was a very memorable day for me. If you require any further details on the Memorial Appeal contact:

The Armed Forces Memorial Appeal
First Floor, Zone A
St Georges Court
2-12 Bloomsbury Way
London
WC1A 2SH

FOUR RECOLLECTIONS OF MONTY

– by Col (Retd) Paul Randall MBE TD

It occurs to me that, with passage of time, there are not so many of us left who had met **Monty**.

During my four years with the 8th Army, we had periods of frustration and boredom, but the eighteen months when the future **FM Bernard Montgomery** was with us, were totally exhilarating. We were inspired. As Chief Signalmaster, I saw him many times, but four occasions remain in my memory.

He took command in August 1942, and we were rather disappointed. **Gen 'Straffer' Gott** had been nominated, but was killed in an air crash. **Monty** spoke to us for only some twenty minutes, but he emphasised 'No more retreats', and we believed him. We had become inured to advance and retreat.

Just before El Alamein, I had the duty of visiting his caravan to test his Secraphone. One evening, I knocked timidly on the door, only to be confronted by a nightshirted figure. 'Go away, I am at prayers.' For half an hour I stood in the cold African night, whilst our Commander communicated on a superior channel to ours.

The following year, we were at Taormina after the invasion of Sicily. I was in charge of the Regimental amateur concert party during the pause before we crossed to the Italian mainland. **Monty** was invited as a guest of honour. He made an inspiring speech from the stage, promising victory in Europe, and thanked all the performers.

Finally, he left us at Vasto on the Adriatic. In January 1944 our Regiment provided the loudspeaker equipment, so I was able to get a good seat in the Cinema for his final address. He informed us that he had been appointed Supreme Commander of the British Forces and was leaving for UK. He thanked 8th Army and the Desert Air Force, and said many of us would be with him shortly. Alas, he took the two best Divisions and his top Staff Officers!

Life was never the same, but 1943 was my golden year. I still cherish the handwritten letter from him explaining why he could not come to my farewell party in 1961!

REUNIONS

BEVERLEY EXBOYS' ASSOCIATION REUNION

Our next Reunion will be held on Saturday, 8 October 2005 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Watford.

Contact **Tony Hull**,
Tel: 01202 770261
Email: anthony.hull@ntlworld.com

13 SIGNAL REGIMENT (RADIO)

Did you ever serve with 13 Sig Regt, Birgelen, 1 Wireless Regt, or any of their subunits? If you did, why not join the Birgelen Veterans Association.

It has its own dedicated website www.birgelenvets.org and exists to imbue the family tradition of the Regt. You can apply for membership via the website.

BIRGELEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION 5th ANNUAL REUNION

The 5th annual reunion of the BVA will be held at the Trecarn Hotel, Babbacombe, Torquay from 30 September to 3 October 2005. Members wishing to attend should apply via the website: www.birgelenvets.org or by contacting the Secretary,

Cyril Harding
14 Park Close
Abergavenny
Mons
NP7 5SU

ARMY APPRENTICE SCHOOL HARROGATE 1958

From: **DJ Hambidge**
Editor, *The Harrogate Apprentice*
117 High Street
Gt Houghton
Barnsley
South Yorks
S72 OAZ
Tel: 01226 340257
Email: dhambidge@hotmail.com

It is intended to hold a reunion in 2008 to mark the 5th anniversary of intakes 58A and 58B. All former apprentices from 1958 are invited to register their interest in attending with:

Gordon McInnes
Holly Bank
Crochan Road
Dunoon
Argyll
PA23 7LW.
Tel: 01369 706629

LAST POST

Congdon - Lt Col JN Congdon *Served* 1952/72 *Died* ??/11/04
Edmunds - WO2 JW Edmunds *Served* 1960/84 *Died* 28/04/05
Falvey - Capt AB Falvey *Served* 1939/46 *Died* 16/01/05
Gillison - Sig WG Gillison *Served* 1964/71 *Died* 25/04/05
Higgs - WO2 WE Higgs *Served* 1944/69 *Died* 26/04/05
Judson - Sig WD Judson *Served* 1939/46 *Died* 22/04/05
Morgan - Sig K Morgan *Served* 1950/52 *Died* 03/05/05
Virgin - Capt LV Virgin *Served* 1941/46 *Died* 27/04/05
Wood - Cpl A Wood *Served* 1955/69 *Died* ??/01/05

OBITUARIES

BRIGHT – Sig Thomas Bright (Tom) died on 7 March 2005.

Tom was born in Lewisham on 18 May 1915, attended school in Catford, and then went on to Pitman's College. He was a keen cyclist, and during the early 1930s, was a member of Catford Cycling Club.

Tom was a Signalman with 56 Div Sigs during WW2, and served in North Africa. He was proud of his service years. He married **Dorothy** during the War, and settled in Sanderstead after the War, commuting to London, until he moved to Dees of Croydon, until he retired in 1980.

In 1987 they moved to Westfield, Hastings, where they pursued their hobby of showing their Jack Russell terriers. **Dorothy** died in 1999.

Steve Bland represented the OCA at **Tom's** funeral, at which his coffin was carried from the church to the tune of *Be Gone Dull Care*, the march of the Royal Corps of Signals.

Tom leaves his only daughter, **Margaret Hartley**, who provided this summary.

DAVIS - Maj Bob Davis TD died on 25 February 2005.

Born on 5 January 1953, **Bob** attended Alleynes' School in Dulwich, and having mastered the sciences, went on to read Ophthalmic Optics at City University, London. On graduation, he became a successful Ophthalmic Optician, a Fellow of the Society of Spectacle Makers, and a freeman of the City of London.

In November 1971, **Bob** joined the London UOTC, where he became well known for his ability in Mess rugby, aided by his size and ability to lift enormously heavy weights.

He was also known as a particularly sage and sensible character, to whom his friends could always turn for sound advice.
He was commissioned in 1974, and soon after met and fell for **Val**. They were married in the Chapel at Alleynes' School, **Bob** proudly wearing his uniform.

They set up home in Maidstone, where they have lived ever since, with **Bob** becoming a Partner with Rawlings Ophthalmic Opticians. He also went on to become a consultant to BAA at Gatwick.

Joining 36 Sig Regt on 21 October 1975, he served with 44 (Cinque Ports) Sig Sqn. Promoted to Capt in 1978, he progressed swiftly, rising to command the Sqn in December 1982, when he was promoted Acting Major after only 7 years. Six years later, he commanded 3 Sqn, 39 Sig Regt for 4 years.

Following this was a spell as Staff Officer in 2 Sig Bde from 1992 to 1995, after which he took command of 41 (Princess Louise's Kensington) Sig Sqn, 31 Sig Regt. **Bob** was appointed 2IC of 31 Sig Regt in 1998, before moving to RSS Blandford in 1999 as SO2 Trg.

Bob was awarded the Territorial Decoration on 23 February 1988, and went on to be awarded two bars. He returned to command 44 Sig Sqn in January 2003, some twenty years after he had originally commanded it.

A keen member and supporter of RFA and the Congress Internationale d'Officiers de Reserve (CIOR), he sat on No 4 Commission (Legal) representing UK, and on CIOR business travelled widely to all the NATO countries of Europe, speaking at the CIOR Summer Congress wherever it was held. During his travels with CIOR, **Bob** was often accompanied by **Val**.

His contribution and dedication to duty was recognised by his being admitted to the Order of Knights Templer, the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem, NATO Priory. **Bob's** work in helping in the hosting of CIOR events in Britain was well received and following the event in Brighton, he was elevated to the rank of Commander in the Order and became CM

Despite all this activity, **Bob** was ever first and foremost a family man. His and **Val's** very happy union went on to produced three sons: **Glyn**, who has just finished his first degree, and twins **Paul** and **Malcolm**, who are now at University. **Bob** was immensely proud of his children, and actively participated in all they were doing. So when **Glyn**, **Paul** and **Malcolm** joined the Scouts...so did **Bob**.

Bob is remembered by all as one of nature's true Gentlemen. Known as an intensely quiet and private person, without a bad word for anyone, **Bob** was a thinker, honest, loyal, supportive and courageous, with a good sense of humour. He had the ability to put everything into a good sense of perspective, never complaining himself, even when cruelly beset by cancer.

He will be sadly missed by all those lucky enough to have met him. His funeral was attended by some 100 military personnel, including **Brig Mike Lithgow** (Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde and representing the SOinC) and **Brig David Hargreaves**, as well as numerous senior officers from the Corps.

Lt Col Roger Buston (SO1 TA J3 HQ 16 Air Asslt Bde), who joined the UOTC with **Bob** and **Maj Stuart Rowson** (OC 44 Sig Sqn) gave moving eulogies.

GLOVER - WO2 Alexander Glover (Sandy) died on 20 February 2005.

It is with regret that the Glasgow Branch announces the death of **Alexander (Sandy) Glover**. After a long illness, he passed away peacefully in St. Margaret's Hospice, Yoker. Members of his family were at his side.

He joined the Corps on 15 October 1942 and was demobbed on 15 October 1947, after seeing service in UK, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Egypt. He joined the TA as a driver on 23 August 1949, and served until 11 June 1968 with 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) attaining the rank of WO2. He worked at one time in a sawmill, but later was employed by the GPO and British Telecom.

Sandy was a Founder Member of the Glasgow Branch, and until his illness, was a very active supporter and regularly attended the Branch meetings.

The Funeral Mass held at St Benedict's Catholic Church, Drumchapel, was conducted by **Rev Fr Anthony Sweeney**. It was attended by over a dozen Glasgow Branch members, who later carried and escorted the coffin into the Dalnotter Crematorium Chapel.

Bill MacNamara paraded the Branch Standard at both venues. **Rev Fr Sweeney** also conducted a short service at the Crematorium. Numerous friends and family filled both the church and the Crematorium chapel.

The coffin was received into the church on Wednesday evening, and lay overnight covered with a Corps coloured drape. **Sandy's** Glengarry and medals were placed on top of the coffin.

Glasgow Branch members extend their deepest sympathy to **Chrissie** his wife of 62 years, his children **Sandy** and wife **Pam**, **Brian** and wife **Pat**, **Catherine** and husband **Archie**, and grandchildren **Lyndsay** and **Jamie**.

LAW - Sgt Jim Law died on 17 September 2004 aged 85.

As a keen motorcyclist, **Jim Law** joined the City of London Signals in 1935 in response to an advertisement for recruits to be despatch riders (in those days you had to provide your own bike). He became a member of the Regimental Motorcycle Display Team, and participated in nearly 70 performances in 3 years, including the Royal Tournament in 1937 – the first time a TA unit had had that honour. They were the first motorcycle team to be televised, and mounted the first motorcycle guard of honour when **HRH The Duke of Gloucester** visited the Tournament. **Jim** was called up as a despatch rider in 1939, but re-mustered as a fitter in 1942. During WW2, he served with 56th (London) Inf Div (the Black Cats), in 8th Army at the battle of Enfidaville, the beach landing at Salerno in 1943, the Anzio Bridgehead, and in the rest of the Italian campaign to Venice, and on to Trieste after the German surrender. He left the Army in 1946, and was one of the founding members of 56 Div Sigs Old Comrades' Association.

He was charged by the then **Capt Jack Angel** to keep the despatch riders together, which he did right up to the end by various means, especially lunches and annual Ladies' Nights in Eastbourne. The Team also gave displays at various venues, including Catterick and Blandford, over the years, earning a lot for charity. He appeared on TV in **Roy Castle's** *Record Breakers* after entering the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest motorcycle display team ever. They also appeared in a TV commercial for Cadbury's *Whisper* chocolate bars, and **Jim** ensured that *Whispers* were part of the menu at the following Ladies' Night. But possibly their greatest achievement (and it was at **Jim's** instigation), was for 10 of them to appear again at the Royal Tournament in 1987, with the active support of the late **Lt Col Phil Spooner**, commander of The White Helmets, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their first performance. They were known as 'The Magnificent Old Men on their Ancient Machines.' After the performance, **Jim** was presented to **HM the Queen Mother**. They appeared again in 1990, 1993 and 1996.

Jim was active on the Committee of the 56 Div Sigs OCA, and at one Annual Dinner, was presented with a Special Award by the Master of Signals in recognition of his work with the despatch riders. **Jim** was also an active member of the Eastbourne Branch of the RSA, and was a well known character in his home town of Eastbourne, involving himself in many other activities, including the sailing club, fishermen's club and delivering meals on wheels until well into his 70s.

His funeral took place at Eastbourne on 30 September, and thanks go to the bugler, **Musn Lee Knott**, from Blandford, and the Standard Bearer, **Brian Pettitt**, from the Eastbourne Branch, who contributed to a well-attended and moving service.

Jim leaves a widow, **Grace**, a son **John**, daughter **Christine**, 5 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

McDONOUGH – Sig Daniel Robert McDonough (Danny) died on 05 March 2005.

230 Sig Sqn said their final good-byes to **Danny McDonough** after he passed away on 05 March 2005 following a tragic road traffic accident.

Having finished his basic training, **Danny** joined 16 Sig Regt on 13 March 2004, and was posted to TN 015, 230 Sig Sqn in June 2004. The same month, he married **Gill**.

A devoted husband and father, **Danny**, just 21 yrs old, had proven himself to be a real character in the Tp, and was certain to have had a promising military career ahead of him. A natural volunteer, he was never one to shy away from responsibility, and his cheerful smile along with his easy manner, made him a popular member of the Tp.

A military funeral was held for **Sig McDonough** at St Clemence Church, in his hometown of Rochdale, and was attended by many of his close friends and family. Our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy go out to his family, especially his wife, **Gill** and son, **Kieran**. Needless to say, **Danny** will be sorely missed.

SIZELAND – WO2 RG Sizeland (Dick) died on 15 April 2005.

Richard Sizeland was born in 1934, and enlisted in Royal Signals on 17 March 1952. After trg at Catterick, he qualified as a Lineman Cable Jointer.

Apart from a spell as Sgt Instructor at RSS Catterick, **Dick** served with Air Formation Signals for the whole of his 23 years' service. This took him to Germany, Cyprus, and Hong Kong. His last appointment was a SSM HQ Sqn 21 Sig Regt (AS) in Vildenrath, from where he retired in April 1974.

On retirement, he joined TSB (before Lloyds), retiring in 1995. Unfortunately, he was to suffer ill health all his retirement.

To all who knew him, **Dick** was a Corps man through and through. He died as he lived, with honour, courage and dignity – a true Soldier. He is survived by his wife, **Zena**, and children, **Lillian**, **Margaret**, and **Bob**.

TURNER – Col KE Turner MBE (Keith) died on 25 December 2004.

At the age of sixteen, **Keith Turner** had decided to follow his father in a military career and, at his own initiative and in the face of intense competition, he was selected to attend Welbeck, an Army sixth form boarding school for potential officers. From there, he went on to Sandhurst and never looked back.

Everything in his life had to be just right - neat, tidy and properly organised. This applied particularly to his personal appearance. He was only 5'7" tall, but was always immaculately dressed. Even off duty, he looked like a proper officer. The neatly tied cravat and blazer gave him the sort of appearance that many others aspired to, but never did.

Early in his career during short tour in Nepal, he developed a very strong affinity with the Gurkhas. He was about the same height as a Gurkha, which must have helped, and he retained the ability to speak Gurkhali throughout his life, using it fluently whenever he had the opportunity.

After attending Staff College, he held a staff appointment in Germany in the mid 1970s, after which, he commanded a Sqn in Northern Ireland, when the troubles were at their height. He was awarded the MBE for his outstanding leadership and superb organising ability in these extremely difficult circumstances. Further successful staff appointments led, in 1982, to command of the Junior Soldier Trg Regt in Ouston, a bleak and desolate former airfield in Northumbria. His achievements there and in later appointments, led to promotion to full Colonel.

His last job in the Army was in a technical appointment in MOD, where he was part of a large tri-service team involved in planning future CIS. **Keith** was not a particularly technical person and it was a tough job, which tested his determination to the limit, but inevitably his patient, diplomatic manner earned him the respect of his Naval and Air Force colleagues. On a visit to Corsham, he broke off from a deep and highly technical discussion, and was later found talking in Gurkhali to a Gurkha soldier. When asked what he was doing, he said 'It was nice to hear something I can understand.'

ADVERTISEMENTS

THE LIBERTY OF SWANAGE

11 Signal Regiment will receive the Liberty of Swanage at midday on Saturday 9 July 2005 in recognition of the support given to Swanage and its wider community since 1984.

11 Signal Regiment regularly host HQ UK LAND authorised EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT, supporting telecom and other general tasks at the award winning **Swanage Railway**

Participation in the exercise, on one of the UK's premier Heritage Railways, is open to any unit in the British Army. Further details from **Frank Roberts** on 07703 566941

The Mercury Group is a supporting group, bringing together former participants. For general information and photographs of past exercises, visit www.mercurygroup.org.uk

SERVICE TO COMMEMORATE THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO

On Sunday, 2 September 1945, an 'Instrument of Surrender' was signed aboard *USS Missouri* moored in Tokyo Bay. This act marked the formal end to hostilities, and will be commemorated by a morning Service at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, just north of Lichfield, in Staffordshire on Sunday, 4 September 2005.

19th Signal Regiment Association is hosting this Service, and members of RSA Branches in the area have been invited to attend. The service will be an occasion for Branch Standards to be paraded, and for wreaths to be laid. A buffet lunch will be available for those who wish to linger after the Service.

All serving or retired members of the Corps who live in the area, together with their spouses or partners and adult children, are cordially invited to join us.

For more details contact me at:

'Shipton'
The HollowChild Okeford
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 8EX
Tel: 01258860647

Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward, Chairman, 19th Signal Regiment Association

WANTED

WELBECK COLLEGE PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORABILIA

Old Welbexians will know that the College, opened in 1953, closes at the end of the Summer Term 2005. The College will reopen as Welbeck, The Defence Sixth Form College for the start of the Winter Term 2005 at its new site at Woodhouse near Loughborough.

We are keen to enhance the existing archival photographic material of the old College, whether depicting buildings, external or internal, major functions and sporting events, together with academic and social life that has a backdrop of a building infrastructure.

Captions with dates on a separate paper are requested in order to maintain an accurate record in chronological order.

Material should be sent to:
SO2 Welbeck
Defence Technical Officer and Engineer Entry Scheme
College of Management and Technology
Shrivenham
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN6 8LA

Thank you.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB YACHT CHARTER

The RSYC has two yachts in UK available for charter at very competitive rates to Royal Signals members and their families.

Skywave is an Elan 333, quick, but easy to sail; high specification, including electronic chart plotter. Sleeps 6. Daily charter rate, £100 per day.

Petasus is a Victoria 34, a very forgiving boat with a good specification, including a fridge and furling headsails. Sleeps 7. Daily charter rate, £90 per day.

Both UK boats are based in Gosport at Hornet Sailing Club (same location as JSASTC), with easy access to the Solent. The yachts are maintained to the harmonised code of practice, and all safety equipment is provided. Full breathable foul weather clothing is available for hire. The minimum qualification required to skipper is RYA Day Skipper.

For further details visit the RSYC website at www.rsignalsyc.info. UK Yacht availability can be found on the Internet at uk.calendar.yahoo.com/charles.roberts6@btopenworld.com. Bookings for *Skywave* and *Petasus* can be made by email through the Yacht Manager (UK) at rsicisyc@tiscali.co.uk or by phone on 023 92765668.

EXERCISE MERCURY CHALLENGE

Mercury Challenge 2006 is a Round the World sailing exped, taking place from September 06 to June 07. The race starts from the United Kingdom, and will sail from West to East, visiting some of the most spectacular ports in the world, and rounding both the Cape of Good hope and Cape Horn. It will also take in the Sydney to Hobart Race 2006.

The Royal Signals Yacht Club will use a Challenge 67 provided by Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre, and will require a crew of 14 for each of the legs of the exped. We are looking for volunteers to crew these legs. This will involve a total of 50 - 70 soldiers taking part. Although previous sailing experience would be an advantage, novices can apply. Comprehensive training will be given.

The training programme is anticipated to cover the following:

Sea survival training
Heavy weather sailing
Storm sails
Safety equipment (Care and Use)
Boat maintenance
Damage control and repair
Man overboard prevention and recovery
Assistance to other craft
First Aid
SAR organisations and methods
Weather forecasting
Fire precautions and fire fighting.
Communications equipment
Flares and EPIRB

Once the exped starts, the crew will change over at the end of each major leg. The approximate dates of the legs are:-

Solent-Canaries	1,700 NM	September 06
Canaries-Cape Town	4,300 NM	September/October 06
Cape Town-Perth	4,700 NM	October/November 06
Perth-Sydney	2,000 NM	November/December 06
Sydney-Hobart	1,000 NM	December 06/January 07
Hobart-Wellington	1,000 NM	January/February 07
Wellington-Brazil	5,800 NM	February/April 07
Brazil-Caribbean	4,500 NM	April/May 07
Caribbean-Solent	3,500 NM	May/June 07

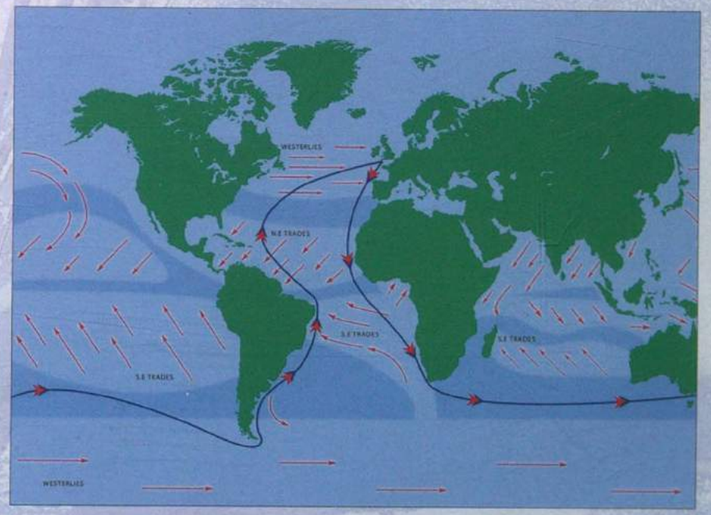
The event will cover every type of climate there is, from the lack of wind and stifling heat of the doldrums, to the 70ft waves and ice of Southern Ocean. Do you think you could be a candidate for taking part? Here are some of the qualities we will be looking for:-

Determination
The ability to stay focused for a long period
Willingness to put others before yourself
Ability to carry on when others would give up
A sense of adventure
Stamina
A good team worker

If you are interested, contact:

Maj Charles Roberts
SO2 Trg Policy
HQ DCCIS
Harrogate Building
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
DT11 8RH

Tel: Mil: 94371 3172
Civil: 01258 481172
Mobile: 07976 387250
Email: charles.roberts@orange.net



THE Wire

August 2005

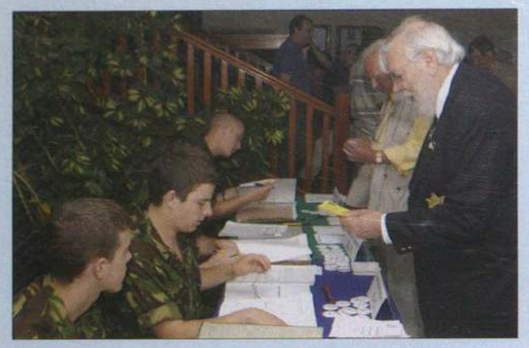
The Royal Corps of Signals

ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION REUNION WEEKEND 25-26 JUNE

Despite rain elsewhere, the weather in Blandford was kind for the RSA Reunion Weekend. And there was a good turnout.

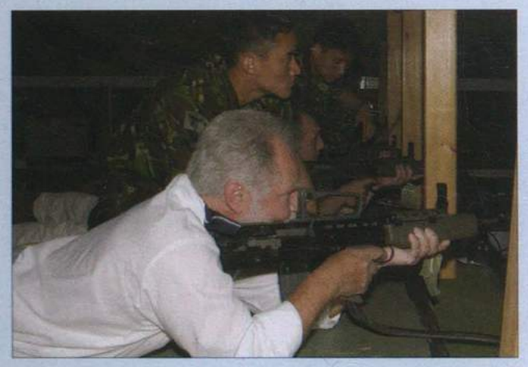
As usual, we had the Princess Royal Parade by 11 Sig Regt on the Saturday morning, followed by a few beers and lunch in the All Ranks Mess. In the afternoon, the weather held for impressive displays on Hawke Square by the Corps Band, the Corps Northern Band, the Corps Pipes and Drums, The Corps Parachute Team and the White Helmets. To mark the 60th Anniversary of VE/VJ Day, there was a special March Past of WW2 veterans. Elsewhere in the Camp were displays of current comms equipt, including BOWMAN, laid on by RSS, and the Small Arms Training (SAT) range attracted a few who wanted to try out the SA80. The day concluded with entertainment in the Sgts' Mess.

Sunday brought brighter, but slightly windy weather for the Drumhead Church Parade on Hawke Square, followed by the Retired Corps March Past.



Saturday. Young soldiers from 11 Sig Regt man the Registration Desk

Saturday. The Master of Signals presents Mrs Christine Doe of Coventry Branch with the Standard Bearer's Award



Saturday. The SAT range was popular with visitors

Sunday. The Master of Signals joins some of the ladies before the Church Parade

Saturday. WO2 Swanston entertains RSA members and families in the ORs' Mess

Sunday. There was a mechanised element in the Retired Corps March Past

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Established in 1920

The Wire

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Please refer to *Guidelines for Contributors*.

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Editor Maj (Retd) BL Redshaw
Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER

A Lot of Silverware to Polish

The Corps shooting contingent did particularly well at Bisley this year. Some 45 shooters (including 17 from QG Signals) from 7 units brought home more trophies than ever. Here are some of the competitors with some of the silverware.

BACK COVER

And the Bike Jumped Over the Band...

During the Corps Band's performance at the RSA Reunion Weekend in June, the White Helmets gave everyone (including the Band) a big surprise by coming on early and jumping over the Band.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

SIGNALLER PRESENTS BRIGADIER WITH OPERATIONAL MEDAL

In a rare event, a Signaller presented a Brigadier with an operational medal. With no one senior to present Comd DCCIS, **Brig John Terrington**, with his Iraq Medal, it was decided that the youngest soldier in Blandford should do the honours. Accordingly, this pleasant duty fell to **Sig Keiron Price** of 1 (Ouston) Sqn, 11 Sig Regt, and on 7 April 05, in front of the whole Regt, he did it in style.

'...quite a daunting task,' **Sig Price** remarked. 'I now look forward to partaking in my own first operational tour...' Read 11 Sig Regt's report on Page 246.

BOWMAN IS NOW OPERATIONAL

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) proudly report that BOWMAN is now operational in Iraq. It has taken the Sqn, and a contingent from 10 Sig Regt, a lot of hard work to get it up and running, and the task is still ongoing. At the time of reporting, they have secure VHF and HF voice down to section level within one of the BGs; the others will soon follow. The provision of Situation Awareness to logistics convoys also gives a marked capability enhancement, particularly in a theatre such as Iraq.

Their report on Page 275 also gives an excellent account of the extent of the Sqn's activities in Iraq.

ROYAL SIGNALS INVOLVED WITH ARMY'S LATEST ASSET

Not another BOWMAN story; this one's about helicopters. EAGLE'S STRIKE saw 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn heavily involved in ex to prove the Apache Attack Helicopter's capability. The scenario saw the Bde fight a battle from Cornwall, driving east through Somerset to a final Air Assault attack on Imber Village. Moving quickly with manpack comms kit, 216 Sqn contributed to the success of the ex. Their story is on Page 302.

LANYARD TROPHY

With 31 teams entering, this year's event was the biggest so far; and 6 of the teams were female. Unfortunately, the unusually hot weather took its toll, with some 13 teams not making it. But those who failed to finish this year are determined to do better next year. As well as Unit reports, a full report on the event appears on Page 289.

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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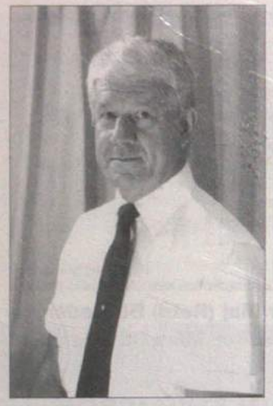


EDITORIAL

It doesn't seem so very long ago when a very old neighbour of mine was celebrating the 60th anniversary of the end of *his* war, the Great War – the so-called *War to End All Wars*. In that year, 1978, I was amazed at how many old soldiers from that conflict were still around. Now, suddenly it's the 60th anniversary of WW2, and again, hundreds of veterans appear, wearing WW2 medals. It was good to see such a large contingent of these parading during the RSA Reunion in June; and it was also good to see the young soldiers of 11 Sig Regt so interested in the stories the veterans had to tell about WW2 when they met up in the All Ranks Mess on the Saturday. As reported in this issue, during recent weeks, many Royal Signals Units and RSA Branches have been involved in the many Civic events around the country to commemorate the occasion. No doubt, there will be more during the rest of the year.

On the wider stage, it was really impressive on Sunday 10 July, to see such a huge crowd turn out in The Mall to join in the Commemoration event there, despite the terrible event on the previous Thursday. I know that many Corps people, both Serving and Retired went up to London to join them.

The Lanyard Trophy is now in its 26th year. With 31 teams entering, this year's event was the biggest so far; and it was good to note the increasing number of female teams taking part. Unfortunately, the unusually hot weather took its toll, with some 13 teams not making it. But, as reported in Unit contributions, those who failed to finish are determined to do better next year. So the Lanyard Trophy looks like getting even bigger.

Whilst on the subject of achievements, the Corps has put in excellent performances in Football and Shooting and this year. As reported on page 318, we have again lifted the Massey Trophy; whilst the front cover and the piece on page 320 tell of the massive amount of silverware we have brought back from Bisley. As with the Lanyard Trophy, all of these successes sometimes overlook the hard work and long hours of training that both the successful and not so successful put in. We shouldn't forget them.

It is not often that I get the chance to report on the formation of a new Regt. In this issue, we have a piece on the new 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt. But it was not an easy article to write. As can be understood, the very nature of their role limits what can be published about this Unit. On the other hand, they need recruits from the rest of the Serving Corps. I spent some time with the Unit, and with their help and guidance, I have managed to produce a story that should give anyone interested in joining them enough knowledge to take the first step. And as with the story we did on 14 Sig Regt (EW), this story also helps the rest of the Corps to know just a little bit more about another unusual Regt, one with a vital role.

It is rewarding to see such good articles now coming in from Units and RSA Branches. More Units are now focussing on their achievements, rather than domestic issues (which are generally more appropriate for Regt or Sqn newsletters). Some Units now only submit when they have something to say, rather than always wanting to appear, regardless. It is also refreshing to see so many stories now written by junior ranks. This in turn encourages more junior ranks to read the magazine. The photographs are improving too. It is good to see more action shots, rather than pictures of large posed groups of troops. The one in the Inter-Corps Hockey piece on page 314 is particularly good. Do keep it up, and remember, if you need any assistance or advice on writing or use of photos, I am here to help. You can also find our Guidance Notes on the Corps website.

Finally, I have been greatly touched by the number of people who have phoned, emailed or written to me with kind words since I announced in the last issue that I would be leaving in February 2006. Thank you all. The RSA Reunion Weekend really brought it home to me how much I am going to miss when I leave this job, and I know I shall be more and more conscious of this as the year goes on. I can see myself returning from time to time. But now the search is on for someone to take over from me, and I am just as concerned as everyone else that we get the right person. We have advertised the job on page 327 of this issue, and also in six other Military publications. So anyone who considers that they have the skills to do this job is invited to call in. There must be someone out there!

BOOK REVIEWS

EDUCATING DADDY

Wouldn't it be great if all fathers came with an instruction handbook? There is a wealth of parenting books for Mums, but precious few are written specifically for Dads. So it is timely to see a welcome addition to the growing genre of parenting books that is aimed specifically at current and prospective fathers. *Educating Daddy* by **Ian Foxley** is a pseudo-textbook, released from an imaginary educational institution, Daddy's College, to bring paternal training curriculum to a wider audience.

In order to induce Dads to read it of their own volition, it maintains a light look at the serious stuff, illustrated by amusing cartoons, and incorporates tutorials that lead Dads sequentially through the growth stages of their offspring, dealing with the necessary issues as they arise. **Foxley** does not shirk the awkward questions that most fathers are inevitably faced with, such as: sex after children; how to stay friends with Mummy, and how to deal with the question: 'Can my boyfriend sleep in my room?' Delightfully, **Foxley** has remembered that Mum is worthy of a chapter of her own and many men would do well to learn this section by heart.

The book concludes with a Summary Worksheet and Final Scorecard for Mums, who, as the appropriate local Chief Examiner, can monitor the progress of her particular paternity student. Successful students may also be issued with a Graduation Certificate, which is also usefully included at the back of the book.

A website, www.educatingdaddy.com, is also under construction to provide a focus on issues of mutual concern, and to promote both the concept of Daddy's College and grow the idea of presentations and seminars on active fatherhood across the nation. Sales of the book will go to support the work of the *Make a Wish Foundation*, a charity that brings joy to terminally ill children by trying to fulfil their deepest wish. As **Foxley** says: 'Your children will never learn about charity if they don't see you practise it. The *Make a Wish Foundation* reaches out and touches children from 3-18 in a real and positive way.'

Foxley's qualifications for writing such a book stem from his own childhood as one of seven siblings, his own fatherhood of two teenagers (one boy, one girl) and a 7-year-old tweenie, his work experience as a trainer and manager, and his experiences as a rugby referee and coach of Mini and Junior rugby teams.

The catalyst for the book was a **Foxley's** own 6fl year old, **Nicholas**, who kept asking awkward questions such as: 'Why is the sky blue?' 'Where does God live?' and 'What happens when things die?' More detailed research showed a gap in the market place for readable parenting books directed at ordinary fathers written by a normal UK-based author. It is targeted specifically at Dads, via their wives, mothers and children. Whilst it has a number of serious messages likely to stimulate and amuse the intelligent male mind, the female reader should also find it an invaluable prompt for the main man in her family life - and thus a direct benefit for her and their children as well.

Educating Daddy by **Ian Foxley** is published by Bentwyck Henry on 14 June 2005. ISBN 1-904538-12-6.

Editor's Note: The author is a retired Royal Signals officer, having commanded 216 Sig Sqn when it was in Aldershot, and 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt in Bulford and Bosnia.

YOUR ONE DAY'S PAY - WHAT HAPPENED TO IT IN 2004

INTRODUCTION

The One Day's Pay Scheme is the main source of income for Corps Funds. It is very encouraging that in excess of 90% of the Corps make 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 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 2004.

INCOME

The total income for the year was £963K. The main source of income was the subscriptions from Officers' and Soldiers' (£619K). 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 (£170K).

Income from our investments amounted to £133K, loan repayments £17K, and donations account for the final £24K. All donations and legacies, unless the terms of the Will state otherwise, are allocated to the Association Fund for reinvestment 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 £293K, or 31% of total income, has been spent on benevolence in support of both the Serving and Retired Corps. This includes a grant of £34K 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 £126K. The Royal Signals Institution and Heritage costs totalled £50K, which includes 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 with £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 also received a subsidy of £6K each.

The Games Club authorised expenditure of £66K in support of Corps Sport, and the Royal Signals Yacht Club received £11K. *The WIRE* was subsidised by £26K.

Capital Grants of £11K were approved by the Heritage Committee for the purchase of Corps Paintings and Silver. £20K and £16K respectively have been set aside in support of the White Helmets and Royal Signals Yacht Club for future capital replacement programmes.

The funds allocated £45K to Corps Entertainment, including such occasions as Royal Visits to Units and the Annual Reunion of the Royal Signals Association.

Further financial support of £105K was made to the Serving Corps, and is summarised as Note 1 in the table below. This includes £25K for Adventure Training, and Grants to the Royal Signals Museum, and the Royal Signals Display Team of £12K and £5K respectively.

SUMMARY

The One Day's Pay Scheme continues to be extremely well supported by the Corps, and RHQ 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 2004 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 Civ 01258 482086, Mil 94371 2086.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND 2004

Where did the money come from?

INCOME	£k		%
Soldiers' Subscriptions	240		44
Soldiers' Gift Aid	115		12
Officers' Subscriptions	199		21
Officers' Gift Aid	55		6
Investments	72	61	14
Donations	24		2
Loan Repayments	17		1
	£963K		

Note: The Association is shown in shaded areas

How was the money spent? (All figures are in thousands)

EXPENDITURE	£k		%
Association, Welfare and Benevolence	256		27
Association Grants (Army Benevolent Fund etc.)	37		4
Salaries	55	26	8
Running Expenses	28	17	4
Institution	40		4
Heritage	10		1
Corps Music	23		2
Sports	77		8
Wire Subsidy	26		3
Capital Grants	47		5
Entertainment	9	36	5
Other (Note1)	105		11
Investment or Carried Forward	171		18
	£963K		

Note1:	£K
Adventure Training	25
Grants	27
Recruiting	39
HQ Officers' Mess	10
HQ Sergeants' Mess	4

AWARD OF THE UNITED STATES BRONZE STAR - WO2 LJ MASON

WO2 Lee James Mason has been awarded the US Bronze Star for exceptional meritorious service while serving as the ECM Adviser/Supervisor in support of OP IRAQI FREEDOM 2 (the US op in parallel to UK's OP TELIC). **WO2 Mason's** outstanding performance and dedication to duty were critical to the success of EOD disposal conducted by his cell.

His efforts contributed significantly to the overall success of the global war on terrorism. His dedication and commitment reflect distinct credit upon himself, 63 Ordnance Bn (EOD), Multi-National Forces Iraq and the United States Army.

From 6 February to 7 June 04, **WO2 Mason** served as ECM Adviser/Supervisor for the Combined Explosives Exploitation Cell (CEXC) in support of OP IRAQI FREEDOM 2. In this role, he was responsible for overseeing the detecting and making safe of all IEDs in theatre. During the initial phase of the development of CEXC, **WO2 Mason** ensured that all data from dealing with IEDs were rapidly integrated into the developing procedures for dealing with them, so that all EOD techs in theatre were effectively trained and kept up to date with the changing methods used by those who devised them. This led not only to enhancing the EOD Teams capability, it also saved lives and prevented serious injury.

WO2 Mason's work involved long and dangerous hours dissecting IEDs in a specialised laboratory, and devising methods safely to manage, or prevent their detonation. This was followed by more long hours rapidly disseminating vital information to all EOD Teams in theatre.

In two instances, **WO2 Mason** immediately recognised that insurgents were deliberately targeting EOD Techs by using devices that would draw them to what they perceived as a post-blast situation, only to detonate another device as they arrived. His immediate response in getting this information out to all EOD Teams, particularly in Baquabah Province, directly reduced the risk to EOD Techs.

WO2 Mason personally built a complete collection of functioning training aids to replicate every possible IED that might be encountered by six Army EOD Companies, two Navy EOD Dets, and eight USMC EOD Teams operating in their AOR. He was also instrumental in developing TTPs (SOPs) for EOD battle drills. He also replicated IEDs to test countermeasures, so that decisions could be made concerning their deployment.

WO2 Mason preserved the Multi-National Force Commander's combat power by planning, co-ordinating and executing hazardous and difficult CEXC missions. During his time in theatre, **WO2 Mason** successfully dealt with over 350 IEDs that threatened to kill or injure US and Coalition soldiers and Iraqi civilians.

He set the standard for electronic exploitation for CEXC. The model he set up has been continued in CEXC Iraq, and has now been replicated in CEXC Afghanistan.

TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE NUMBER 60

- by 2Lt Z Haines and 2Lt J Bell

TC60 began at RSS Blandford in October 2004 and its 18 members were released into the unsuspecting British (and Kuwaiti) Army in March 2005. The first five months of the Course were pretty intensive, so we all welcomed the chance to get away from Blandford for a week's adventure training and a week on exchange with either the 'École Supérieure et d'Applications des Transmissions' (ESAT) in Rennes (the French equivalent of The Royal School of Signals) or the German Army Signal School and Technical College for Electrical Engineering in Feldafing.

With our eyes slowly un-glazing and our bottoms getting used to the new sensation of not being sat in a lecture theatre, we headed off to the snow-covered Bavarian mountains, which provided the beautiful setting or for EX SLIDE DRAGON. We were accompanied by **Lt Col Dryburgh**, **Maj Stringer**, **Capt Fayers**, **WO2 (SSM) Driver** and **SSgt Brookes**, who attempted to instruct, guide and control our path over the slopes. We arrived at the hospitable and welcoming 'Slide and Glide' Ski chalet and toasted the week ahead, with inevitable and hilarious consequences!

Quite rightly, we were split down into three groups based on skiing ability: the 'Pull It Off' group, who could; the 'Show Off' group, who couldn't; and the 'Fall Off' group, who did. By the end of the second day, only half of the 'Fall Off' group had slithered into the snow plough, and **2Lt Jimmy Bell**, **2Lt Keith Dunwoody** and **2Lt Chris Foggarty** were performing acrobatics in the snow that any one-legged gymnast would have been proud of. The intermediate group inadvertently tackled some off-piste, and **2Lt Simon Whitcher** even managed to look cool when getting on a T-bar lift! **2Lt Billie Bill** and **2Lt Vanessa Freestone** were seen carving up the slopes and dodging the kamikaze Bavarian housewives, with the skill and panache of any James Bond villainess. Despite a snapped leg (**2Lt Zack Haines**) and a bout of Bavarian Killer Flu (**2Lt Claire Mikulla**, who's Bavarian), we all reached the standard of Basic Ski Proficiency, with the Advanced Qualification being picked up by **2Lt Alex Eros**, **Capt Mike Fayers** and **Maj Stringer**.

The French exchange provided a good introduction to the French signals and the way of life for their officers and soldiers - such as shaking hands with everyone every morning, drinking bottles of wine in the canteen at lunch time, and taking out a mortgage to pay for a round of beer in the evening! During the week, there was time for us to visit the impressive monastery at St Michel's Mount, and to sample the culture and nightlife of Rennes. As **2Lt Dave Burnett** will confirm, Salsa is very popular in France! Most importantly, we managed to win the inaugural England Vs France cricket match on the final morning, where **2Lt Alex Hodges** managed to pick up a hatful of wickets 'Freddie Flintoff' style. Despite a certain amount of confusion, the French put on a good show and promised a re-match next year.

The German contingent received a warm welcome from the German Officers, and hit the ground running with an initial briefing regarding the structure, history and future of the German Signal School. Thereafter we were integrated into different 'Inspektions' or Classes, to experience different aspects of the Schools' training programme, from 'Datenverarbeitung' Microsoft Excel class, political discussions, and SATCOM overview - all in German. As you can imagine, it was edge-of-your-seat stuff. Much fun was had by all on Thursday night's cultural visit to Munich, resulting in **2Lt Damien Corcoran** not being up to his usual thrusting self for the 'farewell' breakfast that was hosted by the heads of the Inspektions and Colonel Specht, the Chief Instructor. The cooked breakfast and jovial conversation was the perfect way to end this informative insight into the German Signal School.

Back at Blandford we were dined in at the Corps Guest Night, which was attended by no less than *five* Generals, including the CGS himself; an excellent night was had by all. **2Lt Dave Macklin** of 16 Air Assit HQ and Sig Sqn (216) was awarded Top Student, TC60. He was presented with the Evis Memorial Sword by **Brig M Lithgow CBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde..

The Evis Memorial Sword presented by Brig M Lithgow CBE to 2Lt David Macklin

RESETTLEMENT - A STEP INTO THE UNKNOWN

– by Lt Col (Retd) AF Browne

I think that this is a new venture since I do not recall a previous article in *The WIRE* on the subject of Resettlement. I suspect that the main reason for this is a concern that we may be perceived as encouraging members of the Corps to leave, but nothing can be further from the truth. I will therefore start by saying that, based on my experience as the Corps Resettlement Officer over 8 years, and with the current employment climate in civilian life being delicately balanced, you would be most wise to consider your position carefully before deciding to leave prematurely. There is also a perception amongst some serving personnel that much better money exists in Civvy Street. It is true that some specialist jobs do attract a good salary, but in general terms, the grass is not greener on the civilian side of the fence, as is borne out in the Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA) Annual

Report. However, leaving the Service will come to everyone at some stage - the step into the unknown - and thus a little background I hope will be helpful.

I should start by pointing out that I am not part of the official Services Resettlement Organisation. There continues to be three levels of support in the Army. The First Line is in the unit, either by your Tp/Sqn Comd or the Unit Resettlement Officer/Clerk (preferably at both levels), who should provide initial counselling, especially if you are considering leaving before your full term of service. The Second Line is with the local Individual Education and Resettlement Officer (IERO). At this stage, you will be able to discuss your eligibility for support, and initiate the process of deciding what line of employment you wish to seek.

Following on from this, you can consider any resettlement trg that might be applicable, and whilst further information is available at Third Line, the money to support such trg will come via the IERO. The Third Line is provided by Right Management Consultants and, providing you have completed the requisite number of years' service, you will be eligible for a Career Transition Workshop (CTW) and other support given by them.

The CTW provides advice on a number of relevant topics including CV writing, financial considerations, and many other associated subjects; and I understand that the time spent of the CTW is no longer deducted from your resettlement trg days. Also, as part of the Third Line of support, sub-contracted to Right Management, are the RFEA and the Officers Association (OA), who act as Employment Consultants, and will help you more directly in finding a job.

In truth, it was a letter from the RFEA that provided the stimulus for me to write this article, and I will take a little time to make a few more points about their service. They assist ex Regular men and women who have served a minimum of 3 years in the ranks, or were medically discharged, regardless of time served. The service is extended to those commissioned from the ranks, widow(er)s of eligible spouses who died in service, and spouses of those eligible but who are unable to work on medical grounds. Early Service leavers will be offered a service limited to 'sign posting'.

I know that, in conjunction with other work for the new contract of providing resettlement support with Right Management, the RFEA and the OA intend to move towards an even closer working relationship than they have now. It is also important that you note that, due to their charitable status, in particular the support given by Service charities, you can return to seek their help at any time during your working life.

This brings me to another point. Surprisingly, at present about 25% of eligible Service Leavers do not take advantage of the resettlement service. Whilst this might seem acceptable at the time if you have a job to go to, the realities of civilian life are that you are likely to have to job hunt again, and background knowledge is always helpful. My advice is at least to attend the CTW if you can, and remember the life-long support of the RFEA.

This brings me to my position as Corps Resettlement Officer. I am always at pains to point out that it is only a relatively small part of my overall job as SO2 Staff Support in RHQ Royal Signals. This therefore limits what I can do. The post was first introduced at the time of major Service redundancies in the early 1990s. Then we had a full time officer working from RHQ, and having initiated many good concepts, it has always struck me a worthwhile venture to continue.

My main function is to provide advice, and to act as a go between bringing together the Service Leaver and the prospective employer. Due to the time limitations mentioned, I do this via the *Resettlement Newsletter* that I publish monthly and post on the Internet, via which the job vacancies (Job Snippets) are updated weekly. You can find the *Newsletter* at www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/resettlement.

I do not see leavers face to face but I do speak to those who seek guidance over the phone, which I am pleased to do. I also regularly receive phone calls from companies or agencies looking for ex-Service personnel to fill jobs, the fruits of which then appear in the *Newsletter*, and more often than not, I pass them to the RFEA as well. As a Corps, we are unique in producing this *Newsletter*, although others provide excellent support in different ways.

To return to my earlier point, the step into the unknown of civilian life comes to all Service personnel. With this step, generally speaking, comes advantages and disadvantages, and it always involves difficult personal decisions.

If you ever think that I can help with advice please telephone me (01258 48 2077). I strongly advise that you do make use of all the resettlement facilities that are provided for you. After all, not many employers provide such a comprehensive and free service.

SYSTEM ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN – SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- by Colonel Stuart Macrostie, Divisional Colonel Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps MCM Division.

There would appear to be some rumours and misinformation circulating the Corps on the current situation with the System Engineer Technician trade group and also on its future. The Corps is currently in surplus in this trade group, and this surplus needs to be addressed as a matter of some urgency. However, all is not doom and gloom, and any thought that addressing the surplus will disadvantage all technicians is simply not the case.

The WIRE asked Colonel MCM Division to clarify the situation.

Is it true the Corps no longer needs Technicians, and that the trade is dying?

This is categorically not the case. It is true that, in the CIS world we find ourselves constantly changing to keep abreast of technological developments, and that the Corps correspondingly needs to keep pace to reflect this. The need for high quality Technicians will remain in the future and, although their role is likely to change, the overall viability of the trade remains crucial to the future success of Royal Signals.

What is the current view on how the Technician trade may alter in the future?

The scope and training for every trade is under constant review, to ensure that operational requirements are met as efficiently as possible. In the future, contractors may play an increasing role in the repair or replacement of some equipment items. But for the foreseeable future, Technicians will be required to repair equipment and ancillaries. And increasingly, they will also be expected to maintain information services through software control. Consequently, training for Technicians will continue to be modernised and updated.

How have we got such a surplus of System Engineering Technicians?

There is a combination of factors as to why we have found ourselves in this position. Firstly, the move of trade training from

8 Sig Regt in Catterick to the Royal School of Signals back in 1994, necessitated the suspension of Class 3 Technician training for a period of 2 years. As a result, from 1996 onwards, the number of Technician training places was increased significantly to make up for this fallow period. This increased level was maintained for some time, and coincided with the second significant factor. In the second half of 2000, the civilian communications industry, that had been attracting a significant number of Technicians to leave the Corps, experienced a massive and sudden downturn. As a result, those individuals who may reasonably have been expected to leave, did not. Thirdly, in 1999, the Army changed from a 3-year to a 4-year minimum engagement - a change that kept some soldiers in the Army a year longer than they would otherwise have stayed. And lastly, the recent operational tempo appears to have had a retention effect. As a result of all these factors, as at 1 June 2005, the Corps finds itself with 349 Technicians in surplus.

Why has this surplus not been tackled before?

Up to the last couple of years, Royal Signals has found itself in overall manning deficit, and therefore the need to tackle this issue was not there.

If we have too many Technicians, why don't we just train fewer junior Technicians?

From the point of view of overall numbers, this would appear to be an easy way to solve the problem. However, such a step would lead to other problems. Firstly, it would create a serious imbalance in the age structure of the Technician roster; if you create a black hole in age terms, it would take 22 years to work its way through the system. Secondly, we clearly need to maintain a sufficient number of high quality young Technicians from whom to cultivate, select and then train our future Foremen of Signals. We therefore cannot, and most importantly, will not countenance this blunt and over-simplistic solution.

Why can't the surplus Technicians be offered redundancy?

Whilst the Corps currently has too many Technicians overall, it is not in such a luxurious position for other trades. It would therefore be foolhardy to jettison a pool of highly trained manpower that could be utilised for the reinforcement of those areas that need it. The Information System Engineer and Technical Supply Specialist are two of the trades that may benefit - and there are others. That is why the Corps has not pursued this line.

What is MCM Division's plan for addressing this issue?

Primarily the intent is to hold a Merit Board to place in a merit order those Technicians who have either not shown the potential for Class 1 training, or the necessary inclination for advancement within the Technician Roster. The aim of the Board is to make potential recommendations to the chain of command as to the future employability of each soldier who is boarded. That recommendation may be to continue as a Technician, but it could also be for a Change of Career Employment (CCE) to another trade in Royal Signals, or even a transfer to another cap badge. It should be stressed that applications for voluntary CCE or transfer to another cap badge, are options that are available to any soldier from any trade group, at any stage in their career. However, in the case of those going forward to the Merit Board, the Board may, if so authorised by Director Manning (Army), recommend that some CCEs or transfers are made compulsory.

What should I do if it appears the Technician trade is not offering me the opportunities I thought it would?

Clearly the time is now right for you to act. Via your chain of command, and with the use of your Regional Career Management Officer (RCMO), engage now to find out exactly what your options are to ensure that your personal needs are met. The options are wide, and range from a CCE to another trade within Royal Signals, to transfer to another cap badge. As the Army reorganises in line with the Future Army Structures review, opportunities for different career employment are significant. The process we are about to go through, is designed to benefit Royal Signals, but it is also there to make sure you maximise your own potential.

What are the pay implications for those who CCE or transfer to another cap badge?

Any individual who CCEs or transfers to another cap badge, will be on mark-time rates of pay for a period of 2 years, ensuring that no immediate drop in pay will occur. Dependant on what trade (be it lower or higher rate of pay) an individual finds him or herself in, and what yearly pay rises occur, this will then dictate what happens next. Should the trade be deemed an Operational Pinch Point (OPP), then a payment of £1,500 before tax would be payable for anyone transferring into one of these. More details can be obtained from your RCMO.

What happens next?

Once the results of the Merit Board are known, you will be interviewed by your chain of command and your RCMO. Some units have already engaged their Technician cohort to brief them on what is about to happen, so there should be no surprises for most of you. Rest assured, nothing will happen to anyone without first the individual in question being engaged by their respective chain of command. Only then will this process commence, with potential moves not likely to occur before the start of 2006.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, June 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col RM Crombie	HQ AMD
Col MP Llewellyn	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col NP Metcalfe MBE	AD CBM
Lt Col SJ Richardson	SP POL Pensions
Lt Col JR Tod	SHAPE Staff (BAE)
Maj IFK Bates	JSIO
Maj RM Brown	31 Sig Regt
Maj RJ Farrimond	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj NJ O'Kelly	JOP IT
Maj CSK Paterson	D JT CAP
Maj JM Pease	MCM Div
Maj NM Peet	HQ NI
Maj NH Range	HQ NI
Capt NJ Bartlett	MOD A Block
Capt K Bolam	264 (SAS) Sig Sqn
Capt RW Bott	16 Sig Regt
Capt NR Coatsworth	30 Sig Regt
Capt JWA Docherty	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt LA Fish	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt P Gittins	224 Sig Sqn
Capt PM Hodson	225 Sig Sqn

Capt BK Jeffery ... ... ATR Lichfield
Capt LF McCafferty ... ... 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt MJ Mckenna ... ... 34 Sig Regt
Capt AT Peel ... ... 18 Sig Regt
Capt BKN Robson ... ... 2 Sig Regt
Capt SJ Short ... ... HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt KJ Simmons ... ... 36 Sig Regt
Capt CP Smith ... ... HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Capt JL Squires ... ... 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207)
Capt CJH Wootten ... ... 71 Sig Regt
A/Capt MS Hele ... ... RSS
Lt IA Bangurah ... ... ATR Lichfield
Lt GMT Oosterveen ... ... RSS
Lt N Steetley ... ... 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn

OFFICERS, JULY 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig ND Couch	INFO Stratgov
Brig NC Jackson	JSSU Oakley
Col GA James	International Mil Staff Brussels
Col AN Morphet	Rhine Are Supt Unit
Lt Col MG Billingham	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Lt Col JL Fletcher	Sangcom
Lt Col B Hewitt	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col TD Smith	36 Sig Regt
Lt Col K Whitehead	HQ MND (SE)
Lt Col Wood	DCSA DII EN
A/Lt Col JS Adams	39 Sig Regt
Maj NJ Bateson	DII Convergence - Unicom
Maj MC Brookes	Royal Sig/Int Div
Maj MJ Campbell	OCE HQ Land
Maj IR Dobson	HQ DCSA
Maj AHT Garrett	Batcis IPT 1
Maj PR Griffiths	EC - CCII - HORG
Maj GC Hailstone	Army Foundation College
Maj T Hall	OCE HQ Land
Maj RM Jones	MCM Div
Maj SN Meadowcroft	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj NJ Morris	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj TD Sixsmith	34 Sig Regt
Maj DA Wright	HQ BFFI
A/Maj PJ Day	DCBMA(A) Capability Intergration
A/Maj PA Horton	21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/Maj TJ Keates	2 Sig Regt
Capt JS Balfour	RSS
Capt JC Barber	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Capt GJ Clarke	18 Sig Regt
Capt AC Cox	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Capt MJ Crawford	215 Sig Sqn
Capt CM Dixon	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228)
Capt BY Higgs	30 Sig Regt
Capt A Jenkins	18 Sig Regt
Capt KA Larsen	34 Sig Regt
Capt SM Limbrey	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt MSW Macdonald	2 (NC) Sig Bde
Capt LD Marshall	2 Sig Regt
Capt GG Moody	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt NT Muirhead-Smith ...	16 Sig Regt
Capt BE Norton	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216)
Capt RF Plested	248 (Gurkha) Sig Sqn 21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt FJ Reid	DCBMA(A) Knowledge Environment
Capt DG Richardson	HQ 2 Med Bde
Capt SM Smith	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216)
Capt CR Staples	7 Sig Regt
Capt LE Webster	ATR Lichfield
Lt J Chatman	Army Foundation College
Lt NS Clements	10 Sig Regt
Lt GP Endean	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Lt LS Giddings	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Lt PA Hodgkinson	215 Sig Sqn
Lt IJ Kirk	ATR Lichfield
Lt JC Long	20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Lt RA Moody	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Lt EK Watson	ATR Lichfield

WOs and SNCOs, JUNE 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD DA Mitchell	CIS Sector Mons
A/WO1 RD NR Jennings ...	RSS
A/WO1 RD SE Littlefield ...	HQ NI and15 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD L Spiers	39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO1 (FofS) AR Fletcher ...	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO1 (FofS) PA Leach ...	HQ SOinC(A)
A/WO1 (FofS) SI Meldrum ...	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 (Supvr IS) ST Brown	HQ 1 Sig Bde
WO2 RD LD Balmforth	7 Sig Regt
WO2 RD PT Haughton	38 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 RD NJ Pollitt	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
WO2 RD TJ Ward	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
WO2 RD DP Wilson	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
WO2 FofS JB Harper	71 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 FofS KR Peters	35 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 Supvr IS DP Hepburn	D Def Sy
WO2 Supvr Rad SK Clark ...	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO2 RD DJ Brodie	UOTC Glasgow

A/WO2 RD DP Collins ... ... DCSA DEI and IS
A/WO2 RD TW Ewart ... ... 243 Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD PA Jordan ... ... 11 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD DE Leask ... ... 2 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD MR McMullan ... UOTC Wales
A/WO2 RD GE Middleton ... JSSU Cyprus
A/WO2 RD PJ Mitchell ... ... UOTC Liverpool
A/WO2 RD SE Newman ... 4 CTT
A/WO2 RD AJ Wyatt ... ... 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/WO2 (FofS) PJ Levick ... 7 Sig Regt
A/WO2 (FofS) NJ Mitchell ... DCSA(G)
SSgt (FofS) DW Cook ... ... JSSU Cyprus
SSgt (FofS) M Farnfield ... RSS
SSgt (FofS) CF Usher ... ... HQ SOinC(A)
SSgt RA Ezard ... ... RSS
SSgt ND Howard ... ... 30 Sig Regt
SSgt KN Tweddle ... ... JSSU Cheltenham
SSgt SC Wesseldine ... ... 37 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt BD Botwright ... ... CCU Cyprus
A/SSgt KR Duggan ... ... RSS
A/SSgt DC Gard ... ... RSS
A/SSgt J Hawkesworth ... ... SHAPE
A/SSgt CW Kama ... ... 16 Sig Regt
A/SSgt K Langan ... ... 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/SSgt DM Owen ... ... RSS
A/SSgt SE Reeves ... ... 81 Sig Sqn (V)
A/SSgt NJ Turney ... ... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt CP Alston ... ... RSS
Sgt ME Anderson ... ... 2 Sig Regt
Sgt MP Baldwin ... ... HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt AS Bennet ... ... RSS
Sgt LA Collier ... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
Sgt G Cox ... ... RSS
Sgt C Dowd ... ... RSS
Sgt DJ Foster ... ... RSS
Sgt SG Gibbs ... ... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt R Gleave ... ... 14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt SJ Gray ... ... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt NA Hill ... ... RSS
Sgt SD Hopkins ... ... RSS
Sgt MJ Lynn ... ... 31 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt KM McIlvaney ... ... RSS
Sgt MI McIntosh ... ... 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt SR Middleton ... ... 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt AD Morris ... ... RSS
Sgt ID Robinson ... ... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt SG Rose ... ... 19 Lt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt K Wilcockson ... ... RSS
Sgt MD Williams ... ... SC and IS (Gibraltar)
Sgt G Williams ... ... RSS
Sgt TG Woodall ... ... 34 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt A Charnley ... ... RSS
A/Sgt IMF Danter ... ... RSS
A/Sgt JJ Hardy ... ... RSS
A/Sgt DM Howie ... ... RSS
A/Sgt LA Paul ... ... RSS
A/Sgt NM Roberts ... ... RSS
A/Sgt SD Sanders ... ... DCSA
A/Sgt JP Stewart ... ... RSS
A/Sgt GJ Wooley ... ... RSS

WOs and SNCOs, JULY 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 (FofS) MHK Lingard ...	SHAPE ACE COMMSEC
WO1 (FofS) S Moore	RSS
WO1 (FofS) CJ Raynor	JSSU Cyprus
WO1 (FofS) SP Sharp	LSP Oman
WO1 (Supvr Rad) JW Graham	JSSU Digby
A/WO1 RD JS McGaw	30 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD M Simcock	38 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 RD I Conlan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 RD SJ Crooks	21 Sig Regt (AS)
WO2 RD WM Duggan	JSSU Digby
WO2 RD MR Fitzpatrick	40 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 RD SK Legg	33 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 RD AM Maylett	16 Sig Regt
WO2 RD JS McNeill	AC SPT IPT - AS6
WO2 RD CM Ogg	2 Sig Regt
WO2 (FofS) JK Sutton	DCSA Corsham
WO2 (Supvr Rad) CP Ashworth	JSSU Digby
WO2 (Supvr Rad) AP Ball ...	225 Sig Sqn
WO2 (Supvr Rad) D Butler	JSSU Digby
A/WO2 (RD) PD Batley	10 Sig Regt
A/WO2 (RD) S Cain	DCSA
A/WO2 (RD) DJ McCall	BMM Kuwait
A/WO2 (RD) S Page	CAST (N)
A/WO2 (RD) GA Shuck	224 Sig Sqn
A/WO2 (FofS) DJ Eyes	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
SSgt (FofS) LD Box	CCU Cyprus
SSgt (FofS) ML Ebdon	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt (FofS) J Hatch	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt (FofS) PJ Landregan ...	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt (Supvr Rad) NR Benson	AWC Waddington
SSgt (Supvr Rad) LD Mitchell	JSSU Digby
SSgt CJ Brown	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt AWL Dor	CCU Cyprus
SSgt C Dudley	HQ NI and15 Sig Regt
SSgt RD Fieldhouse	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt A Harvey	33 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FG Lewer	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt JB Love	32 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt SA Marritt	600 Sig Tp
SSgt PJ Nealis	1 MI Bn
SSgt PJ Robinson	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt AW Smith	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt

SSgt BJ Spruce	1 MI Bn
SSgt S Sweeney	AFCO Newcastle
SSgt DJ Thwaite	251 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt (RD) DG Rudd	11 Sig Regt
A/SSgt AV Bedward	16 Air Assit Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/SSgt AM Burnham	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/SSgt CD Deas	225 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt DC Fitton	30 Sig Regt
A/SSgt DJM King	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt AM Robins	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/SSgt M Walton	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt S Wedge	251 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt A Williams	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Sgt (Supvr Rad) MA Booth	921 EOD Sqn
Sgt (Supvr Rad) JJ Hobson	JSSU Digby
Sgt A Carter	40 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt SM Carter	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Sgt SA Cooper	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt TF Dunbar	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt AT Gaw	SHAPE ACE COMMSEC
Sgt GT Gibson	40 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DT Graham	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DP Jenkinson	AFCO Leeds
Sgt RA Johnston	HQ Strikeforce South
Sgt M Lawlor	243 Sig Sqn
Sgt SD Link	AFCO Nottingham
Sgt JD McArthur	DII Convergence - Unicom
Sgt LV McMahon	RSS
Sgt D Mordecai	71 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt JE Morgan	5 Bn REME
Sgt C Nealey	7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt K Oliver	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt AI Piper	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt LJ Punyer	224 Sig Sqn
Sgt JI Roberts	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt SJA Rowley	AFCO Brighton
Sgt DS Rumble	AFV CIS School
Sgt JR Samuel	RSS
Sgt DP Steele	JSSU (FI)
Sgt N Sutton	RSS
Sgt SJ Templeman	RSS
Sgt SJ Upcraft	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt SJ Williamsom	40 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DA Wood	RSS

RETIREMENTS

JUNE 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Ritchie - Capt LG Richie	18 Jun 05
Eaglesham - Capt DT Eaglesham	09 Jun 05

JULY 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Barker - Capt CCF Barker	12 Jul 05
Ferris - Capt NS Ferris	11 Jul 05
Jones - Capt JK Jones	17 Jul 05
Knight - Capt BA Knight	01 Jul 05
Nixon - Maj RG Nixon	18 Jul 05
Parry - Maj IL Parry	01 Jul 05

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

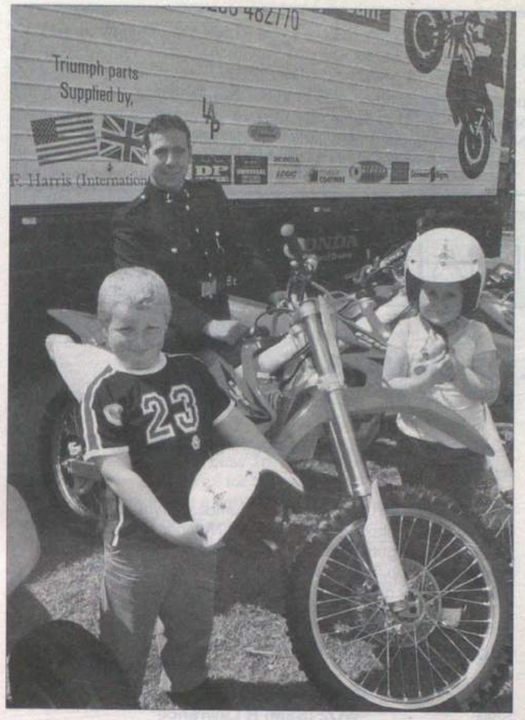
OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Captain **Capt M R Mallett**
Team SNCO **Sgt R Sizeland**

- by LCpl Chip Mooney and LCpl Julie Jones

This month the Team has continued conducting displays around the UK as part of the busy show season. These have included shows at Merseyside, Althorp, Star and Garter (near Bath), Rugeley, Rutland, the Army Benevolent Fund at Blandford Camp, and most recently, the *HMS Sultan* show at Gosport.

The Merseyside Military Show was held over 28/29 May 05 at Walton on the Hill, Merseyside. This Show was aimed at promoting the Army to the public, as well as assisting in the ongoing Army recruitment effort. The 2-Day show also featured a performance by The Red Devils Parachute Display Team. The Star and Garter show was held at the Bath and West show ground. This is one of the biggest shows in the South West, and featured displays by the Musical Ride of The Household Cavalry, the Royal Marines, and Military bands, including a Band from the US Navy. With poor weather conditions and an ever-deteriorating arena surface, the Team were only able to perform a trick show, omitting the fast crossover rides. None the less, the show was still commented on as being excellent!

At the Rutland County Show, the arena was also poor, with only 3 six inch wide ruts for water drainage running the length of the



Sig Sam Bowles entertains some White Helmets wannabees at Merseyside

arena – not the best surface for a fast-moving motorcycle! This could have caused some of the rides and tricks to become more dangerous, but the show went ahead, with the Team putting in another sterling performance with out any glitches.

After several weeks on the road, the Team returned to base to help raise money for the ABF with a display at Blandford Camp. The show went well up until **Cpl Mal Cooper** came off during the jump ride, when his handle bar snapped on landing, but luckily he was unhurt. Unfortunately for him however, it did mean he earned the Black Peak, for coming off of his bike during a public display!

With a successful show at Blandford, the Team moved to Gosport to take part in the build up to the Trafalgar 200th Anniversary celebrations at *HMS Sultan*. Both displays at the show went really well. The highlight of the show was when **Sig Daz Fothergill** and **Cpl Jim Brown** jumped a 32-foot stretched limo. Not a problem for our two car jumpers!

Sig Daz Fothergill makes easy work of the stretched limo

The Team is now looking forward to the arrival of *Fast Bikes* magazine, who have expressed an interest in running an article on the Team. Following this, we are on the road once more, with performances at the Three Counties Showground in Gloucestershire, and a further 5 consecutive shows in Blandford - at St Leonards School, Downlands School, the RSA Reunion at Blandford Camp, and the Blandford 400th celebrations at Larksmead. The White Helmets this month welcomes another 'Junior Wheelie' to its ranks – Baby **Jack Lewis**.

Congratulations to **Cpl Ed Lewis** and his wife, **Mel**, on the birth of their baby son. Also a big Happy Birthday to **Sgt Bob Sizeland**, who celebrated his 42nd birthday this month.

THE OPENING SHOW

As reported in the last issue of *The WIRE*, the opening show at Blandford on 23 April went ahead, even though the weather was bad, with fog and drizzle making riding conditions difficult. The highlight of the display was the presentation of White Helmets to all new team members by the SOinC(A), **Brig JT Thomas MBE ADC**. Those receiving their helmets were **Capt Mallet**, **LCpls Bladen**, **Corser**, **Jones**, **McGinn** and **Stewart** and **Sigs Kitchen**, **Marshall** and **Wareham**. All had worked extremely hard over the last 4 months, and rightly deserve to receive and wear the coveted White Helmet. The display also saw the return of a former White Helmet, **Sig Potter**, who has come back to the Team for a further 3 years.

There were also two trophies presented. The Lucas Trophy is presented for the best new rider in the Team, and this year went to **LCpl Gaz Stewart**. The Elson Trophy is presented to the Team member who has contributed the most to the team over the last season. This year it rightly went to **Cpl Mal Cooper**, for his industrious efforts in the mechanical bays, his immense dedication to the Team, and his work with the Imps Junior Motorcycle Display Team. After the Opening Show, a reception was held in the Semaphore Arms for all the sponsors and invited guests to join the Team for a chat and a sausage roll.

VE DAY CELEBRATIONS – BALLYNAHINCH, NORTHERN IRELAND

After the euphoria of the Opening Show, the Team headed off to Northern Ireland for their first show at Ballynahinch. This saw us going back to grass, which proved tricky for some people, with **Cpl Jim Brown** gaining the Black Peak. This was the first public display for the new members of the Team, and it was a great success, which has set the tone for the rest of the season.

ENTRANCE EXAM

Over the last couple of weeks, some off the Team have been busy going back to their trade skills to prepare for their Class 1 entrance exam. A 3-day crammer course was run at ASG, and all have been working hard swatting up for the exam. They have worked hard to take in all the information, starting only a week before the exam. Good luck to you all; we hope you pass.

ITDs

Not being exempt from ITDs, the Team recently went back to mil skills with some NBC trg. This culminated in a visit to the chamber, and much fun was had by all. We can't wait to do it again next year! We have also been busy weapon training in preparation for a range day later on this year.

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

We welcome a big back **Sig Fitzgerald**, who has returned after a period of sick leave following an unfortunate accident. We say farewell this month to **LCpl Ian Allen**, who is departing for 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn; and **Sig Dicko Dixon**, who is leaving to go to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We wish them the best of luck at their next units.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A WHITE HELMET?

If you are interested in becoming a White Helmet, there will be an induction course being held 31 October 05 to 11 November 05. You can apply at any time in the year, and your application will be kept on file. Interested parties should look up SOinC(A) PD 204, available from you Unit Registry. Alternatively you can contact The White Helmets direct on Mil 94371 2365, Civ 01258 482365.

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj AR Urwin**
SSM **WO2 S Gurung**

COMMAND TASKS

'Let's take the Tp out of their comfort zones of classrooms and offices, and suspend them from the surrounding vegetation.' And so the Command Task event was born. **Sgt Pat Paterson** duly put a package together and with the assistance of MLG (i.e. he pinched their ideas!), produced a sufficient number of tasks so that all participants had a chance to demonstrate their leadership qualities.

We started the Comd Tasks early 5 May, split into two sections under the watchful adjudication of **Capt Si Smith**, **WO2 (SSM) Neil Pollit**, **WO2 (FofS) John Collins** and **SSgts Shazza Robson** and **Angie Ghale**. It quickly became clear from the scenarios that the whole area had become freakishly affected by, off target paras, toxic waste, Columbian drug smugglers and shark infested custard.

Sgt Al G(n)aw 'all teeth and helmet'

The tasks rolled by with little incident, but the methods becoming increasingly ropey, until the final tasks of each section. In our section, **Sgt Kev Young** was heroically trying to rescue a stricken **Cpl Sally Hubble** from across the notorious Blandford Canyon, when the rest of the section disturbed the chock in the tree, resulting in him face planting in the dirt! Meanwhile in the other section, **Sgt Wayne Stainthorp** suffered pretty much the same fate – except that he was the one to disturb the chock, and he fell about twelve feet from a tree – but the ground has been repaired since!!

The ex ended with a section race: numbered tyre moving. I made the personal mistake of selecting tyre Number 1, which, if you know the task, gets moved the most. Despite this, our Section came out on top, and saw us retiring back to our classrooms and offices suitably rope burnt and chafed – it was still only lunchtime!

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj N Baugh MBE**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R Lawrence**

BOWMAN SYSTEM MANAGEMENT SECTION

- by SSgt Debs Hutchinson

As with the rest of RSG, we too have been busy. We are at the moment running the first steady state All Arms Regimental Signals Officers' (RSO) Course. BSM Sect provides 33% of the trg for this course. The officers, who vary in rank between Lt and Capt and sometimes Sqn Ldrs, come to us from Leconfield and Bovington respectively, where they have already been taught the equipt.

During the first week they get taught all about Data Comms, EW and COMBAT. The second week they leave Scotton Hall and go to Catterick Building to become Crypto Custodian Officers. Then for the last two weeks, they come back to us to have an insight into how much work goes into the system planning element of the BOWMAN Comms Plan. There, through blood, sweat and tears they build a small BOWMAN Comms Plan. At the end the 4 weeks at Blandford, participants come out with an ICS Mgr qualification, and return to either Leconfield or Bovington to finish their course, and then go their separate ways to complete the Special to Arm Phase. It is on completion of this Phase that they become RSOs.

We have also got the steady state BOWMAN Sys Mgrs courses up and running, although still without any BOWMAN equipt to practise on. The courses to date have been well received, and are nearing full capacity. So if you are from a BOWMANised unit and need to do the course, book now to avoid the rush.

POWER SECTION *- by SSgt Guy Padfield*

Power Section has grown over the last few months, with 3 Electricians from ASG being posted in. We welcome **Sgt Balaram**, **Cpl Sherwin** and **LCpl Shirkey** to a busy section that has already seen the development of trg on the Lightweight Field Generator for the Corps. Support to Sysex Tp (ASG), for Area Systems Basic courses and Comd Trg exs will continue as normal. However, whilst in bks, the movement of these electricians to Power Section will allow them to gain experience on a whole range of generators and elements of instruction.

With the introduction of CORMORANT come two new generators, the 4 and 20 kVA. Power Section has taken ownership of two gene bays and a classroom in Whitby Building, which will allow us to conduct trg on both genes without imposing on our already limited resources. **SSgt Padfield**, **Sgt Prem**, **Sgt Dransfield** and **Mr O'Connor** have attended a CORMORANT gene course at 2 Sig Regt in York. It is envisaged that in house courses for CORMORANT genes will start around August/October 05, with courses being open to the Corps from November 05.

Some good news for Electrician Basic and Up-grader courses is that all City and Guild Certificates will be provided free of charge for those who successfully complete the course. For Up-Graders this should include PAT and 16th Edition.

RADEX TROOP *- by LCpl Col Paterson*

On arrival at the Radex garages, I was soon to discover that Radex Tp is an extremely busy Tp. Apart from the Phase 2 Trainees that we take on ex for 3 weeks, we also have Potential Yeoman, Tp Comds and a variety of other courses, all of which keep you busy and occupied. After my initial settling-in period, I found myself on to the Potential Yeomen's ex, EX SEARCHING GLANCE. This is a 5-day ex in which the Yeomen put into practice everything they have learned in the classrooms in RSG.

We were extremely busy, constantly moving locs, tearing down, setting up and erecting antennae. My job wasn't to instruct them or to do the ex for them, but to give them guidance and a helping hand with it all. This allowed me to improve my own trade skills, and gave me an insight into what I was lacking. So it wasn't just the Yeomen who where learning whilst on this ex - I learned just as much, if not more.

The Tp also has a 6-a-side football team which plays regularly, and funnily enough the results have picked up since more of us have started going along. There are always events being organised as well.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first three months at Radex. They are a good bunch of people who have gone out of their way to help me settle in. Although at first I was dubious about my posting here, I believe that it will be beneficial for my career.

If anyone has the opportunity in the future, I would thoroughly recommend coming to Radex.

ENGINEERING DIVISION

CI **Lt Col Steve Turnbull**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Al Chester**

Engineering Division was formed 1 June 2004 to bring together all aspects of tech and ICS trg in the School. This was achieved by re-grouping trg assets into a new organisation. The Division has two trg groups: IS Gp (ISG) that concentrates in ICS trg, and Information, Assurance and Technology Gp (IATG), that concentrates both on Information Assurance and on technician trg.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS ENGINEER CLASS 3

The first of the new IS Engr Class 3 Courses run in ISG, started in October 04 and completed in February 05. The second course has been completed, and the third is underway. The course includes all modules in the ECDL, (European Computer Driving Licence) framework, and then builds up the students' skill sets to create a competent and confident engineer, who will be instructed and educated in the practices of the designing, installing and maintenance of Local and Wide Area Networks. Modules also include Web Design and Admin, PC Repair and Data Comms.

A Top Student prize, donated by Elonex Computers Ltd, is awarded to the top student on each course. So far the winners of this prize have been **Sig Jolley**, who is now serving in 216 Sig Sqn and **Sig Yasmin Abouda**, now serving in 16 Sig Regt.

ENGINEERING DIVISION LANGTON WALK

The Division recently enjoyed a Team Building ex walking around the Dorset countryside, which was organised by **Sgt Chris Alston**, and involved both military and civilian staff. The activities took place over two separate days to allow as many of the Divisional staff as possible to take part. Each day started and finished at the *Langton Arms* PH, and consisted of an eight mile steady walk to accommodate all levels of fitness. The day was rounded off with a bite to eat and a drink, before some of the more hardy souls walked back to the Camp, leaving the stragglers to jump on the transport. A good two days were had by all, including an assortment of our K9 friends who also took part.

FofS Paul Landregan, Sgt Richie Wilson, Cpl Ian Waterworth and Cpl Mark Avery striding out at the front of the pack.

INFORMATION ASSURANCE AND TECHNOLOGY GROUP

- by Capt (TOT) Mick Swift

The Trg Ops team has seen some changes over the past few months, not only do we have a new name but some new personalities have arrived to continue the smooth transition.

TECHNIQUES SECTION

Since starting the new HNC course back in 2002, there have been twelve Class 1 Tech upgrading courses. The latest course to

Cpl Rees being presented with the Cogent Cup by Mr Norman Bain of EADS Defence and Security Systems

finish saw an unprecedented occurrence, which will be hard to emulate. One student attending SEUR 04/001 which started on 19 April 2004, has achieved the highest number of HNC Distinction grades since the qualification was introduced. **Cpl Jim Rees** was duly awarded the Top Student and Cogent Cup prize. Both **Cpl Rees** and all the instructors involved should be proud of what has been achieved, providing solid evidence of the quality of RSS trg.

CABLE SYSTEMS SECTION

No nothing to do with lettuces, but over the last two years the staff of CSS have had the Local Awards Group (LAG) busy with their innovative ideas and suggestions for improvements and modifications to enhance the trg and facilities. Their reward has not been enough to retire on, but watch out LAG, there are more in the pipeline - and there's plenty of space on the wall for more certificates. Congratulations to all pictured.

'Little Gems.' Mr Crosby, Cpl Ram Rana, Mr Les Crowder, Mr Brian Hilton and Mr Dick Taylor, pictured with CI, Lt Col Steve Turnbull

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SA Hadley**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RCSigs
SSM **WO2(SSM) C Overton**

The Sqn welcomes the new 2IC, **Capt Gareth Oosterveen**, who takes over from **Capt B Robson** – off to 2 Sig Regt. We also say goodbye to **Capt Ross McLeod**.

IRAQ MEDAL PRESENTATION – *by Sig Keiron Price*

With the many soldiers in Blandford having returned from OP TELIC, it was decided that there would be a Medal Presentation Parade on 7 April 05. It was also decided that the youngest soldier in Blandford would present Comd CSSIS, **Brig John Terrington** with his OP TELIC Medal.

Being that youngest soldier, it was a big event for me, because I had to do it in front of the whole of the Regt, which was quite a daunting task. The dress for the parade was combat 95, except for myself, who had the pleasure of wearing No 2 Dress.

Sig Price presenting Brig Terrington with his OP TELIC medal.

I made sure that I was in good order for the day, as I had heard the whisper that a member of the RP staff would be handing the Medal to me on a velvet cushion. I didn't want to be spoken to afterwards for embarrassing myself in front of the Brigadier.

All in all, the Parade was a great success, and afterwards there were stood many a proud soldier, who should be very aware of their achievements with the Coalition Forces. I was rather proud, too, and I now look forward to partaking in my own first operational tour, hopefully sometime in the near future.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj IJ Carter**
SSM **WO2(SSM) C Marlowe**

The Sqn welcomes **Capt James Landreth**, **WO1 Henry**, **SSgt Fraser**, **Cpl Jackson**, **Cpl Whitehead** and **Cpl Cragg**, and at the same time says goodbye to **Capt Kerry Larsen** – going to 34 Sig Regt, **WO1 Davies** – leaving the Army, **Cpl Ablott** – going to 7 Sig Regt and **Cpl Reynolds** – going to CCU. The Sqn also congratulates **Cpl Harrison** for being picked up for the Army Novice Team of the Army Fishing Federation, and being selected to play cricket for the Corps. Several Phase 2 trainees have gained their Summer Mountain Proficiency qualification as well as undergoing trade training, leading to a trip of a lifetime to Jordan.

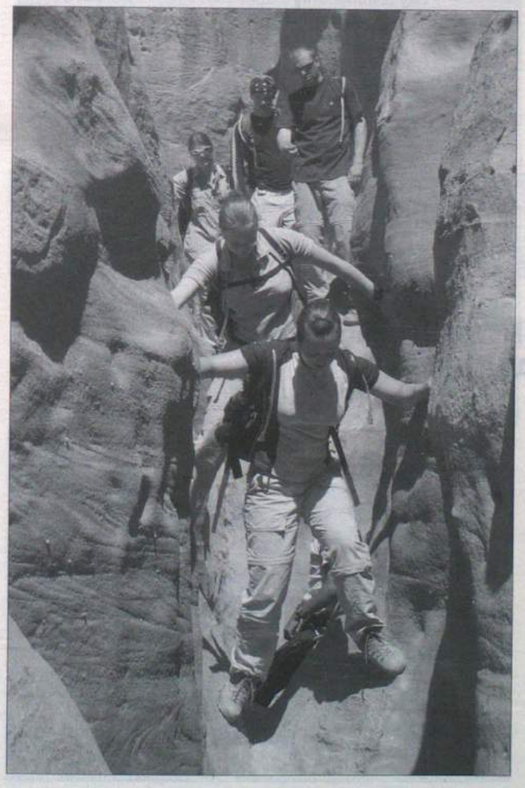
EXERCISE DESERT DRAGON – *by Sigs Cooper, Gormley, Brown, Nelson, Page, Waters, Keylock, Raby, McNally*

EX DESERT DRAGON, 9 – 24 May, was an AT exped to Jordan for nine Phase 2 soldiers, and organised by **Capt Kerry Larsen**. The JSMEL instructor was **Capt Adam Corkery**, and **Cpl Steph Jackson** was OIC Admin. The exped involved 10 days of arduous trekking in three different regions of Jordan; three days in the wadis of the Dead Sea Rift (often below sea level), two days in the mountains around Petra and five days trekking in the canyons, mountains and sand dunes of Wadi Rum. All the flights into Jordan seemed to arrive at unsociable hours, so the first day was built in for admin and acclimatisation – and the chance to float in the Dead Sea and get covered in healing black mud.

Swimming in the Dead Sea was a weird experience but one definitely worth doing. After floating around I spotted some people covering themselves in black mud, I had seen it on television and read about it, so I decided to give it a go. After 5 minutes I looked like something from *Dr Who*.

3 day trek – Wadi Mukheris to Wadi Manshala and Wadi Himara, Dead Sea Rift The trek started from about 400m below sea level, and followed Wadi Mukheris upstream. The surrounding countryside is very dry, and all the rocks ochre-coloured and crumbling. You can see all the layers of sand and stones, some with fossils in. Walking up beside the stream was cooler than we had thought, and the route quickly got interesting. Everyone was involved with route finding since, we had accurate descriptions from a trekking book that were read out to the group. We climbed over and under huge boulders, beside small waterfalls and sometimes up the banks of the wadi to get round a larger waterfall. There were clumps of palm trees and hanging gardens and ferns in the bottom of the wadi, making it really beautiful.

We climbed out of the wadi late in the afternoon, and found the dirt track leading south. There was no need to carry lots of water in the wadi, but we had to each fill up with 5 litres for the trek to the campsite, the camp itself and the next morning's trek. The water tasted strange because it was slightly salty, a bit like Dioralyte. The campsite was right beside an outcrop of black rocks and had a great view down over the Dead Sea. On Day 2 we headed south again. The palm ravine mentioned in the trekking book, was filled with brilliant green palms and blooming oleander bushes, making splashes of pink. We walked down the wadi and found a really nice pool for swimming in at lunchtime. It was a nice way to cool down, sitting under a waterfall. After continuing to the next waterfall we climbed out to the plateau again. The view from this campsite is quite a contrast to what we're used to. It was a nice sandy area on the side of a hill looking over a winding path going off into the distance.



Sigs Raby, Keylock, Brown and Cooper descending the Rakabat Canyon.

On Day 3 we set off towards the last wadi across the plateau. More than once we were traversing goat tracks by our toenails on steep mountainsides and sliding down some pretty harsh shingle slopes on our behinds. But we made it to the tallest waterfall in Jordan, 80m high, and it was quite something. Most took the opportunity to have one of their most natural showers ever. Further down the wadi, we came upon a second 80m waterfall, and left the wadi to cross a spur and go down to the road.

Trekking in the mountains around Beidha and Petra After a very long journey, we joined the Ammarin Bedouin tribe for a really comfortable night's sleep. The whole scene was set with a jet-black sky and a million stars. We were all in proper Bedouin tents in a beautiful blind canyon, with really interesting cliffs all around. The camp even had a proper wash block with showers covered by a tent – lovely to get clean again. After traditional breakfast, we set off with **Mahmoud**, our guide, to explore the old caravan routes of the Nabateans, and climb up to the peaks of the mountains.

The countryside here is so different from the wadis in the rift. We explored Nabatean cisterns and Bedouin stone houses, before walking into a narrow wadi for lunch. After that, we had to climb Nabatean stone-cut steps up a really narrow canyon to get into Little Petra. This was absolutely amazing – doorways and steps cut out of the rock all over the valley. These are not as grand as Petra, but are great to explore. Back to the camp for a delicious meal of chicken, rice, humus, salads and yoghurt – much better than rat packs! The next day, we all set off to Petra, and spent the whole day exploring the palaces and high places. The caves and temples we saw looked like something straight out of a film, and really impressive. I never realized just how big the site was and just how much there was to see.

5-day trek around the mountains and desert of Wadi Rum After a night spent on the Resthouse roof, everyone was refreshed and ready to start the next trek. We met **Attayak**, our guide, and started off straight into the side of the mountain, up Rakabat Canyon. This was a really interesting route, and involved some scrambling in places. On the other side, we were met by a view across red sand dunes to other mountains. It was a lot hotter than in the other regions, so we were glad to rest up between lunch and 15.00hrs, to get a slightly cooler walk in the afternoon. It was still really hard work, especially in the soft sand. We definitely needed a drink of Arabic tea at the end of the day.

The desert was not as dry and purely sandy as I had thought. There were scraggy bushes all over the sand, and loads of different lizard and desert rat tracks. At night we just lay under the stars in our sleeping bags. The next day, we trekked a long way through the desert, down the narrow Burrah Canyon, and then out into the desert. On the way, we passed loads of big and little rock domes. That evening, as we came into the campsite, we had a view of the Rock Bridge of Burdah. That was our destination for the next day. It involved hard work scrambling up through rocks and clefts to climb up to the high rock bridge, an amazing natural stone arch with fantastic views out across the desert.

The route down was very adventurous; we were climbing very carefully down some rocks and clefts and ended up coming down behind the campsite in time for lunch. The rest of the day was trekking across desert to the evening campsite, a tiny canyon in the rock. We enjoyed a delicious meal, and stayed around the campfire. On the following day we set out in a 4x4 to the Khasch Ridge, for a mountain walk. We climbed up rocky goat tracks to the summit.

The dry, windy weather meant that the air was hazy, with dust in the distance, so the views were not as spectacular as they might have been. On our last day we climbed Jebel Umm Adaami, the highest mountain in Jordan (1,834m). This was wickedly hot,

Across the desert of Wadi Rum

because we were in the full sun all morning, but getting to the top was worth it. This was a challenging way to end the exped and everyone enjoyed the interesting route back down a dry wadi. The last couple of days of the exped were spent in Aqaba on R and R. Some took the opportunity to have a dive over the coral reefs, and some of us were happy just to relax by the pool on the beach. It was nice going out for a proper meal with everyone; it just showed how much of a team we were. I am sure many of us are now more confident and keen to try something like this again. It was really testing, with some uncomfortable phases and some fantastic ones. Everyone got stronger and fitter - and dirtier! I know I learnt more about myself and really want to do something like this again in my next unit.

HARROGATE CUP SWIMMING AND HOCKEY COMPETITIONS – *by Sig Hutchinson*

The Swimming Competition took place on 5 April at Bovington swimming pool, with Phase 2, Phase 3 and Tp staff all taking part. 1 Sqn had difficulty finding a female team, so they called back 6 girls from 2 Sqn to make up numbers. As the competition progressed, it turned out that 1 Sqn had poached all the best female swimmers, including **Sig Dempsey**, and with their help, they won the whole Competition! Despite our defeat we put up a good fight. A special mention should go to **Sig Berry** and **Sig Wade** who surprised us by swimming like fish.

The last race of the night was an exciting 'chain of command' race, involving one person from each rank, starting with a Signaller and working up to SSM. This is where **SSM Marlowe** made a splash, getting well stuck in.

The Hockey Tournament ran over 6 and 7 April, with the whole Regt stuffed into the stands on the astro-turf to watch and cheer on their Sqn. Members of the 2 Sqn team were picked at trg sessions from both Iron and Beaufighter Tps. Among those chosen, were **Sigs Talbot**, **Allen** and **Tough**, who played an excellent game and helped win the cup. On pitch entertainment was provided by **Sigs Taylor** and **Manners**.

ATHLETICS

On Saturday 14 May, the Regt held the annual Inter-Sqn Athletics Competition. Teams from the three Sqns took part on what turned out to be a wet and windy weekend. Despite the weather, a good day was had by the majority of the Sqn, and there was another good turn out of competitors from Beaufighter Tp:

Sig Charlton	800m/1500m	
Sig Sands	Discus	
Sig Lewis	Javelin	
Sig Nasilasila	Javelin	Winner
Sig Vetakula	Shot Put	Winner
Sig Subin	1500m	
Sig Sanjoyhang	Steeple chase	Runner up
Sig Samms	200m	Runner Up
Sig Harrison	100m Hurdles	

The team competed well all day, and the Sqn narrowly missed out on first place, but our heads were still held high at the end. Several members of the Sqn were picked to represent the Regt in the Morrison Cup.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) SE Littlefield**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D Deegan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) B Gillies**

EXERCISE ALPS FINN - *by LCpl Thorburn*

On 10 May 05, eleven members of HQ Sqn started the journey to Pfunds, Austria with high hopes of sunshine, good local beer and plenty of fun. However the advance party had informed us there was no sunshine but plenty of snow.

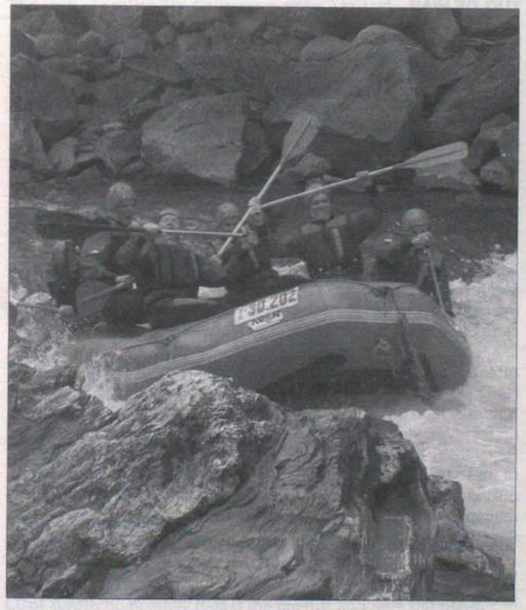
After a long day travelling, the first day brought the first session of hill walking. The session involved a climb of 1,100m to a mountain summit called Raucher Kopf (2,052m. The weather was also improving, with some of us getting sunburned.

On the Frudiger Kopf

The second day of hill walking involved a climb of 1,300m to Frudiger Kopf (2,149m). The climb was a little steeper than the previous day, but no one minded, because we had good weather. After catching our breath at the summit, everyone forgot about the hard climb, on seeing the spectacular views. We took this opportunity to pose for a photo with the Hawaiian shirts coming out.

More excitement was to be had on the next day with white water rafting. This took place at the Tosens and Sanna rivers. After a safety brief by our instructors, we were split into three groups. The first comprised the girls; the second, the Golden Oldies; with the youngsters in the third group. Bets were made who would finish first down the river. The afternoon session on the Sanna made for a very enjoyable time, being a lot tougher than the route taken earlier in the morning. **LCpl Thorburn** and **LCpl Horton** decided to test their capsize drills on the first set of rapids. With no one else capsizing, it was a quick route down, with plenty of fun. The Golden Oldies with their safe tactics finished first, and believed they won the bet. However, they were informed that they only won the afternoon session, and not the entire day.

Rock climbing was the next event. **LCpl Jameson** proved to be the Spiderwoman of the group, completing the hardest climb with ease. The rest of the group just seemed to get cuts and bruises from the climb without much progress.



Rafting the Sanna rapids.

The final day of activities consisted of Canyoning at Thschlungbach and Aukerklan Gorges. Canyoning consists of abseiling in waterfalls and jumping into pools from a great height. Everyone found it enjoyable, but very cold. After stopping for lunch, we were back at it in the afternoon with more jumps, slides and abseiling. Everyone found this even more enjoyable, and we were all willing to attempt everything - even if it left some of us scared at times. With the canyoning completed and everyone on a high, we retired for the evening to compare stories on what was the best day of all.

EX ALPS FINN proved to be a great success. It gave us the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the Austrian Alps, as well as to foster the already strong team spirit within the Tp. Everyone is looking forward to doing something similar next year.

Sig Chambers canyoning the Tschlinbach Canyon

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M J Hanby**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) TJ Bickerstaff**

NORTHERN IRELAND SWIMMING AND WATERPOLO
- by Cpl Yapp

Summer is back in Lisburn, and with it comes the NI Swimming and Water Polo Championships. This event gives the Province's Regts a chance to showcase the product of all their hard work, and possible qualifying for the Army Finals in Aldershot. HQNI and 15 Sig Regt entered a team for both Swimming and Water Polo, under the dictator-like direction of Team Captain, **Sgt Jeffs**. All the trg was done in our own time, so good results were required to make the early mornings and late nights spent in the pool worthwhile.

It was clear from the start that 1 Bn Para Regt were swimming in a class of their own; they took an impressive lead early on. Unfazed, **Cpl Chris Yapp** approached the block for the 100m Backstroke to earn the Team a 2nd place, spurring the others to follow his example. At the interval before the Relays, the scores indicated that the Paras had a seemingly unassailable lead, with three teams, including 15 Sig Regt battling for 2nd place. Some very closely fought races followed, with our Team managing to finish either 1st or 2nd in all four Relays.

This culminated in a nail-biting finish in the last event, the 4x100m Crawl Relay, where **Sgt Jeffs**, **Maj Hanby**, **Cpl Simon** and **Capt Brown** won in a time of 4min 23sec. This was enough to gain on the Para's lead, and distance ourselves from the 3rd place tussle. The competition concluded, and we were presented with 2nd place, three points behind the Paras.

The following day a full squad of thirteen players undertook the gruelling challenge of the NI Water Polo Championships, knowing that only the first two teams would go through to play in

Aldershot. The pressure was on. After two exhausting matches, it was evident that the contest would be decided on the result of the last game. We would have to win all of our ties in order to be awarded the Champions title.

An epic game followed against local rivals 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and after half an hour of incredibly arduous play, we came through as victors. 7-3, 2-0, 2-0, a clean sweep that ensured HQNI and 15 Sig Regt as 2005 winners. A fantastic effort was made by all who took part. Worthy of particular note was goal keeper **Cpl McCubbin** and his defence, namely **Sgt Jeffs** and **Cpl Osborn** with two clean sheets, and the strike force of **Capt Brown**, **Cpl Yapp** and **Cpl Simon**. Aldershot here we come!

LANYARD TROPHY 2005 - *by Capts Allen and Bermingham*

This year's Lanyard Trophy competition took place on Otterburn Trg area on 7 June. Following a week's trg on the course, the big day started at 05.00hrs.

The course was hard, to say the least. The 'babies' heads' and the gradient to be covered, turned the event into an epic trek that was not for the faint hearted. Unfortunately, some of our team were forced to pull out due to injuries, and on leaving CP7 we were down to 7 personnel and therefore disqualified from gaining a team place. However a battle was now on between 39 Inf Bde's mixed team, ATR Lichfield and 15 Sig Regt. By the time CP10 was reached, only 5 team members remained, but heads didn't drop.

The team then put in a fast leg of 2hrs 15mins between CPs10 and 11, and a further two teams were caught. At CP13 (the final admin stop) dusk was setting, and the team pushed out for the final 3.2 miles of torture, with bruised and battered bodies, **Capt Allen**, **WO2 (SSM) Bickerstaff**, **SSgt(FofS) Bailey**, **SSgt Lawer** and **LCpl Hensby** pushed onwards towards Otterburn Camp. Eventually in a time of 19hrs and 46 mins, the line was crossed and the boots were hung up for another year.

Our female team fared no better. Despite sampling the cold, wet and windy delights of the Mourne Mountains in the run up to the competition, they were also taken off guard by the condition of the ground in Otterburn.

When the big day did come, it dawned clear - a beautiful day, and they were keen to get to grips with the course. Unfortunately, things got off to a bad start and the team was non-competitive by CP2. A band of muted merriness continued en route, as they knew what to expect from the terrain thereafter, and got amongst the steep inclines as best as they could. Despite valiant effort, time was escaping and a team decision was made to retire at CP10. One thing however was certain - next year they'll be back to give it another go.

Thirty-one teams took part, with the finishing teams numbering a mere 19 male and 2 female Regular teams and no TA teams.

CORPS SAAM AND NORTHERN IRELAND SAAM 05
- by LCpl Metcalfe

The Regtl Shooting Team departed Lisburn on the evening of Wednesday 6 April 05 for the Corps SAAM at Pirbright. It was an early start on Saturday morning, for us to watch the TA shoot and to familiarise ourselves with the range layout.

After watching a few shoots we went to the exotic weapons range, where they had a selection of different weapons, such as sniper rifles, all of the H and K family, and a number of vintage rifles. The remainder of the weekend was spent watching the shoots and enjoying the odd night out in Guildford.

The competition started early on Monday. There were some exceptionally good scores from the team, but unfortunately, some not so good ones as too. The different shoots during the competition tested the firers at different ranges from just 15m on the FIBUA to 500m on the Roupel Cup.

Thursday was the final day of shooting, and in the evening there was a meal laid on in the Camp's bar. Friday saw the prize giving ceremony, where although gaining no prizes, we did leave with a wealth of practical experience. After another emotional five-hour road trip and an overnight ferry crossing, it was time for some well-deserved time off before commencing NI SAAM on the following week.

With just a day's familiarisation trg, it was straight into the Competition, which would last for the next three days. It followed the same form as Corps SAAM, with some very good scores on the rifle, only to be let down on the pistol shoots. It is worth mentioning **Cpl McFarland** and **Sig Hall's** performance on the GOC's battle match. After declining to carry LSWs on the 2-mile speed march, they proceeded to engage targets at 500m with their rifles on the firing phase, and scored a combined 9 hits out of ten rounds! We finished the Force Troops category in third place, having just missed out on second place by a single point.

A great time was had by all, and everyone's shooting made a dramatic improvement. We look forward to the next year where we can build on the invaluable experience gained.

TUG OF WAR - *by Cpl Caddy*

We left Lisburn early on the morning of the 26 May 05 for Blandford for the Morrison Cup. The 680kg event was first, and was split into two leagues, A and B, with us in League B. This League consisted of 11 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and ourselves. We beat 19 Mech Bde and 11 Sig Regt 2-0, but unfortunately, we were beaten 2–1 by 30 Sig Regt. This meant that in the semi-final we were up against 7 Sig Regt, to whom we lost 2–0. The next competition was the 640kg category. This was again split into leagues, of which we were in League B.

This time we were pulling against 21 Sig Regt (AS), 11 Sig Regt, 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. We managed to beat all these teams with a straight 2–0 victory, but were once again beaten by 30 Sig Regt in the semi-final.

After the Morrison Cup, we were back at Deepcut, trg for the Herts County Show and the Princess Royal Competitions. On Saturday morning at the Herts County Show, the 600kg team was up first. We were in two leagues again, and in our League were 4 Royal Irish, 1 RHA, and 3 RHA. Unfortunately, we didn't beat any of these teams. Next was the 640kg category, where we were pulling against 40 Regt RA, 1 Para, 3 RHA and 11 Sig Regt. We managed to beat 1 Para 2–0, but we were just beaten 2–1 by 11 Sig Regt.

We lost against both 40 Regt RA and 3 RHA. The day was over, and with everyone feeling exhausted, and knowing we had another competition the next day, we had an early night.

The Princess Royal Competition got off to a positive start, with both teams just under the maximum weight. The 600kg category was first, and we were pulling against 12 Regt RA, 4 Royal Irish and 3 RHA. We put up a good fight, but were beaten by each of the teams.

Next up was our 640kg team, and were pulling against 11 Sig Regt, 1 RHA, 40 Regt RA and RAF. We were closely beaten 2–1 by both 11 Sig Regt and 1 RHA, and lost to RAF and 40 Regt RA. We were all exhausted at the end of the day, and looking forward to a bath followed by a relaxing night out.

Despite suffering a number of defeats, there was much practical experience gained, and the team is looking stronger than ever before. Trg efforts have re-doubled and everyone now knows where our strengths and weaknesses are. We're looking forward to the next competition and eager to win some prizes.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

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

EXERCISE MERCURY FINN

39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's Battlecamp, EX MERCURY FINN 05, began with the traditional 04.30hrs reveille in Lisburn, giving more than enough time for the troops to collect weapons, stores, food, load the pantec and the mini -buses for the arduous journey to Wathgill Camp in Catterick. After a particularly smooth ferry journey from Larne to Cairnryan, and an excellent breakfast, it was a long 4-hr drive to Catterick. And on arrival, it was straight into battle prep.

The culmination of the first day's activities ended up with a well-received map folding lesson by **Sig Rees** and a quick section competition. The RSM presented a shiny apple to each member of the top section, not what they were expecting, after having being assured there was a prize for winning.

The start of MERCURY FINN proper was a two-day range package, concentrating on firing from different positions, an interesting night shoot; and finally, all troops had a go at the new APWT. Special mention must go to **Cpl Karen Tarry**, for her sterling efforts in getting all the shoots completed in the most treacherous weather conditions. The culmination of the range package was an introduction to the Infantry Advisors from 1 Para, taking the troops through a gruelling 3 hrs of bayonet trg. **WO2(RQMS) Sheard** did promise to join in with the troops, but unfortunately most of his time was spent digging DAFs out of the surrounding countryside of Catterick Trg Area. He was often heard to say, 'I wonder what those metal roads are for?'

The ex then moved into the field stage, where the Inf Advisors put the troops through their paces with 24 hrs of non-tac tuition and practice, followed by full trg on Section and Platoon level tactics. The next 72 hrs were spent carrying out a navex and putting into practice the skills and drills that were 'refreshed' by the Infantry Advisors. Special mention must go to the OC, **Maj Sophie Evans**, who went out on every single patrol by day and night, eventually breaking **WO1(RSM) Downie**, and forcing him into an early LUP. During this time the Platoon was ably led by the fighting fit **Sgts Hamilton**, **Wilcocksen** and **Hirst**, all of whom wheeled and dealed it like seasoned professionals.

After some final massaging of Comd appointments, the Platoon, led by **Cpl Steve Crutchley**, and with **LCpl Yvonne Smith** leading the assault section, they took on the enemy bunker positions to win the day. A superb left flanking assault led by **LCpl Smith** completely fooled the enemy, and after the depth positions had been cleared, the Platoon listened intently to the final Infantry Advisor de-brief; a fine effort by all concerned. Congratulations go to **Cpl Crutchly**, for winning Best Sect Comd; and to **LCpl Smith** for Best Soldier over the ex.

CHARITY ADVENTURE RACE, 31 MARCH

A 2km kayak, a 1km swim, a 14km run and a 20km cycle orienteering course. When asked for volunteers for this event, the Sqn cleared quicker than a bar when the OC and RSM enter. Unfortunately, four poor guys didn't hear the warnings and kindly 'offered' their services. They were **WO2(RQMS) Bri Sheard**, **Cpl Ski Milevsky**, **Cpl Leon Pears** and **LCpl Jules Grieves**. These four 'adventurers' travelled to Port Rush and completed this gruelling course in an excellent time of 10 hrs 56 mins. This would have been the winning time, had they not incurred a 30-minute time penalty on the cycle phase, when **LCpl Grieves** stabilisers fell off en route. In spite of this, the guys contributed in no small way to the £800 raised on the day for NOMA, the African children's charity - which made all the pain and saddle sores worth it.

CORPSAAM, 10-15 APRIL

A steady hand and an iron nerve, were needed by the competitors for the Corps SAAM. Unfortunately all we could muster, were **Lt Louise Halstead**, **Sgt Gaz Jordan**, **LCpl Jim Street**, **LCpl Reg Tranter** and **Sig Alex Hammond** - along with **Cpl Russ Russell** keeping the butts in order (range butts not ours). Despite the very limited range time afforded to us in Province, the Team finished a very credible third, and made it to the final of the Falling Plate competition, only to be beaten by the inter-Corps winners.

NISAM, 19-22 APRIL

Fresh (-ish) from the Corps SAAM, **Lt Louise Halstead**, **LCpls Jim Street** and **Reg Tranter** were bolstered by **LCpl Jules Grieves** and **Cpl Leon Pears** to take on the Province's finest. Once again, the Team's prowess in the Falling Plate came to the fore, as they ran out winners of the Minor Unit competition.

TUG O' WAR, 4 MAY

Again, an extensive trg period (an hour!) preceded the Province Tug O' War Competition, into which we thrust both a male and female team. The most simian-like Sqn members we found to take on the Provinces' Neanderthals, were **Cpls Fisher**, **Milevsky**, **Russell**, **Stratton**; **LCpls Clifton-Sprigg**, **Grieves**, **Tranter** and **Sig Hammond**, who came a more than respectable third place. However, the more petite and far less hairy Female Team of **Lt Halstead**, **Cpls Ingram**, **Smith**, **Tagilala**, **Tarry** and **LCpl Willis** belied their lady-like manner, by winning the Female Competition.

The Ladies' Team in action...

...and the whole group in celebration mode

EXERCISE SLIANTE FINN 2 - BRIGADE RUGBY TOUR, 5 -15 MAY

Once again the Bde's Rugby season culminated in a tour to London. And once again, purely coincidentally, the first weekend happened to also be the Army vs Navy match at Twickenham. So, with wigs firmly in place **Sgt Gaz Jordan**, **Cpl Fisher**, **Cpl Ski Milevsky**, **LCpl Chris Miles** and **Sig Alex Hammond** made their (very) merry way to the annual humiliation of the Senior Service - and there was much rejoicing after the event. All the team members absolved themselves of sin a day later, however, by attending Church!

Trg then began in earnest for the tour's first game on Tuesday evening against Stockbridge Park. After a very close first half, that saw Stockbridge go in with a narrow lead, we came back to win the game by a convincing 53-12 margin. And there was much rejoicing.

Thursday's game against Harrow RUFC was a step up in class, and it showed on the night. A well-drilled Harrow team frustrated all our attempts to build a lead of any significance. Injuries and wasted opportunities cost us in the end, with Harrow equalising with the last kick of the game, to give a final score of 12-12. Both sides rejoiced.

Friday saw the Team move from Uxbridge to Sheerness in Kent, to participate in the Mainstream International 15's Tournament. The 'International' opposition was provided by a French team, a Navy team from Portsmouth, Deal, Sheppy and another touring side. Keeping in form with a week earlier, the first game paired us with the Navy team, and again the Senior Service were handed a sound thrashing, as we ran out 61-0 winners.

Unfortunately, we could not capitalise on this win, and narrowly lost a heated game to Deal, who went on to win the cup, 17-15. So into the Plate final against another touring side; and once again, we did ourselves proud, winning the game 31-5, to lift the Plate. Even more rejoicing! Six tour games played in a week, only one defeat, surely **Sir Clive** must be on the phone soon...

ATHLETICS - NI CHAMPIONSHIPS AND THE MERCURY CUP 18 AND 23 MAY

Running, jumping, throwing stuff, and playing around in the sand. It's just like being a kid again, so it's no small wonder that the Unit excels at athletics! Once again, the boys and girls of 213 continue to dominate athletics in the Province, by winning both the Mercury Cup and the Northern Ireland Championships (Minor Unit).

Due to an overhaul of the facilities on Thiepval, the fixtures shifted, and the NI competition took place on 18 May. On a day when all sensible people would have been building an ark, both Male and Female Teams ran out comfortable winners. This served as a warm up for the Mercury cup on 23 May, when, after the PTI's accounting ability (requiring an audit from the AO), victory for 213's boys and girls was declared. Those who deserve a special mention for their outstanding contribution to these victories are **Cpl Ewan Darlington**, **Cpl Moff Moffat**, and for the females, **Lt Louise Halstead** and **Cpl Tag Tagilala**.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DP Sheerin MBE**

MERCURY CUP ATHLETICS

The Mercury Cup athletics was held this year in Lisburn camp on 23 May 05. Under **Lt Reid**, the team headed for Lisburn early in the morning, to be greeted in true Northern Ireland style by rain, and lots of it!

As the events began, we held our own, and with all our second and third places it was thought that this year we might not come last! We even had a win by **Cpl Andy Page** in the long jump. However the highlight of the day had to be **Sig Jamie Reynolds** effort at the 110m hurdles. He did very well to get round, but pushing the hurdles over instead of jumping them did not help us to win that event. But it did brighten up our day!

The day ended with the presentations. Needless to say, 218 did not win, but a special mention goes to our girls, who achieved second place.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR - EXERCISE PENINSULAR KNOT

On 6-13 May, the Sqn held a battlefield tour in Spain, learning about the Peninsular War. This was organised by **Maj Layton** and **Capt Redford**. Before leaving we were given an education day by **Dr Anderson** to give us an insight into some of the various battlefields on the trip.

We spent our first day overlooking the Battle of Talavera, where we mainly discussed the ground and how we would have used it. First, we went to where the French were, to see their point of view; and then moved to the British defensive positions on the high ground.

That night we travelled to Badajoz, and stayed in Hotel Rio. The next day was all about the Siege of Badajoz. We walked around a fair amount and saw how high the walls were that the troops had to climb.

We mostly discussed how the commander would have convinced his troops to fight through, knowing that those at the front had little chance of survival.

The Battle of Arroyo Dos Molinos was the most interesting battlefield. It was a little town, with lots of small side streets; and you could see it would be difficult to advance down them whilst under fire. This is where **Maj Parsons** explained his views, which changed other people's thoughts on what had taken place. We could see where the French had been pushed back towards a high mountain side, being left with the choice of either climbing it or going around it, neither of which proved to be successful, although a few managed to escape through a saddle. We then travelled to our next hotel, which resembled a castle inside and out. We had our evening meal here with a bottle of wine per table.

The fourth day was spent at the Battle of Fuentes de Onoro, which was another little town like the previous day. At this one we were to discuss the effects of digitisation, and how junior comds would control the battle over broken ground in built up areas. After a quick look around the town and a discussion, we moved onto higher ground to get a look at the bigger picture.

A battlefield scene in Spain

The next day was the worst weather we had seen, causing everything we were wearing to become moist. Talk about rain in Spain! The Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo was based around the hotel we had been staying in.

We walked around the walls of the castle, and got shown where the British had fought their way through. We spoke about how we would have planned it, and what time we would have attacked. We also discussed about trying to motivate our men to go through a small gap, whilst climbing over their own wounded comrades.

The next day we headed off to the Battle of Arapiles, which had a nice big hill for us all to climb. After discussing whether or not the ground was used correctly in the battle, we talked about the casevac process, and how it differed from today. There were many things brought up, mostly about how we now feel more comfortable knowing that we have a more modern system behind us.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt A Reid**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J Love**

We welcome **Cpl Brennan** from 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, **Sig Newton** from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, **Sig Keery** from 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, **Sig Higgins** from 14 Sig Regt (EW) and **Sig Field** from 16 Sig Regt. Farewell to **SSgt Love**, off to 32 Sig Regt; **Cpl Donaldson** and LCpl **Rodda**, to 34 Sig Regt, **LCpl Thomas**, to DCSA; **Sig French** to S Tp: **Sig Sutherland** to 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt; and **Sig Devaney** to 21 Sig Regt (AS).

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt K M Dunwoody**
Tp SSgt **SSgt S Fitzgerald**

The Troop has been busy in the last month with various OXBOW and public order trg details in the build up to Marching Season. However, we have still found time to fit in a battlefield tour to Spain, with **Sgt Andy O'Neill**, **Cpl Andy Page**, **LCpls Caz Ely** and **Vicky Marsh** attending. **Cpl Gaz Jones**, **LCpls Gaz Lynas** and **Riz Rizza** were away on AT in Scotland. Last but not least, **SSgt Simon Fitzgerald** was away again representing the Corps in Rugby League. Well done you!

Sgt O'Neill is running the Bravo Tp charity event for Glasvey Special Needs School, a local charity. The events to be run include a pool competition, quiz night and a mammoth 1,000km run, row, cycle from Ballykelly to Blandford.

Welcome to **LCpl Chris Maguire** from JSSU, and **Sig James Delaney** from Blandford. Farewell to **LCpl Andy Hawkes**, who is off to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt; **LCpl Aidie Stokes**, off to 10 Sig Regt; and to **Lt James Landreth**, who has just left to take up his new job of Sqn 2IC in 11 Sig Regt Blandford.

QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) J Kielty**

The QM Dept has been extremely busy over the last couple of months providing support to a number of commitments – public order trg, EX RICHMOND REACTION, Sqn Battlecamp, TATNI training and EX ZEUS FINN.

We farewell **LCpl Paul Downs**, who is off to Germany; and LCpl **John Devlin** and his new wife, who are off to Hullavington. Welcome to **LCpl Snow** and **LCpl Emma Standon**.

MT TROOP

Tp SSgt **SSgt S Williams**

Life in MT Tp is just as busy as ever, supporting the rugby, football and athletics competitions as well as completing all normal operational details.

As we go to print, the MTWO, **WO2 Tony Stronach**, is away with 25 members of the Sqn on EX HIGHLAND DRIVE. The aim is to prevent skill fade and to carry out continuation trg on green vehs.

It seems that our JNCOs and Dvr-Linemen do not like being single, with three of them recently tying the knot. Congratulations to **Sig Andy Bryant** and **Katie**, **LCpl John Axtell** and **Danielle**, and **Sig Gareth Jones** and **Michelle**.

We welcome **LCpl Thewlis** with his wife **Sara**, and **Pte Watson**. Farewell to **Pte Moore** and his family, who are all off to 13 Air Assit Regt in Colchester; and to Cpl **Stone**, who is off on a sunbathing posting to Cyprus. The last farewell is to the MTWO, **WO2 Tony Stronach**, who is leaving the Army after 22 years colour service. A big thank you on behalf of the Sqn for all your hard work over the last four years. Good luck in the future to **Joanne** and yourself.

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTI–NATIONAL INTEGRATED SIGNAL UNIT

OC **Maj D Hay** RA Sigs
SSM **WO2(SSM) D WELCH**

Elements of 229 Sig Sqn 7 Sig Regt have now deployed to the Balkans as part of OP OCULUS. Our advance party arrived on 23 April, with the main body following on three days later, and we now form the Multi–National Integrated Signal Unit (MISU).

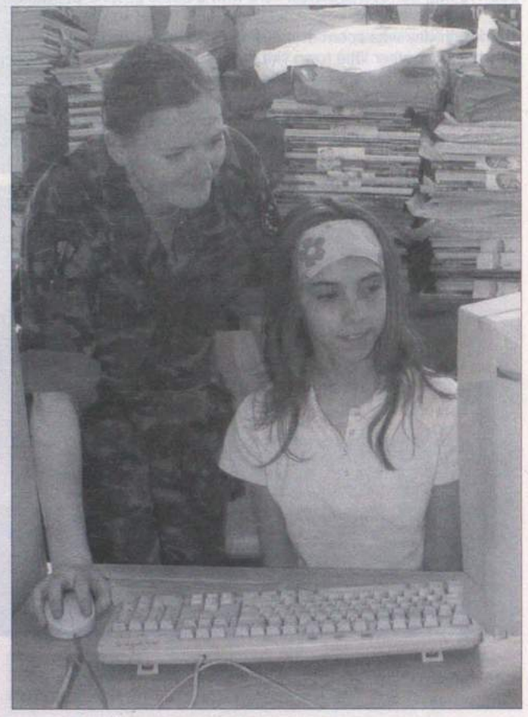
The multi-national part is not just because of our Australian OC, but represents the Dutch and Canadians who are also in MISU. Our role is spread across the Balkans, with the main body of 43 personnel in Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF), one det of 9 in Kosovo, 7 at Corsham Hub in UK, and one very small Det in Sarajevo of currently 2 soldiers, although that will grow.

We've now been in theatre almost a month, and we are slowly settling into a routine. The work in progress has continued from the tasks left by 212 Sig Sqn, from whom we took over, and also ongoing operations with the BG currently in theatre, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

Our DAGGER crews are particularly busy on that front, not just because of operational commitments, but also because one third of the DAGGER manpower is currently in quarantine, following a mumps outbreak in the BG Coy with whom they were attached!

We've already started on some activities to benefit the local community. The first was the donation of 8 computers and printers, no longer required in BLMF, to the National Museum of Banja Luka, and the Georgi S Rakovski School in Banja Luka. The school, which has over 900 students, was especially grateful to receive the equipt, as it enables them to teach their pupils IT and WP skills. Head Teacher **Dusah Mislyehovic** thanked the MISU personally for the donation, and for taking the time to install the equipt. **Lt Paul Andrews** commented, 'We saw this as an opportunity to use our technical expertise to set up the computers for the benefit of the local community. We enjoy helping in this way, and see it as part of our EUFOR mission to support local authorities and institutions.'

The second welfare issue we are currently working is with a local orphanage. We already have several boxes of toys to distribute to the children, and **Capt Clare Cassidy** is liaising with the staff at the orphanage to see how we can provide a permanent garden or play room. Hopefully, more to follow on that soon.



LCpl Nicky Kirkby showing Hikoliha Vucic how to use the equipt

With mixture of shift work and long days differing between Depts, life as a Sqn can be quite fragmented here. To combat this, a Sqn Games Night was organised by **SSgt(SQMS) Tosh Hodgkins**, The Indians Vs The Chiefs. Sadly (from my point of view) The Indians won. Maybe there were just too many Chiefs! But well done to all; the JNCOs can organise the next one!

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C Bruce BEM**

HERFORD HALF MARATHON - *by Lt Potter*

Sunday 22 May saw members of 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt put on their trainers, adjust their camel backs and join 250 runners in the 2005 Herford Half Marathon; allegedly the toughest half marathon in Northern Germany. The race attracted both military and civilian runners from far and wide.

The route this year ran over the hills around Herford and Bad Salzuflen, combining heartbreaking hill climbs with fantastic scenery - for those who had the time to admire it.

Despite it being such a challenging route, every single runner who started the race managed to complete it, although there was some difference in times! First to finish from the Regt was **Maj Lee Keily**, who set a very respectable time of 1 hr 36 mins. The trend for 201 Sig Sqn SHQ continued, with **SSgt(FofS) Marcus Clarke** and **WO2(SSM) Phil Joyce** hot on his heels, finishing second and fourth respectively. **Cpl Richard Simpson** came third in the Regt, and the first from 211 Sig Sqn. His trg for the London Marathon had not been in vain. The Adjt, **Capt Phil Muir**, was somewhat elated, when he finished well ahead of all the subalterns.

The day ended up with the prizes being presented by the CO, before everyone hobbled home to put their feet up and have a well-earned rest. Over 2,000 was raised for local and military charities, including the German Red Cross and the Army Benevolent Fund.

MORRISON CUP - *by 2Lt Daryn Hillhouse*

It was with great trepidation that the Regtl Athletics team set off to Blandford to take part in the Morrison Cup. As the sun rose and the teams began to arrive, it became all too evident that our team was the smallest of them all. But as the Competition got under way, our team made up for being short in numbers with team spirit, pride and superb effort, with majority of the athletes taking part in the maximum 3 events and 2 relays.

There were some outstanding achievements. **Sig Walsh** out ran all the runners in the 800m to take a well-deserved first place, and **Sig Shaw** won the Men's Shot-put, out-throwing all the other 'iron men'. **Sig Richards** and **Sig Hale** took first and third places respectively in the Triple Jump, and **LCpl Charles** and **Pte Tabi** took second and third places in the 100m sprint.

But the real moment of the competition was still to come. As expected, 21 Sig Regt (AS) had surged ahead in the points, their high profile athletes far out-numbering any other unit present. However, the competition for second place was hotting up, with 11 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt and ourselves separated by only five points.

It was then we deployed our secret weapon, the 4 x 100m relay team, combining **Sig Thomas**, **Sig Reid**, **Pte Tabi** and **LCpl Charles**. What followed was undoubtedly the race of the Competition. With 21 Sig Regt (AS) being disqualified in the heats, and 11 Sig Regt producing a good practice run, there was a tough job ahead. The race took a mere 44 seconds to complete - only 1.5 seconds off the Corps record. With a cloud of dust, our team crossed the line first, with 11 Sig Regt team only a few hundredths of a second behind. Few could doubt that this is the Regimental Bobsleigh team in the making!

The 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt Team receiving their Runners-up Medals from the SOinC(A), Brig JE Thomas MBE ADC

The prize giving yielded no surprises with 21 Sig Regt (AS) coming a very convincing first. But our Regt stole the show, coming second, and having earned the respect of every athlete and spectator on the day for their gutsy performances and unrelenting commitment.

LANYARD TROPHY – *by Cpl Simpson*

This year's Lanyard Trophy competition was to prove an emotional experience. Volunteers were acquired in a manoeuvre similar to that of a Snap Ambush. **Lt Paul Carpenter** took us out for some quick shakeout trg in the local area, and all too soon, we were off to Otterburn to spend a few days familiarising ourselves with the area and the 14 CPs.

During the 3 days' trg in Otterburn, we were treated to poor visibility, wind and rain. We had to negotiate the 'babies' heads,' bogs and marshes, midge-ridden forests and bleak open moorland. This course was going to be savage. It was hard enough work walking around the area over three days carrying just day sacks. The thought of doing the whole route in one go and carrying a minimum weight of 40 lbs, made the team realise that just to finish the course would be a great achievement.

Lt Carpenter suggested that for the few days prior to the event, we should eat plenty of carbohydrates, relax and prepare. **Sgt Geordie Gough** suggested that we go to his hometown of South Shields and 'carb up' there. So South Shields turned out to be a superb loc for pre-Lanyard.

On the Sunday we re-org'd and bought a small fortunes worth of energy bars, peanuts, bananas and drinks for the event. Monday arrived and Bergens were packed and carefully weighed to be as close to 40 lbs as possible - nobody wanted to carry any extra! Boots were waterproofed, feet taped up, and admin kit labelled. All too quickly, 03.00hrs Tuesday was upon us. After we had showered, shaved and applied copious amounts of Vaseline to all moving parts, we were ready for the 05.00hrs start. It was a clear, crisp morning, and not a cloud in the sky. The weather forecast was for it to be hot and sunny, with little or no wind. The thunder flash went off to signal the started the event, and we started eating into the miles.

Lanyard Trophy. The Regt Team between CPs 10 and 11, moments after Cpl Simpson had been told he had been promoted in to the Sgts'Mess

All was going well, until around 15 to 20kms, **Sgt George McMinn** started suffering with sore feet and had to slow down. With some 50kms still to go, things were not boding well.

At the halfway point, we were wishing we had brought some sunscreen lotion. It was very hot and we were going through a

lot of water, and **Sgt McMinn's** feet were getting worse all the time. He was dreading the next few CPs, especially CP9, the Nemesis to all competitors - a 250m beast of a climb, a hands and knees job to get up to the top with the weight of the Bergen and the many miles under our feet. But we all made it, and it proved to be a psychological victory for us all.

CPs 10 to 11 were torturous, with never-ending hills, bogs and heather. The sun had gone down, but our singed faces and arms lit up the route and we tabbed relentlessly on. At CP13, we found out that we were the last team on the course.

All the remaining teams had dropped out, and there was only one other team that had finished with its team complete.

We carried on through to the Finish Point, with a time of 20hrs 27 mins and with all our team members! We were proud to go on the presentation parade with with the 'Lanyard Limp'.

A special mention must go to **Sgt McMinn** who, in his last year of military service, exhibited incredible grit and determination that was to inspire the younger soldiers of the team to carry on regardless.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AG Hill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Griffiths**

The Regt said farewell to **Lt Col David Hudson** in April. He is off to be the Dept Manager of a BOWMAN IPT. On top of Kiwi Hill, after his last CO's PT session, **Col David** was presented by the RSM with the Regt's flag as a memento of his time in comd. Best wishes go to him, **Thea** and the girls.

As ever, there is much to do in a Div Sig Regt. What is quite clear, is that everyone gets on with their job and produces excellent results. The Div staff actually queue up to say thank you for the Regt's hard work. The work rate has been nicely balanced with AT, sports competitions, Normandy celebrations, and many more activities organised by individuals - well done to all of them.

The outgoing CO, Lt Col David Hudson, receives the Regt flag from RSM Griffiths

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SN Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM **WO2(SSM) PA Reed**

After a busy period of BOWMAN trg exs on Salisbury Plain, the Sqn took a well-earned break, deploying to Penally Trg Camp, Tenby, for a week of AT on EX DRAGON SURF. We were treated to kayaking, mountain biking, climbing, land yachting, clay pigeon shooting, orienteering, and coastal walking - all set against the beautiful sandy beaches of South Wales. If only the weather had been as well organised!

Sigs Donaldson and **Vine** recently took part in the 61st Anniversary Celebrations of D-day in Normandy, doing a number of parades and a charity walk along the length of the landing beaches. They, along with other members of the Regt, did a thoroughly professional job, and are already looking forward to next year.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Smith**
SSM **WO2 Mark Gilbert**

CORPSAAM/DIVSAAM - *by 2Lt Duncan Reader*

The Shooting Team, led by **SSgt Steve Foord** deployed on EX FIRST SHOOT on 11 March for an initial brief and zeroing of rifles on Bulford Ranges. Once the cobwebs had been cleared out, and after a week's Easter leave, the Team arrived at Brunswick Camp on 29 March, where we could use the competition ranges and run through the practices in the 2 weeks leading up to CORPSAAM. Many early starts and cold afternoons later, and lighter to the tune of 15,000 rounds, the Team felt confident entering the event, with good personal scores achieved during the trg.

After a slightly wobbly start on the Monday, the nerves settled as the firers began to get into their stride as the week progressed. With two competition shoots a day, there was time in the schedule for a visit to the weapons stand, which featured many Heckler and Koch variants and more antique rifles. With the Ghurkhas running away with the Competition's top six places, 3 Div Sig Regt was working towards a respectable ninth out of 24 teams, the issue in the balance being the top female shot.

Sig Price had finished level pegging with a female competitor from 16 Sig Regt, and after comparing scores from the Roberts Cup, took the prize by a single point.

The trg for DIVSAAM began on 29 April, with an uncertain start due to key members being struck down with mumps. This left the Team with only just over a week's worth of full trg before the event. Luckily, the shoots themselves were mostly the same as those in CORPSAAM, so it was more a case of refreshing, rather than having to start again from scratch.

The additions included the Para Cup, involving a 2-mile run with webbing and rifle to the start line, a route that after many afternoons, is no doubt now etched in the minds of the Team.

The event began on 18 May, with everyone now thankfully fully fit. Throughout the 3 days, there was very much hanging in the balance, with top slots all fairly closely packed. Although there were mostly good shoots, and the Team members were showing improvement on the same practices as the CORPSAAM, our place seemed uncertain, and the chance of going to the Army shooting competition at Bisley rather distant.

However, we were relieved to find that we had made 5th out of 17 teams, and had gained a place at Bisley. Special mention must go to **Cpl Doran**, who in both CORPSAAM and DIVSAAM, achieved the best overall score for the team; and many thanks to **SSgt Foord**, for organising and coaching the Team throughout the two Competitions.

EXERCISE ARABIAN SOLDIER - *by Lt Marcus Speed*

Between 15 and 20 May, 222 Sig Sqn travelled up to Wretham Camp in STANTA trg area to conduct their ITD camp. After the Sqn were shown into the 1920s bomb shelters that they were to call home for the next week, they were split into two teams to conduct their trg in a 'round robin' of lessons.

LCpl Bruin taught the first lesson, recognition - a rather long PowerPoint presentation. The next day saw the Sqn divided between map reading and a BPFA around a farmer's field - and a huge dung pile! Map reading was well taught once again, by **LCpl Bruin**, and his techniques were later to be used for Orienteering during the week. At the end of the day, the Sqn retired to the bar, to talk about their new-found knowledge over a few cans.

Orienteering was spread over two days, and covered some of the county's flattest land - with a trig point at a mighty 56m! This should have been a demonstration of everything the Sqn had learned, but the rescue heli was almost called a few times, especially for **Sig Butterfield** and **Sig Baines**, who got lost for two hrs in one grid square! Tuesday was split with Group 1 doing NBC and Group 2 doing First Aid. Yet again, **LCpl Bruin** was instructing First Aid, along with **Cpl Craddock**. NBC was headed up by **Lt Lowe** and a selection of Seniors, all keen to test our drills with an ample supply of CS. Both groups learned theory in the morning, with practical lessons in the afternoon, which was greatly enjoyed by all, being a bit different from the norm. First Aid saw a fighting patrol coming across an ambushed LR with multiple casualties to treat. I believe the amount of fake blood used has now caused a national shortage. The casualties were all really well made up, especially **LCpl Smith** and **2Lt Hodges**.

The NBC practical was in four sections; Romeo 4 PT, the chamber, a field ex, and a very interesting lesson on MCAD and LCAD with **Sgt Knowles**. The ex phase was well presented once **YofS Parks** and **Sgt Barrett** had worked out which was the dangerous end of the CS aerosol! Thursday morning was time for the BCFT, which was very successful. The afternoon saw the Padre and **Capt Taylor** educate us on moral understanding and equal opportunities, which made for a heated and an often blue ending to the week.

Following the last lessons, the Sqn celebrated with a smoker, including skits performed by every block, and a few bar games. For some reason, **Cpl Harle** and **LCpl Walton** seemed to be the focus of most of the skits, and praise must go to **Cpl Cridge** for his rat impression - or was it a Havoc?

EXERCISE PERRIS DRAGON - SKYDIVING IN CALIFORNIA

EX PERRIS DRAGON was a level 3 AT exped to Perris Valley in California, and was run through the Black Knights Balloon and Parachute Display Team. The exped consisted of both Military and Civilian personnel from across all three Services, the biggest exped I had ever seen, with over 50 personnel. I was glad to be responsible for only the 7 members from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt!

Having conducted the necessary ground trg the previous day at the JSPC Netheravon, the exped in its entirety met up on the morning of the 5 February 05. After a short drive to Heathrow, it was then on to one of the biggest and most luxurious flights I have ever experienced. With unlimited drinks (yes, alcoholic), and of course, the ultimate in entertainment systems, it was clear to see why **Sgt Tony Goodman**, the CI and exped organiser, had chosen to fly with Virgin Atlantic. That and the fact he flew First Class for all the bookings he had given them!

Arriving at Los Angeles International with a few sore heads, it was then time to catch our next flight, the Twin Otter aircraft that had been sent to fly us from the Airport to the drop zone. Like VIPs on a private jet, we were greeted with yet more beer and for many, an insight into the plane that for many would transport them to altitude for their first ever skydive!

The first week saw the AFF programme kick into action, and after some refresher trg, **Cpl Birchall**, **LCpl Sheridon** and **Sigs Blair**, **Gorton** and **Lyons** were soon heading for 13,000ft. The week saw some extraordinary sights, including **Sig Blair's** attempt to skydive on her back whilst knocking both of her instructors spinning (available on DVD for those who are interested), and some facial expressions in freefall that would scare almost any enemy. Whilst the AFF was being conducted, experienced jumpers were banging in as many jumps as they could, some even getting 10 jumps in a day. **Sgt Nealey** completed his A Licence, and qualified for his packing certificate, and I started to learn to Formation Skydive with my coach, **Barry Joss** – only 74 yrs of age.

Two skydivers gently grimacing at each other

After a week of hard skydiving, it was time to explore, and so the first weekend was spent in San Diego's Gas Lamp District. With all the shops, bars and nightclubs you could ever want, it made for both an interesting and expensive weekend for all, although we still found enough cash to explore the Navy and Marine Exchanges (huge military shopping centres that don't charge tax!).

Week 2 saw most AFF students complete all 8 levels of the syllabus, leaving them the rest of the week and the following one to complete the 10 consolidation jumps they needed to achieve their A Licence. The experienced jumpers started to get crazier in their jumping, and so we saw some low altitude hop and pops (jump out and pull), as well as some amusing tube and rodeo exits from altitude (13,000ft). **Sgt Colin Nealey's** Formation Skydiving coaching saw me qualify as a Formation Skydiver Grade 1, which was celebrated by throwing me into the Drop Zone swimming pool fully clothed. Cheers, guys!

With many of the other units flying home on the Saturday, 5 of us decided to bear the traffic and head for Las Vegas. Despite none of us having ever been before, we all knew of Las Vegas's reputation. As we pulled into the hotel on a rainy Friday night, with a 6hr journey behind us, most of us would normally have been thinking about hitting the sack. But then this wasn't just 'anywhere else', this was Vegas. And so after a quick shower and change, we set out to discover the delights of The Strip. 48 hrs later, with little sleep, empty wallets, sore heads and hundreds of stories to tell, we set off home.

The final week of the exped saw 3 of the 5 AFF students complete their A Licence to become qualified skydivers. **Sgt Nealey** completed much of both his IC1 (Individual Canopy Grade 1) and FS1 (Formation Skydiving Grade 1), while I had completed over 50 jumps, 1hr in freefall and gained valuable

experience in a number of disciplines, including my FS1 qualification. A successful exped, enjoyed by all, and one I would recommend to anyone interested in getting into the sport. Details of the Black Knight's Balloon and Parachute Display Team expeditions can be found online at www.skydivegunners.co.uk.

EXERCISE PAINE CIRCUIT DRAGON

It was an excited group of 9 members of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt who met up on 22 January 05 to trek the Torres del Paine circuit in southern Patagonia, Chile. After a year's waiting, the day had finally come, and now there was only the little matter of 3 flights and a long bus trip standing between the trek and us. 2 days later, we were safely installed in a hostel in Puerto Natales, the gateway town to the Torres del Paine national park. After an admin day spent desperately trying to reduce the weight in our rucksacks, we were up bright and early to catch the bus to the Park entrance to embark on the 10-day trek.

The first day saw us climb steadily up to a viewpoint looking out over the 3 granite towers that give the park its name. Equipped for whatever extremes the unpredictable Patagonian climate could throw at us, and carrying 10 days worth of food, we immediately began to question the wisdom of completing the trek unsupported. 5 hrs later, as we reached the viewpoint, all such negative thoughts disappeared, and we gazed at one of the most spectacular sights in the world.

As the days passed, and we covered mile after mile of the circuit, we consoled ourselves with the thought that every time we ate anything, it meant less weight to carry. The walking was certainly hard work, but the ever-changing scenery more than made up for it. Blessed with glorious weather, we walked from woodland to prairie, from marshland to mountain passes, and alongside huge glaciers. **LCpl Danny Mountford** kept us entertained when he disappeared up to his waist in mud whilst negotiating one of the

The three granite towers of Torres del Paine

marshes, and **Sgt Jones** and **Capt Sophie Howe** continued to tell porkies about just how far there was to go! As the weight decreased, our pace quickened, and by Day 6, we were flying round the circuit. On the afternoon of the ninth day, we completed the circuit ahead of schedule, exhausted but extremely proud of our achievement. The next day, we made our way back to Puerto Natales to enjoy a couple of days of well-earned R and R. For our last day, we took a boat trip back out into the National Park, to enjoy the scenery and the wildlife, whilst resting our still swollen feet!

It was a sad group that reluctantly made their way to the airport to begin the epic journey home. After such an incredible experience, none of us wanted to leave, and **Cpl Gary Walsh** wasn't the only one begging to be left behind in Chile. The exped was a huge success, and we returned to Bulford with memories that will last a lifetime.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

These *Wire* notes mark the end of another busy period. The Regt now has a Sqn Gp in the Balkans, and another about to deploy to Iraq. The HQ ARRC ex season also rolls along. However, the Regt continues to make time for a wide range of trg and challenging sporting events. Our thoughts are with all those either on an op tour, or about to depart on one. For those frustrated ones at remaining in Elmpt, chins up, more opportunities are on the way!

EXERCISE YOUNG LEADER

EX YOUNG LEADER, an ex designed to develop comd, leadership and teamwork skills in junior ranks, was based on a scenario that saw small terrorist groups operating in trg areas across Germany and UK, with the aim of destroying the morale of the Armed Forces, to make it impossible for them to deploy with fully trained troops on ops to the Middle East. Consequently, the Government had decided to send in troops to clear trg areas of this threat. Elements of 7 Sig Regt and 16 Sig Regt had been warned off for this mission, with the main objective to ensure the security and integrity of Haltern Trg area.

A productive first week was spent in Camp, going through a series of leadership development tasks. Essays on leadership and balloon debates were just some of the tools used to start the troops thinking along the right lines. A progressive PT programme built up from a gentle boot run around the area, and culminated in an 8km burden retrieval, with everything from sand filled floppies and logs, to ash poles and tyres needing recovery. These PT sessions were an excellent opportunity to begin bonding the sections together, and getting them working as a team before they began the basic mil skills revision. This consisted of two days of field lessons conducted by the Tp Cpls, with an introduction shakeout ex at the end. The troops successfully deployed into the field, and then continued with the more progressive mil skills trg. Evening recce patrols successfully located an enemy defensive position, before a daring dawn attack to destroy it.

Just the thing for Parade Ground boots!

A quick recovery to bks allowed for essential admin, and the int picture continued to grow, with video footage of potential hostages captured by the enemy. New deployment orders were issued for a 09.00hrs departure from camp onto the trg area. It came as somewhat a surprise when everyone was roused at 04.00hrs for another int update. The enemy, led by their infamous OC, **Sheik Or'lik mar Sarlami**, had staged a daring raid and infiltrated the camp loc. Lots of shouting and screaming followed, and the Sheik's men had taken a number of hostages. Blindfolded and loaded into 4-tonners, they were saved from a fate worse than death only by an audacious ambush staged by the ex DS. There was quick return to camp before a controlled exit of the now insecure base loc, to take the fight back to the enemy!

This final 4-day ex gave each participant the opportunity to assume the role of section comd or 2IC. A very good standard of orders was reached, with most soldiers developing to the point were they could clearly and confidently brief their plan to their section, before carrying out a successful mission. These missions ranged from simple recce patrols, to RTAs with potential enemy in the area, all combining to allow different individuals to be put under the spotlight to see their reactions under pressure.

The ex drew to a close with a Regtl-style dinner night back at Haltern Camp, where the presentation of Best Field Student was awarded to **Sig Michael Rose** and Best Overall Student to **LCpl Luke Watson**. It had been an excellent ex, allowing individuals to identify and develop their natural leadership potential - a valuable stepping-stone for future career courses and personal development.

EXERCISE YOUNG LEADER - A SOLDIER'S VIEW
– by Sig Adam Milson

The ex began as most do, with three ranks of LCpls and Sigs, predominantly from 231 Sig Sqn, being told by **WO2 (SSM) Dixon** 'We're not here to mess you about.' But no one knew what the following two weeks had in store for us. All we were told was that EX YOUNG LEADER would help find and build on our leadership qualities.

So, on Day 1, it didn't come as a great surprise to anyone when we were woken at around 06.45hrs to do PT on the worst terrain on Haltern Trg Area. This became a daily occurrence, followed by lessons including Fieldcraft, Navigation, Debating and Essay writing. Unsurprisingly, balloon debates (convincing everyone else to let you stay in a falling hot air balloon) quickly became a favourite, bringing people out of their shells and helping lift morale for the challenges we were to face during Week 2.

The second week started with a one-day ex, where we practised harbour drills, section attacks and patrol techniques. All was going well, until a certain member of the DS decided to set a field alight with a mini flare! After a day turning kit round, we were back in the field after being taken hostage, this time with enemy headed by **SSgt Kidd,** using some very intimidating tactics (with a megaphone)! Everyone got a chance to be in a comd appointment, and a lot of constructive criticism was given out, and a lot was learned by all.

All of this trg culminated in a final attack on a heavily-defended position, where all three sections were used to overrun the enemy, achieving the objective sought throughout the ex.

Once all kit had been handed in and everyone had showered, the end of course dinner and prizegiving began. All in all, most who participated in the course enjoyed the experience, and can't wait for the next one to begin!

LANYARD TROPHY 2005

The finish of this year's ski season in February would supposedly see most soldiers hanging up their Helly Hansens for a few months' well-deserved rest. Little did they know that they were soon to be thrust into prep for the Lanyard Trophy. The potential Male and Female teams began with a progressive programme of early morning PT and afternoon tabs to improve endurance and robustness. This also showed who had the commitment to complete the trg - and surprisingly, many did.

With a distinct lack of contour features in the area of Elmpt, productive leg strength trg was rather difficult to find. So both teams headed independently for the Harz Mountains. Based from the Torfhaus Multi Activity Lodge, the Female Team covered plenty of ground over three quality mountain days, whilst the Male Team balanced some extremely tough PT sessions in the morning, with afternoons of hard tabbing.

The boys' week culminated with a long tab up the Brocken, a 600m climb, topped with an old East German listening post.

The Teams then moved to Otterburn Camp in Northumbria for two weeks pre-trg and route recces of the area. This provided an excellent opportunity to select the final ten men and eight women for the teams, and allowed every potential route between CPs to be walked and compared. Unfortunately, the fastest routes tended to be those that crossed the most contour lines... No real surprises there, then.

At 05.00hrs D-Day, the 35-mile loop of Otterburn Trg Area with a 20kg Bergen began - no dramas! A few routes had to be re-planned at the last minute to avoid the out-of-bounds areas, but then no plan survives first contact...

The Men's Team look tight on the way to CP10

For the boys, the first two CPs flew by in a superb time, but it couldn't last: the first team member had to be dropped with a twisted ankle from the rough terrain. A fresh burst of speed following an admin pit-stop took them to the northern end of the trg area, were the real hills waited.

Morale hit a low point when faced with a couple of climbs, but the admin team strived to keep the Team watered and fed, boosting spirits whenever possible. A bad set of blisters meant

we lost one more team member before heading to the eastern edge of the area, for the final push home. With only eight men left, and the light dying, the Male Team crossed the finish line at 22.30 hrs.

The girls also motored through the first few CPs, determined to keep their good reputation. Dropping two team members early on through injury, just six remained to face the northern end alone. With a steady and determined team, they battled through the low point of being knee deep in stinking bog.

The CO and RSM support the Girls' Team on the way in

Each member fought against blisters, Bergen rub and the sweltering heat, but unfortunately, for safety reasons the Team was stopped with all other remaining teams at CP12 at 23.00hrs. They had been going for 18 hrs.

After a very long day, everyone fell straight into a well-earned bed. Although the girls were disappointed not to finish, every last person is eager for next year's competition, with times to beat and scores to settle.

EXERCISE SILVER CHILD V – THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

EX SILVER CHILD V sees the end of a year's charity fund-raising by 7 Sig Regt and Elmpt Station for both Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital and local children's charities in Elmpt Station and the surrounding area. Two teams of eight soldiers from 7 and 16 Sig Regts ran and cycled from Sutton Coldfield, just outside Birmingham, to Broken Gate Lane on the outskirts of Aylesbury on 6 and 7 May 05, a distance of over 100 miles.

Day 1 commenced with 7 Sig Regt winning the toss and choosing to mountain bike the first 33 miles, with a six competitors cycling at any one time. 16 Sig Regt started by running the first 33 miles with two competitors on the ground. 7 Sig Regt then left the mountain bikes at the halfway point, for 16 Sig Regt to take over. At the end of Day 1, 7 Sig Regt had a comfortable 45min lead. Day 2 involved a 42-mile run with 3 members of the team on the ground.

16 Sig Regt was given a thirty min lead to allow the two teams to compete against each other. Unfortunately for them, even this lead could not contend with the blistering pace maintained by 7 Sig Regt. The final times over the two days were 7 Sig Regt, 11hrs 09mins 46secs, and 16 Sig Regt, 13hrs 04mins 00secs. Both of these two times have set a new record for the fastest and second fastest times to complete this 108 mile course.

Each individual team member had raised 300 in sponsorship, and during the two-day build up, collection boxes were placed around the different Depts on the Station, whilst the admin team went collecting around the local towns of Nuneaton, Warwick and

Looking strong, Maj Boyle and Sgt Corstophine stride it out

Bicester. To promote the cause, the girls got decked up in fancy dress, much to the amusement of the local population.

The net result, including the year's fund raising by Elmpt Station, has raised over 42,000, and collected over 100 toys for Great Ormond Street Hospital. On Sunday 8 May, the two teams and admin staff visited GOSH, where they were met by the Fundraising Co-ordinator, **Joan Kearns**, who gave them a tour of some of the hospital ground floor.

12 of the team members also visited the Parrot Ward (Neurosurgery) and the Tiger Ward (Craniofacial), where they gave out a number of toys to children, with **Hannah Bales**, 10yrs old, from London, receiving a giant Scooby Doo Teddy. Over lunch, **Capt Chris Hymas** the event co-ordinator presented GOSH with the money collected and presented the winning team, 7 Sig Regt, with their trophies.

Hannah Bales receives a Scooby Doo teddy

Team Captain for 7 Sig Regt, **Maj Mick Boyle**, at 45 yrs, the oldest competitor to ever take part in this event, when asked what his thoughts were on the endurance aspect on the event said, 'Bring it on!' Before leaving to take on the role of QM in Cyprus, **Capt Chris Hymas**, the EX SILVER CHILD coordinator, has laid down the gauntlet for EX SILVER CHILD VI - Elmpt Station versus Cyprus Garrison. 'Bring it on!'

Further information on SILVER CHILD is available at www.silverchild.info and further information on GOSH is available at **www.gosh.org**.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM	**WO1 J Reid**

We at 14 Sig Regt (EW) are considering making a challenge to 30 Sig Regt's claim of Premier Regt in Royal Signals. Since the last edition of *The WIRE*, in addition to maintaining all our enduring ops and Very High Readiness commitments, we deployed an extra Tp to Iraq with about two weeks' notice. Sqn exs to maintain our edge, and trial new equipt have continued apace, and 226 Sig Sqn deployed to Sierra Leone on a brand new ex in double quick time. This hasn't prevented some excellent AT, support to the local community, and some pretty impressive socials. And all this on the edge of Wales!

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Williams**
SSM	**WO2 Linton**

PARACHUTING – *2Lt Dave Carter*

On Monday 7 March, Comms Tp set off to Germany for two weeks of parachuting. After a late arrival and very few hrs sleep, we were ready for an early start and the intensive trg which went before the first jump. Phase 1 consisted largely of watching videos of what other students had done wrong - which in **2Lt Carter's** opinion was agreeing to jump out of an aeroplane in the first place. As the days wore on, the snow on the DZ refused to melt, leading to rising hopes amongst the students that perhaps we might not be able to jump. Luckily, on the fourth day, it went, and we were loaded up for our first jump.

Having missed their plane, Comms Tp go for a tab instead

According to the instructors, each jump consisted of a set routine: Sit in plane, move to door, jump, arch, and shout: 'One thousand, two thousand, three thousand, four thousand, check canopy!' In fact the sequence consisted of: Sit in plane, edge towards the door and a sharp push, whilst shouting 'One thousand, Two… Sh*t!' **Sig John Butler** was the only exception, getting through the sequence so quickly that he was convinced he had a malfunction, and had his hand on the reserve cord by the time his parachute started to open. Posture also left a little to be desired, with most suffering spasm attacks whilst staring madly at the ground. **2Lt Carter** was helped through the process by **Sig Ash Body**, who pointed out that if he failed to jump, he would never hear the end of it.

Luckily all jumpers were on static line, and so a complete disregard for all trg failed to claim any casualties. From Jump Two onwards however, we were packing our own parachutes – things were getting serious. Brows began to sweat as the sum of our cognitive capacities was devoted to folding material. Nine hours later, and the brave ones were ready to put their material handling skills to the test. Surprisingly, all survived.

EXERCISE WINDY SAIL APRIL - *by Cpl 'Bing' Crosby*

Members of the Regtl MT donned life jackets and equipped themselves with sea legs (at least that's what they thought), and under the instruction of **Sgt Dave Sangster** of JSASTC at Gosport, the six sea pirates underwent a Competent Crewman's course around the Solent area and the Isle of Wight. The course consisted of knot tying, mooring, basic yacht sailing, identifying parts of the yacht, and the art of ' home cooking' on board the yacht. Actually, the lads managed to cook hot meals fit for **Adm**

Our salty dogs, Sig Watts, Sig McLeister, LCpl Challis, Sig Bissicks, and Sig Alone

Lord Nelson himself!
The five day and night course was great fun, but definitely a different pace of life for us all, and we were glad to set foot on land again. Nobody wanted to join the Royal Navy anyway! All the lads passed with flying colours, and some may go on to higher qualifications in this swashbuckling adventure.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CN Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 R Burrows**

EXERCISE DEVIL'S TOPPER

In the space of three very short months, a joint overseas trg ex was organised between elements of 226 Sig Sqn and the Royal Sierra Leonean Armed Forces. This is ongoing as I write. The ex will provide the Sqn and the new SCARUS EW equipt with experience in a jungle environment. Photos to follow!

MEWT COURSE

This course was undertaken by members of 640 Tp during 20-25 February. The aim was to train students in the operation of the SCARUS EW system and the Mobile Electronic Warfare Troop (MEWT) concept of ops. We deployed to Salisbury on a cold Sunday, and set about theory lessons on Selection, Occupation and Defence of Comms sites and First Aid. As if to ram the point home, the cold weather injuries brief was given by a SSgt in just a T-shirt at -2°C!

Day 2 was more lessons on the SCARUS equipt and theory, and practical anti-ambush drills, which provided plenty of laughs at the RAF's attempts at Fire and Manoeuvre! A navex that night, which encompassed 18km and 6 waypoints, was enjoyed by most, with one or two waypoints proving a real challenge.

The next day was spent learning more about Fieldcraft and other theory lessons on EW in prep for the culmination of the course, a two-day ex. The dets set out at 04.00hrs, with the snow and temperature falling. An accident helped put the trg into a good on-the-spot test, which was passed with flying colours! All aspects of the theory lessons were put into practice, and ample opportunity was provided to 'brass up' the enemy! With the Tp moving to being a lighter and more mobile asset, this course provided the partaking personnel with an excellent insight into how EW may be used by 226 Sqn in the 21st Century.

MAES-Y-BONT ANIMAL SANCTUARY

226 Sig Sqn continues to show its compassionate side by lending a helping hand at the Many Tears Animal Sanctuary at Maes-y-Bont in Carmarthenshire. Their regular visits have provided the much-needed muscle to tackle successfully a variety of projects, all aimed at improving conditions for a variety of rescued animals. No job has been too big, small (or dirty) for the ever-resourceful volunteers, who have worked tirelessly on undertakings such as heavy-duty drainage laying and concreting. All tasks (normally the reserve of professional, and very expensive tradesmen) have been dispatched quickly and efficiently, in the manner expected of 226 Sig Sqn! The Sqn project is ongoing and we aim to visit once a month.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj PR Flavell**
SSM	**WO2 Tobell**

EXERCISE FOXES DAWN – *Cpl Jamie Matthews*

It all started on a cold, frosty winters morn' in the deepest, darkest corner of Wales! The Fighting 237 Sig Sqn rolled out of Cawdor Bks in our now extremely well-maintained fleet all the way to the airfield - just outside the perimeter fence! As we lined up in packet order, we had already lost our first veh, courtesy of our RAF comrades.

We had our obligatory driver-comd briefs from our illustrious MT Sgt, **Sgt Barker** before setting off, which included the usual 'Make sure your tanks are full and you're carrying SOP fuel.' Of course, after we set off, the MT Sgt broke down, due to a lack of fuel!

After the first week on SPTA, we were kicked out of one of our locs by the Cadets (ACF not RMAS)! The second week we moved to Sennybridge via Birmingham. After an extra long drive, we got there about 17hrs later, raring to get into the war phase. As you can guess, we won the war, and then returned to Brawdy with an extra long weekend as a reward for making the kit work in the field.

VE DAY CELEBRATIONS – *Cpl Gaz Ward*

On Sunday 8 May, members of 237 Sig Sqn's High Readiness Tp travelled to Neyland to attend the VE Day celebrations. The day consisted of a Church Service followed by refreshments at Neyland Athletics Club.

The Church Service was enjoyed by all, especially when a children's choir acted as WW2 evacuees. A mixture of songs from the time of the war, and hymns were accompanied by Neyland's female choir.

After the Service, the Parade formed up and marched to the Cenotaph, where **Lt Keith Fensome** laid a wreath, then marched on to the Athletics Club.

The female choir put on a 1950's style sing-along, which was enthusiastically but not tunefully accompanied by **LCpl Matt Jones**. **Lt Fensome** initiated relations with the locals when he was abused by a youngster, who repeatedly beat him with balloons. When he was threatened with a spell in Colchester, the youngster quickly changed his attitude. **LCpl Chris Anderson** spent most of the afternoon exchanging war stories with his age group, the veterans. A good time was had by all, Civilians and Military, on this special day.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Jason Renshaw**

VETERANS' VISIT

SSgt Swannick and **Sgt Pond** recently hosted thirty-three WW2 veterans on behalf of the Regt. They had all been involved in OP MARKET GARDEN and had been attending Remembrance Services, Liberation festivities and battlefield tours in Holland. **Mrs Barton** and the year 3 and 4 students at Bruggen School also benefited from a question and answer session with the veterans, to help with their WW2 projects. For many of the veterans it was their first time back to Germany after the War, and it was quite emotional and exciting for them. They stayed in the Officers' Mess and, despite being elderly, were always the last to leave the bar.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mark Schofield**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Andrew Morris**

The Sqn is currently deployed on EX LION SUN. More later.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj John Collyer**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ben Batley**

The first half of 2005 has been a busy one on all fronts for 230 Sig Sqn. We were welcomed into the New Year with a very frosty EX AMBER GAMBIT, which helped develop first aid and NBC skills, and, despite freezing temperatures, the Sqn actually enjoyed it.

The next few weeks were taken up by EXs LONG JAVELIN and CELTIC SHOT, which were trg and testing exercises that gave many of the Sqn a valued insight into other areas of comms life that many of us don't often see.

Next was the much-anticipated FIBUA Battle Camp, EX SHARP DAGGER. The comms equipt was left at home, and everyone adopted the role of their favourite war hero, to immerse themselves in the scenario to the fullest. In the end, the good guys won, and half the world's reserve of brass was collected in record time. On the sporting side, the Sqn achieved a runaway victory at this year's Leicester Trophy, with a staggering display of athleticism from all participants of the Sqn team.

We have had a very busy period for postings in and out. We welcome **Lt McDonagh**, **SSgt Wilson**, **Sgt Parker**, **Cpl Andrews**, **LCpls Hayes**, **Ball**, **Bradley**, **Jelf** and **Tuck**, and **Sigs Budgen**, **Rothwell**, **Colleti**, **Mahaddy-Iddins**, **Tranter**, **McLachlan**, **Bishoprick**, **Pun**, **Earles** and **Paine**. And we say farewell to **Lt Bates**, **Cpl Green**, **LCpls Hughes** and **Kerr**, and **Sigs Shepperd** and **Townsend**. Congratulations to **Sgt Knowles** and **Sgt Francis**, both successful in their Sgt to SSgt promotion board; and to newly-promoted **LCpls Gregory**, **Kerr**, **Tyrell** and **Welch**. Congratulations also to **Cpl Brady** and his wife, **Kerry** for the birth of **Liam**; and to **LCpl Dale** and his wife **Mel**, who has recently given birth to **Millie**.

230 Sig Sqn also say a final farewell to **Sig Danny McDonough**, who sadly passed away this year. People who bring so much happiness to so many are rare, and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Tim Cooper**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Andy Jones**

DEPLOYEX

As well as a staff ex and a comms ex, DEPLOYEX was also a movement practice for the ARRC's deployment to Afghanistan next year. Most of the Sqn were based at RSC on Beckingham Camp, with only a small H Tp contingent with 7 Sig Regt at Fwd. It was a successful ex, although the OC, **Maj Tim Cooper**, has a tendency to press buttons to 'see what they do', and so had to be watched closely by **Sgt Renshaw** and his team of Techs. **SSgt Brown** and **WO2(FofS) Riley** were on a moments notice to move with the imminent arrival of their respective babies. We congratulate **SSgt Brown** on the birth of **Elizabeth**, while the Foreman still eagerly awaits his new arrival.

H TROOP IN BRUNEI

On 15 April, ten members of H Tp deployed to Brunei under 10 Sig Regt, to update the comms infrastructure of Brunei Garrison. The team was ready for the work, but not ready for the heat, half of them looking like red lobsters. They were also attacked by a variety of creatures, ranging from giant ants to lizards, to jumping spiders and psychopathic crabs. But they wish to thank OC, Queens Gurkha Signals for hosting them.

Sig Whittaker up the pole in Brunei

LANYARD TROPHY

After a 02.30hrs wake-up call, the teams crossed the start line at 05.00 hrs. Our Female Team put in an excellent performance, chasing 11 Sig Regt around Otterburn Trg Area on what was a hot day and a gruelling course. They finished second in the Female category, completing the course in 19 hrs 52 mins. The final six to finish were **2Lt Bill**, **Sgt Herbert**, **Cpl Cartmell**, **LCpl Ball**, **Sig Turvey** and **Sig Selkirk**.

The Male Team also put in an admirable performance, coming 7th out of 31 teams, and finishing in 17 hrs 51 mins. The final eight to finish were **Capt Crinnion**, **SSgt Christie**, **LCpl Wood**, **Sig Chadwick**, **Sig Howland**, **Sig McLachlen**, **Sig Panayiotou** and **Sig Pun.** A large part of the Teams' success can be attributed to the awesome admin support, headed up by **SSgt Cartledge**, who got us in and out of the admin CPs at a rapid rate, and organised our recce time on the area before the competition. We are also grateful for the encouragement shown by **Maj Drain**, **Maj Collyer** and the RSM, who all showed up to cheer us on.

The Female Lanyard Trophy Team being presented with their runners up trophies by the SOinC(A)

HOCKEY - *by WO2(YofS) Emsen*

After a slow start to the season due to heavy work commitments, hockey finally took off in the Regt, mainly thanks to the efforts of **WO2(YofS) Emsen** and **Capt Yogi Cauldwell**. Trg took place twice weekly, with both the Yeoman and **Capt Neil Taylor** passing on their skills. After a fantastic display against the Lancers in an early round of the Army Cup, the Regtl side made it through to the final stages of the BA(G) Major Units competition. The event followed a league system ending with a final match between the two best sides. After a hard fought match against HQ ARRC Sp Bn, the team went down by 2 goals. During the match, **LCpl Gillett** made some outstanding saves, keeping the score respectable; and were it not for some poor finishing by our own attack, the outcome could have been very different.

All now rested on the game against 1(UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, with 16 Sig Regt coming out worthy winners, thanks to a well-taken penalty corner by **Maj Paul Bosher**. The final was a repeat of the opening match, and HQ ARRC finally produced a performance that they had been threatening all day, ending up as worthy winners of the competition. A special mention should go to **LCpls Gillett** and **Fraser**, who as a result of their excellent performances, were asked to return to UK to represent the Corps.

BRADBURY CUP GOLF - *by Sgt Taylor*

The Bradbury Cup 2005 was keenly contested on a glorious spring day in April on the West Rhine Golf Course. Our appreciation is once again extended to Culpeck Insurance for their kind sponsorship, and without whom the event would not be possible. The strongest ever field of 58 golfers enjoyed good company and witnessed some fine golf on a well-prepared course.

The results were as follows:

Winner	**WO2 Daz Luckett** REME	33 pts	Scratch Stableford
Runner Up	**Maj Paul Bosher** Royal Signals	31 pts	Scratch Stableford
Third Place	**Sgt Trev Cook** REME	28 pts	Scratch Stableford
H'cap Winner	**WO1 Jason Renshaw** Royal Signals	40 pts	H'cap Stableford
Runner Up	**Sgt Martin Middleton** RAMC	35 pts	H'cap Stableford
Third Place	**Cpl Alan Stephen** REME	34 pts	H'cap Stableford

A special presentation was made to **Col (Retd) Sam Wyatt**, for his continued support over the last 30 years to Royal Signals golf in Germany. **Sam** has donated glass tankards engraved with the Royal Signals insignia at both spring and autumn meetings here in Germany throughout this period. Last year, at the age of 80, he represented the Corps in two league fixtures against the AGC and Infantry.

SWIMMING

Thanks to the trg held every morning by **WO2 Brett**, the Regt swam like dolphins in the recent BA(G) Swimming Championships. The Male Team came first, and the Female Team were runners up. Notable wins were by **Lt Ollie Lees** - 50m Freestyle, **LCpl Davies** - 50m Butterfly and **Sig Vale** - 100m Breaststroke. The 4 x 50m freestyle and medley relays were won by the Regt. The Water Polo Team also emerged victorious, with a 4-1 win in the final.

The*16 Sig Regt Swimming Team*

There were exceptional performances by **WO2 Brett**, **Capt Si Lord**, **Cpl Rousell**, **Cpl Buckingham**, **LCpl Davies**, **Sig Griffiths** and **Sig Vale**.

EXERCISE ALLGAU JAVELIN - *by WO2 (YofS) Emsen*

With the upcoming cycling and triathlon season fast approaching, 6 members of Javelin Bks Cycle Club embarked on a weeklong trg exped in Bavaria from 24 – 29 April. It was based in a small town near Sonthoffen, Bolsterlang, where the local hospitality was exceptional. The event was organised by **WO2(YofS) Pete Emsen** of 255 Sig Sqn, with the main emphasis of the camp focused on the novice riders in the club. The trg throughout the week was designed to be progressive, culminating in a final stage of 100km over some very arduous terrain.

Each day, trg sessions were set out by **WO2(SSM) Andy Jones**, to ensure that the novice riders were competent prior to the big climbs later in the week. The highlight of the week was on the Thursday, when the group tackled the Riederpass, a 600m climb in only 4km, with gradients reaching 22% on parts of the hill. This proved to be very challenging, with everyone eventually reaching the 1,420m summit (with only one pushing!). Coming down proved to be equally challenging, with speeds of over 60kmph being recorded on the 10km descent. During the 5 days, nearly 400km was covered, most of which seemed to be uphill.

The camp was a great success, with both **LCpl Luck** and **Sig Rea** performing extremely well, especially as complete novices. **Cpl Phil Brown** tried his hardest to knock **Cpl Nicky Wilkinson** off her bike, but only succeeded in getting 'road rash'. The group is now very much looking forward to the 'no hills' of Bruggen.

The Allgau Javelin group

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Hancock**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CADRE COURSE

The main aim of the 3-week course is to refresh and develop leadership qualities to assess soldiers' potential as JNCOs.

30 soldiers started on 17 April, but the initial testing stage reduced numbers to 21. The first week was in camp, focusing mainly on refreshing and advancing soldier's basic skills. Once the classroom part was finished we travelled down to Nescliffe for EX SHAKEDOWN, 3 days in the field, putting all the classroom side into practice

The hardest part was yet to come, the final ex on Nescliffe trg area. All lessons in the classroom and in the field were now to be put into practice and assessed by the DS.

After ENDEX, we travelled back to Bramcote for the final pass-off the following day, in front of the Regt. Top Student was awarded to **Sig Thomas**.

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JHN Harrington**
Sgt Maj **WO2 Tesharjang Gurung**

As usual, an extremely busy period for 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, with a Sqn FIBUA battle camp, EX URBAN KUKURI, an ABTF ex with 16 Air Asslt Bde, EX EAGLES STRIKE, the arrival of CORMORANT and the British Tp Comds managing to squeeze in their SLP(2) Nepali course in Nepal. The Sqn has said farewell to **WO2(FofS) CJ Heath**, who is posted to 2 Sig Regt on promotion and welcomes **WO2(FofS) J Collins**. Last but not least, congratulations to both British Tp Comds on their recent promotion to Lt.

EXERCISE URBAN KUKHRI

On 8 May 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed to a dry but slightly nippy STANTA trg area for EX URBAN KUKHRI. Practical trg started with harbour drills, section battle drills and platoon attacks. Ambushes were rehearsed and the concept of FIWAF (Fighting in Woods and Forests) was introduced for the first time.

After a night or two out under the stars, we moved into the village to begin the process of trying to get a troop up into the top floor of a building. Casualty evacuation and ammo re-supply through sewers, provided a few character building moments. The highlight for most was when four ultra-keen stretcher-bearers forgot to hold onto the stretcher carrying the OC.

Primed and ready, the Sqn started offensive operations. Somehow, Tp Comd V Tp got captured whilst on patrol. It is said that this was due to a breach of OPSEC by someone.

The finale of the ex was a sequential attack with 35 Engr Regt onto Eastmere FIBUA village, accompanied by an impressive range of live demolitions to aid our progress through the heavily fortified buildings. Thanks go to **SSgt Churchward**, **Sgt Hopkins**, **Cpl Tirtha Rai**, and their team for organising a great ex which refreshed everyone's skills and added a great deal of new ones.

The attack goes in

NEPALI LANGUAGE COURSE

As part of their education for Queen's Gurkha Signals, **Lts Vaughan** and **Morris** attended the SLP(2) language course in Nepal. The first part consisted of an intensive 10 weeks of language trg in the beautiful city of Pokhara. Despite the various comms and transport problems, regular cultural visits to the lakeside area were arranged. One week was spent in an Area Welfare Centre, where there was plenty of opportunity to practise Nepali with the many welfare pensioners, who had plenty of old stories to tell.

Lt Morris conducting some EO work in Nepal

The second part of the course was a three-week trek into the foothills of the Himalayas to visit a number of Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS) projects and pensioners, and to get a sense of where the soldiers come from. Treks were either to the west (paschim) or to the east (purba). Now returned, the two officers are enthusiastically looking for any opportunity to use their Nepali, especially for telling bad jokes, 'Dui macha tankma chan!'

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Chambers**
SSM **WO2 M Eastman**

JOCOMEX ON *HMS INVINCIBLE* - *by Charlie Tp*

Our journey started early on Monday morning for the drive from Bramcote down to Portsmouth harbour. We arrived a little early and so we treated ourselves to an impromptu tour of Portsmouth and the Navy dockyard. We were met by a young seaman, who escorted us to the ship.

We were given a quick tour around the decks, and were shown the *Invincible's* main comms room. When the tour was complete, we were shown to our mess deck, (room in non-Navy speak). It was surprisingly large, with Sky TV, X-Box, PS2 and the like - and a beer fridge (empty).

We were living in the Communicators' Mess with around seven other blokes, but as they work a constant shift system, it was rarely crowded. By the time we had finished settling in, it was time for lunch in the galley (cookhouse).

Walking into the galley was like entering a bar in a spaghetti western. We were the only greens in a sea of blue. Overall, this

The early morning wake up call

was a cracking experience for me, seeing how the Navy's comms systems operators live and work. But after being at sea for less than a week, I don't have any thoughts of changing Services. I think I'm definitely a landlubber.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Hiorns**
SSM **WO2 M MacPhee**

EXERCISE ECHO DRAGON – *by Echo Tp*

EX ECHO DRAGON is a hillwalking exercise that was conducted in and around the Butteremere area of the Lake District from 24-25 May. There where 2 groups, each consisting of an MLT Instructor and 5 members of Echo Tp. Group 1, led by **Sig Matt Turner**, started off near Braithwaite and headed south. The pace was quite easy going at first, then as we started to ascend up towards Crag Hill, the heavens opened up and made going harder. After a lengthy drive to Wasdale Head, the second group, led by **Cpl Kev Smith**, started the steep climb up to Great Gable, where the weather was getting progressively worse. Group 1 then ascended Robinson, and once they were at the summit, the wind was so strong it almost blew them off their feet. Eventually, the bad weather had their jaunt called off. Group 2 had started from Honister House Youth Hostel, with a steady climb around the southern edge of Fleetwith Pike passing the slate mines. The weather was getting worse and as the group entered Buttermere, **Cpl Smith** decided to call it a day. It was certainly a tale of Gortex till Endex.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Duckworth**
SSM **WO2 M Wilford**

EXERCISE RAMPANT DRAGON

In 1971, a man named **Arthur Wainwright** embarked on a unique cross-England exped, a 192-mile trek from St Bee's Head on the Irish Sea, to Robin Hood Bay on the North Sea. We decided to do the same.

Under the comd of **Sgts Dave Owen** and **Martin Walton**, our starting 25 were broken down into 'friendship groups,' and we then hacked our way over the first 100 miles over the next 6 days. The first week of our adventure brought with it great weather, sunburnt 'baldy heeds,' and blisters. We all got to try our hand at rounding sheep, too - but only because someone left the gate open. The week also brought a welcome visit from both the CO and the RSM. I think they're still out there! The legs varied from 12fl miles to 20 miles, some of which seemed entirely uphill! At day 6 and 100 miles later, the hard work was over for many of us, and fresh feet were sent for to replace us. The instructors however were just halfway through their ordeal. Blisters were rife, and for **Cpl Martin Campbell** whose pinky fell off, the poor guy still had 92 miles to go.

Week 2 brought not-so-good weather, but what could be better for morale than the snare-drum effect of the rain hammering down your tents all night? The OC, **Maj Jon Duckworth** and the SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Wilford** came to boost our morale, together with the 2IC, **Capt Sean Keilty**, who just couldn't seem to get enough of it! **Cpl Martin Campbell** was only person to complete the whole 192 miles. It was a tremendous effort by him, made even more awe inspiring in that he started full-time Lanyard Trophy trg two days after getting back!

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

On Friday 8 April, the opening showpiece of the British Rally Championship arrived at Gamecock Bks, bringing with it more Barbour jackets and tartan-coloured flasks than you could shake a stick at. The highly dedicated Support Sqn team of race enthusiasts worked long and hard, under the comd of chief race anorak, **WO2(SSM) Coupland**, ably co-driven by **Sgts Simpson** and **Pearce**.

Having erected enough Heras fencing to envy a certain US detainee camp, the SSM found that it was six feet too far to the left, and not in perfect Pirbright-style alignment. Saturday morning saw an early start to make final preparations. The arrival of the Pirelli Girls and the ladies of the Eddie Stobart Roadshow, made it all the more worthwhile. By lunchtime, we were open to the public. The attendance was very good, and the number of stands and stalls, plus the fun fair for the kids, made for an impressive display. The camp soon filled up with the familiar smells of burning rubber, highly revved engines, and sounds of screeching tyres blasting around camp at breakneck speeds. The Regtl MT aside, the racing was pretty good as well!

The highlight of the weekend for me was being taken around the course in an MG ZR at speed. The driver didn't want to push it too hard though, as he was concerned that if he broke it, there may have been an issue obtaining Rover spares! Also, my orange issue race-suit was beginning to take on a darker hue in the nether regions. All in all it, was a spectacular event, with the added bonus of great PR from the Sky Sports half hour show coverage the following day.

Sig Macdonald British Rally Champion

EXERCISE EMERALD MERCURY – *by Foxtrot Tp*

EX EMERALD MERCURY was a CJTFHQ (Combined Joint Task Force HQ) exercise that took place in Hyderabad India from 2-20 March. The advance party left a week before the rest of the Tp, and the Staff Off contingent followed, visiting Cyprus and Oman on the way. After we had assembled the HQ, an un-seasonal mini hurricane took the tents and some of the accn apart, and the FofS almost lost his head. OC Sqn, **Maj Clive Cook** was to be seen through the entire storm in good Officer fashion, still wearing his beret. When the main party arrived boasting of a night spent in a five star hotel in Abu Dhabi, we moved into the normal running of a HQ, with the added dramas of air conditioning breaking down and Staff Offrs melting.

ARMY

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

CO **Lt Col Simon Hutchinson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Johnston**

41 (PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj John Kendall**
SSM **WO2 Ian MacKay**

MEDAL PARADE

On Tuesday 5 April, the Mayor of Croydon, **Cllr Brenda Kirby** and the Deputy Lieutenant for the Borough of Croydon, **Col Ian McRobbie** came to Coulsden to present a variety of Medals and Awards. Invited friends and family watched, as members of the Sqn, and the affiliated Cadets from 148 (PLK) Cadet Det, were recognised for their achievements. **Sgt Simon May** and **LCpl Babs Ennis** finally received their OP TELIC medals.

The proud Medal recipients

VRSMs were awarded to **Sgts Simon May** and **Julia May**, and **WO2 Ian MacKay** received a bar to his VRSM. In addition, although presented a couple of weeks earlier by **FM Sir John Chapple** at a London wide event, **Capt Debs Speakman** read the Citations for **WO2 Rob Watson** and **LCpl Babs Ennis** that earned them both a Lord Lieutenant's Certificate.

ST GEORGE'S DAY PARTY

The Sqn celebrated St George's Day in style this year, with a superb party organised by **Cpl Warren O'Driscoll** and **LCpl Chris Page**. Most of the Sqn turned up in fancy dress (some made more of an effort than others!), with **LCpl Page** looking particularly ravishing as a serving wench. Sqn members chose fish and chips or pie and chips to eat, all washed down with copious amounts of English ale. And then the entertainment began....

The games started with horse racing. Teams and individuals sponsored horses, raised money for the PLK Association in the process. **Sgt Nick Tuck** displayed some previously unseen jockey skills on his horse, Wonkey Donkey, and romped home ahead of the field on several occasions. Other entertainment included and inflatable barfly challenge, archery courtesy of **Sigs Daniel Hopkins** and **Robin Young**, and an English themed quiz thanks to **LCpl Alison Kelly**.

PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON DINNER

Every year the PLK Dinner is a chance for old and new members of the PLK Association to get together and exchange stories. This year was no exception. The Association was pleased to welcome **Sig Ben Sherwin** back from OP TELIC, and to welcome the new Deputy Lieutenant for Kensington and Chelsea, **Mr Richard Walker-Arnott**. **Cpl Warren O'Driscoll** presented a cheque for over £280, much of which had been raised during the St George's Day party, to the PLK Association.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Ironside**

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andrew Thompson**

Members of the Sqn attended the Leadership Trg weekend on the Isle of Arran on from 8-10 April. For the Sqn members who attended, the weekend started with a long trip to Irvine on the Friday, for an early morning start on the ferry to the Isle of Arran on the Saturday. Trg during the day consisted of the Regt being split into rank groups, each of which had tasks, which included river crossings, mind puzzles, comd tasks, first aid and veh recovery. Groups had to navigate to each loc, with the navigating left to the junior ranks. Upon arrival, one of the group was briefed by the DS, and then had to instruct their team on the task in hand and carry it out within a specified time. Points were awarded for the quickest and safest execution of the task, for teamwork, and for the briefing of the teams by their leader. To end the day, the groups feasted on a BBQ and a few drinks in a

The plank proved not to be a team player...

style that most people could easily become accustomed to. The weekend ended with beach volleyball and various other sports; and, for the most adventurous, a dip in the very cold sea. All in all, it was a fantastic weekend enjoyed by everyone who attended.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

Sqn members travelled to Tulloch Lodge near Fort William for and AT ex during the period 12-16 May. Trg consisted of Rock Climbing, Abseiling, Kayaking, Hill Climbing and Mounting Biking. Each day, everyone was given the opportunity to select what they wanted to do. **Recruit Jennifer Minor** elected to do Kayaking for the whole weekend, and for her efforts, she came away with the Phase 1 Certificate for Kayaking.

The OC took another group mountain biking and, judging by some of the injuries, many had been on the Double Black Course. **Cpl Brian Hunter** proved that the price of his mountain bike will not stop the trees getting in his way, but on this occasion, the tree came off better. Others enjoyed the more leisurely task of hill walking - a 17.5 km hike! The entire weekend had been well orchestrated by **Capt Linda Smith**. It was one of the best weekends, enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Capt Granitza waits for the stragglers

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Karen Swan**

WAPINSCHAW 2005

The weekend kicked off early this year, with the majority of the 32 Sig Regt shooting team (52 Sqn!) heading off to Aberdeen at 17.30 hrs on the Friday. The teams got off to a good start on the Saturday, with **Cpl MacLaughlin**, **Cpl McCole**, **Sgt McPherson**, **Sig McCabe**, **LCpl Mcluckie**, **Sgt Brown**, **Cpl Purvis**, **Cpl Barrie**, **LCpl Whiteside**, **Capt Iain Davidson**, **2Lt Lorna Craik** and **Cpl McKenzie** all doing well in all the events, whether they shot as individuals or part of the 2-man or 4-man teams. Things started to go drastically wrong for **LCpl Mik Whiteside** when it came to the individual falling plate competition. He was paired with a young naval OCdt. The said OCdt had never fired a rifle before, and **LCpl Whiteside** had a SUSAT. You can probably guess the result. That incident aside, teams managed to win a healthy 8 Trophies, with the lion's share going to **Sgt Phil Brown**. A great weekend was had by all, and the host unit, 51 Sig Sqn, laid on a great curry and quiz night that evening.

DIVSAAM NORTH 2005

DIVSAAM North was again a great success for the Regt and Sqn teams, with soldiers from the Sqn winning Silver in all Other Arms categories. Unfortunately, this weekend clashed with a RTW, so 52 Sig Sqn could not turn up en masse at either event. But all attendees had a great time, putting forward the 52 Sqn ethos with great results.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Bruce**

Fresh from leadership trg on the Isle of Arran, some hardy members of the Sqn took to the hills around Stirling for some survival trg, whilst other members put over 150 executives through their paces during EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH. We also managed to get through the usual rounds of ITD trg, and some people have almost qualified for their next bounty!

COMBAT SURVIVAL

A team from 61 Sig Sqn had spent ages packing all the necessary kit for a chilly weekend in the hills into their Bergens, making sure that fleeces and waterproofs were near at hand, and that everything was packed so we could carry our kit in comfort. So, it was a bit of a shock when we arrived at the drop off point at the start of the ex to have all our pockets emptied, and everything except our bivouac bag, Gore-Tex jacket, and one piece of warm clothing, taken off us. We were then rushed through the darkness up a track in the woods, given a photocopy of a map and a grid reference to go to to collect breakfast the next morning. We had to fend for ourselves and not get caught by any enemy lurking in the woods.

The Sqn team took the challenge with enthusiasm, and after a quick huddled discussion over our options, quickly made packs out of our Bivouac bags, hid our rank slides in case we got captured, checked the map using a smuggled cigarette lighter, and set off towards our breakfast CP. After struggling through dense forest in the pitch black for a few hours, we settled down for the night, remaining vigilant for the presence of the enemy through the night - and feeling rather chilly while doing so. As the sun rose, so did we, and managed to navigate ourselves successfully to the breakfast CP - even arriving early enough to have a quick doze in the heather while waiting for our nosh.

The CO kindly arrived with trays of sausages and bacon, which we devoured promptly. We moved between stands for the rest of the morning, carrying out activities such as improvised nav skills, building bow and arrows, camming up a veh and fishing for plastic bottles with improvised fishing rods. In the afternoon we were given a lesson on the various ways to cook over an open fire, as well how to clean and gut the fish, which we had later for dinner. We also learned how to light a fire without matches, lighter or a Trg Major. Finally, we had a session on combat survival skills and equipt, in particular how to make a warm and cosy basha. These skills would prove handy later on!

We then moved off across the trg area to set up our base for the night, and after a couple of hours effort we had a textbook example a small 6 man shelter, complete with log walls to keep out the wind, and a roaring fire, on which we made a hearty meal of sausages and boiled vegetables, accompanied by the trout we had disembowelled in our earlier lesson. We were then occupied for the rest of the evening an OP on a local track junction, whilst two of the more athletic members trekked their way through darkness to an agent contact, who gave us a grid reference to be

at for breakfast. With the benefit of the fire, we were able to get a few hrs' sleep, in slightly more comfort than the night before.

Sunday finished off with an inter-team game involving going round CPs with a team burden, with bonus points going to teams that managed to steal other teams' burdens and get them to the CPs. It was a weary team who finally trudged into the HQ loc at the end of the ex, but all were very glad to be reunited with Bergens full of chocolate bars, and delighted to wolf down some sausages and burgers that hadn't been cooked on a flat rock!

By the end of the weekend, we were all thoroughly worn out, but the combination of unusual scenarios, interesting trg and the succulent taste of trout cooked over an open fire, certainly made it a first class weekend. But never has a takeaway curry or a Mars Bar ever tasted so good as it did that Sunday evening!

EXERCISE EXECUTIVE STRETCH

On a sunny weekend in May, members of the Sqn were asked to put on an interesting comms comd task for EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH.

152 civilian employees, aged 19 to 59, from various companies throughout Scotland descended on Barry Buddon for a weekend of military-style teamwork and leadership trg. With an early start of 05.30hrs the executives spent Saturday navigating their way around the trg area, completing 11 tasks along the way. From the ranges and rafting to charging around in an armd veh, the day was packed full of interesting challenges, not least the comms challenge.

After arriving at our stand, the executives were handed their orders card, and given 5 mins to plan the task and 30 mins to complete it.

The scenario was that they had recently completed their mission, and were on the run from enemy forces. A toxic waste spill now stood in their path, and they had to cross it to reach a comms base, where they were to assemble an HF radio or satellite phone and make a call back to base, so that their loc could be pinpointed.

All teams successfully completed our challenge, with times ranging from 7 mins 30 secs to just over 22 mins. The main points they took away were focused on comms within a team: keeping everyone informed, listening to ideas, passage of information, concurrency of tasks and keeping everything simple. All the groups who left our stand were given one piece of advice: if you pull the trigger and feel a sharp pain in your shoulder, then turn the rifle around and try again!

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

CO	**Lt Col W Adsett**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Shean Dewar**

42(CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DA Titheridge**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Coburn**

On Friday the 15 Apr 05 the permanent staff of the Sqn received an initial visit from the new CO, **Lt Col Bill Adsett**, who was touring his new command, which is spread between Liverpool, Runcorn and Manchester. He was met by the PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**, and the SPSI, **SSgt Dave Kirk**, before being introduced to the other Regular, NRPS and civilian members of staff over coffee in the Officers' Mess. A tour of the real estate followed, and then it was back to the Mess for a curry, prepared by our chef, **Sgt Peter Marchant**. **Lt Col Adsett** is no stranger to the TA, having served as a Sig and then as a 2Lt in a Volunteer Regt, before joining as a Regular Officer. All ranks of 42 Sqn wish both him and **Janet** a successful and happy tour.

MEDAL PRESENTATION CEREMONY AND OPENING OF 'BAR 42'

The new CO kindly returned to the Sqn on the Tuesday drill evening immediately following his initial visit, accompanied by the RSM, **WO1 Shean Dewar**, to present medals to six members of the Sqn prior to opening and renaming our newly refurbished JRC bar. This proved to be a most enjoyable event, with the medals being presented in the Sgts' Mess witnessed by the proud families of the soldiers being honoured. The Sqn OC, **Maj David Titheridge**, received The Efficiency Decoration (Territorial), **SSgt Kevin Westall** and **Sgt Paul Duffin** received the first clasp to their Efficiency Medals (Territorial), and **Sgts Hazel Trotman**, **Susan Heaps** and **Ken Bryan** the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal (VRSM).

Once the medal ceremony was over, everyone decamped downstairs to await the opening of 'BAR 42' by the CO. This proved to be an opening with a difference, as our Sqn Foreman, **SSgt Danny Mulheran**, had installed an up-market ceiling

The CO, Lt Col Bill Adsett, and Sgt Kevin Westhall

The CO officially opens Bar 42

projector with all-round sound system which plays Sky TV, DVDs, Computer programmes et al, onto a wall screen to great effect. The CO was invited to press the appropriate button and, to the accompaniment of the Corps March, his name and the date that he opened the bar were projected in glorious Technicolor. He then officially declared the bar open, by cutting a ribbon and downing

the first pint. Yet another curry was served up by our chef (we are fond of curries in Manchester), and the rest of the evening passed most enjoyably with most of the families and soldiers having the opportunity to chat with the CO over a beer.

CORPS CHAMPION AND SCOTLAND TRIALIST

This is the first time that the Sqn can count amongst its numbers a current Corps sporting champion and Scotland trialist. **SSgt Jimmy Frew**, our Radio Relay PSI, is the Corps Angling champion and is a member of the Army Angling team. **Jimmy** started fishing only in 1999, being introduced to the sport by **SSgt Brian Clarke**, a Scottish international.

SSgt Jimmy Frew beside the Zwolle Canal near Heerde in Holland

He started competition fishing in 1999 after joining the Army Angling Federation, and has never looked back since. He has represented the Army team three times in overseas challenge events, represented Group 4 in both 3 man and 5 man team events during the Army Angling Federation Festival, captained the winning team in Group 4 of the Army Angling Federation, and is Currently the Corps champion.

He has also represented his civilian team in the Angling Times Super-cup and both summer and winter NW England league matches.

This year he is hoping to have trials for the Scottish National Team. His most recent event took place last month in Holland when he fished for the Army in the Overseas Challenge Match competing against teams from RAF, Navy, Royal Marines, Dutch Military and Dutch Civilian teams.

25th ANNIVERSARY - FREEDOM OF KNOWSLEY

After a week of rain, 4 months of planning and a limited number of days practice, the Regt exercised its right to march through the streets of Knowsley, 'with bayonets fixed, flags flying and drums beating.' The parade was keenly attended by families of soldiers who were on parade. We also managed to have with us **Col (Retd) Pat Jolliffe TD** who was the CO when the Freedom Honour was bestowed on us 25 years ago.

The Regt has strong connections stretching back to 1967, when it was formed with its HQ here in Knowsley. Support to the Borough manifests itself in many guises, from Remembrance Sunday Parades to charitable events, and numerous other civic and royal occasions. The Parade recognised the Regt's right by virtue of the Borough Council's grant of Freedom of Entry to the Regt in 1980, an honour granted uniquely to us.

Soldiers representing all four of the Regt's Sqns marched through Knowsley to parade in front of the Huyton Civic Suite. The General Salute was taken by the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, **Col Alan Waterworth JP** and the Mayor of Knowsley, **Cllr Tommy Quirk**, before they inspected the Parade. Also in attendance were the SOinC, **Brig Thomas MBE ADC**, Comd 42 (NW) Bde, **Brig Powe** and representatives from the Council.

After presentations to the Borough of Knowsley by the CO, the Regt marched off to music played by the Corps Northern Band, that of 34 Sig Regt.

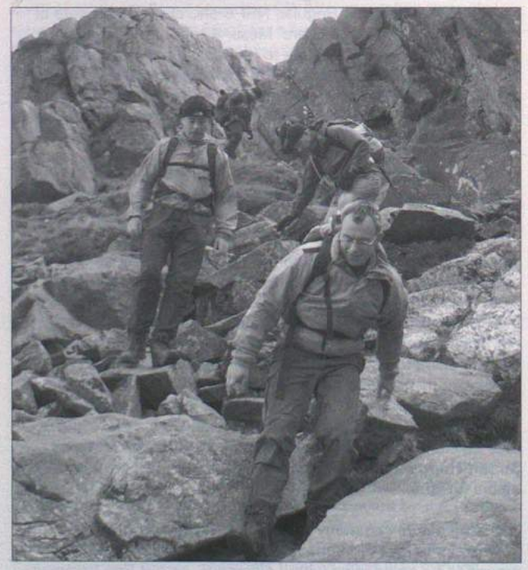
A civic reception in the Huyton Suite followed, where the invited guests had the opportunity to meet the soldiers and their families. The day was a huge success and served to strengthen further the Regt's ties with the local community.

The Mayor of Knowsley, Councillor TB Quirk, inspects the parade with the CO, Lt Col Bill Adsett

EXERCISE CANTABRIAN ROSE TRAINING

A one-day hill walking training session was held in Snowdonia. The day's outing was in preparation for EX CANTABRIAN ROSE, an AT exped taking place in Northern Spain in June.

After a rather quick start to the day, the group found their second wind and managed to walk 14 miles up and over several peaks - some larger than others! Everyone enjoyed the day taking in the breath taking in the scenery and getting much needed time on their feet. All returned to the Regt with plenty of colour in their cheeks, windburn, disappointingly not sunburn.



FofS Gaz Pearson leads the CO down a tricky slope

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Garry Hearn**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Paul McGarry**

EXERCISE NORTHERN WANDELPAD
- by Capt HJP Hebblethwaite

EX NORTHERN WANDELPAD was a trekking exped, which took place from 19 March – 5 April 05 and was 34 Sig Regt's major level three exped for 2005. South Africa, and more specifically, the Drakensburg National Park within Kwa Zulu Natal, was selected for a number of reasons. The rugged, unspoilt terrain; the variety of trekking routes and easy access; good value accn options; and the opportunity for alternative activities for a worthwhile R and R package.

The outward journey was smooth and uneventful, and we reached our first destination that evening - Sani Lodge, an excellent hostel close to the Sani Pass in the southern Drakensburg. The owner, **Russell**, provided some sound advice on suggested trekking routes, and was able to book caves for the overnight trek. After a hearty dinner, all fourteen participants were soon to their beds.

The first trek was to be along the Pholela Valley, staying overnight in a cave, and returning the next day via a high ridge to Sani Lodge. However, after 17kms we reached the river crossing, to find that it was flooded and impassable. So we camped overnight under a small overhang shelter and headed back the following day.

The third day saw the start of our main effort, the 60km Giant's Cup Trail, and thankfully, the weather had cheered up. The Giant's Cup Trail can be completed only in one direction, from North to South, and it takes five days. Accn en route is in basic huts, so we didn't have to carry tents. We also arranged for a driver to carry out rations for each leg, thereby further cutting down on the amount to be carried. We duly completed the Trail, the longest trek that many of the party had done. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful scenery and varied wildlife encountered along the route including elan, puff adders and baboons.

As a short respite before the second trekking phase, we then did battlefield tours to Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift. Both were led by **Evan Jones**, a local and well known military historian, who really brought the details of the battles to life, with individual stories of heroism and tragedy.

The second trekking phase began in Royal Natal National Park, in northern Drakensburg. The challenge with this overnight trek to the top of the impressive Amphitheatre is not so much the distance, but the altitude and the precarious chain ladders used to reach the plateau. On a clear and chilly night, we camped beside the Tugela Falls, the second highest waterfall in the world, whilst keeping watch for notorious Basotho tribesmen.

Unfortunately, with torrential storms, the route was declared unsafe. So, as an alternative activity, **Maj John Lighten QLR**, one of the instructors, led an impromptu, but highly successful battlefield tour to Spionkop. The planned two days of white water rafting down the now engorged Tugela River went ahead, hosted by Zingela Rafting and River Company.

The return journey saw a twelve-hour delay at Johannesburg Airport, but we all arrived safely back at Brambles Farm, albeit in the middle of the night. The exped was thoroughly enjoyed by all, with every participant having gained a huge sense of achievement. All have learned valuable lessons in self-reliance and teamwork.

All were in agreement that AT is one area of trg that should be expanded in the TA. It should be made as inclusive and wide ranging as possible, and as proven on TA Day, it is a great recruiting and retention tool.

EXERCISE HELL'S HIGHWAY VI *- by Capt Simon Land*

EX HELL'S HIGHWAY VI, held over the long weekend 20-23 May 2005, was this year's Regtl Battlefield Tour, and was organised by **Majs Graham Jennings** and **Chris Jones**. The purpose of the tour was to study the area and actions associated with OP MARKET GARDEN in September 1944.

Eleven Offrs and WOs went on the tour, and we were very fortunate to be guided by **Henk Donovjan**, a local historian with a passion for the area in which he lives. **Henk** was 6 years old in 1944 and living in Oosterbeek. He has a phenomenal knowledge of the action, which he has collected over many years of being deeply involved with airborne veterans.

Lt Karen Ford and WO2 Harkin at the Liberation Museum, Nijmegen

We were also fortunate to stay in the Dreyeoorrd Hotel, known as The White House, and used as a HQ during the action. A pre dinner visit to the Airborne Cemetery at Oosterbeeck on the Saturday evening as the sun went down, set the stage for a fine meal in the hotel. Sunday was filled with more fascinating accounts, many of which included personal accounts from **Henk**. Standing on the DZ, **Lt Col Garry Hearn** added his experiences as an airborne officer, allowing us to gain an understanding of modern tactics. Crossing the Rhine by the Driel ferry near to the spot where so many men had made their escape by boat 61 years previously, brought a poignant touch. The tour concluded with a visit to the Liberation Museum near Nijmegen. All in all, a very informative tour with many lessons learned.

TERRITORIAL ARMY SPRING LAUNCH *- by LCpl Wilkinson*

The Regt turned up the heat on recruiting as part of the Spring Recruiting Campaign launched in May. 34 Sig Regt hosted all the units from the Teesside area to launch the campaign at Brambles

Farm TA Centre. The highlight of the day was the visit of Middlesborough FC first team player, **Franck Queudrue**. This caused quite a stir, with the local lads asking him for autographs. He was taken aback when our RLC guru **Sgt Scotty Burton** presented him with a white lace bra to sign! **Franck** casually said 'Left boot or right boot?' and duly signed the bra.

34 Sig Regt recruiters in Middlesborough Town Centre

The culmination of the Spring Launch was TA Day on Saturday 14 May. This saw the Regt descend en masse to all the local town centres. A high profile presence was achieved and we even managed to raise over £450 for local charities. All in all, the Spring Launch was a complete success, with an estimated £140k worth of free publicity, and 50 general enquiries to join the TA.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Mark Finch**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

THE YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE – 23/24 APRIL 05

The responsibility for organising this year's Sqn charity event was given to **Sgt Wood**, who decided upon the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge. This involves achieving the three peaks of Pen-Y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough within a twelve-hour timeframe.

The aim was to do something that would raise money for charity, and would also provide challenging leadership trg. Unfortunately, the weather was perfect on the day, which slightly detracted from the expected level of character building (suffering) possible. A local campsite provided the accn and the owners seemed somewhat surprised that we wanted to erect only four tents. But they looked more than a little stunned when they saw the size of them. Following a late night of map marking, the early morning start saw the teams brimming with energy and confidence. As is always the case, this gradually diminished as the day wore on, with **Sig Woods** carrying injuries after the first hill. The rest of the

The finish, with Pen-y-Ghent in the background

team didn't look too good either, with **Cpl Malloy** due to go into workshops for a long overdue knee repair the following week. **LCpl Norton** dutifully kept up team spirits as the finish line drew gradually nearer. Everyone on it, enjoyed the event, and we managed to raise just over £1,000 to be shared between the ABF and Cancer Research UK.

50 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Smith**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) CA Phillips**

RESERVE FORCES ASSOCIATION MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

At the end of April, the Regt entered a team organised by the SVWO, **WO1 Neal Dixon**, in the international Reserve Forces Association military skills competition held at Altcar Ranges. These are regular international events, and whilst the team did not win anything on their first attempt, they did perform well and came away with the knowledge and enthusiasm to have a real attempt at the next event. Well done to **Sigs Lance Nixon**, **Rob Prothero** and **Rob Saunders** for their efforts.

EXERCISE SUMMER FALCON

Despite the problems of VOR vehicles and manpower missing elsewhere, the Sqn deployed on EX SUMMER FALCON 05, as another step in the build up to Annual Camp this year. With the whole of SAN 666 off the road, only TN035 hit the ground with a motley crew, including the OC driving the Switch, and the SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Carole Ann Phillips**, manning Node Comd.

However, the latest batch of trade trainees were up to the job, and ensured that, as usual, comms were in. Rather than just do one job, the multi-tasking SQMS, **SSgt Colin Ridley**, spent his weekend driving all round the Catterick and Darlington area to feed the Sqn, help with recruits, and look after Cadets. It certainly helps, getting three for the price of one!

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

COMMEMORATION, DEDICATION & CELEBRATION

The Regt were invited to the VE Day Commemoration Parade and celebrations in Birmingham on Sunday 8 May. In particular, we were honoured to find ourselves surrounded by many WW2 veterans and veterans of other conflicts. We were also delighted to find several ex Royal Signals personnel, including **Reg Cannadine, Ron Caswell** and **William Hanson** and their families.

The outgoing RSM, **WO1 Russ Dalton**, was responsible for marshalling the contingents to ensure that the parade went like clockwork, the British Legion contingents taking the lead.

Meanwhile his replacement RSM, **WO1 Jim Coupland** chatted freely to many representatives from the British Legion as well as keeping the Regtl contingent on their toes.

The RSM chatting to William Hanson

The surprise promotion

The Parade, led by the Band of the Army Air Corps, marched past the City of Birmingham Council House, where the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Cllr John Hood** took the salute. (**Cllr Hood** is no stranger to the military, having served in RMP with 48 Ghurkha Inf Bde before he was demobbed back in 1959). From here, they marched through some of the city streets to Birmingham Cathedral, where all contingents attended a moving Dedication Service, conducted by the Bishop of Birmingham, **The Right Rev Dr John Sentamu**. Following the Service, all contingents marched back to the Council House. From here, they dispersed and joined in the local celebrations, involving numerous street parties and other activities with a WW2 theme. The CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, also took time out at the conclusion of the Parade to promote a rather surprised **LCpl Andy Price** to Cpl. It is worth noting that **Andy** works for Adidas in Germany, and regularly returns to UK to fulfil his TA commitment, which is commendable.

REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

The CO was clearly pleased as he reviewed the latest dual pass-off parade on Sunday 31 May, held at the TAC at Canley in Coventry. This was for recruits who had concluded Part 3 (the Training GAP), and for those who had just completed Part 1, and were now preparing for the ATR phase. The parade marked a reversal of fortune on our recruiting front, as it was our largest pass-off parade for some years. It was dominated by 95 Sqn, who in one recruiting surge, managed the triple whammy of attracting, recruiting and attesting eleven recruits, beating the record held by 48 Sqn. However, 48 Sqn produced the best overall recruit, with **Sig Lee Sheldon** receiving this prestigious award from the CO. Indications are that 58 Sqn, who are also experiencing a surge in recruiting, may pull off the next surprise. Meanwhile HQ Sqn and 89 Sqn are flooding their recruiting areas with many displays and other activities that will eventually lead to special Open Evenings during July. So watch this space for further good news!

Sig Sheldon receiving his award from the CO

ARMY ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Regtl Orienteering Team were determined to put their previous disappointments behind them, and with a much improved team, were confident of making our mark of the Army Championships in Sennelager on 19/20 May. But, despite a remarkable effort, we narrowly missed winning a prize, being placed 5th Major Unit overall, in one of the best attended events in the last few years. With stiff competition, the team continue to prove that we are more than a match for most Regular units. Not forgetting last year, the team won the Royal Signals TA Champs, the 5 Div Champs and the overall TA Champs, and was placed 4th in the Army. As the team goes from strength to strength, it expects to repeat or better these achievements.

REGIMENTAL REVIEW

Many other events have also taken place during the last couple of months, and just before the VE Day Parade, elements of the Regt were heavily involved in EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH, supporting Birmingham UOTC in their venture to put local management executives through their paces. This is the kind of ex that caused Comd 143 Bde to comment, 'They enter as individuals and walk out as teams,' which effectively sums up the nature of the event. Our involvement was sending a team to run a hostage stand, and this task fell to **Lt Rachel Stanley**, who with her unbridled enthusiasm, quickly enlisted the support of other members of the Regt to ensure the stand was successful. She certainly put the young executives through their paces, so much so that the hostage release negotiators thought they were engaged in the real thing, preferring instead to tackle a much easier stand, like wheel changing on a Landrover.

Running concurrently with this ex, was the Regt's prep for the Lanyard Trophy competition. This had been regularly taking place over Sqn trg weekends, and the organiser, **SSgt Paul Coxon**, despite one or two setbacks, was confident of deploying a strong team capable of achieving a good place. The week of the event dawned, and **Paul Coxon**, together with his team of nine apprehensive warriors, Bergens packed with their obligatory competition weight, deployed to Otterburn early Monday morning, 6 June. The event kicked off at 05.00hrs on the Tuesday, and in the early stages, the Team was doing well. But injuries took their toll at CP6, when **Sig Stuart Linden** sustained severe blisters, and **Sig Samuel Haynes** had testicle problems. The remainder of the Team carried on to CP7, when they lost **Lt Rachel Stanley**, **FofS John Ford** and **Sig Marcus Thompson**. Undeterred, the remaining five struggled on through to CPs 8 and 9, perhaps the hardest and most difficult part of the competition. Spirits among the remaining members were high, until the final denouement just before the last CP, when the Team was disqualified for failing to meet a qualifying time. Despite this horrendous setback, they resolved to carry on to the final CP, to validate their intensive trg, finishing on a high but disappointing note.

Handover/Takeover of RSMs

ALL CHANGE

A number of personalities have changed since the last edition of *The WIRE*, and we have welcomed the new RSM, **WO1 Jim Coupland**, and bid farewell on retirement to **WO1 Russ Dalton**. We have also said farewell to **WO2(YofS) Steve Hillier**, who is moving to HQ SOinC in Blandford, and welcomed his replacement **WO2(YofS) Pip Crowder**, fresh from 2 Sig Regt. Also, we have welcomed the new NRPS Chief Clerk, **WO2 Vince Harris**, **SSgt(FofS) John Ford** to 58 Sig Sqn.

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KD Gratrick**

44 (CINQ PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Rowson**
SSM **WO2 J Davis**

At the early time of 05.30hrs on Saturday the 23 April, 8 brave members of 44 Sig Sqn awoke to the smell of a good old fashioned English breakfast, prepared by **Sgt Bob Boynton**.

Most of the team helped themselves to the abundant spread, but a few members decided against it, considering they were about to freefall from 14,000ft. On arriving at Maidstone Airfield, we underwent 15 minutes of trg, then sat around waiting for the weather to clear. Finally at 13.30hrs, our first jumper, **Sig John Grainger** plummeted towards the ground. We were sure that we could hear him screaming for the first 8,000ft. During the next 4hrs, we went up, in groups of 2 to do the same. Why? For charity. **Sig Richard Parrack** was the funniest jumper of the day. After completing his jump, he had to sit against a wall for an

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NEWS FROM THE GULF

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC Sqn **Maj RJB Spencer**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Phil Hay**

The Sqn is now complete in Iraq, and is settling in for its six month OP TELIC 6 tour. Following a good handover from 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204), the Sqn is now firmly in the chair and has quickly settled into a routine.

The first task for the Sqn, which started well before the Transfer of Authority from 4 Bde, was the fitting of BOWMAN dismounted ops room racks into the Bde HQ, BG HQs and a number of sub-unit locs. This task was fulfilled by the Ops Cell Installation Party, which included a significant contingent from 10 Sig Regt. Despite initial difficulties, this project is now well on target, although the process will be a protracted one, taking 2fi months finally to complete. Simultaneous to this, has been the BOWMAN conversion of the Snatch vehs in theatre. Again, whilst there have been difficulties with this process, it is on target for completion by 31 May 05, and across the board, BOWMAN is already providing an increased capability compared with CLANSMAN. We already have secure VHF and HF voice down to Sect level within one of the BGs; the others will soon follow. The provision of Situation Awareness to logistics convoys also gives a marked capability enhancement, particularly in a theatre such as Iraq.

The Sqn has quite far-reaching responsibilities, providing CIS support not only to the Bde, but also to the Div, as well as delivering a large proportion of the G4 infrastructure within the Joint Support Unit Basrah (JSUB). We have a number of outstations deployed over what is a very large Bde AOR. We provide Rear Link Dets to each of the BGs as well as SYNERGY Mobile Dets on call, a permanent Det at Safwan Hill, and a number of Spec Task Dets to locs, such as Umm Qasr and the Japanese Bn at As Samawah.

Tech support to, and to an extent re-supply of, these Dets is also a Sqn responsibility, and Tigris Tp provides escort multiples to enable this function. Tigris Tp also contains the SYNERGY Mobile Dets, Spec Task Dets and RRBs, as well as maintaining the capability to provide a deployable Fwd Bde HQ should the need arise.

The other Comms Tp, Euphrates Tp, is responsible for the provision of static CIS infrastructure within the Bde and Div HQs. It provides manning for the Div Commcen, Bde HQ Radcon, JOCS Management Cell, Military Services Desk and Bde Installation Tech Cell, as well as Tech Support and ICS Support for both the Bde and Div HQs. It is also responsible for the BG Rear Link Dets.

Support Tp has been subsumed into the JSUB organisation. It provides the lion's share of the QM(T) Dept, LAD, MT and Gene Section, as well as a substantial QM(A) department liability.

The Rear Party also requires a mention. They are providing critical support to both the deployed Sqn and their loved ones in the UK, under the leadership of Local **WO2 Donnelly** and **Maj**

Developing our relationships with the Japanese at As Samawah

Hugh Burden (SO2 Man Plans at the Bde HQ). They have already run a number of coffee mornings, a Bingo night, and visit to Longleat Safari Park, events that have been generally well attended by wives, husbands and families.

EUPHRATES TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt ZK White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Clifton**

After a long, long journey to Iraq, we have finally made it into theatre following months of trg, prep and waiting around at South Cerney. The majority of the Tp are working from an old hotel building that has been refurbished by RE. The first activity for the Tp was to conduct our handover briefs with the soldiers from 4 Armd Bde. We all felt exceptionally welcome, as our arrival heralded their imminent departure. They were all very pleased to see us.

Once the Black Rats left, we spent the first few days conducting the time-honoured routine of stripping out everything in the HQ and changing it around - a process that was all the more complicated, as it involved the fitting of BOWMAN into the Ops Room. This process has had to be replicated right across the Bde AOR. The Techs and operators who deployed early to fit the new BOWMAN racking, faced a number of difficulties with the initial builds, ranging from problems with the equipt provided to problems 'encouraging' the BG Ops Rooms staff to accept the huge racking system required. Despite these initial problems, the new system seems, so far, to have been a success though it has yet to 'go live' across the AOR.

Although having deployed in the first tranche to theatre, **Cpl Roberts** has been pushing out some extremely long days training his Commcen crew and adjusting his 'Starbucks outlet' to his liking. The Commcen also have the unenviable responsibility of ensuring that the building always has power. We frequently lose the use of our generators, and have to rely on the Iraqi mains system. Syscon, under the watchful eye of **Cpl Tomlins**, are still getting over 'Black Tuesday' (the first Sqn only VTC day that was interesting to say the least and which prompted a swift trg package for those responsible for operating the kit). The Tech Wksps and JOCS café spend their lives running around for both the Bde and Div – how did an entire Div manage to deploy with no support, somebody must know! The Techs have had to make a few cuts in the services they provide the Div, though as our manning strength has dropped from 8 with 4 Bde to 2 with 12 Bde.

The aftermath of a rocket attack

We also have soldiers whom we have embedded in the BGs on a permanent basis. They provide comms advice and assistance to the infantiers and tankies, and have settled in well, receiving excellent reports from all of their COs. **Cpl Nath Eldridge**, working with 1 STAFFORDs, has won the competition to be the first Det to get BOWMAN working in theatre so far. We still don't know which competition **Cpl Dale Brittain** entered, but he is driving round in a brand new Pajero at his loc. **Cpl Richie Cranswick's** outpost at Shatt Al Arab was proving very popular with visitors, since it also housed the only icecream salesman in theatre. Strangely enough though, the loc has been less popular since a Chinese 107 rocket detonated in his accn block! **Cpl Walls** is also being kept busy out in desolate Al Muthanna with the Light Dragoons. Finally, it all became clear to the Tp why **LCpl Bleach** was so keen to volunteer for Padre's Driver, as he now has a Discovery, pistol and authority from higher command not to do guard for the tour. We are taking names now to cover his R and R slot, and have already turned away most of the Ops Team.

It was always expected that the first few weeks were going to be hectic, and we have certainly been busy. Hopefully, as we settle into routine, we should find time to get some volleyball in. **LCpl Cassie Downs**, as our resident expert, has been tasked with training our team and winning some medals for the Tp. More on that next time.

TIGRIS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ed Cuthbertson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jona Jones**

After a frantic March and April finishing off confirmation trg, packing stores and loading vehs, Tigris Tp have finally successfully deployed on OP TELIC 6! After a long flight out, first by chartered 747 and then by C130, the Tp landed in Iraq and made its way to Shaibah Log Base to conduct its 'Receipt, Staging and Onward Integration' trg programme. This started with a comprehensive set of theatre briefs on weather, local customs and most importantly, health and hygiene. On the final day, there was a range package, which consisted of weapon zeroing, pairs fire and manoeuvre ranges, and vehicle 'top cover' shoots. It proved an informative few days, and a good opportunity to start the initial acclimatisation process.

Next came OP FABLE, the transfer of all the Sqn vehs in two convoys from the port of Umm Qsar to Shaibah Log Base and then onto Basrah Air Station, where the majority of the Sqn was to be based. Force protection was ably provided by 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. With this task complete, the Tp could finally settle in and get on with the job it had been training for so long.

Tigris Tp is the mobile Tp in the Sqn. As well as providing mobile comms dets on demand, the main role for the Tp has been the provision of force protection multiples. This latter function has entailed a number of tasks assisting the RAF Regt with aviation fuel runs from Kuwait to Basrah and re-supplying a Sqn det at Safwan. Any spare time the Tp has, tends to be spent practising mil skills and undertaking physical trg.

There have also been Arabic language, culture and local customs lessons, given by members of the local population, and the NCOs have been giving lessons on the manpack radios used to support our comms systems out on the ground.

ATTACHMENT TO 5th JAPAN IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION SUPPORT GROUP - *by Cpl Tommy Durbridge and Sig Mark Freeman*

Prior to arriving in Iraq, **Sig Mark Freeman** and I were told that we were going to be attached to the Japanese Reconstruction Group at Camp As Samawah in the Al Muthannah province. We were a bit wary at first, because we didn't know what would be in store for us when we got there.

After a four-hour drive up from Basrah, we arrived at Camp As Samawah. At first it looked pretty bleak, but we were welcomed by the Japanese, and thankfully, most of them could speak a little English - our Japanese wasn't too hot! Our task was to look after the SYNERGY equipt, and to set up the daily conference call for the Group Comd. We were also tasked with helping the interpreters with their English.

It soon became apparent that the conditions for our stay were not going to be so arduous – the welfare facilities were excellent. We spent a lot of our spare time on the massage chairs they had. There were also good internet facilities, a gym and they even let us hire a Playstation 2. After quite a bit of persuasion from the Japanese, we also went for a Japanese bath - not an experience we'll not forget in a hurry!

We ended up being the last UK personnel to man the SYNERGY equipt at Camp As Samawah, as the Japanese took on the entire facility after we left. The OC and RSM came up on our last night, to smooth the waters with the Japanese regarding the duties that they had to undertake to allow us to leave.

The OC took up the offer of the Japanese bath, but the RSM was not at all keen. He was much more at home when, during the official tour of the Camp on the final morning, he was introduced to the Japanese Linemen called 'Wire Men,' as can be seen from the accompanying photo!

Working with the Wire Men

We enjoyed our time up there. It was interesting to see how the Japanese worked, and to find out about their culture. The Japanese looked after us very well, and made a real effort to chat with us and practise their English.

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRAH – MT DEPT

MTWO **WO2 Andy Palin**
MT Sgt **Sgt Hall**

The Sqn MT has quickly settled into life in the Tri-Service Multinational Div (South East) Joint Support Unit Basrah (JSUB) MT. All personnel are settled into their Corimecs in MT Skid Row - two to a room in Waterloo Lines - and are looking forward to getting on with the job.

The MT had its first taste of driving in Iraq, after completing a sweaty but smooth boat unload. Force protection for what was a huge convoy, was provided by 204 Sig Sqn as 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn vehs were transported from the port of Umm Qasr to Shaibah Log Base in two loops.

After a well-deserved sleep, 204 Sig Sqn then continued to provide protection escorts for our onward move to Basrah Air Station (BAS).

A hectic handover then took place. **WO2 (SSM) Newton** (MTWO 204 Sig Sqn) and his team are to be congratulated for all their hard work and assistance in the passing over a well-oiled MT machine to **WO2 Paling** (MTWO 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn). The biggest obstacle on the handover/takeover was the heat.

The process required completion of CES inspections and the fitting of Vehicle Protection Kits in temperatures well over 35° C. Plenty of water and avoidance of the sun was definitely the order of the day.

After familiarisation trg in left-hand vehs, the delivery of orders, and actions on contact, the MT personnel departed on their first force protection run, with **CSgt Swallow PWRR** in overall charge, and **Cpl Marston** and **LCpl Verga** as veh comds.

The boys were straight into it, hitting the ground running, with a local gentleman trying to hand **Sigs Lee** and **Isaacs** Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) - an incident that obviously resulted in an extensive 4 Cs operation.

On return there was much back-slapping and war stories - and more importantly, an impressed **CSgt Swallow**.

Five days after taking over, all the Dept are feeling fairly well acclimatised. The veh comds, top cover sentries and drivers are now fully conversant with the routes and the required escort driving techniques are well practised. Light physical trg has started, and the day-to-day routine, is now in place. With the high mileage and harsh conditions, regular veh maint is essential, so when not on the road, any spare time is spent working on the vehs.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) MP Townley**

The Regt activity has ticked along over the last few months, the key highlights being EX JOINT VENTURE 05, Race the Sun and EX KEY LEADER (Signaller Development Cadre). There was the outstanding success at the Corps and 2 Div SAAMs, where the Team brought home a total of 20 trophies. These included the Team Trophy, the Best Young Officer (**Lt Olivier**) and the Best Young Soldier (**Sig Stanley**) at the Corps SAAM and at the Div SAAM; the Champion at Arms for **Cpl Devprakash**, and most importantly, the Major Unit Champions Challenge Cup (ITC Catterick not amused!).

On another sporting front, the Regt undertook a somewhat rushed Athletics Sports Day on 23 May. Nevertheless, there were a number of wonderful highlights, including **Capt Matt Nuttall** (who does not claim to be the fittest person in the world) coming in first for HQ Sqn in the Novelty 4 x 100 Relay Race. It was a close-run competition, but 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn just managed to win the day.

Maj Gen Louden meets Kohima veterans

The Regt also participated in the Kohima Remembrance Day. In the past, this has been a large celebration that culminated last year in a major event attended by **HRH The Duke of Edinburgh**. However, it was decided that future events should be much smaller, so this year was the first to follow the new format. It started with a short Service of Remembrance in York Minster, followed by a Wreath-laying at the Memorial by **Maj Gen WEB Loudon CBE**, GOC 2 Div, and then lunch in the Kohima Restaurant. The day was attended by about 100 veterans, and although smaller than previous years, it still retained the dignity one would expect.

We have also had a couple of high profile visits, including **Admiral Dunt**, the Chief Executive of Defence Estates, and the first visit by **Brig Downes**, Comd Joint Force Logistics Organisation. In a large-scale deployment, JF Log O will be one of the components supported by the Regt, so a close working relationship will therefore be essential. It was also a privilege to have the Regtl Col visit and take time out to present some LS and GC Medals and two Operational Awards to a number worthy recipients.

The CO briefs Brig Downes on CORMORANT

STAFF RIDE TO BATTLE OF MARSTON MOOR
- by 2Lt D Corcoran

On a wind-swept Wednesday, the Offrs and WOs of 2 Sig Regt departed on the Battle of Marston Moor Staff Ride. The purpose of the day was to examine comd and control during the battles of the English Civil War, and to compare it with our current modus operandi.

Our first stop was the Royal Armouries in Leeds. After a leisurely coffee, we received a comprehensive brief on the Battle from the resident expert. The emphasis was on how many 'foot' and 'horse' the Royalists and Parliamentarians had respectively. As a former infantryman, the Regtl 2IC jovially donned the archaic apparel, and looked remarkably at one with the thick skin and ineffective weapon.

Once we had all tried the breastplate and helmet, we were allowed to roam the weaponry sections. It was reassuring to see that the SA80 A1 is now a museum piece, along with the cross-bow and the blowpipe. The Armoury showcases weapons through the ages, and allowed us to see what the two factions were fighting with in 1644 - from pikes and clubs to projectiles and muskets.

A video re-enactment of the Battle helped the group to visualise what the conditions must have been like for soldiers in years gone by. However, the consensus was that standing still in front of a volley of lead, was not a particularly good idea - even in the 17th Century.

After an astounding lunch in the field, we were treated to a tour par-excellence of Marston Moor, courtesy of the Junior Officers of 219 Sig Sqn. The heavily detailed overview clarified and brought to life what we had only envisaged beforehand. Basically, it was bags of smoke and up the middle for Cromwell, whilst the Royalists tried a sneaky flanking manoeuvre. The Parliamentarians won.

219 Sig Sqn had obviously put a great deal of effort into balancing the educational and social aspects of the trip, and it was deemed to be a great success by all participants.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM **WO2 D Leask**

REGIMENTAL FOOTBALL - *by Capt Matt Nuttall*

The 2004/05 Season has been another hugely successful season for the Regtl Football Team, with progress being made on more than one front. We have continued to provide a number of players at representative level, including Army U21 and Corps, whilst bringing through a number of younger players who are showing much promise.

The main effort this year has been the defence of the Signaller Cup. In this year's competition, our first match was against a very good 11 Sig Regt side. It was with much relief, that we gained a very hard-fought 2-1 victory. Next up was 216 Sig Sqn in Colchester for the quarter-final.

We knew how tough this match would be, because we had played them in last year's Competition. This year was no different, and we had to come from behind twice to win 4-3, with literally the last kick of the match. 216 are understandably sick of the sight of us!

The semi-final against 30 Sig Regt was a classic! 9 goals, the lead changing hands no less than 4 times with first- minute goals, last-minute goals and extra-time goals. After falling behind very early on, 2 Sig Regt struck back to lead 2-1 at half time. When we went 3-1 up early in the second half, we turned one eye to the final. Fatal!

To their immense credit, 30 Sig Regt fought back magnificently, and with the match entering injury time, they led 4-3. 2 Sig Regt, however, have a tremendous 'never-say-die' attitude, and simply don't know when they are beaten; so again, we scored with virtually the last kick of the match to send the game into extra time. We scored a goal early in extra time, and 30 Sig Regt were once again chasing the game, but this time we held on to win 5-4, to reach the final for a second consecutive season.

It is fair to say that the final was a somewhat one-sided affair. 7 Sig Regt had clearly not forgotten about last season's final, and had their minds firmly set on revenge. We were outplayed on the day, but not outfought, and 7 Sig Regt ran out deserved winners. Champions one season, and the best of the rest the next! Not too bad, we think.

Back in York and licking our wounds, we turned our eyes to the Yorkshire Services Football League title. 2 Sig Regt have not been Yorkshire Services Football League Champions for a number of years, and so we were determined to land the title this year. However, due to our Cup run, we found ourselves several points adrift in the title race, despite having a 100% record. A few hastily arranged games saw us maintain our 100% record to take the title for the first time in years. The pain of the Signaller Cup was forgotten, and it was a great feeling to end this season with some more silverware from a League that contained some very strong teams, such as 1 Kings, ITC Catterick and RAF Leeming.

Each and every player should be immensely proud of their performance and achievements this season, under the watchful eye of new team manager **WO2(SSM) Dave Leask**. They have all been a credit to the Regt.

ARMY INDIVIDUAL NOVICES BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS
- by Sgt Shirley APTC

The Army Individual Novices Classes A and B Boxing Championships were held in the Army Boxing centre Maida Gymnasium, Aldershot from 19-21 April 05. 2 Sig Regt was represented by **Sig Brice** in the Welterweight category. Also representing the Regt was **LCpl Chisholm** at Middleweight in the Female category. Unfortunately there were no other female entries, so the Female Championships did not go ahead.

Sig Brice about to win the Welterweight event

Spurred on by his coaches, **Sgt Dan Shirley APTC** and **Sgt Rob Smith**, **Sig Brice** fought his way through to the Prelims to the semi-finals, and was then awarded a walkover through his opponent pulling out due to injury. He then faced **Pte Webb** of 3 Para in the final on Thursday night. It was a hard-fought contest, that went the full length, with both boxers giving their all through three hard hitting rounds, with some impressive displays of boxing skill, controlled aggression and physical fitness. The bout was decided on points, with **Sig Brice** being the victor on computer scoring at an impressive 16 points to 7. **Sig Brice** was the only boxer on the night to beat one of the five 3 Para finalists who went on to win the team event.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S McGaw**

EXERCISE JOINT VENTURE 05

EX JOINT VENTURE 05 was a direct development on the previous ex in October and November of last year. It sees the Joint Task Force HQ (JTFHQ) directing 3 (UK) Div Land Component Comd, who in turn 'fight the battle'. The notional battle is controlled by EXCON, who adapt the operational and intelligence picture to provide realism to the scenario. The role of the Sqn was to provide the comms infrastructure over the CORMORANT system.

The build-up for the ex started in South Cerney - three whole weeks before the Staff Officers started their war-gaming! During this time, the Ops and Inst Techs were worked hard, laying out fibre and Digital Voice Terminals (a DVT is a phone in anyone else's language!). As the build carried on, more tests were run on the system, and then the TALON satellite bearer was brought into play. By the end of the build phase, most people were looking forward to the routine of 'stagging on' and the chance of some rest.

The ex itself ran quite smoothly from the perspective of 214 Sig Sqn. The ICS Helpdesk was put in place to allow Staff Officers a point of contact when any problems arose. For the most part, the problems were 'forgotten log-ins' and not pressing the pressel on their DVT.

A full error database was established to create a method of real time incident reporting, which resulted in timely and accurate solutions being provided. After numerous VTCs, briefs and backbriefs, the ex came to an end on 20 May. It was deemed to be a success from the comms perspective. All that was left was a rapid tear-down and return to York.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Haughton**

The Sqn continues to be busy even though we account for only 3 CORMORANT vehs. There are, however, more on the way! With OP HERRICK Tp now deployed to Afghanistan, the Sqn seems to have shrunk by half. Will this mean that the workload will reduce? Only time will tell.

EXERCISE KEY LEADER - *by 2Lt T Kelly*

EX KEY LEADER is a cadre course run by the Regt Trg Wing. It took place between Imphal Barracks and Catterick Trg Area over the period 04 - 17 April 05. It is an opportunity for private soldiers to show their leadership potential by being tested both in classroom and field arenas. Candidates are taken from each of the Sqns, and are thrown together for an intensive two-week period. Not only does it give them a chance to develop their leadership, but it also allows a certain amount of cohesion to be gained between the Sqns.

The first week involves a lot of theory work and lesson preparation. Individuals are tested on their presentation skills, drill, and there are also two tests of fitness in the form of a BCFT and BPFA. They then deployed out into the field, where they are given further instruction that will be tested during the field phase of the course. The deployment went without a hitch to Gandale Farm. The weather, although sunny, was absolutely freezing, and certainly proved to be a sharp reminder that we were now on exercise. Soldiers were expected to deliver orders, mount recce and standing patrols, which all culminated in a final attack followed by a battle run.

All those participated enjoyed the exercise. Awards were given for Best Endeavour to **Sig Chatainya**, Best Field Student to **Sig Ashok** and Top Student to **Sig Wood** who was promoted to LCpl on the strength of his excellence. It is a worthwhile course, which brings out both the best and the worst in all those who participate. All learned something about themselves, and it stands them in good stead for the future. Well done to all those who completed the course, and to the Trg Wing for their efforts.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

Since the arrival of the first tranche of CORMORANT in January 05, we received additional installations straight after the Easter break. Systems tests were conducted to confirm the serviceability of these new installations. In the mean time, 3 dets deployed with 214 Sig Sqn on EX JOINT VENTURE 05, supporting JTFHQ and JFLogC and providing excellent CIS capability. The Sqn is currently providing support to the Coalition Warrior Inter-operability Demonstration (CWID) being held at Portsmouth.

The Sqn was also responsible for the co-ordination of this year's Race the Sun challenge, which was held from 12 -13 May 05, and was a great success. **Capt Alan Foote**, the Sqn Operations Officer and the SNCOs worked tirelessly. An invitation was extended to all units across the Army, but only 18 units were able to take part. AFC Harrogate won the Major Unit Champions title, and UOTC Exeter clinched the Minor Units' Trophy. The target this year was to raise £9,000 for Charity, and so far we have raised £8,000.

The Sqn has also taken part in various sporting activities. **Sig Hasta** represented the Army at Tae Kwan Do, **Sigs Kolikata**, **Raikoso**, **Harris** and **LCpl Clayton** represented the Regiment/Corps and even Army in different levels of Rugby events. We have had the honour and privilege to host VIPs to the Sqn on numerous occasions, including a contingent of high-ranking officers from the International College of Defence Studies (including a Colonel from Libya!) and **Col NAW Pope** (Col QGS).

SHOOTING IN THE ARMY AND CORPS SAAM
- by Sig Stanley

A while ago I had the opportunity to take part in the annual Corps SAAM. I did not know anything about the event, but was up for the challenge, as I have always fancied myself as a bit of a sniper. The following Monday I found myself in the middle of an intensive and fairly advance trg regime, which was a big shock to me. Initially I found that I could not keep up with the pace of things, and I felt like I was completely out of my league.

The only thing I did well in the first week was zeroing. After some hard and dedicated personal trg from **Maj Krishna** and the other members of the 2 Sig Regt team, I eventually began to get better and better. I could see my score improving to the point where I was nipping at the heels of the Class A soldiers in the team. Although I have been shooting since the age of eight, that first week of trg taught me more than the last ten years trying to teach myself. Unfortunately, about a week before the competition, our Team Captain, **Maj Krishna** had to fly home to Nepal to attend to a family emergency. This was a little bit of a set back for me, because almost everything I was learning was straight from him.

As the competition approached I was very nervous and excited, all of the pressure and anticipation of the event was unreal. All we had done in the past three weeks was eat, sleep and drink shooting, and it became our only reason for existence! What a waste if you did not give it more than everything you had. When it was my turn for the first shoot, I kept on thinking I am going to do really bad and mess this up. After completing the shoot, I was waiting for my score to be called out - and to my surprise, it was my personal best in that particular shoot. I was on top of the world, and from then on, the scores just came pouring out. At the end of Corps SAAM, I was presented with the Trophy for the Best Young Soldier across the participating Corps and Royal Signals. A month earlier, if someone had told me that I was going to do was well as I did, I would have laughed at them. And look at me now, I am the top young shot! If any of you reading this article are ever offered the opportunity to go away on Corps SAAM, I hope you do, because it is so much fun. And you never know, you might just win a few trophies as well.

Sig Stanley being presented with the Best Young Soldier Trophy by the SOinC(A)

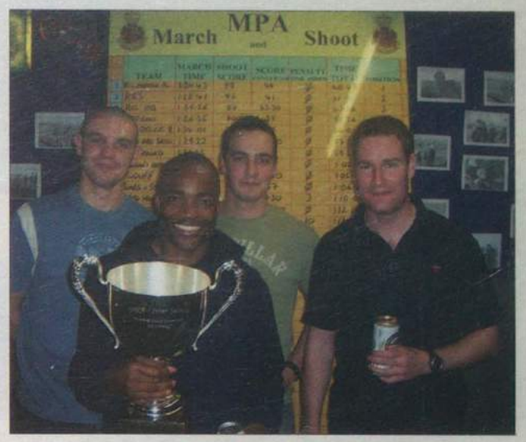
JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC	**Maj Paul Anderson**
USM	**WO2 Sid Barrass**

As winter grips the Falkland Islands, and everyone wishes they were posted to Cyprus, the work carried out by Royal Signals personnel always seems to increase. We've had a very hectic early part to 2005, with the handover to DCSA getting ever closer, and the ongoing PROJECT TURING work (BFFI Net upgrade) now delayed towards the end of the year. But this hasn't stopped other projects taking off. The implementation of a JCUFI tri-Service Ops Cell, re-structuring of the JCUFI Orbat, creation of a Single Point Of Contact Service Desk, and the interrogation of the Sunrise fault reporting software, have made for a busy time, especially within the IT Cell, Eng Ops and Line Section.

Nevertheless, the Unit has found time to compete in the various events around MPC. Late April saw the 24-hour Bowlathon charity event take centre stage - a well-contested across the 3 Services, which the Army Team, captained by the event JCUFI FofS, **WO2 'Arry Arundel** won. The Unit has also recently competed in the charity go-karting, and the RIC March and Shoot Competition, which is reported below.

The coming months see OC Sqn, OC Sp Tp, USM and several SNCOs leave to return to the Corps. It's farewell to **Maj Paul Anderson**, his wife **Elaine**, who are off to Birmingham UOTC; to **WO2 (USM) Sid Barrass**, who returns to 21 Sig Regt (AS), and then to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215); and to **Lt Rich Warmington**, back to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. Additionally, goodbye and good luck to **Sgts Vicky Charnock**, **Mick Lawlor** and **Billy Boyle**. To replace them, and stepping straight into the Austral Winter, come **Maj Dougy Wright** and his wife **Norma**, from MS(B) Glasgow; **WO2 (USM) Taff Kinsey**, from 7 Sig Regt; **Sgts Ian Lawson**, **Dan Read** and **Steve George**. We hope they have brought their arctic issue socks and thermals!



The RADCON Team. *LCpl Johnno Johnson, Pte RAF Rafemoyo (with the cup), Cpl John Connor, and Sgt Chris Noviss*

MPA MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION, 14 MAY 2005
- By Sgt Chris Noviss

Every four to six months, the Roulement Infantry Company (RIC) holds a March and Shoot Competition that is open to all units in the Falkland Islands, and also to civilians at Mount Pleasant Complex (MPC). So in March, the call went out from the USM, **WO2 Sid Barrass**, for volunteers for the latest competition. This was to consist of an eight-mile march, an assault course and a snap shoot. The OC, **Maj Paul Anderson** was quick to throw down the gauntlet, by assembling all of the JCUFI Officers into one team. There was to be no map reading involved, so he considered this a safe move. Teams were also entered from RADCON, IT Cell, the Line Section and AMS.

As trg began, it soon emerged that the contest between RADCON and the Officers would be a close-fought thing. RADCON, with a little help from **Pte Rafemoyo** of UHQ, found itself out in all weathers, tabbing up and down Pleasant Peak. And, as the day of the competition drew near, wildly exaggerated claims were banded about as to which team could cover the distance the fastest.

On the day, RADCON and the Officers team, 'Nelsons Hero's,' were first of the thirty-two teams to start the event. RADCON were quick to take the lead, but by the halfway point, Nelsons Hero's, captained by **Lt Rich Warmington**, had moved ahead of them. After throwing themselves over, under and through the obstacle course, they finished 59 secs ahead of RADCON. At this point, the Officers thought they were home and dry, but the shoot was still to come, and as **Sig Phil Hayden** was heard to point out, Officers can't shoot! This proved to be the case, and with time off for their score on the shoot, RADCON's final time was 51 mins 36 secs, to the Officers' score of 1 hr 5 mins. RADCON finished fourth over all, beating a number of the Infantry teams and winning the non-Infantry Award. Nelsons Hero's finished in eighth position, closely followed by Line Section in ninth. All of our teams put in a strong performance on the day, thus maintaining JCUFI's competitive edge in the MPC community.

The *Officers Team Lt Rich Warmington, Flt Lt Dave Roe, Maj Paul Anderson, and Flt Lt Dave Ramsey*

A NEW ROYAL SIGNALS UNIT

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

On 5 April 2005 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt was formed. Or rather, it was re-formed. 18 Sig Regt can trace its roots back to Comms units serving in the Far East from as far back as 1920. 18 Sig Regt was officially created there in 1959, and disbanded in 1971.

The new 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt's role is the provision of CIS for all UK Special Forces. For this, it has subsumed 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn, SBS Sig Sqn and 63 (SAS) Sig Sqn (R). Two new squadrons, 267 (SRR) and 268 (UKSF) Sig Sqns have also been added.

A major recruiting drive is now under way to fill the new posts in the Regt. Any serving member of HM Forces who has a communications qualification may apply to serve as a Special Forces Communicator (SFC).

QUALIFYING STANDARDS

The minimum requirements are:

Class 2 in a Signals trade;

To have passed BFPA and All Arms CFT;

To have at least 3 years' residual service left;

Preferably, to have served 12 months in a working unit.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection procedure normally starts with the 5-day Briefing Course, which gives the candidate a taster for the main qualifying course. If, as a result, the candidate is found to be suitable and wishes to become a SFC, he will attend the 25-week Special Forces Communicator's Course to qualify.

THE BRIEFING COURSE

The 5-day Briefing Course is designed to give applicants an insight into SF Comms, and an overview of the Special Forces Communicator's Course (SFCC). It also demonstrates to candidates how achievable the qualifying course is, helps them to assess their current capability, and shows them what they need to do to prepare for it. These Courses are currently run in March, April, August, and October.

THE SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATOR'S COURSE

The 24-week the Special Forces Communicator's Course is run twice a year, starting in May and November. It is highly preferable that applicants would already have attended the Briefing Course.

The Course comprises 6 Phases, all of which must be passed to gain SFC qualification: These Phases are:

Technical Trade Assessment	1 week;
General Support Comms	6 weeks;
Physical Aptitude	5 weeks;
Close Support Comms	5 weeks;
Conduct After Capture	2 weeks;
Military Training	3 weeks; and
SF Parachute Training	3 weeks.

OVERALL COURSE APPROACH

Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be super-fit and tough to be a Special Forces Communicator, and the qualifying course is not there to break you. There is no 'beasting'. The instructors are firm, but their approach is to encourage each participant to develop his own strengths using his own individual resources. To a certain extent, participants play a big part in selecting themselves.

The instructors act as role models, constantly encouraging students to achieve

Range work covers a variety of different weapons...

The overall approach reflects Charles Darwin's belief: *'It is not the strongest who survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones who are most responsive to change.'*

VIEWS AND IMPRESSIONS

I visited 18 Sig Regt in April, and spent some time with participants of a Briefing Course (Days 2 and 3). I joined them on the range, where they fired a number of unfamiliar weapons; in the pool, where they did (and all passed) the complete swim test; and I spent a whole day with them on the hills, where they did navigation tests.

It was not easy for some participants, but what was apparent was the growing confidence as they achieved things – and learned in the process. Typical comments out on the hills were: 'I didn't realise how bad my map reading was, but now I've sorted it, so I'm confident that I can pass that part of the main course...' and 'My BFPA was awful this morning, but I know I've got time work on it, and I'll get it right for the main course – which I'm definitely going to apply for!'

That evening, I joined them over a brew. They were tired, and they still had to prepare for the next day, but they were full of enthusiasm. These are just a few of their comments:-

'At first I only thought that I could pass the main course. Now I know that I can.'

'The DS here treat you as adults. They let you see for yourself that you can do it.'

'There are many tests to do. Some are tough, but they are all attainable.'

'This course (the Briefing Course) is great. It's like, taste it before you buy it.'

I later spoke to two Royal Marines who had passed the SFC Course. 'We were worried when we were informed that we coming on a course run by the Army,' they said. 'Let's just say

... and Comms training, a range of different kit

that we had certain views on how the Army operates. But we found on this course and in this Unit that, like the logo says, the Army really is the best. Their approach, the comradeship and team spirit here is really brilliant. We are now highly motivated, and looking forward to 2 years of doing all the things we joined up to do.'

An RAF Cpl, who had also passed the SFC Course, said, 'It was a bit daunting at first. I hadn't done the Briefing Course, and I thought there was no way I would pass the SFCC. But we approached each stage logically; we achieved it, and then went on to the next one... Very soon we could see what we had achieved so far, so there was no way we could chuck it all away; we just had to pass all the next stages. And we couldn't let down our mates or our instructors, who had given us all that encouragement.'

A Tech Cpl serving in the Unit said, 'For some reason, I now find myself technically better at my trade. The job here is so much

Parachute training includes water jumps – which everyone achieves

more challenging; we work on kit that you would never see anywhere else in the Corps. I know that I'll have no difficulty passing my Class 1. My message to other Techs is, if you think that you are good at your trade, then come here and you can really find out.'

The last two stories I have, are from two soldiers elsewhere in the Army, who firmly consider that their career progress was enhanced by service in a SF Comms Unit. A SSgt, currently serving with a regular Sig Regt, said 'I was a Driver Electrician, 21 years old, no better than anyone else; but I wanted to be a SFC, so I applied. I went straight into the SFC Course without doing the Briefing Course - probably not the best way. Like everyone else, I struggled, but with the support of the other candidates and the constructive approach of the DS, I made it.

Then when I was posted to the Sqn, it was brilliant; my boss was great, and everyone treated me like one of the family. Even though I was an Electrician Driver, I still got the training for, and was deployed as an Operator. In fact I discovered that most Yeomen prefer to take an ED with them on deployment.

During my time as a SFC, I went from Signaller to SSgt in 7½ years, ending up as a CI on a selection course. On the strength of my SFC training, I am now a Radio Troop SSgt in my current Regt.

The RSM of another regular Sig Regt, passed the SFCC in 1990, and was posted to 264 Sig Sqn in 1991. After 6 years as a SFC, he was posted to ATR Lichfield as a Sgt instructor. Two years later, he was back with 264 Sig Sqn for 2 years. Then after a spell as an instructor at ATR Bassingborne, he was back at the Sqn as its SSM. He made WO2 in 2001 and WO1 in 2004.

'To have gone from LCpl to WO1 in 13 years wasn't bad going,' he says. 'My time in a SFC Unit and the deployments I went on has not only been fulfilling and enjoyable, it has greatly assisted my career.'

SO HOW CAN YOU BECOME A SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATOR?

The best way is to attend the 5-day Briefing Course. Inform your OC of your intentions, and call 94475 2493. They will answer any questions you have, and will send you a complete information pack.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO **Lt Col IG Standen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SK Cook**

CYPRUS CYCLE CHALLENGE 2005

Each year several volunteers from JSSU(Cyp) take part in a sponsored cycle ride, the proceeds of which are given to charity. The chosen charity for 2005 was Leukaemia Research.

On the 14 April 2005, 22 personnel from all 3 services and the Unit's civilian element, set off from Ayios Nikolaos for a punishing 356 km cycle that was to take in Dhekelia, Akrotiri, Episkopi, UN HQ Nicosia, and included a 2,500m ascent to reach the summit of Mt Troodos.

Unfortunately, the start did not go according to plan as 15 mins after the CO officially commenced the event, the motorcycle safety outrider lost control of his bike on gravel and took a fall, resulting in a broken leg and a very broken military motorcycle. But the team pushed ahead with the remaining outrider, giving them a comparative degree of safety.

Three days later, the weeks of prep and the hard trg regime were to show dividends, as all 22 cyclists completed the full course, and returned to Ayios Nikolaos in style, to a warm welcome at the Unit bar. Several beers later, there were contented murmurings, and general agreement that they had all thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

All those who took part are to be congratulated on their determination and dedication, as the overall sum raised for Leukaemia Research is expected to be approximately £4,500.

THE VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL

The first inkling that the Unit was to receive a Royal visit came in Autumn 2004, when a discrete call from RHQ indicated that **HRH The Princess Royal** would visit both Royal Signals and Royal Logistic Corps units on Cyprus in her capacity as Colonel-in-Chief to both. Several months later, and after a deal of prep, and planning, all was ready, and the Unit eagerly awaited her arrival on 19 April. This was to be her first visit to Ayios Nikolaos Station since the formation of JSSU(Cyp) and therefore her first opportunity to see the Servicemen and their families in home surroundings. So all concerned were determined to show the Unit in style.

She was greeted with a sunny day as she stepped from the helicopter accompanied by the Comdr British Forces Cyprus, **Maj Gen PTC Pearson CBE** and the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, who presented the CO, **Lt Col Iain Standen**. A short drive later, the visit proper started, when **Her Royal Highness** had the opportunity to meet Royal Signals personnel at their place of work.

The Princess Royal displayed a clear understanding of the work we do here, and was extremely interested in the role Royal Signals personnel play in the prosecution of the Unit mission. Indeed, both **Cpl Evans** and **LCpl Mumford** were somewhat surprised and impressed by the complexity of her questions, and her very obvious grasp of the intricacies of our daily business. This was to be a theme repeated throughout the visit, as **Her Royal Highness** toured the various sections.

WO2 Sharples briefing Her Royal Highness

Once **Her Royal Highness** had completed her tour of the working areas, she proceeded to the Joint Mess, where she was greeted by the children of the Ayios Nikolaos Primary School, who entertained her with a short musical rendition, and presented her with a posy. This was followed by a small luncheon, prepared by the Unit's military chefs, before **Her Royal Highness** met the remaining Royal Signals and Royal Logistic Corps soldiers and officers, some of whom were accompanied by their partners. This was a hugely enjoyable experience in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere, and the presence of **Her Royal Highness** accompanied by the Master of Signals evoked a real sense of the Corps as a wider family.

Sig Quinlan and Her Royal Highness with WO1(FofS) Holyoak.

SSgt(FofS) Eyes and Her Royal Highness in discussion with WO1(Supvr R) Winfield.

When the Princess had finished chatting to all who had gathered to meet her at the reception, she was invited to sign the Station Visitors Book, before being accompanied to the waiting helicopter by the CO. The walk to the HLS provided a chance for her to meet the remainder of the Station who she was unable to see earlier in her visit; needless to say there was quite a turnout.

The day was a great success and admirably illustrated the twin tenets of professionalism in the workplace, coupled with a strong

sense of family unity that underpin the way in which we live and work here at Ayios Nikolaos.

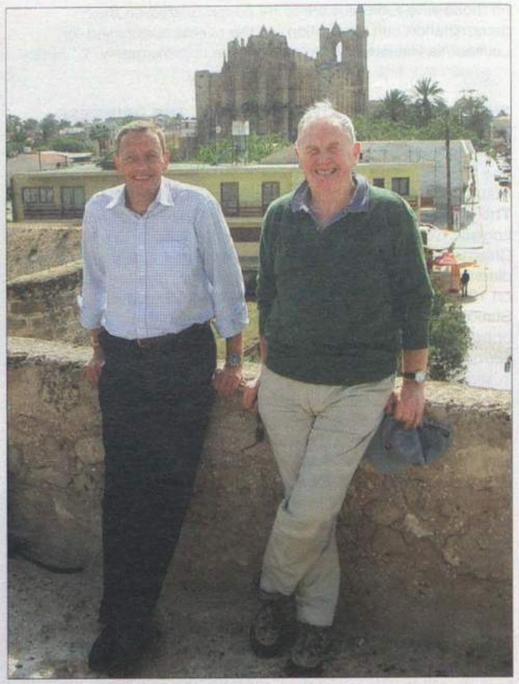
THE VISIT OF THE MASTER OF SIGNALS

The Unit was extremely fortunate to host the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, for four days prior to, and immediately after the visit of **Her Royal Highness**. Besides benefiting from the invaluable advice and assistance with the Royal Visit given by the Master, the Unit also had the opportunity to display to him the key role Royal Signals personnel play in this unique and diverse organisation.

The Master was able to tour all the operational areas, and spent a good deal of time talking with the young (and not so young) operators from all three Services, in their place of work. They acquitted themselves extremely well, and displayed the level of professionalism and intelligence that we have come to expect from them. Indeed, the Master commented on how well they understood both their own specific tasks, and their contribution to the overall Unit mission.

Despite a hectic schedule, which included several other official engagements, the Master was able to visit some of the historical sites that surround Ayios Nikolaos. In particular, he took advantage of the relaxation of border restrictions to cross into the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) to visit Kyrenia, Famagusta and Salamis, accompanied by the CO, **Lt Col Iain Standen** and the Adjt, **Capt Al Jenkins**.

All too soon, the visit came to an end, and after a Unit breakfast in the Combined Mess, during which he addressed the Royal Signals Officers, WOs and SNCOs, the Master departed for the UK, bringing to a conclusion two particularly enjoyable VVIP visits.



Capt Al Jenkins and The Master of Signals enjoying the delights of Famagusta TRNC

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

SPORTING GIANTS

The Regiment has been awarded the Birtwistle Pennant of Merit for Sport after an amazing year of sporting successes. Central to the award was the superb performance by the Regtl Cross Country Team, who won nearly every event against all opposition from across the Services. They are probably the first all military unit team to be selected to represent a county in the National Championships. Other successes came at Football, where the Team has won its division. Fighting its way through to the final of the Div Challenge Cup, the Team were only narrowly beaten by Inter Service Jubilee Cup Winners, 6 Bn REME.

Achievements at Swimming and Water Polo, Orienteering and Shooting all contributed. The Regt now boasts a growing number of International Athletes, most notably **Cpl Sophie Morris**, **Sig Haggai Chepkwony** and **LCpl Michelle Scott**.

The Regt is always on the lookout for sporting talent, so budding stars who wish to be part of a winning team should contact Regt 2IC, **Maj Butch Maycock**, or fill out a PPP and post to MCM Div at Glasgow.

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS COMPETION

The Regtl athletics season got underway in earnest with the Inter-Sqn competition, held at the University of Bath high performance centre - only the best for 21! This was an excellent opportunity for the team management to spot new talent, and for the more established athletes to wish that they'd spent their off season time training, rather than hanging around with the Rugby and Football teams.

Fortunately, the weather proved to be kind, which prompted some first class performances from all the Sqn teams. It was obviously so impressive that Olympic Gold Medallist, **Jason Gardener** was spotted eyeing up the squad, no doubt picking up a few tips from **Maj Jason Kennedy** on how to conduct a proper acceleration drive phase. After a hotly fought competition, both on the track and in the queue for the BBQ, HQ Sqn ended up as winners of both the Male and Female competitions and earned themselves some much needed points towards the CO's Cup.

MORRISON CUP 2005 – VICTORY FOR 21 SIGNAL REGIMENT

The first engagement of the season for the Regtl Team was the Morrison Cup at Blandford. An excellent turnout saw 9 Major Unit teams and 10 Female teams competing, and ensured that the competition in all events was fierce. It was an excellent opportunity to try out some new talent. **Sig Scarff** produced an excellent result with hammer throwing, and **Sig Evans** was unlucky not to win the high jump. **Sig Hardy** also made his debut in the 800m and the 3,000m Steeple Chase, running a sound technical race in both. **Sig Harrison** was only just beaten in the Pole Vault, and **WO2(SSM) Dunbar** made his first appearance for the Regt in the Javelin event.

WO2(SSM) Wayne Dunbar gets to grips with the javelin

With much of the rest of the squad already Corps and Army regulars, the scene was set for a clear victory, especially with the 4x100m team having to do only just enough to make the final. Sure enough, the team stormed to an impressive victory, only to see a red flag on the first changeover. Apparently, the changeover had occurred only a marginal 30 feet outside the box, and the boys had been unlucky to be caught out. With a bit of catching up to do on Day 2, both the male and female team went into overdrive, to pick up maximum points in all but 3 events. By the time the relays came around, the trophies had already been decided. The Ladies' Team put on a master-class in the 4x400m, winning by half a lap, whilst the men decided to put on a show to keep the audience on the edge of their seats, **Cpl Williams** finally putting in some work after a quiet 2 days, to secure victory.

Sig Chris Hardy, the youngest Signaller in the Team, poses with the CO after being presented the Morrison Cup by the SOinC(A)

CROSS-COUNTRY SEASON 2004/05

The cross-country teams can look back on an outstanding season, even managing to grab a County title from the civilian running teams of Wiltshire. The teams are captained by **SSgt Jock Castle** and **Cpl Sophie Morris**. Both teams boast many Corps, Army and Combined Services runners. We very proud to have an international, and potential international runner leading the way in all competitions. **Cpl Morris** was selected to represent England in November 2004, and **Sig Haggai Chepkwony** is also on the verge of a call up.

The Regt has taken a number of trophies this year, and many of our runners have gone on to achieve individual success in civilian competitions. The honours are as follows:

Male Team	**Female Team**
Army Relay Champions	Army Relay Champions
Wiltshire Champions	Corps Champions
5 Div Champions	Army team Champions
Corps Champions	
Army Team Champions	
Inter Corps Champions	
Army Half Marathon Champions	
5 Div League Champions	
Bruggen 10 Champions	

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steve Morgan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Anthea Burdus**

EXERCISE SOLENT SAIL - APRIL 2005 - *By Sig Hanvey*

EX SOLENT SAIL was the first AT sailing ex for the Regt this year. Skipper for the exercise was **Sgt Marsh**. Amongst the crew of seven, three were total novices to sailing. After attending mandatory safety briefs from the staff at JSASTC, we were ready to take to the wild seas of the south coast (Portsmouth inner harbour, actually)

After some low-level crew trg, we were eventually let loose on the Solent. This was to teach the basic life saving skills, such as man overboard drills, and for the Skipper to beast the foredeck crews with some fast sail changes. Even the duty cook had to learn the essential skill of how to make a good brew whilst the boat is leaning over at 45 degrees. After an afternoon sailing around the local area, it was time for us to return to Gosport to re-supply for the week's trip.

With lots of other units sailing around the local area, **Sgt Marsh** put his crew to the test by challenging the Worcester and Sherwood Foresters to a race to Lymington. Not only was the pride of the Regt at stake, but the pride of the Corps was also. Five hours of hard sailing later, we entered Lymington Harbour with our pride intact - an easy victory, finishing some 2 miles

LCpl Lane, Cpl Kitson, Sig Hanvey and Sig Roberts enjoying a flat sea, just hours before the storm hits

ahead of our rivals. This victory was credited especially to **Sgt Martin Baldwin** and **Cpl Kitson**, whose quick sail handling and good course selection made the whole race run like clockwork. To celebrate, we had a quiet night in Lymington.

Very early the next morning, we were back out on the Solent for more sail trg. This time, **Sgt Baldwin** and **Cpl Dickey Lane** took turns to run through skippering skills. With **Sig Roberts** on galley duties for the day, this gave **Cpl Tina Dodd** and **Sig Hanvey** a chance to learn some sail changing drills. We also briefly let them take control of the boat, and after another hard day's sailing, we moored alongside in Cowes, Isle of Wight.

We awoke to find weather conditions had deteriorated, which brought a sadistic smile to the Skipper's face. With an order for everyone to prepare for rough sea conditions, we slipped our moorings, and set out for an unforgettable day's sailing. It was a very wet and tired crew that sailed into Yarmouth that evening.

Sig Hanvey enjoys the 30-degree list to starboard!

The final day afloat gave all participants the chance to practise skills learned over the course of the week. All in all, this was a fun day out at sea, which came to an end as we returned the boat back to its home in Gosport.

With the boat handed back to JSASTC, the Skipper took everyone out for an end of week meal at a local pub. With the rum flowing, it was not long before the salty old seadogs told their stories of 20-ft high seas and 90-knot winds. But for me, it was a welcome change from having to cook for seven people on a small gas cooker, and washing up in a bucket of seawater!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Bob Lovett**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wayne Dunbar**

EXERCISE SCORPION DALE – MAY 2005 - *by Sgt Lee Palmer*

After a casual conversation with the OC back in December, here I was organising AT for two thirds of the Sqn. Even before I had a confirmed loc, I had already reached Nominal Roll version 653.5. This was going to be a long couple of months!

Planning started in earnest in the middle of February, with the confirmation of having Halton Trg Camp at our disposal over our chosen dates. Going it alone was a laborious and painstaking task, and with other work simmering away in the background, it was time to go on a recruiting drive for an Ex Co-ordinator/2IC. This I achieved by a simple remark directed casually towards an unsuspecting and newly posted-in **Sgt Chris Cant**. Little did he realise that this was to be the beginning of what turned out to be a highly successful planning team.

The first week was a roaring success, with tremendous weather blessing the party. The activities included hill walking, rock climbing, orienteering, cycling, canoeing and socialising with the inhabitants of Lancaster University. The final day of activities for Week 1 centred around an 8km canoe trip across Windermere, led by **Cpl Ross Kane** of 3 Protection Group, RM, followed by a 20 km cycle on a trail around Grizedale Forest Park. By the end of the afternoon, everyone was sporting a fresh tan.

On Week 2, Monday started with a spot of rock climbing under direction from attached submariner, **Lt Chris Evans RN**, an activity that saw **Sig Keeling** demonstrating an Elvis Presley technique. On Thursday, the weather was so bad that the canoe and cycling activity was cancelled, so a cultural visit to the Ambleside tearooms was pencilled into the itinerary. Of course tearooms had previously been recce'd by **WO2 (SSM) Wayne Dunbar**, and myself, and had been given the all clear.

All in all, a good fortnight was had by all members of the party. Halton comes highly recommended on the list of places to go for squaddies.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jason Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ganesh**

CORPS SKILL-AT-ARMS MEETING 2005

The annual CORPSAAM takes place at Ash and Pirbright Ranges. This year, there were approximately 26 Royal Signals teams competing alongside numerous teams from other Corps.

The Regt entered two teams each of 5 soldiers, and 3 individual shooters. The team was under the comd of 2IC 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, **Capt Buddhi Gurung**. All personnel worked extremely hard, and performed excellently over the course of the week, with the A and B Teams finishing 4th and 6th respectively. In addition, there were a number of noteworthy individual achievements. **LCpl Khagendra Tamang** won the Royal Signals Rifle Champion Shot 2005 and the FIBUA Match; **LCpl Kris Halton** won the Kukri Trophy (awarded to the best non-Gurkha shot); **Sig Lokaji Gurung** came top in the Class B Association Match; **Sig Anjit Tamang** finished first in the Roupel Match; and **Sig Krishna Khajum** was the second overall highest scorer in the Class B category. Finally, the week ended on a particularly proud moment, with half of the Royal Signals Team for the Inter-Corps Falling Plates Competition being drawn from our squad. Once again, congratulations go to all those members of this year's successful team.

Royal Signals Rifle Champion 2005, LCpl Khagendra Tamang is chaired off by his fellow team members

LANYARD TROPHY COMPETITION 2005

- by Capt J Hawkins, Competition Organiser, 216 Air Asslt Sig Sqn

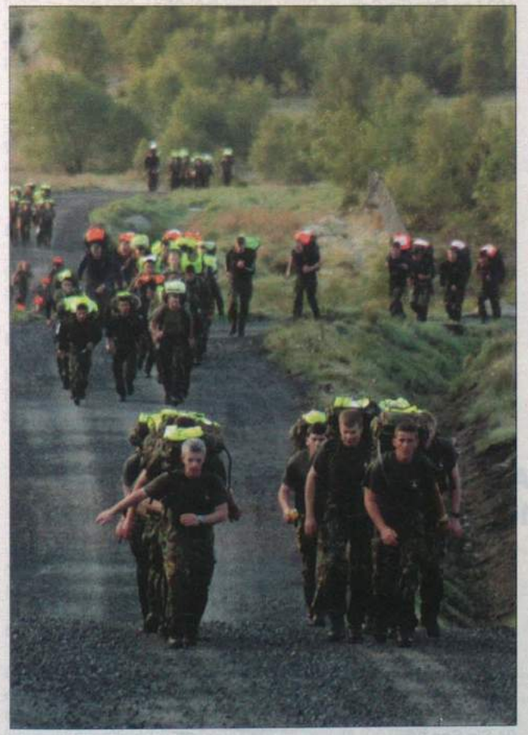
Another year on, and another gruelling course was tackled, as the Lanyard Trophy Competition 2005 took place in one of the most unforgiving locations in England. This year saw the largest number of teams to enter the biggest event in the Royal Signals' calendar, with teams competing against each other across the hills of Otterburn Training Area in North Yorkshire.

The history of the Lanyard Trophy Competition dates back to 1979, when in July that year, the inaugural event was organised by the 6 Field Force Unit HQ and Sig Sqn, and took place along the South Downs Way. In its early form, the Trophy was competed for solely by the members of the Sqn, and on an individual basis. Successfully completing the course earned a competitor the right to proudly wear the coveted Airborne Signals Lanyard after which the Trophy took its name.

The Competition has evolved considerably over the past 26 years, with the event this year attracting 31 teams drawn from Regular and TA Royal Signals units alike. These teams were split into 3 separate categories: Regular, Female and TA. The intention was to form a Veterans' category this year also, but the challenge was not taken up by the old and bold! Each male or mixed gender team member carried their 40lbs, and each female team member carried their 25lbs, over the 40 mile course, through each of the 13 CPs manned by members of 216 Air Asslt Sig Sqn.

With the mist clearing and daylight breaking over the rugged Cheviot Hills, teams began arriving for their obligatory weigh-in and inspection at the Start Point from 03.00hrs on 7 June. A clear sky left competitors with only nerves and adrenalin to keep them warm, before the SOinC(A) initiated the Battle Noise Simulator to indicate the start of the race at 05.00hrs. Many were caught unawares! With photographers and visitors diving for cover as if they were jockeys thrown at the Grand National, just under 300 Bergen clad Army Communicators launched themselves forward from their starting positions. in a burst of energy never to be seen again over the unforgiving course.

As the hours passed and the teams spread across the route, the sun rose ever higher in the cloudless sky, and showed Otterburn a freak and rarely seen display of extreme heat. The temperature gradually rose to a decidedly uncomfortable 25°C, and remained constant for many hours. For too long, was the consensus of



After a massed start at 05.00hrs, teams converge on CP 1

10 Sig Regt check in at Checkpoint 6 using the trial electronic punching system

The fantastic views that this year's course provided were not really appreciated to their fullest extent by most competitors!

most teams! Thankfully, there were no reported cases of heat related illnesses or retirement due to dehydration, but the heat took its toll on all competitors, and further added to the relentlessness of the course. At 5 nominated CPs along the way, each team was welcomed by their admin support crew, who were able to dish out much-needed fluids and food. Many a visitor from across the Corps also turned up to add their support to their respective teams. The SOinC(A), along with Comd 11 Sig Bde, spent the day moving around the course speaking to teams, their admin crews and visitors alike.

Capt Bea Robson accepts the prize for First Female Team from the SOinC(A)

After a cruel 13hrs and 58 mins, the Competition saw its first finishing team emerge from behind a woodline, adorned with maroon berets, to cross the finish line. 216 Air Asslt Sig Sqn had won the Lanyard Trophy for and impressive third time in a row. Hot on their heels, came 14 Sig Regt (EW), also with a fair smattering of maroon berets, showing great determination and drive to complete the course in a time of 15 hrs and 4 mins. Just over an hour later, 30 Sig Regt followed, with an equally impressive effort.

After nearly 19 painful hours on their feet, the winning female team, 11 Sig Regt, loomed out of the darkness to cross the finish line. They were followed by 16 Sig Regt ladies an hour later. These were the only 2 female teams to cross the finish line.

With their muddied boots and combats, wet and sweat stained t-shirts, and a smile of relief across their faces (for those who could muster it), teams came trickling in to the finish and to the end of an agonising event. The accumulative distance walked by the competitors was a staggering 11,920 miles, which roughly equates to the distance from London to Paris, but via Cape Town! A total of 18 teams finished with the required amount of members to earn a position. Special mention must be given to the teams from 220 Sig Sqn 21 Sig Regt (AS) and 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, for being the only teams to finish with all team members. A few teams had withdrawn themselves as a result of the unusually harsh conditions, and a few teams were withdrawn by the organisers when the finish was clearly not going to be reached within the allowed 24 hr time period.

As the clock struck the cut off-hour of 05.00hrs, all teams were safely back at Otterburn Camp for a well-earned rest. A few hours later, and for those who were able to walk, hobble or crawl, the Prizegiving began. The SOinC(A) awarded prizes to those teams placed first and second in each of the Regular and Female categories. Alas, no TA teams qualified for their category Trophy. It was an unusual sight to see drill performed in flip-flops!

So for another year, the tabbing soldier can hang up his or her boots and take a well-earned rest. This year's Competition saw another gutsy and determined effort by all who took part, and the tough and remorseless course provided everyone with the opportunity to learn a little something about themselves, and the limits of their own mental and physical endurance. There was teamwork, leadership and resolve in abundance this year. It is hoped that Lanyard Trophy 2006 will also demonstrate such admirable qualities.

The results are as follows:

Category	**Time**
Regular Male	Hrs Mins
16 Air Asslt Bde Sig Sqn	13 58
14 Sig Regt (EW)	15 04
30 Sig Regt	16 11
10 Sig Regt	16 44
21 Sig Regt (AS) (244 Sqn)	16 56
21 Sig Regt (AS) (248 Sqn)	17 41
16 Sig Regt	17 51
21 Sig Regt (AS) (220 Sqn)	18 25
7 Sig Regt	18 35
11 Sig Regt (Team 1)	18 39
ATR (L)	19 01
102 Log Bde Sig Sqn	19 25
19 Lt Bde Sig Sqn	19 33
39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn	19 49
1 (UK) ADSR	20 27
3 (UK) DSR	21 27
Not placed	
2 Sig Regt	17 11
21 Sig Regt (AS) (HQ)	18 03
15 Sig Regt	19 46
Withdrawn	
11 Sig Regt (Team 2)	
Regular Female	
11 Sig Regt	18 57
16 Sig Regt	19 50
Did not complete/Withdrawn	
3 (UK) DSR	
7 Sig Regt	
21 Sig Regt	
15 Sig Regt	
Territorial Army	
Did not complete/Withdrawn	
35 Sig Regt (V)	
21 Sig Regt (V)	
37 Sig Regt (V)	
94 Sig Sqn (V)	
33 Sig Regt (V)	

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hour, till he resumed his normal colour, which is very white anyway. **LCpl Emma Burton** raised the most sponsorship, with a total of £600. The total raised by the members of the Sqn was £1,400, which was forwarded to See-ability, a charity that aids blind and handicapped people.

Why does she look so happy?

45 (EASTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M McKenzie-Bell**
SSM **WO2 N Back**

THE JACK SMITH MEMORIAL – *by LCpl Reid*

The Jack Smith Memorial was the first Army Tug of War competition of the season, the bulk of the Regtl team being made up from 45 Sig Sqn. This was the first time the Regt had entered in a Tug of War competition at this level, and WE were the only TA team to take part. Despite a valiant effort by all, the day's competition turned out to be a baptism of fire, with our Team narrowly failing to beat Army Champions, 7 Sig Regt and 40 Regt RA.

45 Sqn also found themselves forming the main bulk of the Regtl shooting team, and thanks mainly to the efforts of **Sgt Woz Wright**, we were able to spend valuable trg time at Folkestone Ranges before representing the Regt at the Corps SAAM.

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DA Prince**
SSM **WO2 Alan Beach**

EX HERMES BAG - *by 2Lt J Barker*

Late-April saw 36 Sig Regt deploy to Capel Curig Trg Camp (CCTC) in North Wales for a week of AT. The ex included a Summer Mountaineering Proficiency course with Instructors from

Kayaking at Plas-y-Brenin

54 Sqn. The instructors were **2Lt John Barker**, **SSgt(FofS) Kev King**, **LCpl Tom Burke**, and the ex co-ordinator was **Sgt Steve Riley**.

As if on cue, morale-boosting rain started as we crossed the border, but this had petered out by the morning of the first day, leaving settled weather for the start of the ex. The first day was set aside for some acclimatisation to the hilly stuff, with a walk up Moel Siabod. At 872m, it was high enough to stretch some muscles, but still lower than some of the peaks to be tackled later in the week.

On Day Two we split into two groups to take advantage of the excellent facilities available locally at Plas-y-Brenin. One group spent the day at the centre skiing and kayaking. The second group was taught advanced rope safety techniques by **Sgt Riley**, based at the foot of Milestone Buttress on Tryfan (a Grade 3 scramble of some note). By the end of the day, **Sgt Riley** had taught some interesting techniques, including double abseils and belay selection.

The Summer Mountaineering Proficiency (SMP) course, led by **Sgt Riley** and **LCpl Burke**, started on Day Three. Those not involved in it went walking with **2Lt Barker** and **SSgt King** in the Carneddau. Conditions were good, with a number of deep snowdrifts remaining in sheltered places on the higher peaks.

Although all the SMP participants were trained soldiers with a number of years experience between them, many commented on the very different skills needed to navigate effectively in the mountains. **Cpl Brocklebank** noted in his log the problems that 'horizontal rain and winds threatening to blow us over' caused during the micro-navigation on the higher summits. The sudden changes in weather and the generally difficult walking conditions, made all those involved realise that a 'day out on the hills' could rapidly become a serious undertaking. As **Sig Adcock** commented, 'Before coming to Wales, who had ever heard of a marsh situated on top of a mountain?'

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

EXERCISE VON TRAPP DRAGON III

Despite rain and heavy wet snow, 37 soldiers from the Regt deployed on EX VON TRAPP DRAGON III, a ten day skiing exercise in Austria. The team comprised soldiers from all five Sqns, and included both beginners as well as the more experienced skiers.

Trg for the beginners started with the basics, but early attempts to ski down the blue slope were aborted due to the heavy, wet snow, which produced tired-out snowplough legs. But they soon progressed to cross-country skiing and blade downhill skiing, despite the conditions.

Meanwhile, the more advanced skiers had headed off to Stein Platter ski area, which was higher up and in the sun, and continued to go from strength to strength. The day before the end of ex competition, all the groups proceeded to Stein Platter.

The beginners group remained confined to the blue slopes; the advanced group concentrated on achieving fine form skiing in prep for their assessment the next day.

The Advanced Basic Ski Proficiency was awarded to **Lt Lucy Sewell**, **Sgt Tracy Fleming** and **Sgt Fred Smart**, all from 67 Sig Sqn. Basic Ski Proficiency was gained by the majority of the other soldiers on the slopes, all despite the poor skiing conditions.

TERRITORIAL ARMY CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The TA Cross Country Championships took place at Swynnerton Trg Camp on Saturday 23 April, and the Regt entered two male teams of 10 runners, with **Cpl Louise Daveron** of 93 Sig Sqn being the only individual female entry for the Regt.

Competition from Exeter OUTC proved too much, and they took most of the trophies. However, **SSgt (SQMS) Milton** of 96 Sig Sqn was the first Regtl Team runner in, being placed 9th, followed a few places later by **Capt (QM) Kemp**, with **LCpl Sole** of HQ Sqn close on his heels.

Cpl Daveron came in as second female veteran and received a prize. However, there was a little confusion over this due to an incorrect date of birth being given, and she did think that 1st place should have been hers. Perhaps she should be pleased that she hadn't been thought of as veteran in the first place, which was why no one requested her date of birth. Besides it's rude to ask a lady her age.

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Giles**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) S Webb**

CORPS RUGBY SEVENS - *by Cpl Thomas*

The sporting highlight of year has seen the Regt entering the Corps 7-a-side Rugby Union competition. In fact, it is the first TA unit ever to do so. Several trg sessions in the lead up to the big day, had revealed an abundance of footballers and non-sportsmen, but not many fit rugby players.

The very exhausted 37 Sig Regt Rugby 7s Team

The selected squad was made up of Regulars and Volunteers, with a wide range of ability and pedigree. Some believed that they had retired years ago, whilst others seemingly had never played before. With more than a little trepidation, we kicked off against 16 Sig Regt. Ten minutes later we walked off triumphantly, with a narrow but fully-deserved victory.

Unfortunately, further games revealed some major flaws. A lack of skill and talent was noticeable, but the whole squad displayed great determination and spirit, and can be justifiably proud of their efforts. Whilst we may not have won too many games, 37 Sig Regt was the first to hit the Bar to participate fully in the socialising element of the Competition.

Lt Longcake, **Sgts Humphries** and **Turner**, **Cpl Thomas** and **Sig Howells** represented 53 Sqn. **Sgt Lucas**, **LCpl Boneham**, **LCpl Shead**, and **Sigs Bennett** and **Swann** came from 67 Sqn. 96 Sqn's sole player was **Sgt Sabuda** and 93 Sqn was represented by **SSgt Eldridge** and **Sgt Templeman**. All in all, a successful and worthwhile effort and one that will be repeated next year.

67 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj K Metcalfe**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Francis**

The main event in April was the Sqn entering the Stratford Dragon Boat Race. Last year we won the event, and were hoping to retain our crown this time around. With more teams entered this year, the format differed from the previous year, and only the best 2 teams went through to the final. This made things rather more difficult. Every team took part in 3 heats. The two fastest times from the 3 races counted, so each race was equally important to record a good time. Unfortunately, we didn't reach the final; the team we beat last year took it. Even so, our 4th place finish was very respectable.

This month we farewell **SSgt Barlow** and **Sgt Fisher**, whohave left the Sqn after many years of loyal service; and we welcome the new SSM, **WO2 Francis**. With over 40 years of experience behind, him he will no doubt be a useful edition to the Sqn.

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) G Small**

THE LANYARD TROPHY - *by Sgt Templeman*

It's amazing how good some ideas sound so good when in the surroundings of a comfortable bar in Blackburn. The question 'Why don't we do Lanyard next year?' should have a received a very forthright and concise reply, but, for some reason, everybody nodded in agreement. **Cpl Greaves** led the trg with many of the younger members in the hills around Lancashire. As the event loomed closer, weak and unmilitary excuses came from some, as courage deserted them. But with a little help from the Welsh, the Sqn Team stepped up to the start line with ten team members ready to go. Thanks go to **Sgt Turner** and **Sig Ryan Lewis** for stepping in at the last minute to enable us to field a full team.

So at 05.00hrs on the day, the Team, led by **Maj Cosgrove**, crossed the line, and it very quickly became clear that the course would be challenging, demanding and character-building. However, the whole Team arrived at CP2 in high spirits, enjoying the hot weather - something they had not been used to in Blackburn. The next leg proved more eventful, with **Sig Sam Howarth** having a nose bleed and **Cpl Dave Hughes** suffering from an old knee injury. But the Team made it intact to CP3, where the CO and RSM were waiting to give their support. On entering the CP, **WO2 (SSM) Small** demonstrated his meticulous pre-event diet to the CO and RSM, by showing them what he had eaten for breakfast. Shedding two members at this CP, the remainder cracked on, but had to leave another member at the next CP. The admin support team were a welcome sight at CP5. With further injuries, we now had six team members through CPs 7, 8 and 9, where we had to leave yet another member. In the darkness of the next CP, the decision was made to call it a day, and the remaining members were recovered to Camp. The Team remained in high spirits, showing what could be done with the

determination and courage, fostered by this event. Everybody went the extra mile, even after injury, and after this experience, all the signs indicate that the TA Lanyard Trophy could be with the Regt next year.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt S Jenner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) A Bennett**

EXERCISE FLANDERS FIELD - *by Sig Mohammed*

It was a bright and sunny day as 96 Sig Sqn set off for a weekend battlefield tour in Normandy. As a younger member of the Army, I was unsure of what to expect from the weekend. We see a lot of war films, but nobody can truly comprehend the true meaning of war or the unbelievable feeling of sadness and loss experienced by fellow members of British Forces, until we go back in time to experience first hand the places where such sorrow occurred.

One of the highlights of the weekend was visiting a bunker on the Hillman Site. Here lie the original remains of a German Commcen CP, which was single-handily taken by one **Pte Hunter**, who was subsequently awarded the DCM. There we could see how zigzag trenches were formed, and how an area of 600metres by 400 metres had to be guarded. This was a great privilege offered to us by **Monsieur Parcollet**, as this is not an opportunity open to the public.

Another interesting site was Juno Beach, where the Canadians landed. Here, there was an armoured veh, known as a bunker buster, that had been used in the attack, but had been caught in a tank ditch prepared by the Germans. The veh had been left in the ground and cemented over until 1978, when the British Sappers had recovered it. When they opened the tank, they discovered there were still ammo and personal kit inside!

One of the sadder moments of the weekend was visiting the Cemetery. Here more than 4,000 soldiers lie in its perfect grounds, all there for doing their duty. This was a short sharp shock of the reality of the fateful day on 6 June 1944. There was a Ceremony, where a wreath was laid, and time was given to pay our respects. The Book of Remembrance was also signed on behalf of 96 Sig Sqn.

I found the weekend to be a wonderful insight, where a lot of important history was learned in an interesting way. It was also a great eye-opener into the harsh realities of war and loss, but one that I am appreciative of. I would recommend this weekend to everyone who has not had the privilege of experiencing it.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col AD Smith MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) KP Innes**

THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S LAST DRILL NIGHT...

Although **Lt Col Steve Richardson** had had more than his fair share of Dining Outs, Lunching Outs and general partying, there was a special effort made to ensure his last trg night was a memorable one.

The Regt's training night was handed over to the White Helmets as they put on a dramatic and somewhat interactive display for the CO. Indeed the entire affair involved the CO being escorted into Sheffield Station by outriders, then some 'fly bys', ladder-climbing and juggling, as well as the customary ramp jumping.

After the display, it was into the Drill Hall for a curry and a few beers, before the CO was escorted out of Sheffield Station for the last time...this time on top of a ladder on a motor cycle, accompanied by outriders.

His route was lined by soldiers of the Regt, who clapped and cheered as he left the TAC for the last time. Clearly they were applauding all that he has done for the Regt - not the fact that he was finally leaving!

...AND HIS DINING OUT FROM THE OFFICERS' MESS

The CO was dined out in some style at Sheffield Station by the Officers' Mess. During the evening, there were several skits and presentations, most of which were related to the love of his life (that is golf - but apologies to his wife, **Jane**!)

However, **Lt Hamish Fell** did manage to acquire a piece of flooring from Endcliffe Hall that the CO had damaged during one of his more social events...please feel free to ask him about the details - we are all still paying the price!

The evening was a great success, with an abundance of great food and fine wine, all topped of with a first class band. As usual, the whole evening passed far too quickly.

The CO is presented with his leaving present by the Hon Col, Col Christopher Jewitt DL

We all wish **Lt Col Steve** and his wife, **Jane** and their family all the best for the future and thanks for a great tour.

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Whalen**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Horton**

BATTLEFIELD TOUR – DUNKIRK - *by Maj A Whalen*

This was the first time the Sqn had had the opportunity and funding to undertake a Battlefield Tour. It was decided to visit Dunkirk, and we duly employed the services of Anglia Battlefield

Tours Ltd and their guide **Maj Martin Featherstone**. An advance party arrived on Friday 4 June and began setting up the tentage.

The main body eventually arrived at the campsite on Saturday 5 June at... well, several hours late, after the 2IC, **Capt Dan Milnor** forgot his passport and had to return home to collect it.

We travelled to Arras, to meet our guide, who gave a brief overview of the events of WW2, and then went on to the events leading up to the withdrawal of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). This period of inactivity was known as the 'Phony War' or 'Bore War,' where we dug and built numerous defensive bunkers across France, based on the assumption that an attack would come from the East where France placed it's faith in the famous Maginot Line. The only flaw was that they did not defend the border around the Ardennes Forest, having calculated that it would take the Germans 9-10 days to penetrate the dense woodland. It took them just 57 hours! The nightmare had begun. The subsequent fighting was of a vicious and confused nature, with woefully inadequate comms. The British Comd on the ground was **Gen Lord Gort VC**, and he made the difficult decision to withdraw the BEF to Dunkirk for evacuation to England on 25 May 1940. **Churchill** and his war cabinet opposed this, but **Gen Gort** made a brave personal decision, to which the BEF owed its eventual survival. The codename for the evacuation was OP DYNAMO.

The guide discussed the fall of France and the Arras counter attack in May 1940, before we moved on to famous Vimmy Ridge and the Canadian Monument. Then we moved to the town of Cassel and the Le Pecall crossroads and its incredible defence by the 2 Bn Gloucesters. Wormhout and the defence by 2 Bn Warwicks and the massacre at Esquelbecq followed, where 100 men were brutally murdered by men from the SS Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler – no one was ever brought to book for this atrocity! We were then off towards the town of Bruges and its defence around its canal systems, which were held by the East Lancs and the Coldstream Guards. After the day's exertions, we went back to our campsite for a BBQ finely prepared by **SSgt (SQMS) Paul Ingram** and **SSgt Adrian Fadzilah**, washed down by a couple of beers and (honestly) an early night. We were up early on Sunday to pack the tents up and, after a quick breakfast, we were off again. This time we crossed the border into Belgium, and then it was on to Bray Dunes and the actual extraction site of the BEF. Following this, we moved to the British Memorial at Dunkirk, where a few words were said, and a wreath laid at the gravestone of **Sgt HHE Gibbs,** a member of the Corps.

In total, 338,226 troops were evacuated (220,000 British and 120,000 French) aboard more than 900 vessels. There are many stories that come out of these events, indeed too many to mention, but it is worth noting the soldiers of our Regt who walked where those heroes had fought, were truly humbled.

Maj A Whalen and Capt L Jordan Lay a wreath at the grave of Sgt HHE Gibbs Royal Signals

CAPT DAN MILNOR'S STAG WEEKEND - *by Maj A Whalen*

Just as a bit of fun, we thought it would be prudent and only fair to mention a little of what happened during the above-mentioned individual's Stag Weekend.

The weekend consisted of paint ball, quad biking, kebabs, curry, singing, a few beers, a few cheeky surprises, and several guest appearances, as well as an assortment of outfits for the Stag. We were lucky enough to get tickets for the final of a rugby cup event, which happened to be between 2 French teams, namely Toulouse v Stade Français. Needless to say, when we found this out, a little creative imagination was put to great use! The highlight of the day must have been being asked which part of France we were from (by a Frenchman). Clearly our disguise was too good! We are currently looking for jobs as extras on *'Allo 'Allo* – smuggling British Airmen out of war torn France will be nothing to men of our calibre! Sacré Bleu!

Rene and the Resistance smuggle another British airman out of France

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Powell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S Coburn**

FIBUA WEEKEND, 20 – 22 MAY

This year's mil skills weekend was held at the FIBUA Village in Longmoor Camp. On the Friday evening, after a pyro demo, we were bedded down early so that everyone got a good night's sleep in prep for the weekend's activities. Then, bleary eyed on Saturday morning, we began the FIBUA trg: clearing buildings, tunnelling and using specialist equipt to enter buildings. The most popular stand was definitely the Molotov Cocktail throwing.

After preparing our cocktails, we each had a number of goes at setting the tank on fire, some being a lot more successful than others. This got everybody psyched up, and we tabbed off to a harbour area for the next phase of the ex. The next 12 hrs were spent defending our area, sending out recces and preparing for an attack on the occupied village. As the sun rose, the bullets flew, and we put all the skills we had learned into practice. Thoroughly exhausted, we then headed to the range, where everyone had a go at firing the pistol. It was definitely a weekend of new experiences, and seemed to be enjoyed by all.

LOMBARDIA 26– 29 MAY

The Regt entered four teams into the Lombardia Military Skills Competition - two from our Sqn, and two from 64 Sig Sqn. On arriving in Italy, we spent a day 'acclimatising' and recceing some of the routes, as well as testing the ice cream and beer.

The competition started at 04.00hrs on the Saturday morning, and we all set off into the hills. It wasn't long before the temperature rose and with the steep hills, it made us realise this was going to be no easy day. The competition consisted of a 21km tab, with numerous tactical stands along the way.

The highlight of the day was the river crossing, at which point we were all quite happy to dive into a lake in our combats! Other stands included a shotgun range, OPs, a house clearance and recognition. The competition ran late into the night, with navigational errors meaning that some teams took a lot longer than anticipated! It was really satisfying for the people who had not competed before to finish the event, and we had a celebratory beer, before collapsing into our beds complaining of blisters, chaffing and midge bites.

There was a presentation parade and ceremony on the Sunday morning. Unfortunately we didn't bring home any silver this year, but our two teams came 33rd and 4th (out of 90 – not too bad at all). More ice cream followed, before a dash to the airport and home. Lots of people wonder why we join the TA.

Getting paid to spend bank holiday weekend in Italy with your friends - you can't beat it!

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col Campbell-Black**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Hatton**

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Clive Dawes**
SSM	**WO2 Hall**

MOVEMENTS

Maj Clive Dawes became a Hussar for almost 5 months, when asked to take over comd of the Sqn whilst **Maj Ruth Empson** was away on a sabbatical in Europe and Japan. During his time with us, he will be remembered for his insistence on having an adjoining door between the newly refurbished Tp accn and the garages – the door will now be affectionately known as 'Dawes' Door'. We wish you well for the future, and are proud to have served under your comd. We also said farewell to **Lt Oliver Gleave** to 1 RGJ, and **Cpls Steve Bennett** and **James Osborn** to 1 Sig Sqn. **Maj Ruth Empson** returned from her sabbatical hoping to have a newly refurbished recruiting building and Tp office, but it's all still a building site! **Sgt Steve Brady** returns from a very successful tour of duty at Camp Dogwood with the Black Watch, and **Sig Emma Rye** from the Tiger Team in Iraq. Welcome back to you all! Congratulations to **Sig Emma Rye**, on promotion to LCpl; to **Sgt Mark Taylor**, to SSgt; and to **2Lts Alex Orr** and **Brumfitt**, to Lt.

RECRUITING

Sqn recruiting has again been the main effort for this year, with events being held at Job Fairs in Oxford, Banbury and Bicester. North Oxfordshire has been swamped with leaflets, the Sqn website is up and running, and a number of the Sqn have taken part in running events. Our latest event was the Banbury Show, with the attraction a mock CFT, where members of the public were invited to don CEFO and attempt 1 mile on a treadmill. Not too many takers, but those who had a go found it invigorating, as did the RGJ Cadets, who queued all day for a turn. We welcome the following new members to the Sqn and have another 6 being processed, **Sigs Simon Machin**, **John Scales**, **John Le-Masters**, **Matthew Eden**, **Sam Wootton**, **Lisa Blezard** and **Tanya Hissey**.

VISIT TO RIFLE WOOD

On 1 April, several of the Sqn went to Rifle Wood in France to commemorate the anniversary of the WW1 Battle that took place on 1 April 1918, and where 21 member of the QOOH lost their lives. At the joint Fort Garry Horse (Canadian) and QOOH memorial, unveiled in June 2003, wreaths were laid by The Lord Lieutenant for Oxfordshire, **Mr Hugo Brunner** on behalf of the Queen, **Mr Maasz** and **Mr Marsh** on behalf of families whose relatives were killed in the battle, **Capt Dai Jones** on behalf of the Sqn, and **Sgt Claire Goodwin** on behalf of the Oxfordshire Trust and Association.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Bill Ruthven**
SSM	**WO2 Mike White**

It has been a busy few months within the Sqn, the main event being Ten Tors on Dartmoor. Also during the period **SSgt Richard Sharp** completed his SSGT Course, gaining top student award, and the newly commissioned **2Lt Andy Doherty** did well at Sandhurst. We wish all our Sqn personnel on mobilisation a speedy and safe return in October.

TEN TORS 2005

Ten Tors is an annual event that takes place on Dartmoor, and is one of the most important weekends in the Sqn calendar. Some 2,500 young people trek various distances across the moors over a weekend, stopping at CPs along the way. The Sqn's task is to man a number of these Tors and to run the Main Control Centre for the event. This year some 35 of 57 Sqn, five operators from 5 Sig Sqn and three from HQ Sqn took part.

We arrived at Oakhampton on the Friday evening, with just enough time to receive a briefing and a quick beer. On Saturday morning the first shift were up early for breakfast at 05.00hrs, to begin work at 06.00hrs. This year, we had also been asked to man 9 of the Tors with operators, and these had already been positioned. Very soon, a steady stream of comms began from those tor parties, as the walkers arrived at their first CPs. For the rest of the day, comms went well, and there was a steady stream of traffic throughout. The weather was wet and miserable and the

The drafty makeshift Commcen

Commcen, a makeshift tent on the side of a building, was freezing cold. But hot tea was on tap to help fend off the shivers.

The Sunday morning brought clearer weather, and despite some delays in transfer of data from the Tors, we held it together, the Commcen ran smoothly, and all of the participants were successfully tracked and brought back safely.

And so another Ten Tors weekend had passed, with a great feeling of satisfaction for a job well done. Our thanks go to the elements of HQ and 5 Sqns, whose help over the weekend was invaluable. Hopefully, they enjoyed themselves, and will return with us for Ten Tors 2006.

A TOR PARTY OPERATOR'S VIEW – *by Sig Stuart Haynes*
This was my second year of Ten Tors. Last year I spent my time in the Commcen; this year, I was delighted to picked to go onto Rough Tor as a radio op. We where flown out by Sea King, through driving rain and visibility of around 100 metres. When we arrived at the Tor, I was surprised to find that apart from myself, the lowest rank was Capt, all Navy! The next thing that took me by surprise was the friendliness. I was introduced on a first name basis, as they liked the idea of calling me **Ginge**! The whole time I was on the Tor I didn't have to cook, wash up or even empty the Portaloo. They said my only job was to communicate, and they were quite relieved when I told them that I was competent in using Airwave and Ranger.

It was one of the best weekends I have taken part in so far. One reason for this is that it was a real event, not just an exercise like most weekends are. I look forward to next year's event, and hope maybe again to be a Tor Operator.

EXERCISE ENDURING HELP - MAY 2005

Being the first foray into this 24-hr charity off-road motorcycling event by the Regt, it promised to be an experience. With the loan of two bikes from 21 Sig Regt (AS), the RSM, **SSgt Garner**, **SSgt Jarvis-Cleaver** and the Adjt arrived at Abingdon to conduct some off-road trg. To start with, the instructor had us just 'riding fast' on a grass oval circuit. Some got bored with this and tried other things, such as sliding along the ground or just dropping the bike. Having shown how adept at interfacing with the ground we were, we all moved to the off-road track, where experience was gained quickly. RSM fired his bike into the scenery, but the bike bit his leg on the way, forcing him to withdraw. Trg was completed with everyone having improved their riding ability, and eager to tackle the unknown of the Longmoor circuit.

On Friday, 27 May the Adjt, **SSgt Garner**, **SSgt Jarvis-Cleaver**, **LCpl Thompson**, **Sig Chapman**, **Sig Butt**, and **SSgt Cheshire** (replacing the RSM) converged on a sunny Longmoor trg area to set up our pit lane workshop/accn. With teams from Germany, Ireland, Holland, Scotland, Wales and England (100 in all), the pit lane was a large affair. Some teams had ISO containers or 7.5 tonne trucks fitted as wksps; one team of 2 riders had a 9x9. One team even pitched up with its own physio – did they know something we didn't? The evening BBQ was accompanied by a live band, an **Ali G** look-a-like, Gurkha beer, and proceeded late into the night.

Saturday was another fine day, and after the bike inspection, all machines were lined up ready for a mass start. At 12.25hrs we were off, screaming and buzzing round tracks, through woods, sand, over rocks, roots, up slopes, and bouncing down hills. We planned on a rider change every 2 laps, and at 20 mins a lap, this was more than enough. Round and round we went, adrenaline flowing, covered in dust, grit and sand. The support crew worked efficiently, collecting meals, making brews and cold drinks, waking up resting riders, refuelling and oiling the bike, keeping lap times, and ensuring that the next change would take place with the minimum of fuss.

Throughout the day, there were calls over the Tannoy, such as 'Team X your bike is marooned on the beach', 'Would riders please wear knee pads, the medics are running out of knee parts', and 'Team Y, your rider is down, and won't be back up'. However, with the exception of **SSgt Jarvis-Cleaver** getting trapped under the bike in the 'sand pit' and burning his leg on the engine, things progressed smoothly until sunset.

SSgt Garner revving it

After sunset, the Adjt fell off his bike and trapped himself underneath it. He buried the red warning cylume at the back of the bike, turned the ignition off to reduce the risk of fire, and relied on the sharp eyes of the other riders and his reflective safety jacket to avoid being run over. He was helped to extract himself, and returned with pockets full of sand and legs smelling of petrol. **SSgt Cheshire** was gone a long time, when over the comedy Tannoy came the announcement, 'Team 92 you need a new cam belt'. **Chesh** arrived soon after, sweating profusely, having tabbed in 4kms cross-country. After a quick drink, and with a spare belt in his hand, he tabbed off back into the forest. He rode in later, now more intimate with the workings of the machine.

Dawn broke over a haze of dust and exhaust smoke. **SSgt J-C**, as team forager, had secured us another 2 cam belts, and we were ready for the last 6 hrs. As our confidence grew and the course became more familiar, our lap times were reducing. Everyone was riding faster, **J-C** was now crossing the sand pit with only 2 stops to build castles, **LCpl Thompson** was now awake, **Sig Chapman** had finished 4 crosswords, and **SSgt Garner's** lap times were down to 12 mins, according to **Sig Butt**, the time keeper. With things going so smoothly again, **SSgt Cheshire** fitted in some more engineering practice, stripping another cam belt. But it was easier this time; it was daylight! The end of 24 hrs of riding seemed to come so very quickly. We could have kept going, but it was time to recover. We had come through relatively unscathed, compared with teams who had sustained broken legs, toes, ankles, dislocated shoulders, and fingers; not to mention bikes with cracked frames, broken headlights, punctures, bent handlebars, etc. We did not win, but we survived and came away smiling. All in all, a great result!

The Team. Sig Chapman, Sig Butt, LCpl Thompson, SSgt Jervis-Cleaver, SSgt Cheshire, Capt Wong, SSgt Garner

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col HJ Robertson TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) PR Curtis**

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Michael Wood**
PSI	**SSgt Kenny**

COURAGE TROPHY 2005 - *by Sig Ian Brazier*

For us, this year's event started better than my previous experiences. We had managed some trg beforehand, and as we rolled into Longmoor late on Friday night, we all had a feeling we might be able to put in a reasonable effort. The team were: **Lt Leigh** (team captain), **Cpl Cloughton**, **LCpls Young**, **Nugent**, **Mackay** and **Denton**, **Sigs Stow**, **Brazier** and **Carmichael**. The next morning at 06.00-ish, we defrosted and left for the day's series of military tests.

We performed solidly on the driving, with **LCpl Young** using the Landrover hand brake turn technique to good effect on the reversing ex. Then the comd task was getting a mortar over a bridge that had been blown. We studied the many pieces of equipt that could be used. **LCpl Denton** was heard asking if the beer barrels were full or not? (wishful thinking in the scorching heat!) Anyway, we had a plan, and within a few minutes were on the other side with all the necessary parts. We thought our two planks tied together method was pure genius… that was until we realised one plank would have reached. Oh well.

The objectives of the next stand looked simple… Get the whole team through a track full of mines and (live) trip flares, pull the injured person out of the damaged Landrover and carry him to safety - whilst getting shot at! **Cpl Cloughton** and **LCpl Nugent** led the way slowly, prodding their way inch by inch, thoroughly checking each piece of dirt for foreign objects. This was going really well until we were told we had taken a third of the time allowed and hadn't even reached the start point yet! **LCpl Denton** then made the required decision, and the careful approach was dropped in favour of a slow sprint. When the forward part of the team reached the injured person, they found that he weighed about 25 stone! He was dragged unharmed by most of the team to the finish line, but somehow minus his trousers.

So onto the last stand of the day. **Lt Leigh** had expertly got us to the loc specified on the map, but it didn't seem right - unless the equipt to be recognised was a dozen old caravans? Finally, we found the correct stand - we had already walked past it. We were faced with an array of small Army toys, and were asked questions about them. We gave the correct answer for all the items, and avoided loosing points for wiping out a section of tanks with someone's elbow.

We patrolled back to the admin area to find the OC and **WO1 Humphreys** had cooked our dinner and provided some cakes as well! Somehow the food tasted even better than normal. Then it was time for night navex. Each team provided three pairs of people to cover a number of points on the trg area in as short as time as possible. The A teams left first, sprinting off like Olympic athletes, followed by the B teams who jogged, and finally the C teams, who had to be reminded they should be running! When we got back, we were told the good news that our A team of **LCpls Nugent** and **Young** had been first back, and by some time. After all, the team contained a PTI and a Marathon runner!

Sunday morning was again slightly strange. Breakfast had been cooked by the OC himself, and he had slept outside, leaving us inside in the tents. Our next event was 8 miles of March and Shoot. The tab was well performed, the only down side being going to the wrong range to do the shooting. When the targets appeared, we sprinted off, with **LCpl Denton** and myself managing to fall over a number of times. But in spite of this, we still managed a decent score. We then formed up for the final push, and were told by **Lt Leigh** that the end was near… 'Just around the corner, by the next red flag.' Three 'next red flags' later, we finally spotted the line. We all made it, finishing only a handful of points behind the Paras, so we did well.

We had all given everything we had. We had finished 11th last year, and our best result ever had been 6th. So I had a feeling that somewhere in between seemed possible. To our surprise and great joy, we discovered we had finished third! At the start of this event, I had said this was to be my last year. But during the weekend, we have already started planning for next year!

For more information on 71Sig Regt visit
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/71sigregt

The Courage Trophy Team

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

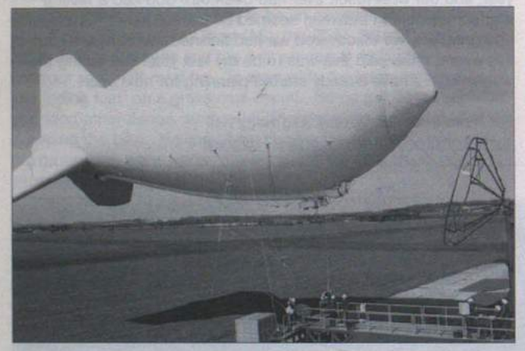
OC **Maj S Roden**
SSM **WO2(SSM) B Singers**

EXERCISE MERCURY SWORD

EX MERCURY SWORD saw 30 members of the Sqn deploy to Barry Buddon Trg Area to conduct ITD trg and low level PI tactics as part of our annual military trg programme. The trg team delivered an interesting and varied programme, including a round robin of stands to test individual command skills. A night of hard routine under bashas was followed by a platoon attack, and rounded off with a CFT just for good measure. Although there were a few tired and weary bodies at the end of the ex, everyone enjoyed the event and want more of the same next time (well, maybe not quite everyone!)

EXERCISE MERCURY RISING

EX MERCURY RISING was the first major deployment of the LFFB Aerostat since that fateful day 18 months ago (if you don't remember it please don't even ask). Conscious of the resulting skills fade, the Sqn approached the ex with trepidation and a good deal of caution - none more so than the Ops Offr, **Capt Bob Davidson** and SPSI, **SSgt George Cowan** who have the honour/misfortune to have three dreaded letters in their job descriptions FCO (Flight Control Officer)



The big beast launched...

...to the relief and delight of the launch crew

The ex was conducted at a slow tempo to refresh everyone's skills in the inflation, transfer and launch procedures that are so essential for a successful deployment. After many sleepless nights going over drills in their heads, the FCOs were pleasantly surprised to see that skills fade was in fact much less than anticipated. The ex provided a valuable trg and confidence-building opportunity, and was widely regarded as the most successful LFF13 trg event the Sqn has conducted to date.

VISIT OF COMMANDER 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE

Whilst deployed on EX MERCURY RISING the Sqn hosted a visit from Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Mike Lithgow CBE**. This was the Comd's first visit to view the LFFB system deployed, and whilst he seemed impressed by the scale of the operation, he appeared slightly less comfortable when 40 feet up in the Cherry Picker. Sir, you follow a select line of other ashen-faced Bde Comds who have 'enjoyed' the same experience.

Following a 40-min presentation from **WO2(YofS) Rob Lewis** (which actually took over 2 hrs and resulted in the OC shredding the programme!) and a light lunch on the hoof, the Bde Comd visited all component parts of the system and received comprehensive briefings from the resident subject matter experts. The Comd is to be congratulated for surviving

SSgt Dave Heap's brief was on the ground handling equipt and the merits of hydroscopic something or other. **Dave** is renowned for his depth of knowledge and enthusiasm, but there is no truth in the rumour that he can breath through his ears!

Brig Lithgow, SSgt Cowan, SSgt Heap, and Maj Roden

DAY OF CULTURE

In early March and taking advantage of the unseasonably good weather (well for this neck of the woods anyway!), the Unit embarked on a day trip to sample the culture of Scotland's Capital City (that's Edinburgh for those of you south of the wall). The day was designed to give Sqn personnel the opportunity to spend time together outside of the formal trg environment, and to learn a little more about 'Auld Reekie'.

We left the TA Centre by coach at 08.30hrs, with the PSAO muttering something about 'charabangs' and 'Sunday School outings when he were a lad'. First port of call was *Royal Yacht Britannia*. We were fortunate to have **Cpl Bruce Tarbet** on board, as his prior knowledge of the Navy would be handy - or so he said. The visit was extremely informative, and helped by mobile audio guides that resembled a walkie talkie. Sadly, it took quite some time for the SSM to realise that he couldn't use it to phone home.

On the bridge of RY Britannia

By the time we had a finished the guided tour, it was time for lunch. At this point, everyone spread to the four winds to explore the city, with the intention of meeting up back at the coach for the journey home. Within an hour, most had met (by sheer chance) at a well-known hostelry in Rose Street. Following initial embarrassment, excuses were exchanged and cover stories agreed.

Fed and watered, and armed with only a full set of tourist brochures and winning smiles, everyone finally made their own way around the city. **SSgt Fred Mollison** and **Sgt Lesley Bayne** took the alternative approach and went rock climbing coals to Newcastle when you live in the Highlands.

Having successfully navigated the city, all made the RV, and the journey home began. At first it was noisy, with folk recounting their adventures, but by the time the coach reached the Forth Road Bridge (about 20 minutes) this had been replaced by snoring. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all, but was all over far too quickly. Those who indicated that they would rather have been in the field, in the rain with their radios, have been referred for counselling.

DOMESTICS

We welcome following new additions: **Rcts Barnes**, **Brown**, **Guthrie**, **Kett**, **Muo** and **Olukoya** and **Sig Chris Harper** on attachment from I (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. We farewell **Cpl Steve Wright** (not the Radio 2 DJ), en route to become a RE TA Officer; and **LCpl Jenny Millar**, who has defected to become a Surgeon Sub Lt in the Senior Service.

We congratulate **SSgt Mollison** for passing his MLT course and for being awarded The Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service; **Sgt Billy Morris** and **Cpl Jane Carmichael**, for passing their Class 1 course; and **LCpls Neil Carr**, **Fiona Scott** and Sean Townsley on passing their Cpls courses.

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj AE Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Smith**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Tp Comd **Capt E Swift**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A Lockie**

SHQ Tp says farewell to **Capt Vicky Maddison**, who is moving to Australia; to **SSgt Bri Magowan**, who goes to Sierra Leone on promotion; to **SSgt Wayne Davies**, who is off to Bulford; and to **SSgt Andy Lockie**, who goes to 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. We welcome **WO1(RSM) Smith** and his wife **Jane** from Cyprus; **SSgt Tomlinson**; **SSgt Welsh**; and **Capt Jane Squires**, who joins us as the 2IC.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt N Streetley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G Middleton**

It has been another busy few months for Alpha Tp. Priority was to get the newly returned BOWMAN–fitted armour ready for its first ex in over a year. EX ARMADILLO RAT was the Sqn's first chance to deploy the Armd HQ, practising HQ movement and set-up, as well as testing and smoothing out the expected glitches from the BOWMAN equipt and software. With a lot of new members in the Tp, it was an ideal opportunity to gain some hands-on experience of running the Bde HQ in the field.

Finishing this ex on Friday, we were off again on the Monday to Sennelager as part of the Sqn support to a Bde CAST ex. Everyone worked hard on both exs, and **Brig Marriot** expressed his thanks for the effort and results achieved by the Sqn.

Lt Nathan Streetley arrived from 30 Sig Regt to take comd of Alpha Tp from **Capt Fi Loxton**, who is off to the. We also welcome **Sig Nixon**, just arrived from Blandford, and say goodbye to **SSgt Gaz Middleton**, off to JSSU Cyprus; and **Sgt Andy Morris** who leaves us to begin his Yeoman's course; and **Sigs Anderson** and **Huck**, who have both been posted to 2 Sig Regt.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt A Rea**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J Giddens**

With the arrival of the newly converted BOWMAN AFVs, the Tp had its work cut out with a speedy prep for EX ARMADILLO RAT, which was a combined comms tp ex to test the HQ set-up, and the BOWMAN equipt. Whilst driving out en route to the ex area, one of the troops was heard singing, 'Is this the way to Armadillo?' All in all, a good shakeout ex and many lessons were

learned. Meanwhile, the Tp Comd and his shooting team were rapidly turning live rounds into empty casings at the CORPSAAM in Pirbright. It a hard life sometimes! After the Bde CAST the following week, the Tp settled back into work in the garages and **SSgt Giddens** and his team of DMIs was able to run a very successful two week AFV driving course, whilst the remainder of the Tp deployed the HQ as a trg ex.

We have farewelled **Cpl Jay Preston**, who is off to 21 Sig Regt (AS); **LCpl Gaz Warwick**, who is off to 2 Sig Regt; and **Sig Fisher**, who goes to 19 Lt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. We welcome **Sig Smudge Smith**, from 1 (UK) Armd Dive HQ and Sig Regt; **Sig Wynn**, from Blandford; and **Sig George Lucas**, who has also decided to become a Desert Rat.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (QM) S Lawes**
RQMS	**WO2(RQMS) A Maylett**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt G Revell**

In May, a large proportion of the Tp deployed to Sennelager to assist with the admin of the Bde CAST for over 250 personnel. **SSgt (SQMS) Walton** ran the accn in a Basil Faulty style, ably assisted by **SSgt Revell**. The ex was a complete success, with all troops working exceptionally hard. **Cpl Nat Whelan** has just completed a huge task bringing our ET onto UNICOM, which to our great surprise went very well. It just goes to show that a good manual account is needed before you start! Our conversion to BOWMAN has now been completed, which has left us with the disposal of all CLANSMAN legacy equipt.

We congratulate the following personnel selected for promotion: **LCpl Phil Lacey** to DSMT as an instructor; **Sgt Stu Williamson**, selected for SSgt to 40 Sig Regt; RLC Chef **Sgt Colin Huetson**, URS **Sgt Swann**, and **Sgt Jase Hawksworth**, SSgt to SHAPE. We welcome **WO2(RQMS) Andy Wyatt**, from 16 Sig Regt; **LCpl Smith**, from Afghanistan; **LCpl Dryburgh**, from 16 Sig Regt; and **Sig Simpson** from Phase 2 trg. And we farewell **WO2(RQMS) Andy Maylett**, who is off to 16 Sig Regt as SSM.

SQUADRON SHOOTING – *by Lt A Rea*

Recently, a newly formed and freshly trained Sqn Shooting team took part in the Royal Signals CORPSAAM on the Ash and Pirbright Ranges. After a long night's driving and an almost international security incident regarding weapon transfer, we arrived at Pirbright Camp. The week began with dry and live rehearsal, and then quickly moved into the actual Competition shoots. These were of varying difficulty, and we were glad of the trg we had put in. Unfortunately, we couldn't compete against the skills of some of the Regtl shooting teams, and we didn't pick up any silverware. Alongside the rifle shooting was the Corps clay target shoot, which was a new and fun experience for the team. After another week back on the ranges in Germany, we were off to Sennelager for the BA(G)SAAM, where we competed against all units in BF(G), including the Infantry. Congratulations to all our finalists: **Sgt Rumble** with Pistol, **LCpl Evans** and **Sig Lewis** with LSW, and **LCpl Watson** with the SA80. The PWRR sniper section was a little bemused to be competing in a final against a female! **LCpl Watson**, finished 6th overall in BF(G), and was ranked top of 7 Armd Bde. Not bad, considering she thought she was competing in a 'clay buffalo' shoot alongside the clay pigeon in Pirbright!

Another well done to **Cpl Jo Howell**, who is living proof that SAA instructors cannot shoot. But he did a fantastic job coaching the team throughout all the trg, despite not being able to hit a barn door with a banjo!

LOOK AT LIFE – A FEMALE RECRUITING EVENT
- by Sig Beckett

On the 23 May 2005, **LCpl Emma Watson** and I participated in a *Look At Army Life* event in Shrewsbury. The week-long course was for females aged between 14 and 16 from various schools in the Birmingham area. These girls had been selected by their schools, after showing an interest in the Army. The week allowed them to experience some of the things that they could do in the Army if they decided to join later on. Arriving on the first day, we were shown to our accn. The camp was in the middle of nowhere, with no shops, just tin bomb-shelters. As DS, we were each responsible for our own shelter, and we each acted as a Section Comd, having 8 or 9 girls in each section. The DS had a separate room where the girls could come and talk, or ask for advice. On the first day, the girls had to do a BPFA, and we ran around the route with them, giving encouragement and support!

Throughout the week the girls had to be up at 06.15hrs, with a room inspection at 08.00hrs. They were shown how to make their own beds to a high standard (including hospital corners!) During the week, they experienced firing rifles on the SAT range, comd tasks, drill (followed by a drill competition – which my section won!) and the obstacle course. On the Wednesday, halfway through the course, they all went out into the field on an overnight ex. All the girls were issued kit and shown how to pack it correctly – they then had to tab out to the area. Out in the field, they were shown how to basha up, using a poncho; and then went through lessons, including Duties of a Sentry, Cam and Concealment, Rations, Observation and a Memory Test. They practised patrolling, including formations and signals. As the evening grew dark, we took them out on a night patrol, recce-ing an enemy position, getting as close as possible to observe.

Overall, the course was enjoyable for both the DS and the students. It gives school kids a good taste of Army life in a friendly environment, and it is definitely something that I would consider doing again.

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC	**Maj MS Dooley**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Forrester**

Whilst the Sqn trophy cabinet has been expanding at a rate of knots (read on for details), the routine work has not been forgotten. Our hard work was rewarded with a Green across the board on our ECI, and a strong pass on our SHEF inspection. To adapt an old saying 'Work hard and play harder - and win!'

We farewell two long serving members in the Sqn hierarchy . The now **SSgt Jim McKay** has departed for Ireland, and the now **Capt Jim Chatman** has moved down the road to AFC Harrogate.

SIGNALS OFFICER IN CHIEF'S VISITS *- by SSgt Mick Lynn*

The SOinC(A) visited 209 Sig Sqn on 11 May 05 and the visit was a resounding success. The day started at 09.30hrs when the Brigadier arrived to be greeted at the camp gates by the OC, **Maj Dooley** and the RSM, **WO1 Forrester**, with the obligatory photo in front of Sqn HQ. This being the first visit by a VIP to the new 19 Lt Bde Sqn HQ, the new sign was given centre stage.

After a quick coffee with the Offrs and SNCOs, the SOinC was invited to attend the Sqn Photo. He was then shown to the Sqn NVQ Assessors office, and asked by **Mr (Ex Sgt) Mick Clarkson** (our resident NVQ Assuror) to present **LCpl Nick**

The OC and SOinC(A) in front of the new sign

Urwin and **LCpl Cath Mitchenson** their NVQ Level 3 Certificates. Next on the itinerary was a whistle stop tour of the new Lt HQ set up, which was immaculately presented, from the LAD to the SAS MC. The SOinC was then back in to presentation mode on a Sqn parade, firstly presenting OP TELIC 2 Medals, and secondly a number of promotions to LCpl: **Cfn Richie Beattie**, **Sig Johnny Houghton**; and to SSgt: **Sgt Mike Lynn** and **Sgt Jim Mackay**. He then addressed the Sqn, giving an informative insight into the future for the Corps. Afterwards, the entire Sqn retired to the Sgts' Mess for a curry lunch, where the SOinC managed to speak to almost every member of the Sqn. Just as the SOinC was leaving, the OC presented him with a memento of the day - a framed montage of his visit.

209 SIGNAL SQUADRON MANAGEMENT TRIP
- by WO2(FofS) Morrison

With the conversion to a Light Bde well under way, 209 Sig Sqn Offrs and SNCOs annual management trip was planned to gain valuable experience from air mobile and rapidly deployable units. By pure chance, the trip was once again arranged around the Offs Corps Dinner Night, leaving the seniors a night of public house visits and dodgy taxi rides in London.

Once all had recovered, it was off to Gujarat Bks to be hosted by 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216). An excellent night of entertainment was provided by 216 Sig Sqn WOs' and Sgts' Mess who would have put Oxford's University Challenge Team to shame in the Quiz Night (Hmm!). The next morning, we teamed up with our opposite numbers, to be given an insight into air portability and the key issues to be aware of.

After a quick turn around, it was on the road again to Bramcote, to visit 30 Sig Regt, who provided an informative presentation about the high readiness process. An excellent demo was also set up, to show the strategic comms available to Light HQ.

After a busy three days, it was back on the road again to Catterick. 216 and 258 Sig Sqns are greatly thanked for their hospitality and outstanding presentations.

MORRISON CUP 2005 ATHLETICS *- by Lt Hunston*

The sun was certainly shining at this year's Morrison cup, especially on the Sqn, who put in a gladiatorial performance to win the Minor Units Competition. With first place in every track event and the triple jump, and second place in every other field event, the day was a resounding success. **Cpl Eden** was kindly volunteered by a 'friend' to do the pole vault (much to the amusement of everyone else) and performed very well, considering this was his first time. There were some individuals in need of refreshment after achieving double firsts, with **Sig Chesworth** winning the 100m and 200m races, **Sig McGuire** the 400m and 800m races, and **Maj Dooley** the 3,000m and 5,000m.

Sig McGuire receives the Minor Units Cup from the SOinC(A)

With a first outing for both the Male and Female Tug of War teams since forming only a short time ago under **WO2 Barker**, a good performance was delivered, and experience was gained for both teams, with this being their first, but hopefully not their last competition. There was little time to celebrate before the long journey back, but it was an excellent day and a great opportunity to catch up with friends old and new.

ON TARGET AT DIVISION AND CORPS SAAMs
- by Lt Chatman

Shooting is a basic and fundamental skill that all soldiers and officers alike must master. But to shoot in competition is an entirely different art. So the Sqn team had to put in some time on the ranges before entering first the Corps SAAM, and then the Div SAAM. The chosen venue for the build-up trg was Altcar Trg Camp, just north of Liverpool and overlooking the sea. **Sgt Porter** was calling the shoots as the RCO whilst **Sgt Livingston** provided all the technical advice. The first of the weeks saw gale force winds, with everybody aiming off by two targets' width at 400m, whilst the second week saw blistering sunshine, with everybody reaching for the sun cream. By the end of each week, all firers had dramatically improved their shooting, and so the team left in high spirits and sore heads from the delights of Liverpool.

The first event was the Corps SAAM, held at Pirbright and Ash ranges, with the delightful accn in Brunswick Lines. After the wind of Liverpool, the first shock the team had was that, when they aimed directly at the targets they fell - outstanding. As the week progressed, it became clear that we were on for a good result if we maintained our standard. The week passed in a flash, and suddenly the OC and RSM had joined us for the prize giving ceremonies, and I'm glad to say, they hadn't made the long journey south for nothing. The Unit finished as Runners-up in the Minor Units Championship, a commendable achievement.

Congratulations go to **Lt Jim Chatman**, **Sgt Dave Livingston**, **LCpl Street**, **Sig Ian Courtaney-Wyllie** and **Sig Ian Thompson**. **Sgt Livingston** finished fourth overall of all the firers in the Corps, and walked away with the prize for the best Other Arms Shot. Meanwhile, we had also been firing on the shotgun range. The Sqn Team, led by **Cpl Charlie Lister** and **Sig Billy Beaumont**, both shot gun enthusiasts, entered the Corps competition. Despite three of the five-man team having had little experience, the Team cruised to win the top prize.

Congratulations to **Cpl Charlie Lister**, **Sig Billy Beaumont**, **Sig Bill Reddy**, **Sig Ian Courtaney-Wyllie** and **Sig John Canning.** At the end of the main shoot, **Cpl Lister** was tied at the top of the individual leader's board, and had to enter a shoot off with one of the Corps best shots. With a supportive team cheering him, he held his nerve to become the Royal Signals Top Shot Gun Shot.

Well done! The week was enjoyed by all, and the success of the event was all down to the hard work and dedication of the

Cpl Charlie Lister receives Top Gun Award

soldiers and officers of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V). Our praise and thanks to go to all of those involved. Because of the commitments of this very busy Sig Sqn, a few team selection changes were forced on us for the Div SAAM, and a ten-man team was needed instead of the five at the Corps SAAM. Despite this, the team arrived at Bulford Ranges, fresh from Altcar, and in a buoyant mood.

The team performed well throughout the week, but saved the best until last. The final morning of shooting saw the Blue Riband event, the Falling Plates contest. Round after round passed, as the Team marched on victorious, until we found ourselves in the final of the 3 Div Falling Plate contest. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be our day, and we finished as runners-up. But, as a Sig Sqn competing against the whole of the Div, inf regts and all, it was a very good performance. Congratulations go to **Lt Jim Chatman**, **Sgt Dave Livingston**, **Sig Ian Courtaney-Wyllie** and **Sig Jim Davidson**. Once more, **Sgt Livingston** had shot extremely accurately, and he picked up Top Shot in the Robert Cup.

FOOTBALL UPDATE - *by Cpl Young*

For the past few months, the Sqn football team has been playing some brilliant football, achieving promotion to the Premier League, despite playing only half our League games. We had played 13 and won 13, but due to exs and other commitments, we were unable to fit all our games in. In the 2 Div Cup, we played RAF Linton-on-Ouse in our first round away, and came away with a 4-0 victory. In the second round, we faced 5 Regt RA away, and after a slow start, we came away with a brilliant 8-0 victory, to put us in the final.

In the Final against 1 Kings at Catterick Garrison Stadium, we started brightly, and created good chances. **Cpl Cairns** was unlucky 20 mins into the game, when he latched onto a flick-on from **Sig McGuire** to hit the post with a vicious strike. At half time, the team went into the changing rooms on a high and with a 0-0 score line. The team talk from **SSgt Andy Dutton** and **Cpl Lee Lyons** got the team going and ready for the second half, when once again, they started brightly early on. Midway through the second half, to our disbelief, 1 Kings took the lead, with a near-post header. As always, our team did not let it get to them, and attacked the Kings defence. 20 mins from time, the game was thrown into chaos, when during, an attempted goal by 1 Kings, the Linesman flagged to award them a penalty. Team Captain **Cpl Cas Castledene** and **Sig Kev Neilson** went over to the ref and the linesman and had rather strong words with them. To the surprise of everyone on the pitch and the remainder of the Sqn in the stand, the ref produced 2 red cards and sent them both off. It was not now looking good for our team. 1-0 down, 9 men left on the field, and still a penalty to face.

But just as we thought our chance was over, **Cpl Col Opie** pulled off a great save to tip the spot kick over the bar. The last 20 mins was a struggle, but the Team battled on and went at it till the end. In injury time, **LCpl Muz Coyle** struck a free kick from 25 yards out. The keeper parried the shot, and **Cpl Danny Fletcher** along with the rest of the Team, scrambled to try and get a late equalizer, but was unable to hit the net.

At the final whistle, our team was gutted by the result. After all the effort we had put in, we had lost. But afterwards, the Team held their heads high as they walked up the steps into the stand to the applause of the Sqn and of 1 Kings, to receive our runners-up medals. **Cpl Opie** was awarded the Man of the Match Trophy from the League Secretary. Overall, it has been a very good season for the Sqn, and we now look forward to pre-season trg.

The 209 Sig Sqn Football Team

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj J Gunning**
RSM **WO1(RSM) C Coates**

EXERCISE EAGLE'S STRIKE 05 - *by Lt R J Agnew*

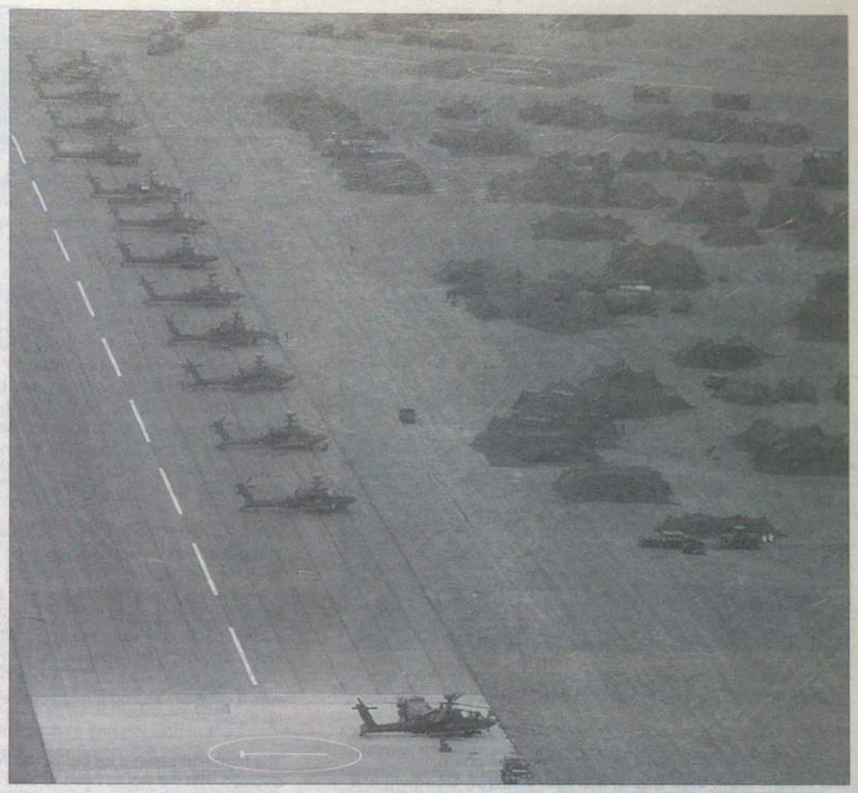
EX EAGLE'S STRIKE took place between 16-26 May 05, its main objective being to prove the Apache Attack Helicopter (AH) capability. This involves using the AH to create and maintain air corridors so that the Support Helicopter Force (SH) can fly forward and drop Air Asslt troops onto the enemy target. The success of this ex will have a direct impact upon the deployability of the Army's most modern and exciting new asset.

For the Sqn, it was one of our major ex commitments of the year. Over recent years, the size of Bde Main HQ has increased rapidly to encompass the tri-Service elements that are now accommodated within the Bde. From a comms perspective, the introduction of the PSC 506, ground-to-air assets and RAFCIS, has added a different and exciting dimension from the traditional manner of fighting the comms battle. The very nature of this Unit demands speed and agility, yet the complexity of the HQ set-up is increasing. But the soldiers showed how adaptable and professional they were throughout.

The scenario saw the Bde fight a battle from Cornwall, driving the enemy east through Somerset. The final attack was an AH and SH Air Assault attack on Imber Village, where the nucleus of the enemy were held up.

The main problem the Sqn faced was to achieve and maintain comms as the 3 Para BG invested into the comms vortex of Imber village. This necessitated the deployment of the Man Pack Rebro (MPR). The aim was to position the MPR Det on the outskirts of the village, within metres of the FIBUA battle, so that the BG Comd could speak directly to the various HQs positioned on the ground.

Exciting times are ahead for this versatile and rapidly deployable Bde. The final decision on the AH capability is eagerly awaited, and the initial results are very promising. It's an exciting time to be in 216 Sig Sqn. Our role is constantly evolving and more is demanded of us, as technology and tactics constantly change.



Apache Longbow Attack Helicopters preparing for action.

EXERCISE FEROCIOUS FRENCH TIGER 05
- *by Sig Binks*

On Sunday 3 April 05 **Capt King**, **SSgt Page**, **Sgt Robertson**, **LCpl Langley**, **LCpl Oates**, **LCpl Sloan**, **Sig Binks**, **Sig Heggie**, **Sig McGhee** and **Sig O'Sullivan** travelled to Pau in the South of France to complete the French equivalent of the British Basic Military Parachute Course. We were required to complete two static-line clean fatigue jumps at École Troopes Aeroportes 13es Parachutistes (ÉTAP).

On arrival at ÉTAP, we were met by a French female **SSgt** called **Elisabeth**, who was to be our liaison officer. One of the first tasks she invited us to do, was to 'formally welcome in the Season of Spring with ÉTAP.' This was to be a compulsory 7km cross-country race around the parachute school. Not being frightened of PT, all 216 Sqn members finished in the top 40 out of 220 entrants!

The French parachute is similar to the British Low Level Parachute (LLP) but smaller. The airframe from which we jumped was the Transall C160, which is comparable to the Hercules C130 but again, smaller.

The main difference between the French and British parachuting technique is that the British exit is more controlled, whereas the French exit is quite unregulated – even reckless. This unnerved some of us. Our first descent was from 1,200ft, quite a difference from the 600ft jumps we do in UK. Jumping from this height allowed us to enjoy the descent and watch the men and women of the French Army pull their reserves - for no reason! Maybe that had something to do with their mad exits! After the second jump, we formed up on the DZ to be awarded our French wings by the Commandant.

The French Tiger 05 team with their hosts

The French experience was fantastic, and we also managed to fit in a trip to Biarritz on the South Coast of France. Our thanks must go to **Mac** our Parachute Jump Instructor (PJI) and **Elizabeth**. We were hosted exceptionally well, enjoying all things French!

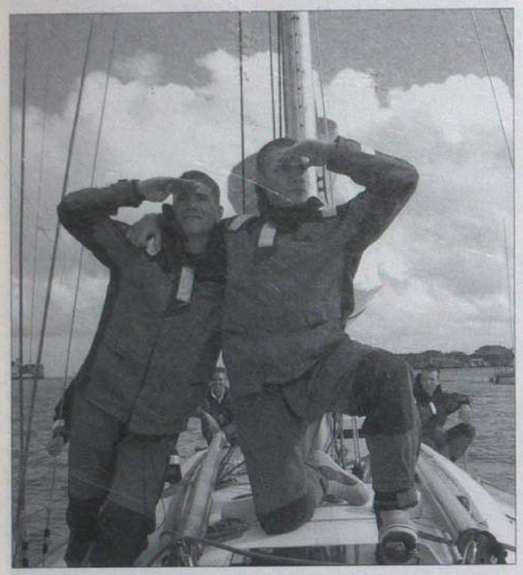
EXERCISE FLOATING TIGER 05 - *by Sig Heggie*

On Wednesday 20 April 2005, six members of the Sqn came back from leave 4 days early to embark on their maiden voyage. **Sigs Ferguson**, **Le Marinel**, **Waters**, **Guyton** and **Thomas** left Colchester to meet 2Lt **Agnew** in Gosport.

Upon arrival, they saw the first glimpse of the yacht they were to call home for the next week. With the sleeping arrangements sorted out, the crew set off on their voyage of a lifetime around the Solent. Whilst visiting places such as Southampton, Yarmouth and Cowes, they got to sample the taste of the local cuisine and the local ales.

After a night arrival in harbour on the Isle of White (which the crew weren't too happy about), everyone had a good 3 hrs' run ashore, which they used to delve further into the heart of the Island, to get a proper feel of what the local breweries had to offer. Not much, actually!

Much to the delight of the crew, they arrived safely back in Gosport on 26 April. After a good clean up of the yacht, they



Air Assaulters they may be, but it took no time at all for Sigs Goodwill and Savage to settle into the sea-farer's way of life

returned to Colchester, with no one falling over board.
The second crew, **Sigs Binks**, **Savage**, **Stanyer**, **Goodwill** and **Heggie** left Colchester on 27 April. They had much the same experiences as the first group. On the first night before leaving Gosport, they went sight seeing, mostly to the local hostelries. And on the second day, they set sail, visiting the same places and sampling the same food and drink. After such hard work, the team finally returned to dry land and then back to Colchester.

CORPS SAAM - *by Sig Cameron*

In April, a team of five from 216 Sig Sqn deployed to Bisley to enter the annual CORPSAAM. The event consists of seven different rifle matches, as well as pistol and LSW competitions. We had a couple of days practice on the ranges beforehand, which allowed us to zero and have a run through the quite complicated shoots. This was essential, as we had only one experienced shot in the team. Our thanks go to 2 Sig Regt, 21 Sig Regt (AS) and 30 Sig Regt in helping us achieve this.

On the first day, we managed to exceed our expectations, scoring well in all the shoots. This put us in high hopes for the remainder of the competition. We were run close by 19 Light Bde, but managed to win all but two of the rifle matches. Of particular note, was **Cpl Marshall**, who managed to finish in the top fifteen in the pistol match, and **Cpl Bradley**, who had the highest aggregate score in the team.

Overall, we were very pleased to walk away as Royal Signals Minor Unit Champions, and we hope to return next year to defend our Trophy, perhaps upsetting some of the Major Units as we go...

LANYARD TROPHY 2005 – THE WINNING TEAM
- by Lt Jagger, Team Captain

Trg for the 216 Sqn Lanyard Squad started in Spring 2005. The package, designed by **SSgt Newman**, was finely tuned from a number of years' experience. He and **Sgt Good** had won the Trophy the previous year, so they knew exactly the level of fitness we needed to achieve.

After an intensive week of trg in Colchester, we set off in earnest to our first trg camp. The Brecon Beacons would be our home for the next few weeks, an ideal area to condition our bodies to the hills we would face in Otterburn. With **Sgt Good's** detailed knowledge of the area, and **SSgt Newman's** electric pace over every type of terrain, we finished that phase in excellent shape, with a good squad to work with. Saying our farewells to Jacob's Ladder, Cefn Cru, and Usk reservoir, we headed back for a well-earned weekend off.

As dry training was not allowed over the Otterburn Trg Area until three weeks before the Competition, time on the ground was vital. The course this year was no racetrack. Fences, rivers, peat bogs, marshes, heather and 'babies' heads' made route selection critical. However, we soon realised that there was no way around most of these features, so we had to rely on our usual trick: speed and bags of it! Throughout the three weeks in Otterburn leading up to the Competition, it rained every day and was generally cold and miserable. Nothing could have prepared us for the heat wave that hit race day.

At 05.00hrs the thunder flash sounded, starting the 40-mile event. Thirty-one teams started a very long and arduous race. By 09.00hrs the heat was really starting to kick in, and this began to have a major impact on the pace of the race. At the 20-mile point, our strategy had changed. If we were to carry on at our current pace, we would not finish with 8 men. Increased water intake and recovery times at the admin stops, slowed down our progress. We knew that we had a 1-hr buffer at this point, so it was a case of keeping a respectable pace whilst staying hydrated.

The heat had taken a lot out of the Team, and by CP12, we decided that we would need to take some additional rest stops. The pace really slowed down by the latter end of the race, but

The winners of the Lanyard Trophy 2005 cross the finish line after a gruelling 13 hrs and 58 mins

after 13 hrs and 58 mins, we crossed the line with 9 men. It was a moment that the team and I will never forget, and I am sure that anyone who took part and crossed the line will be immensely proud of their achievement.

The members of the winning Lanyard Trophy 2005 Team were: **Lt Jagger**, **SSgt Newman**, **Sgt Good**, **Cpl Marshall**, **Cpl Giroux**, **LCpl Steel**, **LCpl Peevor**, **LCpl Miller**, **LCpl Hill** and **Sig Shyrane**.

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj TJS Allen**
RSM **WO1(RSM) AB Lothian**

Even with prep for our up and coming ECI on the radar, we have managed to get twenty members of the Sqn on EX AQUATIC TIGER BELIZE, a three-week scuba diving exped to Belize. We also managed to fit in EX MERCURY LEADER, a week long Sqn Cadre course designed to test and assess our junior soldiers. And in June we have EX US TIGER TREK, a 12-man exped to the Grand Canyon in America.

MORRISON CUP - *by LCpl Bielby*

We had been described as an Olympic standard team by the team captain as he picked the athletes that were to bear the colours of the Sqn at the Morrison Cup in Blandford in May. The competition started on a rather overcast day, but as the events came and went, the sun began to shine, and our competitors started to produce the results.

LCpl Al Huish triumphed with a solid first place in the Hammer; **Sig Jenks** narrowly missing out to 19 Lt Bde in the Triple Jump; and **Sig Webb** had a fantastic run to win the 5,000m. We were now in second place overall, so it came down to the relays with double points available to the victors. It seemed as though, with the proper motivation, anything could be achieved, as **Cfn Rotchford** stormed through from 4th to 2nd position in the third leg of the 4 x 100m, giving **Sig Foster** an opportunity to win. However, he was pipped to the post by the 19 Lt Bde athlete. With our position almost cemented, the 4 x 400m would make or break us. We were pushed from start to finish, but managed 2nd, which secured our overall team position of 2nd.

The Morrison Cup was once again a success, and the new two-day format allowed for longer rests between events, and the chance to meet old colleagues and make new friends - more than worth the pain of competing. We are looking forward to next year's competition and slightly more preparation.

Cpl Olivierre flies round the 3,000m steeplechase.

TOUR OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS - *by LCpl Armstrong*

When heard I was posted to the Falkland Islands for four months, I didn't know quite what to expect. As far as I knew, the only inhabitants were penguins and a handful of minefields. What would I do for 4 months? I landed at Mount Pleasant Airport in the afternoon, and my predecessor, **LCpl Al Huish**, greeted me with a beaming smile. 'Get a sense of humour,' was his one piece of advice to me, 'and keep it.'

It took time to adjust to my new job, from RS Op to Tech Sup Spec working in the Unit's QM Dept a task that, although I had never done it before, I jumped into with both feet. I learned new skills working in the stores, some of which I hope I can transfer to my day job, now I have returned to the Sqn.

I needn't have worried about what to do, as there is plenty of scope to keep busy both in and out of work. The gym facilities are amazing, and there is opportunity to get on a few courses down there. Socially, there is a bowling alley, a cinema and many bars to visit. After four and a half months, which seemed like minutes, I was being replaced by **Sig Mo Morris**, and soon homeward bound, with a cracking tour behind me.

EXERCISE AQUATIC TIGER BELIZE

EX AQUATIC TIGER BELIZE was a chance for 20 members of the Squadron to experience the delights of sub-aqua diving in the fantastic waters surrounding the World's second largest barrier reef. We flew out to Belize, via Houston Texas, and spent three and a half weeks exploring the vast underwater habitats and marine life it had to offer. The exped was split into two groups, each group spending a week and a half on the British Forces AT Centre on St George's Caye. We had a great time, and everybody managed to progress their qualifications and gain more diving experience.

Elements of the Sqn deployed on EX AQUATIC TIGER BELIZE

EXERCISE MERCURY LEADER - *by LCpl Dunseith*

Early one Saturday morning, the Sigs and LCpls of the Sqn set off from Aldershot, apprehensive and nervous for what was to come. Arriving at Sennybridge, we debussed and shook out into

our sections, to start an insertion patrol in full fighting order, operating as a team for the first time.

The next morning, PT started early, and took us out among the hills of the trg area, culminating in a 'hares' race back to the harbour loc. **LCpl Dunseith** came romping home first, foaming like a Grand National winner, narrowly beating off stiff competition from **Sig Webb**.

One day rolled into another, and the cast of EX MERCURY LEADER found themselves at Farm Five after a day of mental agility in the form of comd tasks, ranging from casualty evacuation to mathematics and rudimentary problem solving. The day concluded with group presentations on subjects such as Nelson, Trafalgar and Rommel.

PT once again, and this time a loaded speed march around the local area. The day continued with topical debates and discussions, chaired by members of the DS. Some extreme opinions were expressed, but everyone contributed, and all were surprised at their own level of current affairs knowledge. To finish the day, we had a nightnav stand in the area the comd tasks were held the previous day.

For the final phase of the ex, we conducted battle prep and rehearsals for a platoon attack. Little did we know that the attack would be at night on a fortified enemy position, and on ground we were unfamiliar with. However, after much pyro, illume, and some screaming and shouting, we cleared the position and recovered our ex casualties to a pick up point to wait for our 'Beddi-copters' to extract us to sanctuary and dry clothes at the harbour.

Congratulations to **Cfn Rotchford**, for being chosen as Best Overall Student; to **Sig Senior**, for Most Improved Student, and 5 Section, for the overall Best Section.

LCpl Challis shows the lads how it's done.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj JP Hazlewood**
RSM **WO1(RSM) R Douglas**

EXERCISE ANCIENT HALBERD 2005
– by WO2(FofS) S Meldrum

EX ANCIENT HALBERD is the annual Staff Ride for 262 Sig Sqn and Bde Unit Reps. This year, we visited Tunisia during 12-19 February 05, to walk the ground of OP TORCH, the Allied op in Tunisia from November 1942 - May 1943.

The difference between a Staff Ride and a Battlefield Tour is the degree of research and participation required of the tour members. As part of the preparation, individuals contributed to syndicate staff papers on OP TORCH, and prepared short presentations that were delivered on the ground. **Dr Chris Pugsley**, from RMAS Dept of War Studies, was lead academic for the week, and 9 cap-badges were represented.

OP TORCH was the first major US op of WW2, and the first large-scale multinational operation that saw UK, Commonwealth and US troops operating as a coalition. The strategic aim of the operation was twofold: to split the Axis forces by diverting their efforts from the Eastern Front into Africa, and to establish a foothold in North Africa to launch ops into Italy and Southern Europe.

The Staff Ride comprised 5 full-day trips to visit and walk the ground of some of the most prolific battle sites. Medjez, the Mareth Line, Longstop Hill and Takrouna were all highlights. Of particular note, was the trench system and original comd bunker on the Mareth Line, which still stands as it did 60 years ago, replete with shrapnel and bullet holes. **Dr Pugsley**, an expert on this theatre, brought to life in intricate detail the battles that had been fought on the very ground where we stood.

Time was put aside during the tour to pay respects at a number of war cemeteries and memorials, including the two Commonwealth War Grave sites, the US Cemetery in Tunisia and a memorial to Axis losses. A particularly poignant part of the Ride was the opportunity to visit the graves, and to remember all those, including a number of Corps soldiers and officers, who lost their lives in the numerous battles.

The tour was a unique experience. No motorways or high-rise buildings distort the landscape, and the mountains and wadis appear today as they did to **Montgomery**, **Alexander**, **Rommel** and their soldiers. A fascinating insight into a theatre of ops that few people have the opportunity to visit, the Staff Ride was made possible for a minimal individual contribution, thanks to generous contributions from HQ SOinC(A), The Berlin Memorial Fund, Theatre Tps and the BFG Officers Enterprise Fund.

ARMY VOLLEYBALL - *by WO2(RQMS) Spiers*

The selected team turned up to play in the Crown Services Competition, comprising teams from Army, Navy, RAF, Prison, Police and Fire Services. This year it was hosted by the Police in Hull, and held over the weekend of 21-22 May.

With trg and prep complete, we headed up to Hull to take on some excellent teams. We played the Police first and had a great game, followed by the Prisons (who are the current Champions),

then the Navy. Unfortunately we didn't manage to take any sets that day.

On Sunday, we faced the RAF team, who are a National standard team, but overall the Army Male and Female teams took the most points from them. With the games over, it was time to say our farewells for another year. The hope now is to get together every two months for trg and some friendly games and to hold specific trials, as there is a lot of talent not being utilised.

MORRISON CUP BA (G) - *by Sig Blair*

This year's Morrison Cup BA(G) took place at the Ludwig Jahn stadium in Herford on 11 May 05. The Sqn started well, with **WO1 Steph Grant** finishing first in the Female High Jump competition. We then went from strength to strength, with **Sig Rach White** and **Sig Cat Blair** finishing second and first respectively in the 800m. Well done to **2Lt Sam Hunt**, who came third in the 3,000m, even though she arrived on attachment only two days previously.

The next events were the Discus, where **Sig Andy Boldy** finished third; and the Javelin, which **LCpl Dickinson** won. Buoyed on from that win, **LCpl Dickinson** went on to take part in the 400m hurdles, where he finished fourth.

Next up was the Female 100m sprint, with **Capt Hannah Stoy**, **WO2(RQMS) Lindsey Spiers** and **Sig Stevie Haberfield** taking part. Being the super fit athletes that they are, **Capt Stoy** came second in the final, and the RQMS third and **Sig Haberfield** a creditable sixth, in their heats. To cap a remarkable day, the RQMS came first in the Female Shot Put event.

I decided to take part in the 1,500m and the 400m, where I finished third overall. In fact I was enjoying myself so much that I decided to try another lap of the 1,500m!

EXERCISE SNOW WARRIOR - *by LCpl Wildman*

EX SNOW WARRIOR consists of six ten-day packages held in Bavaria each winter. It is designed to teach soldiers to journey on skis in the disciplines of Alpine and Ski Touring, gaining JSSS qualifications on the way. Those who have never skied before, complete the Basic Ski Proficiency, and those with ski experience attempt the Advanced Ski Proficiency aiming towards JSSI (A) recommendation.

As a recently qualified JSSI (A), I instructed at Hubertushaus, a small town within touching distance of the Austrian border, and venue for the Nordic World Cup earlier this year. The ski slopes available to ATC were fantastic, with four different resorts to choose from. But as March arrived, a random heat wave settled in Bavaria, lasting around five weeks, essentially ending the season for many slopes. We found ourselves on the last remaining slope, the Nebelhorn, with three lodges worth of troops (around 150 soldiers) and only two runs open!

The season ended with the Level 4 Centre at Sonthofen organising a thank you meal for all involved in the ex. I was delighted to receive the Woolgar Trophy for most improved Ski Instructor, the first person in the Royal Signals to do so.

The trophy is named after Great Britain's most successful skier ever, **Jim Woolgar**. All in all, I've had a fantastic experience, which I recommend to anyone, given the opportunity.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL WING (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt Rigby**

AMALGAMATION

On Thursday, 23 March 2005, a parade was held at RAF Digby to mark the amalgamation of RAF Digby with JSSU(D), and the move of the Station from PTC to the Directorate General Intelligence Collection. The guests of honour officiating were **AVM Moore**, Air Officer Commanding Directly Administered Units, and **AVM Peach**, Director General Intelligence Collection.

Following an all ranks lunch held in the Gymnasium, that saw half of station personnel in attendance, a parade was then held outside the Officers' Mess. Despite the inclement weather of previous days, the sun shone down as the station gathered together with their families, to watch the Parade. The Band of the RAF Regt started proceedings, followed by the Guard of Honour, whose ranks included personnel from all 3 Services at RAF Digby, commanded admirably by **Lt Rus Allen** (RN).

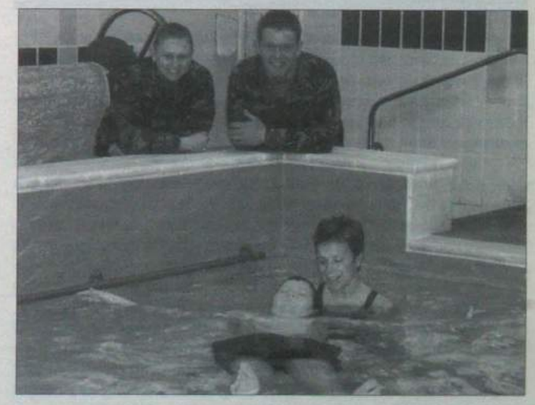
Timed to perfection, two Chinooks from RAF Odiham provided a stunning and very low flypast, appearing majestically over the Officers' Mess at the General Salute. Following inspection of the Honour Guard, it was the turn of the US contingent at RAF Digby to wow the assembled crowd with a rifle display. **PO Deaton**, a former member of the US Detachment Colour Drill seemingly effortlessly threw the heavy rifle in to the air and back and forth to his compatriot **CPO Worcester**.

Following a short speech by **AVM Moore**, the Station was ceremonially handed over to **AVM Peach** with the Parade once again performing the General Salute. The ensign lowering ceremony and playing of the National Anthem marked the end of a highly enjoyable parade, and with the formal part over, it was then to the Silver Maple Club for all ranks to enjoy a few beers together.

The Parade and lunch had marked the culmination of what had been several busy months for the Station, following all the necessary preparation that had gone into arranging the amalgamation.

2 SQUADRON CHARITY SAINT FRANCIS SCHOOL, LINCOLN - *by Sgt Tony Hauxwell, Cpl Kerry Fleming and LCpl Jim Askwith*

St Francis School is a special school that teaches pupils with varying physical and mental disabilities, ranging from Autism to Muscular Dystrophy. The pupils are aged between 2 and 19 yrs. 2 Sqn have been involved with the School for a number of years,



Hydrotherapy is one of the many methods used to give children confidence

helping build an outside play area, and also raising money through various charitable endeavours.

On 22 February 2005 a group of Service personnel from Army, RAF, RN and the US Army visited the School, most for the first time. It was a very humbling and eyeopening experience to see the daily routine of the School. There is a high ratio of teachers, carers and helpers to the number of children, ensuring every child receives the highest standard of education and care.

The first part of our tour consisted of visiting several classrooms and watching the junior pupils take part in lessons such as Maths, Science, English and Art. It was amazing to see children with such severe disabilities being able to engage, participate and communicate through various aids and devices, many of which are provided by the School.

We then visited older students, many of whom had already achieved GCSEs and had moved on to further studies including NVQs. Others even had ambitions to go on to University after completing their Alevels, and one student hoped to study Law. This is why schools such as St Francis are so important; they offer a start in life for young people that might otherwise be significantly disadvantaged by their disability.

The school now wishes to construct a Sensory Room. This room would allow pupils to develop and stimulate sensory skills through sense-based activities, and would be particularly helpful to children with vision or hearing impairments. The School has already identified a room for this purpose, and now requires funds to help install the facility. After interacting with the children, it wasn't a difficult decision to decide to do some fundraising on behalf of the School.

THE 100 KILOMETRE ROWING CHALLENGE

So what was the easiest way to raise some money for the school? Beg, borrow and steal from colleagues, friends and family? Organise a sponsored drinkathon? No... We decided to get teams to row 100km in the quickest possible time. Not the easiest of things to do. So, on 30 March, Teams of 9 or 10 turned up to the gym, to face approximately 6 hrs of pain and physical endurance on the staticrowers.

The teams had differing tactics for the event. Two teams decided to do one-minute blasts with maximum effort, and others decided on the slow, steady approach-the tortoise and the hare approach.

All the way through the race it was neck and neck, between the two teams who had chosen to do one minute, maximum effort bursts. The other teams' tactics seemed to have enabled them to keep a nice steady pace, but couldn't quite keep up with the pace of the 'hares'.

As the hours wore on, everybody started to feel their muscles tighten, the pace get slower and the sense of impending dread when it was their turn on the rower. Quite soon after starting, those freshfaced, strong, able bodies had been replaced by redfaced, feeble bodies. Everybody was soon realising that the challenge wasn't quite as easy as first imagined.

After a superhuman effort from both the top teams, and a tight race all the way through, one team started to pull away with the end in sight. Finishing with an even faster pace than they started, 'Norfolk and Chance' (geddit?) crossed the finishing line in just over 5½ hrs, with 'G Force' finishing not long after.

Soon after, the rest of the teams completed their 100km with very respectable times, and everyone gladly packed away the equipt, got showered and changed, then met in the bar for well earned prizes, food and drink. Funnily enough, the drinking didn't last for long (not many people had even managed to make it to the bar!) as everyone who participated was thoroughly exhausted.
A grand total of nearly €1,500 was raised, which we hope to

Royal Signals soldiers quickly adopted the role of carers during a subsequent school visit. Sgt Tony Hauxwell, LCpl Jim Askwith and Cpl Kelly McIlkenny

deliver to the School very soon to help complete the much-needed and valuable learning resource. As with all sponsorship, collecting the money in sometimes proves to be harder than actually completing the event...

DIGBY OPERATIONS MUSEUM VISIT

The final part of this story ends with a group of children from St Francis School coming to visit the Ops Museum at RAF Digby on 26 April. The group, with their teachers/carers arrived at the Museum entrance to be met by a willing group of volunteers consisting mainly of those who had visited the school back in February to take them through the faithfully recreated Ops Room of 1939.

Sgt Liz Dodds very kindly offered us an insight into the working of an Ops Room used during WW2. She did a great job in telling this story very simply and comically, keeping the children (and even the military personnel) engaged and interested, despite the topic... Thanks, **Liz**!

The children were then free to explore the rest of the Museum, where items such as Spitfire wheels, old radios and even a Hurricane engine are to be found. For those of us who have been based at Digby for a number of years and never really had an inkling of its origins, it proved to be very interesting and informative-definitely worth a visit on one of your free Sunday mornings.

After a photoshoot in front of the replica Spitfire gateguard, we all went for a buffet lunch, very kindly provided by the Officers' Mess. Chatting with the children over salmon and cream cheese sandwiches (of course), it was clear they had all thoroughly enjoyed the visit, and were undecided as to the highlight of the day-dressing up as a WW2 pilot or getting out of lessons for the day!

THANKS

First and foremost a great big thanks must go to **Cpl Kelly McIlkenny**, who, after visiting the School, was determined to raise some money as quickly as possible. When the idea for the Rowing Challenge was dreamed up it was she who spent weeks prior to the event cajoling people into taking part. This is why we had nearly 50 people on the day, all willing to give up their free time and punish themselves in the name of charity! Actually, most didn't volunteer; they were bullied into doing it-myself included. **Kelly** also wrote to many local companies for sponsorship and even managed to persuade a local paper to write a story about it talk about keen!

Thanks also to St Francis School for opening their doors to us and making us more aware of what these schools actually achieve through the staffs' hard work and love of the job.

Finally thank you to all the people who took part in the challenge, enabling us to raise such a large sum for the School, and to those kind people who dug deep to sponsor the brave few...

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY
DIRECTORATE OF CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

ENGINEERING OPERATIONS - *by Maj GM McCrindle*

Eng Ops are a virtual organisation, scattered across a number of UK sites. This article has been provided by our Northern Ireland team, **WO1(FofS) Sue King** and **LCpl Cartwright**.

INSTALLATION TEAM - *by LCpl Cartwright*

Now in its fourth year, Installation Flight have deployed in small teams to just about every theatre where UK has troops, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Brunei, Cyprus, Florida, Sierra Leone, Germany, Gulf Regions, Falklands, NI and UK. The Team comprises 12 Royal Signals Inst Techs and approximately 50 RAF Techs.

Some examples of our work and coverage include **Sgt Glen Sunderland**, who spent 7 months leading a team to 'Synergise' Iraq; **SSgt Dickie Dickinson**, who missed out on going to Afghanistan, but got a trip to RAF Buchan instead; and **Cpls Craig Bate** and **Jim Stocks**, who are doing an upgrade on the radio systems in NI. **Sgt Les Welsh** will shortly be starting a major project, travelling round over 70 sites worldwide, installing the new Airfield Radio System. **Sgt Dave Healey** is currently working in Wales on a massive project at a recently moved camp, putting in a massive infrastructure fit. **Sgt Dave Atherton** will be hopping round the UK to places including RAF Oakhanger and RM Poole, doing small-scale infrastructure builds over the coming weeks.

We recently had a 'Leadership/Thinking outside the bubble' day that included Royal Signals junior ranks. As well as various comd tasks (of a civilian orientated nature) we had a 4 mile Bergen retrieval ex that the soldiers strategically placed in each team, naturally took charge of from the RAF, and showed them what real PT is all about. The drinks and BBQ that followed, more than made up for aching limbs that evening, though next day a lot of very sorry people appeared in the Team Lines.

ARMY NETBALL TOUR – SOUTH AFRICA
- by WO1(FofS) Sue King

I was lucky enough to be selected for a tour to South Africa in April, and the day finally arrived when I excitedly met up with all the other 13 squad members at Heathrow, ready for the overnight flight to Cape Town. Other Royal Signals personnel included **Maj Ros Brown** and **Cpl Lou Binnie**.

Having spent an incredibly cramped night watching all the latest film releases on the flight, we eventually arrived 12 hrs later in a wet rainy Cape Town. It's always sunny in the holiday brochures!! We were accommodated in self-catering apartments near the tourist area of Cape Town, the V and A Waterfront. Dominated by Table Mountain, the area offers many good restaurants, bars and shops, although at tourist prices. Cape Town itself offers many historical locations, from City Hall, where **Nelson Mandela** gave his liberation speech, to the multi-cultural Green Market Square.

During the 10-day tour, we played a total of 6 games of netball against various civilian and military teams within Cape Province. As well as conventional netball, we quickly had to learn a new game, Action Netball. This involves a much smaller court than normal, but completely surrounded by high netting. The rules are the same, but the ball can be played off the netting, a concept some of the girls struggled with, but great fun none the less! One of the games was played against a team from one of the local townships, Langa. This also included a guided township tour by two of the local girls, with a delicious lunch of local cuisine at the only restaurant in the township. With HIV at 40%, shantytown accn, and unemployment at 98%, there are still differences in some places between white and black South Africa.

Several trips were programmed into the tour. The first was a peninsular tour along the spectacular coastline, which involved a boat ride out to Seal Island, a rock located in Hout Bay, inhabited by many hundreds of seals - and the smell proved it! This was followed by a trip down the coast to Cape Point for lunch, at the point where the 2 great oceans meet, and finally a visit to the penguin colony at Boulders Beach. On a second day, we took a boat ride to Robben Island, where **Nelson Mandela** and many other political prisoners were imprisoned during the Apartheid years. The guides who take you around the prison are all ex-inmates, and for some, the experience is still quite raw. This was by far one of the most memorable parts of the trip.

WO1(FofS) Sue King on Robben Island

Eventually, after 5 days of drizzle and rain, the sun came out. Although it was autumn, the temperature was still very hot. It was now time to go to Table Mountain. The trip to the top was by cable car, an experience in itself, as half of the glass was missing from the front of the car. It also rotated through 360°, which was quite disturbing, especially near the top as we approached the rock face! The temperature on the top plummeted, and we were soon putting clothing back on. The views from the top definitely take your breath away, and it was definitely worth the trip.

On our only free day, **SSgt Claire Jeynes**, Int Corps, and I decided to go shark diving! The rest of the girls thought we were mad, but up we got at 05.00hrs for the 2-hr trip to Gaansbaai, home of the Great White shark. After a light breakfast on the beach, we set off to sea in a newly built catamaran. Approx 12 kms offshore, you come to a shallow channel between Dyer

Royal Signals on Table Mountain. Maj Ros Brown, Cpl Lou Binnie, WO1(FofS) Sue King

Island and Geyser rock, also known as Shark Alley. For various geographical reasons, this area has earned worldwide fame as one of the most unique areas in the world to view the Great White shark. We dropped anchor there, and the captain let the boat drift into the best place to lure the sharks.

'Chumming' is the technical term for attracting the Great White. It involves dropping a whole load of fishy bits, bloody water and fatty blubber into the water, and allowing the current to take the scent out to sea to attract a shark or two. Sitting in the sun on the top deck, waiting for sharks to appear was quite surreal. After about 40-60 minutes of baiting, I spotted the first fin. Jumping up and down, highly excited shouting 'Shark, Shark!' soon got the other divers awake. Soon we were all crowded round trying to get 'that' photograph.

We eventually attracted 4 sharks to the boat, and now the captain was telling us to put on our wetsuits. The crew dropped the cage into the water, while we were madly pulling on our kit. The cage could hold 4-6 people, and was constructed of very sturdy chicken wire, with floats at the top to ensure that it floated on the surface. **Claire** and I were first to be ready. I don't know why, but neither of us was the slightest bit nervous. And we couldn't wait to get in the cage. To get into the cage you had to climb over the side of the boat and jump into the cage – a very precarious move!

The water was freezing, but the cold was soon forgotten as the crew encouraged the sharks towards the cage. With waterproof cameras in hand, we were soon busy taking photographs and gesticulating to each other, the excitement becoming almost too much too bear, as the sharks came closer. We were not wearing scuba gear, so it was a case of who could hold their breath and could stay down the longest. With the crew shouting 'Down, down!' every time a shark approached, we were madly filling our

Shark, shark!

lungs for the next venture under the surface. The sharks frequently brushed against the cage, several people were lucky enough to touch one as it went past.

We had two 30-minute sessions in the water, with plenty of opportunities to view the Great White at close quarters. My time came right at the end when the shark was lured straight to where I was stood in the cage. It came straight at me. Out of the corner of my eye I saw the two people either side of me jump back. I stayed where I was: I was too fascinated to move. Just as it reached us, it opened its mouth, and we had a fantastic view of its teeth! This is it, I thought; my ultimate photograph. Reaching for my camera, I starting clicking, only to find I had no film left – no photo. My opportunity had passed. But still a euphoric experience!

After about 3 hrs, the sharks had had enough of us and started to move away, so the crew decided to call it a day, and started to pack away the equipment. Shivering, we watched the crew get the cage back onto the boat, had some lunch, washed the salty water from our faces and mouths, and headed back to shore. It was a rough ride, as the weather was changing and the wind was whipping up the waves.

Back on shore, after purchasing the obligatory 'Shark' t-shirt, we set off back to Cape Town, tired but happy. After a very memorable day, we had plenty of stories to tell. Needless to say, some of the other girls were now wishing they had come too.

On the last day of the tour, the trip back to the airport included a wineland tour around several of the wine producing estates in Stellenbosch. In 1680, the Protestant refugees from France brought with them their centuries-old viticulture skills, which they applied locally with great success, creating what is known today as the cradle of the South African wine industry. Several estates and tastings later, we stopped for lunch at *Moyos*, on the beautiful Spier Wine Estate. This was by far the best food we had tasted in Cape Town, and well worth the £20. The band was great, too. A fitting end to a fantastic tour.

COMBINED COMMUNICATIONS UNIT - CYPRUS

OC **Sig LCpl S McLaughlin**
USM

EXERCISE YOUNG DRIVE 2005

EX YOUNG DRIVE is CCU's safe and skilled driving competition. The aim of the competition is to improve road safety and driving skills for young drivers in a fun but challenging and constructive manner. This year, eight teams were entered from all sections of the Unit, a total of 24 young drivers to be tested on a round robin of 10 stands, ranging from a cross-country course to a reverse blind drive. They were also tested on MT documentation and procedures.

On some stands, it was obvious that skill fade had already set in for some of the young drivers, especially when we found out that after only 2 weeks from passing his test, a certain young driver had already forgotten his road signs. Also, **SAC Dent**, part of the 3 Dumb Blondes Team, was worried about her nails breaking when doing the wheel changing exercise, so she took a step back and watched her team mates **Cpl Wilson** and **SAC Herron** complete the task. However, she eventually ended up second overall in the team competition. 'So who's dumb now?' she asks.

The winners of the team competition were the Rough Riders Team, comprising **Sigs Mercer**, **Wassell**, and surprisingly **Sig Moore**, who is renowned throughout the Unit as a somewhat 'dodgy' driver! Even he was surprised to be in the winning team. It seems that a bit of concentration and competitiveness can bring out the best in you. The team have now been offered an entry into the Master Drivers, British Forces Cyprus Competition later in the year.

The winner of the Best Young Driver 05 went to **Sig Lewis** of Dhekelia Section, who impressed nearly all the stand commanders and received the most votes for her excellent driving skills.

Cpl Andy Keatley being overwhelmed by the driving skills of a certain Mrs Keatley

'Don't tell me: that's the brake pedal down there somewhere!' Cpl Jock Taylor puts his life in the hands of another enthusiastic forklift driver wannabee

Cpl Jock Taylor also ran a separate competition for the wives, who had a fun day driving military vehs, such as a big green truck, a coach and a forklift. The winner was **Mrs Georgina Keatley**, who happened to be the wife of the scorer **Cpl Andy Keatley**. No fixing going on there, then.

The prize giving and BBQ rounded off the day, with the QM, **Capt Dave Whitaker**, awarding the prizes. The competition was a great success, and enjoyed by all the participants. A special mention for a job well done must go to **Sgt Nathan Ruff** and **Cpl Andy Keatley**, who organised and ran the event.

CCU GRIFFON 500

CCU brought a new charity and competition event to Cyprus this year, with the birth of CCU GRIFFON 500, an endurance event covering 500 Laps of a standard 400-metre athletics track, in full kit and carrying 30lbs weight. The competition was designed to be a 10-man Baton Relay, covering the 500 laps in the fastest time. It had two aims. The first was to raise money for charity; the second to provide British Forces Cyprus with a competition event. Trg had suggested that this event could take around 25hrs to complete, so with that in mind and gaining the support of the Garrison, **SSgt Torrington** engineered an Extreme Sports Open day to coincide with the Griffon 500. Quad bikes, Go Karts, Paintballers, Harley and Vee Twin Bikes, CJATC and BFBS were all eager participants, together with the obligatory Burger and Beer outlets, with a bouncy castle and train ride for the younger kids.

On Thursday 14 April 2005, the 10-man Team, led by event organiser, **SSgt Torrington**, took to the track to initiate the event. The agreed tactic was to run 5 laps each, giving each team member at least 1hr to recuperate before hitting the track again. After all, we were raising money! The initial times achieved for each 5-lap bound, far exceeded expectations, with **Cpl Shelley**, **Sgt Hickey** and **SSgt(FofS) Clish** consistently managing what would have been a BPFA pass on every visit.

The morale and speed of the Griffon 500 Team increased throughout the night, so a quick call to Sunray was in order. The order was given by OC CCU, **Sqn Ldr Shaun McLaughlin**, not to back off, with strict instructions to go for the fastest time possible. The dark hours were upon us, with MP3 players driving things to keep the tempo fast and boredom in control. Running round in circles for 200km isn't exciting. Tiredness finally started to kick in around 04.00hrs, so a tactical adjustment was called for. Track visits were increased from 5 laps to 8 laps to give the really tired ones a chance to actually close eyes and re-energise. Visits throughout the event from Dhekelia Garrison Comd, **Col Grossmith MBE**, kept spirits high. As the sun came up, the finish was in sight. Team spirit was excellent, with all team members pushing out personal bests for their last run. **Sig Griffiths** carried the baton for the last 8 laps, finally crossing the line in a time of 18hrs 41 mins. The challenge to all in BFC was now set, and directed towards JSSU Ayios Nikolaos and the ESBA RIB, 1 QLR to come and have a go!

All in all, it was a fantastic challenge, with only the weather letting the side down slightly throughout the Extreme Sports afternoon. Special mentions go to **Cpl Jock Taylor** and his Admin team for setting up the Open Day arena, and generally looking after the Griffon 500 team.

VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS ROYAL

During her visit to British Forces, CCU were delighted to host **Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal** on 19 April 2005. The visit took place in Happy Valley, Episkopi on a balmy Cypriot spring morning, and went off without a hitch.

The Princess Royal was accompanied by her husband **R Adm TJH Lawrence MVO**, the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, and Comd BF(Cyp), **Maj Gen PTC Pearson CBE**.

On a number of stands displaying the Unit's role, **Her Royal Highness** met some of the Officers, Airmen, Soldiers, and Civil Servants who make up the Unit. She also met some of the wives and children. After meeting the OC and USM, her first visit was

The OC, SSM, Her Royal Highness, and the Master of Signals

to **SSgt Paul Bailey** and his team of Inst Techs. An innovative display comprising Battle Damage repair and Fibre Optic splicing demonstrations provided the talking point around which the team could meet their Colonel-in-Chief.

At the Primary Network Control Centre, **SAC Dave Stamp** had the pleasure of briefing her on the role the Ground Radio Maintenance Section fulfils in supporting flying operations out of RAF Akrotiri. On the Radio Stand, she learned the key part the Team play in providing Island wide VHF network coverage to support the role of the Resident Infantry Battalions and the Sovereign Base Area Admin Emergency Services.

Her Royal Highness learned from **Lt Ben Price** and his team of CCU's involvement in the wider community, including the events that have helped raise over £10,000 in the last year. **SSgt Jason Harris** could not resist the opportunity to raise the profile of our football team that won the Minor Units League again this year.

Finally the QM, **Capt Dave Whitaker**, the Unit project officer for the visit was presented to **Her Royal Highness**, and after signing the Unit Visitors' Book she departed by helicopter.

Sig Ben O'Neil explains the technicalities of fibre optic cable jointing

1 NATO SIGNAL BATTALION

CO **Lt Col Tony Burgin**
RSM **CWO Pierre Chamberland**

Another busy period has seen the Bn heavily involved in the major NATO ex of the year, ALLIED ACTION 05 in Spain. The whole event lasted some 9 weeks, and resulted in some steep learning for the participants. Engineering into the NATO core network is difficult in itself without the added difficulties of using old equipt and demanding conditions. The Bn sent a mixed group, based around a core of 628 Sig Tp, who used the ex as a means to ready themselves to be SACUER's Deployable CIS component for the new NATO Response Force (NRF). They will be on point from 1 July at 5 days NTM for a six-month period, and as such, leading the way in how NATO is transforming itself into a new more agile organisation. Only time will tell how successful NATO will be, but it is expected to be tested at some point by SACUER to see how well things are shaping up.

The Bn is slowly coming together now, with more pieces slotting into place and new personnel arriving all the time. The tempo is still quite high, with soldiers deployed in KFOR, ISAF and in support to EUFOR and Iraq. We are still heavily involved with the Sig Suppt Gp in HQ ISAF and have just had the Danish Contingent return, being replaced by a German Coy. The PRT expansion is ongoing, with a great deal of work and effort being expended building and configuring the comms installations for new locs, as well as the trg bill involved in bringing the relevant Nations' soldiers up to speed with new COTS equipt.

We also see a few members departing for new jobs, and the departure of **WO1(FofS) Steve Moore** will be particularly hard-felt. His efforts in the Ops Team have been greatly appreciated, and all of us wish him and his family well in his new job in Blandford - and hope that **Maj Noddy Baugh** allows him some time off! We have also said farewell to **LCpl Coco Cownie**, who also leaves us to go to Blandford; and **LCpl Wood**, who will leave us in the next few weeks for a new career in civilian life.

EXERCISE CRYSTAL SPIKE – *by Cpl Cooke*

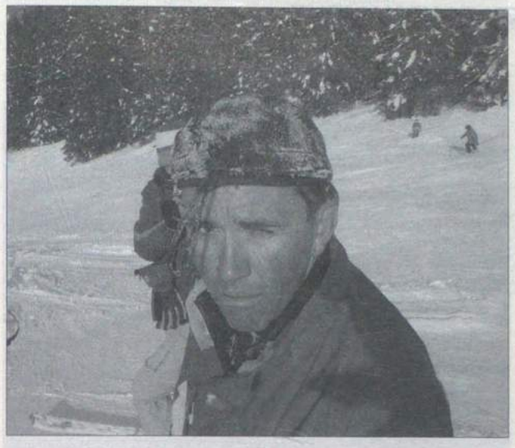
EX CRYSTAL SPIKE was the Bn's winter trg camp, a first for us. The ex included 11 British, 2 Americans, 1 Belgium, 1 German, 1 Norwegian and 1 Polish member, which certainly gave it a multi-national theme, but it also proved to complicate what would normally be a straight forward planning ex. This presented two problems. Firstly, not all nations have AT facilities - indeed not all nations recognise AT as an official duty. Secondly, there was the question of funding. No one nation is going to fund for all the others. So a solution was required that would satisfy the minefield of rules that exist within this multi-national fraternity.

After much brokering, **WO2(Supvr IS) Harry Harrison** secured the funds required, and the only option for accn was to go private. We used the aptly named *Slide or Glide* a lodge in Bad Hindelang in the Allgäu region of Southern Germany, owned and run by a former member of the Corps.

WO2 Harrison organised the ex and **SSgt Paul Elwood**, who supplied the blankets, assumed the role of ex SQMS. The ex OIC, **Maj Jim Boyle**, played banker and gave further assistance. **Maj Boyle** and **WO2 Harrison**, with 16 tours of Norway and countless qualifications between them, were our instructors for the duration.

We were split into 2 ability groups, the novices with **WO2 Harrison**, and the advanced group with **Maj Boyle**. Day 1 saw the novices receiving their introduction on the Blue slope, whilst

the advanced took to the Red. Day 2 was the real start for the advanced group now they had got there ski legs in, whilst the novices were wondering what they had got themselves into. Confidence and morale grew throughout the ex, with both groups receiving fast track instruction. After only five days, the novices were easily negotiating steep blacks with no fallers.



Maj Jim Boyle insisting that snowmen usually have carrots for noses

With a Slalom race organised for the final day, it was tense, with everyone having butterflies at the start gate. The final results were kept a secret until the evening presentation. **WO2 Harry Harrison** was confident he had made it, but had to defer to **Sgt Lee Rotherforth**, who beat him by 7 hundredths of a second!

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM DEPLOYMENT - AFGHANISTAN – *by Cpl Eckett*

The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) comprises Military and Civilian staff, whose mission is to assist the Government of Afghanistan to extend its authority, to facilitate the development of a stable and secure environment in the identified area of operations (AOO).

The Bn was tasked to install comms at two identified PRT sites, one in Feyzabad and the other in Heart, both in East Afghanistan.

SSgt John Boreman guarding the sand castles at Feyzabad, Afghanistan

The PRT comprised **Capt Brandon Glover** US Army, **SSgt John Boreman**, **Cpl Geoff Wilman**, **Cpl Chris Eckett**, with **Cpl Petra Vanweert** BE Army. The team deployed from 29 March 05 to 30 April 05, arriving initially at ISAF HQ in Kabul. After a troubled period of 'in processing' caused by our Turkish friends not working over lunch, we were able to test our equipt prior to a planned flight from Kabul International Airport (KIA). I say planned because we arrived at the airport at 05.00hrs to find we were not on the manifest. An early start the next morning proved frustrating, as the Turkish C130 could not take off due to a cloud being present. Third time lucky, we arrived at Kunduz to find bad weather was against us, so back to ISAF HQ – happy days! The whole experience was a challenge, from moving into buildings not suited to large pieces of equipt, to open windows for air-con. We were all delighted, and applauded **Cpl Vanweert** when she managed to point the satellite dish in the right direction. But there were four dishes already pointing that way. Well done, **Petra**! Once the teething problems were overcome comms links were quickly established, and the deployment was a complete success.

TAPIJN BADMINTON COMPETITION
- by RSM Chamberland CA Army

An in-bks Badminton tournament was organised on 2 June 05 by **RSM Pierre Chamberland**. The players' ages ranged from 18 to 52, and the Tournament was represented by members from UK, Denmark, Poland, Canada, US and Belgium. As the Tournament progressed, you could feel the tension, the Belgian players were eliminated one after the other - even **Commandant** (Senior Capt Equiv) **Yves Devillers** couldn't intimidate his fellow countryman by reminding them of his input on their CRs. The day was exhausting, with most players putting in for a day off following the event – not granted by the CO!

The quarterfinals were well played, with **LCpl Danny Bishop** getting the better of **RSM Chamberland**, who at 52 yrs, put his slight failure down to the youth of his contender. Sadly, the fourth placed semi-finalist, **Capt Robert Przybylowski** Polish Army, could not continue. So it was decided that the 3 remaining players would vie for a place in the final. **Maj Benny Pokmire** US Army, who has being playing the game for only 6 months, put up an excellent display of sportsmanship to achieve third place. The final ended between **LCpl Bishop** and **OR-7 Kim Hanson** Danish Army in a nail-biting display. The Tournament was enjoyed by all who took part and will certainly feature in the future. The final results were:

1st **LCpl Danny Bishop** UK
2nd **OR-7 Kim Hanson** DA
3rd **Maj Pokemire** US

OR-7 Kim Hanson DK, 2nd; LCpl Danny Bishop UK, 1st; and Maj Benny Pokemire US, 3rd

SPORT

INTER-CORPS HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

– by Capt AJ Parkinson

The annual Army Inter-Corps Hockey Tournament, the most important fixture of the Hockey calendar, took place at Aldershot over the period 26 - 28 April 05. The Royal Signals Ladies Team had achieved limited success over recent years, but this year saw an end to our drought. Captained by **Capt Sophie Howe**, the Team made a comeback, qualifying for the finals, for the first time in years.

With the AGC Ladies holding an unbroken reign for the last 5 years, the Royal Signals Team were justifiably nervous at being drawn in a pool with them. Our first match was against REME, and we knew that we had to beat them if we were to make it to the quarterfinals. We immediately came together as a functional team, securing a 3 - 1 victory, with goals by **LCpl Mandy Wright**, **Capt Lesley McCafferty** and **Lt Nic Berry**.

AGC felt a misplaced confidence following this match, believing that we were no threat to them. Their mistake; we were ready for them. An overawed AGC team saw us go from strength to strength, winning decisively, 4-1, with goals from **Capt Sophie Howe**, **Lt Nic Berry** and **Sgt Ann-Marie Ambury**.

We were now through to the semi-finals to face RLC. This was by far our hardest match so far. RLC was an extremely fit, fast and determined, kept fighting till the full time whistle blast, and beyond! We were winning 3-2 at full time, but RLC managed to secure a short corner in the last second. But after a tense extra time, we were finally through to the finals to face - AGC again.

This time AGC fielded an almost entirely new team, many having been drafted in to take part in only the final, and bolstered by

Lt Nic Berry on target against AGC

numerous Army and Combined Service players. Exhausted from our previous battle only an hour previously, we were unable to fight off the AGC onslaught, ultimately finishing as runners up. Despite this, the Tournament was a resounding success; the Team had matured significantly and came into their own on the day, through sheer grit and teamwork. **Lt Nic Berry** was voted Best Player, **LCpl Rachael Hay**, Most Improved Player, and **2Lt Maggie Ashton**, Best Newcomer. There is much yet to be seen from this young and upcoming team. Stand by for next season, AGC Ladies!

THE MARATHON DES SABLES 2005

- by Sgt Steve Reeves

Billed as the Toughest Foot Race on Earth, the Marathon des Sables is a race across the Moroccan Southern Sahara. Competitors are expected to carry all their own equipt, including minimum rations of two thousand calories per day. The organisers supply only 9 litres of water per day and a Berber tent to sleep in at night. This year's total race distance was announced as 245.7km.The race itself is conducted as daily stages, each stage having its own special horror.

What drew me to this unique event? Well that's simple, really. After breaking my back and sustaining several injuries to my legs and arms in a motorcycle accident, I decided the only way to prove the surgeons wrong was to enter an extreme event. I have always liked a challenge, and thought the MDS would be the perfect test. I began planning and saving about 24 months previously, and submitted my application in March 2004.

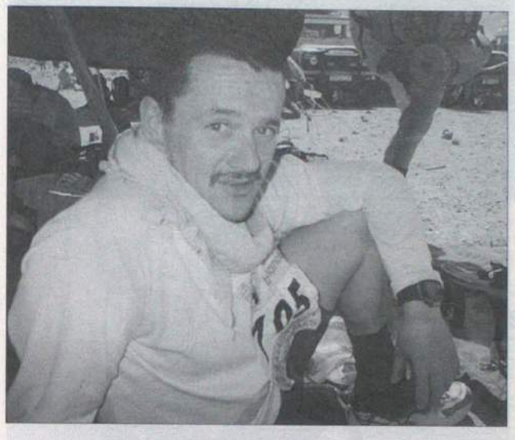
Then when the organisers sent back acknowledgement of my application, panic set in! Did I really want to run 200+ kms in temperatures in excess of 40°C? How would I be able to train properly in the not so tropical climate of UK? Realising that most of the other British competitors would be in the same boat as myself, I decided the best policy would be to just get on with it, and rack up as many miles as possible each day - running with the equipt that I would be carrying on the day. As trg progressed, the bag got heavier and heavier, as I found more and more vital equipt that I might need. Eventually, I was running a minimum of a half marathon a day, carrying more than I would on a CFT. God only knows how many miles I did in preparation, but my family became trg orphans, and quite tired of the 'When I run across the desert...' conversations.

One real concern I had about the race was fuel was I to use to cook my meals with. Airlines have a complete ban on carrying flamable materials in your luggage, so there was a problem. However, the UK organisers had arranged for a supply of eco friendly *Green Heat* to shipped to Morocco for distribution to the British contingent before the start of the event. *Green Heat* is a jelly type fuel that comes in small tins with its own attachable stove. This sounded ideal, so I ordered three tins and relaxed.

The day of departure, 7 April, dawned bright and crisp, and I was now at Gatwick airport waiting for the flight. All of the other competitors I met looked to be in excellent shape - focused and eager to get going. In comparison, I was sporting a badly bruised knee, the result of yet more motorcycling adventures. The 4-hr flight to Morocco was quite uneventful, and we landed at Ouarzazate Airport, where we were cheered off the plane by a local audience of traditional Moroccan singers, dancers, musicians and school kids. The Marathon des Sables is held in very high esteem in Morocco, and the King himself takes a great deal of interest in it.

The rest of the day was spent in the only five-star hotel in town, which was reserved for the 250 British competitors. The other nationals stayed in the lesser establishments. In all, there where 777 competitors from 36 countries. I queued patiently with the other 249 Brits to draw my cooking fuel – only to discover that it hadn't materialised. This meant no hot food for a week, an absolute nightmare if your rations need re hydrating!

We left the hotel on a 7-hr coach trip to the start area at Taguerroumt. Unsurprisingly, all the bravado from the day before suddenly stopped. This was it!



Do I really want to go through with this?

Day 1 (29km) The local Berbers who have been employed to set up and take down the Bivouac site, arrive at 06.00hrs, and have the tents down by 06.05hrs. The first stage starts at 09.00hrs and the temperature is already 35° C. Today's stage consists of two sets of dunes and open flat plains. Thankfully, there are also two water stops, each giving 1.5 litres of water. The atmosphere at the start line is very tense; along with the other 776 competitors, I am starting to wonder what I have let myself in for.

Before we know it the Eurosport Helicopter has buzzed the start line several times, and we're off!

This stage goes quite well for me, and I complete it in 5hrs 3 mins. The biggest shocker is the heat and the sand dunes. Its like running in porridge, as the sand swallows your legs up to the middle of the shin. My only comforting thought throughout this stage, is that my Bergen will get lighter as the week goes on.

Although the total amount of water for each day is 9 litres, this is not a generous amount. On arriving at the finish line, I have a banging headache, and am quite parched. I am given 4 salt tablets and told to get them inside me. They work almost instantly and the headache goes, so I spend the rest of the evening eating and repairing my feet, which have taken a battering from the sand abrasing the skin.

Day 2 (37.5km) The morning arrives far too quickly for my liking, and once again the locusts are up before anyone, tearing the tents down. Breakfast consists of porridge oats mixed with cold water, washed down with cold coffee - delicious! Still it's not as bad as eating dry noodles with dehydrated meat.

Today's stage is a little further than yesterday's. Again we have two sets of dunes, open plains and the rumour that there is a big climb at the end. It's not a big climb; it's a bloody massive one. On reaching the third CP at 31.5km, we are confronted with a climb of over 950 metres, all of which seems to be very loose sand. That's the equivalent of climbing Scaffell Pike after running 4 CFTs.

The temperature today has been in excess of 57° C, and the first heat casualties have started. The organisers have accepted that today has been a killer and decide to distribute an extra 1.5 litres of water per competitor. A very generous offer. Total time for today 7hrs 45mins.

I'm glad to have got this stage over, and can't wait to tuck into my dry rations. Again the feet injuries are getting worse, but for the moment, I'm not desperate enough to let the French doctors treat them.

The sand gets into everything...

Day 3 (41km) Only one set of dunes today; the rest of the course is just rough ground. Although I felt quite rough this morning, I can sense that I will have a good day. The start line is now starting to resemble an A and E Dept. The walking wounded are everywhere. Many competitors have forgotten to pack sun block; lobsters everywhere. I estimate today's stage will take 9hrs, and complete it in just 8hrs 30mins, so am well pleased.

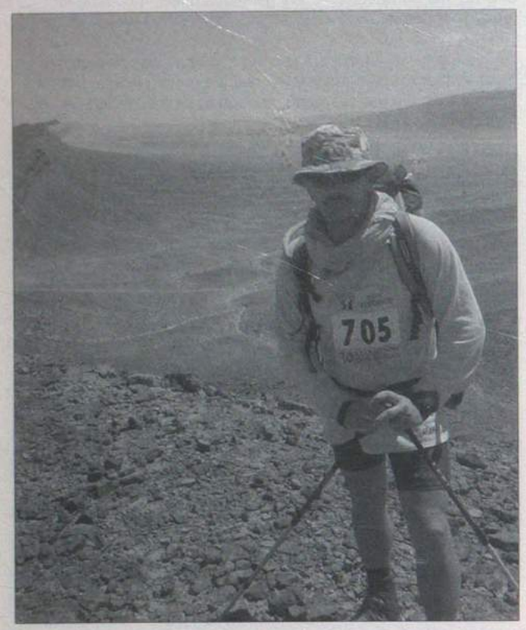
When I get back to the tent, the rest of the crew are complaining that this was the hardest day so far. Three of them have been given drips, and look really wasted. I guess it pays not to go hammer and tongs all the way. Tomorrow's stage is the big one, so I eat as much as I possibly can, and drink every drop of fluid I can get my hands on.

Day 4 (76km) Today's stage is feared by all the competitors. Morning brings the usual panic, but noone seems to want to line up on the start line. The total time allowed for this stage is 36 hrs, but logic says the quicker you do it, the more rest time you get... My tactics for today are to hammer it for as far as possible, and hammer it some more. But I'm in for a shock!

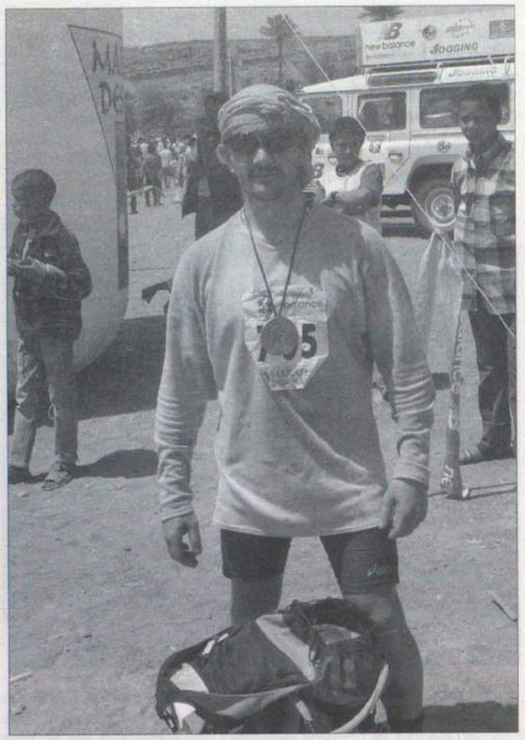
I manage to run the first 30kms in under 3 hrs, but unfortunately by CP3, my feet are falling off. I decide to be a brave soldier and visit the medical tent - a big mistake. Quite clearly doctors in France are trained at the local abattoir. I arrive in the medical tent just in time to see a Brit having his toes skinned, not just one but all of them. The doctor sees me laughing, and informs me I'm next! After undergoing an hour of surgery on the feet, I decide it's probably best to leave the medics before they butcher me any more. Possibly the hardest thing to overcome, is trying to warm back up and run on open wounds. Luckily for me, I am hit by a sand storm, which takes my mind of the feet.

By now, my average speed has dropped quite considerably and I'm not even making 4km an hour, by the time I reach CP5. Although I only have 21 kms left, it's time to rest, eat and have a couple of hrs' sleep. But 2 hrs' sleep turns into 8! By the time I start again, it's daylight, and I can see the finish line on the horizon 21 kms away. No matter how fast I run, it never seems to

get any nearer. I eventually finish this stage 25 hrs after starting it. My body feels trashed, but at least I am able to rest now till the next stage starts at 09.00hrs next morning.



...and it's very lonely out here...



...but at last, I've done it and got the Medal!

Day 6 (42.2km) Today's stage is the official Marathon Stage. It consists of three CPs. Having never done a marathon before, I will set a PB today. I have decided that I don't want to spend any more long days in the sun, so will get today over as fast as possible. My time is 6hrs 30mins, which puts me into 301st position overall. My tactics of not stopping for water or medical assistance have paid off, and for once I am second back to the tent. Amazingly, I feel as if I could do it again, which is just as well as tomorrow's stage is a half marathon!

Day 7 (22.5km) The final day has now arrived, and I guess I shall use yesterday's strategy and just go, go, go!

The start pace is really rapid; everyone is putting in the maximum effort. In fact, it becomes quite a struggle to keep up. But by CP1, most people are burned out and queuing for water. For me, it's just arrive at CP, get card stamped and bypass the water. Just doing this has gained me 50+ places. The final 6kms are through the town of Tazzerine. The streets are line with local kids trying get some free stickies, as most of the runners are emptying their supplies. I only have the dry rations left that I couldn't eat during the week, so dish them out. Strangely, it doesn't make my bag feel any lighter!

On passing through the finish line each competitor is met by **Patrick Bauer**, the sicko whose idea this race was 20 years ago. A brief hand shake, a medal hung around the neck and a packed lunch signal that it's all over - at last!

My total time for the 247.7km is 53 hrs 02 mins. The winning time is 19hrs! As usual, it is won by the Moroccan **Ansell** brothers - the seventh time they have taken it. Today is also London Marathon day. I expect **Paula Radcliffe** will take the next few days off to rest, but for us it's party time! As usual, the **Ansell** brothers take the lead and manage to get more drunk than anyone else. Obviously, they are proper athletes.

Would I do it all again? Yes, definitely. Possibly, 2010 as that will be the 25th anniversary of the event. But in the meantime, I have entered the 2006 Yukon Arctic Ultra - 320 miles in 8 days. At -40° C, it should be slightly cooler than the desert!

ROYAL SIGNALS INDIVIDUAL COARSE ANGLING CHAMPIONSHIP

On 3 June, 30 fishermen from across the Corps gathered at Decoy Lakes near Peterborough for the scheduled two-day angling competition for the 2005 Royal Signals Individual Coarse Angling Championship.

The event was fished over 2 days, with the overall placing to be decided by the combined section points gained on each day, with a draw on points being decided by the overall weight of fish caught by each individual.

Following a wind and rain swept day, with little or no protection from the elements on the newly-formed lakes, **Sgt Kit Knight** of Blandford, **SSgt Brian Clark** of 35 Sig Regt and **SSgt(YofS) Marcus Pollit** of 19 Lt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn took maximum points and an early lead. The most weight caught by an individual (**Kit Knight**) was 48 lbs, with a total of over 500 lbs being caught by all 30 anglers.

Day 2 saw a change in conditions, with mostly strong sunshine, which had the fish sunbathing, rather than eating the wide selection of bait put in front of them. But there were still some canny anglers, whose efforts were rewarded with good weights. The best individual weight of the day was from a guest angler, **Cpl Kerry Bolitho** from Chicksands, who landed just over 50lbs, with the 2 other sections won by **Sgt Speedy Speed** and **Capt Chris Kidd** both of 21 Sig Regt (AS).

Sgt Kit Knight with his Day 2 catch

At the end of Day 2, and after two very competitive matches, there were 3 anglers tied on 4 points. Following a countback on weight, it was **Sgt Knight's** Day 1 weight that swung the balance in his favour.

Kit's 2-day haul weighed in at just over 66 lbs, just ahead of **Capt Kidd** and **SSgt(YofS) Pollit** who weighed in at 64 lbs and 51lbs for respective second and third places.

The trial 2-Day event was voted a success by those in attendance, and proved to be a highly competitive event with individuals working hard to achieve maximum weights. The organiser, **Capt Chris Kidd** and his assistants are thanked for their contributions to the event, which saw not only **Sgt Knight** taking Individual Champion, but also facilitated the Corps Team selection process.

ROYAL SIGNALS SPORTS PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION

On Monday 25 April, eight members of RSSPA departed from Netheravon to EX FREEFALL TIGER 05 at the Rhine Army Parachute Centre (RAPA) in Germany. The weather was terrible and after many hours squashed up in the minibus, the team finally arrived, hoping for some quality trg. Although he weather was bad for several days, between the cloud and the heavy rain, we managed to get in several jumps, and to practise important skills on the ground. There were also a variety of wet weather activities to keep everyone entertained.

After a couple of days, the weather lifted, and we managed to do what we came to RAPA for, skydive. Most of the team managed to get in 15 jumps during the ex. These consisted of formation jumps in prep for future competitions, and practice display jumps in prep for the many displays we have booked for this year. Variable wind conditions resulted in some interesting landings and a couple of long walks back from the other side of the landing area, but everyone had a great time. Despite the bad weather delays, we managed to get three individuals Display qualified, one Formation Skydiving qualified, and an Instructors rating as well.

On the subject of displays, the season is well underway now, and we are extremely busy, jumping every weekend at shows across the country from June until mid September. We are also competing in competitions towards the end of the summer. If anyone is interested in joining the Team for either displays or competitions, or wants to give sports parachuting a go, they should contact the Team Captain, **Capt Lee Rickman** on 94321 2688; or Team Leader, **Sgt Ian Shaw** on 96801 3066, for further information. Any Unit that is organising a skydiving exped, and who would like some advice, are also welcome to get in touch.

FOOTBALL - THE SIGNALLER CUP

- by Capt Tommy Steele

The Signaller Cup final was held in Blandford on 18 May 05, between the holders of the Cup, 2 Sig Regt and 7 Sig Regt, who were desperate to avenge last year's 3-0 defeat. With 2 Sig Regt having lost a few players last year, they would certainly find it difficult to match last year's performance. And so it proved to be; the match turned out to be a one-sided affair, with 7 Sig Regt dominating the entire game from start to finish.

Nevertheless, it was still an enjoyable game to watch, with both sides playing some attractive free flowing football on a blustery day. 7 Sig Regt, resplendent in all white, never really looked in trouble at the back, with the experienced **SSgt Baughen** keeping a tight control over proceedings. Every time the 7 Sig Regt strikers had the ball, the 2 Sig Regt defence were at sixes and sevens. Despite the ever youthful **SSgt Leask** marshalling his back line, there seemed to be a lack of understanding, communication and confidence, that 7 Sig Regt exploited time and time again. By half time, they had scored three times, with goals by **Sig Bates**, **Sig Talbot** and **Sig Frankel**.

The 2 Sig Regt manager, **Capt Nuttall**, looked mightily depressed at half time and tried to raise the morale of his side. They certainly came out for the second half looking intent on getting back into the game, but alas there was going to be no remarkable comeback. Instead, there were further goals by **Sgt Richards** and three more by **Sig Bates**, his fourth an absolute

Sig Bates torments 2 Sig Regt's defence...

...and receives the Man of the Match Award from Lt Col O'Hara

7 Sig Regt's Captain, Cpl Al Jordan receives the Signaller Cup from Col JK Ewbank

cracker from just inside the box right into the top left hard corner of the net. The eighth goal, and final nail in the coffin for a dejected 2 Sig Regt side, was scored by **Sig Simpson**. Although the game looked like a rout in terms of the score line, 2 Sig Regt did have plenty of the ball, but were badly let down by an out-of-sorts defence. There was no argument that 7 Sig Regt were worthy winners of the Signaller Cup for the third time in 4 years, and **Cpl Jordan** collected the Trophy from the President of Corps football, **Col JK Ewbank**, to the delight of his team mates. **Lt Col RT O'Hara** presented the Man of the Match award to **Sig Bates**, who, with 4 goals, had terrorised the 2 Sig Regt defence from start to finish.

CORPS FOOTBALL

- By Capt Tommy Steele

Corps football is certainly going through a golden patch. Having won the Massey Trophy once and the Quadrangulars twice in succession over the last two seasons, at the start of this season, hopes were high for further success.

Our first match of the season was against RLC at Deepcut - an extremely difficult fixture at the best of times, but even more tricky not having had a chance to get the boys together for a trg session beforehand. Although we were a little apprehensive, we were confident in the side's ability to cope with what RLC could throw at us. And it was quite a match; with the score 0-0 at half-time, we had matched them in all departments. The second half was fast and furious, but the Corps started to get on top by being sharper in the tackle, and passing the ball quickly on.

It was only a matter of time before we scored to break the deadlock. A free kick was awarded 5 yards outside the box, and **Sig Simpson** stepped up to slot the ball home. The Corps stepped up their game even further, and it wasn't long before **Sig McGhee** scored the second and decisive goal with a 'knee shin toe' effort. A deserved 2-0 win for the Corps, but more importantly, this victory with such a young side, bode well for the remainder of the season. **LCpl Rizza** was outstanding and was the Man of the Match by some distance!

Our second game was no easier. The Infantry were the current holders of the Massey Trophy, and had soundly beaten us last year. **Capt Richie Bell** had charge of the team, and fielded an even younger side than the first game. The Corps played with a great deal of panache, running out very comfortable winners by three goals to one, with 2 goals by the skipper, **Cpl John Stephenson** and a penalty by **Cpl Jorden**. Wins against two of the top sides outside of the Quads was more than we could have hoped for.

In the run up to the Quads, the Corps beat Army Music 6-0, with **Cpl John Stephenson** scoring a hat-trick; APTC 9-2 with **Sig Talbot** scoring a hat-trick and **Cpl Stephenson** 4; and Army Medical Services by 5-0, with **Sig Jay Bates** scoring a brace on his return to the side. The final game before the Quads was against the AGC at Worthy Down, and it turned out to be a difficult game, with the AGC playing well above themselves. We managed to score just before half time to settle our nerves, but after the restart AGC scored a well-deserved equaliser, which spurred them on even more. They started to gain the upper hand but they were unable to get past **Cpl Pinchback**, who made some quite excellent saves. With 20 minutes to go the Corps got to grips with the game, scoring two further goals from **Sig Bates** and **Sig Hankey**, running out 3:1 winners. Another three points in the bag!

And so onto the Quads having played six and won six, with another three wins due to teams conceding, we had maximum points and were in prime position to win all that was on offer for the season. However, the Quadrangular Tournament can never be taken lightly; you need to be at your very best if you want to be top of the pile on the last Friday of the season.

Our first game was against RE. We turned up at Borden ready for a 12.00hrs Kick Off, but there was no RE side to play; they were stuck on the M25! Although we could have taken the points for a no show, it was decided in the interests of the competition and sportsmanship, to play the game with a delayed Kick Off. The match eventually got under way, and within the first few minutes we knew exactly what we were in for, 'physical football!' We could easily cope with the physical side of things but found it extremely frustrating not being able to get the ball down to play neat fast football. We went down by two goals to one, and what started out as a day of anticipation ended in frustration and dejection. And what made matters even worse, was the fact that we had been left hanging around for four hours prior to the game. It was our first defeat to RE in four years, and our first defeat in the Quads in four years!

Having lost the first game of the Quads, it was an extremely tall order to go and win the Competition, but that is exactly what we had to do if we wanted to realise our ambitions of holding on to both Awards. The Massey Trophy was still in our hands, but the Quads would mean we would have to rely on results to go our way.

Our second match was against RA, who had beaten REME convincingly; and we knew they were up for it. We expected a similar game to that of RE, but we expected to be able to get hold of the ball and play more of our football. The lead changed over three times before the end of the match. RA took an early lead, which stung the Corps into action, and within 10 minutes we were in front with two goals by **Sig Mark Hankey**. The Corps started to play with confidence, and it looked that we would increase our lead, but with two mistakes gifting them two easy goals, it was RA who retook the lead before half-time, with the score line 3-2 to them.

At the start of the second half, we grabbed the game by the scruff of the neck, and slowly turned the screw as chances started to appear. RA were still very much a threat, but were caught out time and time again by some fine defending and sharp goalkeeping. The equaliser came from a stunning individual goal by **Sig Simpson**, who picked the ball up outside the box, and ran at RA's defence, beating four defenders, and calmly slotting the ball past the advancing keeper. We then went one better, and scored the decisive fourth goal by **Sig McGhee**, hanging on to win the match by 4 goals to 3. Now firmly back in the competition and needing to avoid defeat against REME, a renewed level of ambition and anticipation swept through the players. We could hardly wait for Friday!

A tense moment as Royal Signals look for possession

With every thing still to play for, the game against the REME was the most important game we had played, since the dramatic final game against them last year. We fielded a strong team with **SSgt Collins** back in the centre of the park and **Sgt Watts** alongside to do a marking job against their expected playmaker. After 10 mins REME had a corner, delivered the ball to the back post, and it was headed back towards our goal and then flicked on to where **Sig Simpson** instinctively stuck out his hand clearly preventing the ball from going into the net. The Referee produced a Red Card, and gave REME a penalty. There was frantic head scratching by the management on the sidelines, as we watched on in shock. Could our season be coming off the rails? **Sig Simpson** took the long walk back to the dressing room and looked over his shoulder as REME prepared to take the spot kick. Up he stepped and smashed the ball, but it was brilliantly saved by **Cpl Pinchback**. A quick reshuffle saw us leave one up front alone, and move the other striker in the middle to maintain our shape.

The game slipped into a pattern, with the REME play breaking down, due to our hard work, discipline and shape. Even down to 10 men, we were having the best of the chances, and it was no surprise when just before half time, **Sig Bates** smashed a low cross shot in the right hand corner of the net after REME had given the ball away cheaply. One nil at Half-time, and with a few words of praise and further encouragement, we went out for the second half to try to maintain our lead. Play quickly settled in to a similar pattern, with the Corps working extremely hard and keeping their shape, as REME toiled to make any inroads into our defence. With 30 minutes to go, REME won a disputed free kick, and as the ball was apparently kicked away, the Referee produced another Red Card as he booked **Sig Hankey**. We were now down to 9 men with 30 minutes left to play. Even the REME players tried to prevent the sending off, as it was they who had asked the player to kick the ball to them! A cruel injustice was inflicted upon us, but there was no time to complain; we had to get on with the game. **SSgt Collins** went into the back three, and we asked the four in the middle to squeeze in and defend. At times it looked like the Alamo, with REME firing the ball, with players forward at every single opportunity. Our lads were magnificent, and defended as if their lives depended upon it. And when REME did manage to get through, our keeper was on hand to thwart their attempts. Time was running out for REME, and they were beginning to make more mistakes as they desperately tried to get the equaliser. Then as if by magic, in the last minute of the game, the ball broke loose and fell to **Sgt Watts**, who strode forward and hammered the ball low in to the right hand corner of REME's goal. A remarkable two nil victory, played with only 9 men on the pitch for much of the time! That second goal also meant we had won the Quads for the third consecutive time, and more importantly, we were once again the winners of the Massey Trophy. What a season! We had played 12 matches, won 11, scoring 41 goals with 9 against us.

Col John Ewbank and Lt Col Bob O'Hara review progress with Capt Ritchie Bell

The end of season celebrations saw **LCpl Rizza** receive both the Players' Player of the Year and the Managers' Player of the Year awards, in what was a truly outstanding season for him. Also worthy of mention is **Sig Hankey**, who received the Army Player of Year award. Many congratulations to them both from all the players and staff!

Team Captain, Cpl John Stephenson beams as receives the Massey Trophy, already festooned with Corps colour ribbons

ROYAL SIGNALS EXCELL IN SHOOTING

- by Capt Colin Kell

The 2005 Central Skill at Arms Meeting (CENTSAM) and Queen's Medal Competition (QMC) were held on Pirbright and Century Ranges, Bisley over the period 27 June–1 July 2005. In a field of 26 unit teams totalling 198 UK competitors, the Corps entered 45 personnel (17 from QG Signals) competing as members of 7 unit teams and as individuals. The units were:

2 Sig Regt
3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
10 Sig Regt
16 Sig Regt
30 Sig Regt
ITC Catterick
JSSU (Cyprus)

2 Sig Regt performed extremely well, rewriting history by becoming the first Royal Signals team to win the Unit Championship at the Central Skill at Arms Meeting.

They were closely followed in 2nd place by 30 Sig Regt. 2 Sig Regt also won the Parachute Regiment Cup and Match 30, the LSW Aggregate. 30 Sig Regt won the Falling Plates and the Fire Team Match and came 2nd in the Combat Snapshooting Match. The last similar success by Royal Signals, was at the Hong Kong SAAM of 1986, when QG Signals beat the remainder of the Bde of Gurkhas, to win the Unit Championship.

In the individual QMC, 26 Corps members qualified in the Army 100, of which half were first time achievements; again a record. These were:

SSgt Bharat Shrestha	2 Sig Regt
Cpl Devprakesh Grg	2 Sig Regt
Sig Sachin Thapa	30 Sig Regt
Cpl Lilasing Grg	ITC (Catterick)
LCpl Brock	2 Sig Regt
LCpl Saroj Rana	30 Sig Regt
Cpl Durga	2 Sig Regt
Capt Kell	30 Sig Regt
Lt Nirmal Grg	30 Sig Regt
Cpl Khagendra	21 Sig Regt
LCpl Shiva Grg	30 Sig Regt
LCpl Halton	21 Sig Regt
Sig Yubaraj Grg	30 Sig Regt
LCpl Gardner	10 Sig Regt
Sig Chijkumar Grg	30 Sig Regt
LCpl Krishna	21 Sig Regt
Sig Wilson	16 Sig Regt
Sig Stanley	2 Sig Regt
Sig Neal	30 Sig Regt
Sig Richardson	16 Sig Regt
SSgt Robertson	10 Sig Regt
Sig Quinlan	JSSU (Cyprus)
Sgt Turnbull	10 Sig Regt
LCpl Netra	21 Sig Regt
Lt Olivier	2 Sig Regt
LCpl Basanta Grg	30 Sig Regt

Worthy of individual note was the 3rd placing of **SSgt Bharat Shrestha** and the winning of an ARA Bronze Jewel.

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION 136th IMPERIAL MEETING

The Corps entered two 4-man teams and 30 Sig Regt entered one 4-man team in this year's NRA Service Rifle Meeting held over 4/5 July at Bisley. The Corps didn't quite as well as they did last year, but we did win the Africa Challenge Cup as winners of the Inter Unit Championship, and the Malta Cup as winners of the Hythe team match.

Sig Sachin Thapa being presented the REME Trophy

METHUEN CUP – INTER ARMS AND SERVICES MATCH

The Corps also entered a 6-man team into the Methuen Cup match on 6 July, which is shot between the Services, Divisions of Infantry and other Corps. Again the Corps fared well, winning the Woolwich Bowl (between RA, RE and Royal Signals) and the REME Trophy (between REME and Royal Signals) but were beaten into 2nd place in the Methuen Cup by the Royal Gurkha Rifles. It still remains a challenge for the Corps to repeat its last win of 1993.

SUMMARY

It has been an incredibly successful year for Royal Signals and QG Signals, a success that will be hard to repeat next year without the support of Corps units in combat shooting. The Corp's future success still depends on the fostering of new talent and utilisation of experienced shooters to increase combat shooting ability.

The Methuen Cup Team

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
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DT11 8RH
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

Welfare Secretary
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Tel (civ) 01258 48 2089
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Membership Secretary
Tel (mil) (9)4371 2090
Tel (civ) 01258 482090
e-mail: rsa@rsignals.net

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

BRANCH NEWS

Col (Retd AF Carter MBE is now the Secretary of the Gurkha Signals Association. He can be contacted at: Rosebank, Hindon Lane, Tisbury, Wilts SP3 6PU.

RSA WW2 Veterans To mark the 60th Anniversary of VE Day, the Association has produced a lapel badge for its Life Members who served during WW2. Members who have not yet collected their badge from a Branch or whilst at the recent Annual Reunion at Blandford, are invited to send a SAE and their RSA Life Membership number to RSA HQ. Please address your request to: WW2 Veterans' Badge, Royal Signals Association, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH. Branch Secretaries who have not received this information by e-mail, should submit a list of their veterans (with RSA LM No) to RSA HQ.

Postings Many of you have sent in details of your postings and have subsequently received a list of those RSA members who served in your units around the same time. As more postings are received every day, members might like to request an updated list. Please e-mail your request to: rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk.

2005 Reunion Over 600 members of the RSA and around 300 guests, attended the RSA Annual Reunion at Blandford over the weekend 25/26 June. The weather was kind this year, which enable a full programme of events to take place.

The weekend kicked off at 10.30 hrs on the Saturday with the Princess Royal Day Parade by the officers and soldiers of 11 Sig Regt. **WO1(RSM) Simon Hadley** had trained the soldiers up to a very high standard on this, his last such parade before retiring. Following the parade, the SOinC(A), Master of Signals and CO 11 Sig Regt joined RSA members for the All Ranks Lunch in the Soldiers' Restaurant.

The afternoon arena display consisted of; the Corps Band, the TA Band, the Corps Pipes and Drums, the Corps Free Fall Parachute Display Team and the White Helmets. During the display, the Master of Signals presented the trophies for the RSA Standard Bearers Competition: Winner, **Mrs Christine Doe**, Coventry Branch; Runner-up, **John Mumford**, Reading Branch; and third place, **Fred Bridges**, Aldershot Branch. The Master also presented **Alan Wingate** with a 50-year Pennant for the Cotswolds Branch Standard. To commemorate the 60th Anniversary of VE Day, the WW2 veterans took part in a march past, with the Master taking the salute. The Band played them on with the tune, *Keep Right on to the End of the Road*, to generous applause from the audience.

Also on show throughout the day, was a display of current comms equipt, expertly arranged by OC Systems Division, **Maj Noddy Baugh MBE**, and **SSgt Guy Padfield**.

WO1(RSM) Simon Hadley kindly opened the doors of the Sgts' Mess to RSA Members in the evening, where a good time was had by all. RSA Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle**, and officers of 11 Sig Regt visited the Mess to enjoy a beer and a chat with our Members.

On the Sunday there was a Drumhead Church Service on Hawke Square, conducted by the RSA Hon Padre, **Peter Clemmet**, and the whole weekend ended with the RSM beasting our members as they formed up for a final March Past.

The RSA received magnificent support from the Garrison and 11 Sig Regt. It is normally unfair to single out individuals for praise, but we must mention and thank **Maj Paul Murrell**, Director of Music for the Corps Band, and **WO1(RSM) Simon Hadley**, as this was their last RSA Reunion.

A video/DVD recording showing the highlights of the 2005 Reunion is being produced. For details on how to obtain a copy, see the RSA website or contact RSA HQ. The website also shows many photographs of the reunion. Finally, another reminder that the next reunion at Blandford is on 1/2 July 2006.

Cenotaph Parade 2005 Members are welcome to join the Corps contingent at the Cenotaph Parade at Whitehall on Sunday 13 November 2005. Tickets will be available from RSA HQ on request.

Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey Members and their families are welcome to join the RSA Chairman for the opening of the Field of Remembrance on Thursday 10 November 2005. Please be in position by 10.30hrs. Following a short service, a member of the Royal Family will open the Field.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Rank/Name	*Service*
Cpl Symon Allen	1979-05
Sgt Don Ferguson	1983-98
LCpl Dave Parker	1993-99
Cpl David Chapman	1978-02
LCpl Russell Samuel	1956-59
Sig Les Large	1943-47
LCpl Marc Crewes	1993-00
Sig Peter Starrs	1980-89

Cpl Steve Robinson	1991-98
Cpl Alex McLaren	1983-97
WO2 Chris Skelton	1975-99
LCpl John O'Hara	1993-99
WO2 Wayne Hayes	1981-05
WO1 Michael Ginty	1981-05
Sig Michael Seggie	1991-99
Sgt Tony Lucas	1980-93
Cpl Neil MacKellar	1958-67
SSgt David Marchment	1977-00
SSgt Mick Dowds	1973-date
Sig Sam Sahota	1972-78
WO2 Martin Abraham	1983-date
Sig Richard Connelly	1990-96
Cpl Steve Slimm	1976-84
WO2 Mick Fitzpatrick	1977-99
WO2 Richard Buxton	1983-95
WO1 Paul Gardner	1980-05
WO2 Steve Behan	1980-05
SSgt Steve Reeve	1975-99
Maj David Smith	1951-75
LCpl John McGovern	1980-date
Cpl J L Hannen	1955-57
Sgt Troy Burrows	1988-98
Lt Melville Whitworth	1939-46
Cpl Ged Halliday	1981-05
LCpl Bernard Randall	1966-77
WO2 Tom Hannon	1969-92
Cpl Neil Beament	1979-93
LCpl Kieron Yates	1981-87
Sgt Dave Knapman	1983-05
Cpl Ian Shackleton	1988-99
LCpl Debbie Horton	1980-86
Cpl David Tresidder	1969-79
Sig Stephen Murray	1988-99
LCpl Michael Roberts	1988-99
Cpl Mark White	1972-96
Cpl Malcolm Peplow	1945-56
Maj Ian Parry	1970-05
Maj Brian Dalton	1969-05
Capt Gary Tomlinson	1979-05
Lt Col Richard Wilson	1981-05
Sig Rex Walsh	1987-91
Sgt David Haseltine	1949-56
Sig David Mustoe	1983-93
Sgt Chris Abbott	1961-76
Sgt John Guy	1981-05
LCpl Wayne Bennett	1993-99
Cpl Bob Porter	1976-00
Sgt Andy Sargeant	1983-05
SSgt Brummie Perks	1982-05
Cpl Calvin Hewitt	1976-03
Cpl Andy Clarke	1985-97
Cpl Ian Pike	1992-date
Sig Scott Whiting	1995-98
Sig James Sawyer	1940-46
Sig Stuart James	1946-48
Cpl Peter Fearn	1979-95
Cpl Jimmy Hayes	1976-90
LCpl Dave Henderson	2004-date
LCpl David Francis	1967-78
Cpl Stuart McCrone	1996-date
Sig David Preston	1962-65
Cpl Gerald Gudgin	1944-47
Sgt Teri-Sue Lees	1983-05
SSgt Mike Davison	1962-84
Dvr Bill Tancock	1939-44
Sig John Griffin	1964-74
LCpl Marion Stewart	1966-69
Cpl Steve Royston	1979-95
Capt Dougie Eaglesham	1980-05
Capt Lucy Ritchie	1998-05
LCpl Chris Nocetti	1970-82
Sig John Green	1956-59
2Lt Sam Osei-Agyemang	2004-date
Sgt Karl Duncan	1981-05
Cpl Anton Jones	1997-05
LCpl Grant Mockett	1994-05
Sgt Clare Waldron	1993-date
Sig Peter Watson	1987-95
WO1 Geoff Grover	1961-86
WO2 John Drake	1963-88
Cpl Richard Brown	1962-78
WO2 Gordon McGee	1939-47
Cpl Robert Cleghorn	1986-05
Sig Paul Robinson	1999-05
WO1 Russ Batley	1981-05
Sgt Barrie Walker	1970-93

DONATIONS

Lt Col (Retd) KJ West	£100.00
Arthur Thomas, in memory of **Capt Leslie Virgin**	£10.00
Rev Peter Riley	£10.00
Ron Larby, in memory of **Bill Higgs**	£10.00
In memory of **Mr Alan Whittington**,	£1,419.00 + $50.00
Cotswolds Branch	£30.00
Donations in memory of **Mr Roy Williams**	£395.00
Mrs Olive Corfield	£15.00
Rotherham Branch	£50.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Eric Walker	£25.00
West London Branch	£25.00
Maj (Retd) D Henry MBE, in memory of **Capt Gordon Park**	£25.00
Sgts' Mess 21 Sig Regt (AS)	£39.00
Lt Col (Retd) D P Herring	£25.00
Certa Cito Lodge L8925	£500.00
Mrs S D Jarvis, in memory of **Mr Alan Whittington**	£100.00
Bedford Branch	£50.00
Capt Alison Schofield, in memory of **Lt Joy Traynor** and **Capt John Fisher**	£25.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

In April, our AGM followed our Spring Luncheon, which took place in the Garrison Sgts Mess through the good offices of **Joe Fairbairn**, the Garrison Sgt Major. It was well attended, and the sun shone, so that after lunch we were able to retire to the garden to hold the meeting.

Our Quiz Might held in May, has become a legendary event, one to which we welcome the serving Corps, neighbouring Branches, and many friends who give us their support. This year was remarked upon as being our 'best ever,' which is commendation indeed. The Quiz Master, **Neville Lyons**, did a splendid job formulating the Quiz, mustering his troops throughout the evening, and keeping them in good order. These included **Noel Moss**, our Chairman, **Edelgard Moss**, **Carole Thomas** and members of the Committee. Not the least of these was **Ian Ronald**, who gave our guests a resume of the Ghurkha Welfare Trust, in aid of which the Raffle was held. **Ian** had produced a magnificent glass kukri, containing a considerable quantity of the hard stuff. This was won by a serving member. **Chris Endean**, our Membership Secretary headed the team that won the Quiz, the runners up being a team from the Sqns.

Our thanks go to **Joe Fairbairn**, for hosting the event in his Mess, and for the excellent buffet they produced for us. **Mike Wilson**, our Deputy Chairman, ran the Raffle, and our thanks go to **Ian Ronald's** appraisal for our guests of the Ghurkha Welfare Trust. The princely sum of £130 was raised for this charity.

On a fine day in June, a small party gathered for an informal lunch at *The Bat and Ball*, a pleasant hostelry situated in a rustic setting in the deepest environs of Farnham. The party was organised by **Mary Pagan**, and we were delighted to have with us **Eileen Murray**, **Joan Collyer** and **Joan Boyle**, all Associate Members of our Branch. **Mary** did a grand job not withstanding having her arm in a sling, having been incapacitated by an accident a few weeks before.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Allibone**
Secretary **Phil west**

The Branch continues to hold coffee mornings at a Brighton hotel to cater particularly for those members who are unable to attend evening meetings, and the first of these was in April. Naturally, the talk tends to be more about remembered highlights from the past than plans for the future.

In May we had the annual quiz night, when the Branch challenges the Tp. This year, it is a pleasure to be able to record that, after a long string of defeats, the Branch won. Some comments were heard regarding the relative numbers present, but the quizmaster overruled these.

Later in the month, we had a very successful Sunday outing to the Amberley Chalk Pit Museum, where we enjoyed a buffet lunch, and afterwards members and families visited the various exhibits. Younger members seemed to enjoy the narrow gauge railway, whilst older members explained how to operate the 11 and 22 sets on display

Finally, we include the latest poem by our resident laureate, **Ken Brown**, which he wrote to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the ending of WW2.

The Signals of Thirty-Three Corps - *by Ken Brown*

When you sit in your chair by the fireside,
When you're home from the office or job,
Does your mind ever wander to countries out yonder
Where you soldiered on in ' The Mob'?
Perhaps it is only but seldom
Your thoughts may chance idly to roam
To those days, long before, spent in Thirty-Three Corps,
When a Chevrolet truck was your home.

Home, they say, is the place where the heart is,
And our hearts travelled over the earth,
As we trod 'terra firma', from Mid-East to Burma,
Many miles from the land of our birth.
The 'homes' that we lived in were legion,
On our way from UK to Rangoon,
From the back of a truck to a hole in the muck;
Rather damp in the annual monsoon!

Lines we laid covered miles by the thousand,
And so did our DRs, of course;
Ops, Wireless and Line tapped away, rain or shine,
And filled up the ether with Morse.
Our signals, encoded by Ciphers,
The Tele-Ops typed on the wires,
Whilst electric distresses were fixed by ESs
And IMs with Meggers and pliers.

With all of our heavy equipment
There was no telling where we might be,
Without Transport: our Drivers were truly no 'skivers'
And nor were the staunch LAD.
When you think of those days in 'The Uniform'
Those days now remote as a dream,
We owed our success to one thing, I guess;
We worked as a tightly knit team.

From the Colonel and Company Commanders,
The Majors, and Captains, and Lieutenants,
And well to the fore, the Tiger of yore
With Sam Browne and highly-shone boots;
To the WOs, Sergeants and Corporals
And the Signalmen, every one,
We worked side by side with a feeling of pride
In getting 'the job to do' – done.

So, whether you'd pips on your shoulder
Or if you were one of the ranks,
One thing can he said for those days that are dead
They gave us a reason for thanks.
Thanks for all of our friends of the present,
Thanks for all of the friends gone before.
And thanks for the tether that binds us together
The Signals of Thirty-Three Corps!

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

In April we had our annual AGM, and there were a couple of changes on our Committee that are worth noting. **Barry Greenwood** decided to step down as Secretary and stand for the Vice Chairman position, with **Alan Turner** taking the Secretary position and also keeping the Branch Information Manager position. With 44 Members attending this meeting, it seemed a good time to have a Branch photo, with **Brian Streetly** bringing his digital camera with him to do the honours. Our full Committee positions, the Branch photo and future events, can all be found on our website at.

Before moving on, we should note that during **Barry Greenwood's** period as Secretary over the last 10 years, the Branch has gone from having less than 20 Members turning up regularly for meetings, to the current times where around 30 to 40+ regularly turn up for the meetings. A lot of this is down to hard work put in by **Barry**, who will of course continue to contribute in his new position as Vice Chairman.

In May, we had a flurry of activities, starting with the Freedom Parade through the Borough of Redbridge to mark the VE Day celebrations on 8 May. We were especially pleased that the Corps Band was there to provide the music and keep us all in step (well most of us anyway!). We were also delighted that two Royal Signals badged Chelsea Pensioners join us for this and the rest of the day. After the march, there was a Church Service and this was followed by a Fun Day at the TAC in Ilford where we were wined, dined and entertained by activities organised by 36 Sig Regt. There was more music from the Corps Band, and an Iraq Medal presentation for a number of TA Soldiers by the Mayor of Redbridge. All in all, it was a delightful day, with the weather, although threatening at times, holding fine to make it all the more enjoyable.

The Mayor of Redbridge, **Cllr Arthur Leggatt**, in recognition that the Branch had made a splendid effort in having over 30 members marching on the parade, presented our Chairman, **Paul Burton** with free tickets to distribute for an ENSA style concert that was being performed a few days later at the Kenneth More Theatre in Ilford. This was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. At our Branch meeting in May, we had guest speaker **John Harris** from undertakers T Cribb and Sons.

While 'Funerals from 16th Century England through to current times' might seem a morbid subject, nevertheless, we were fascinated as **John** talked as through the changes that have happened through the years right up to the present day, where horse-drawn hearses are making a comeback. Judging by the number of questions fielded by **John** after the presentation, it was much enjoyed by our Members.

As we wrap up these notes, a large contingent of our Members are preparing to visit Blandford at the end of June for the Annual Reunion, an event which is always greatly looked forward to. There are also further events locally that we will be attending to mark the Official VE/VJ celebrations in July, and also separate VJ observance in August.

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, Ilford at 20.00hrs on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

The Branch AGM was held on 17 May, with the Branch President, **Lt Col AS Petrie** as Chairman. 29 Members and 6 Associate Members were in attendance. After addressing the Members, the President went on to thank the CO and soldiers of 32 Sig Regt for their support and cooperation. He also thanked the Branch Committee, Members and friends for their efforts and support, in arranging and attending the variety of functions throughout the year, including Burns Supper, the visit to Millport, and the Annual Dinner Dance. He also mentioned the festival of events to be held in Falkirk, and said that booklets giving details were available for those attending. The Parade is organised by Royal Signals, and is supported by the President of the Association, the Master of Signals. He wished to see plenty of Signals Cap badges on show.

GUERNSEY BRANCH

Chairman **Alec Forty**
Secretary **Eric Le Quesne**

The Guernsey Branch held its annual Dinner to celebrate the Liberation of Guernsey from German Occupation in very special circumstances this year. It was the 60th anniversary of the Liberation, and we were privileged to have HE the Lt Governor of Guernsey, **Lt Gen Sir John Foley KCB OBE MC** and **Lady Foley** as our Guest of Honour.

Sir John was Maj Gen Bde of Ghurkhas when he served as Comd British Forces Hong Kong, and our Branch Vice Chairman, **Peter Buchanan**, who served with the Ghurkhas, had arranged for **Sgt Narendra Gurung** of 30 Sig Regt to attend in full Ghurkha dress uniform to entertain the large number of diners with stirring pipe music. This was followed by a traditional military ceremony between **Narendra** and Branch Chairman, **Alec Forty**, in which they both drank a tot from a silver quaiche.

HE the Lt Governor of Guernsey, Lt Gen Sir John Foley KCB OBE MC thanks Sgt Narendra Gurung for his performance

In his speech, **Alec** summarised **Sir John's** exceptional military career, with particular reference to his service with the SAS Regt, and he also welcomed guests, who included the Lt Governor's Secretary, **Col Richard Graham** late PWRR, and his wife, **Ruby**; **Col Andrew Carter**, former RSA Regimental Secretary, and his wife, **Debbie**; and a strong contingent from the Beverly Ex-Boys Association, one of whom had travelled from Australia for the occasion. By one of life's remarkable coincidences, the **Grahams** and **Carters** had at one time been neighbours during service abroad, and to find themselves sitting together at our function added to their enjoyment of the evening.

Alec worked the required amount of humour into his short speech, and concluded by thanking Branch Officers, **David Bichard** and **Eric Le Quesne** for the hard work they had put into making the event a success. He followed this by presenting a pair of whisky glasses inscribed with the Royal Signals insignia to His Excellency, who assured him that they would be put to good use! Committee Member **Judy Cobb**, whose husband, **Jim** served in the Corps, presented a beautiful bouquet she had created in Royal Signals colours to **Lady Foley**.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Secretary **WO2 (YofS) I Wolfe**

At our May Branch meeting the Branch President, **Maj (Retd) RN Johnston**, reminded the meeting that come next March, the Branch will have been in existence for 50 years, and we must not let it pass without celebrating it in some tangible way. He also suggested that we should consider the dedication of the new Standard (which we would hope to have by then) to be included in the celebrations. As a result a sub Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Branch Vice Chairman **Jack Donaldson** to bring forward to the Branch various proposals for consideration. Although the Branch will be publishing the final arrangements later in the year, if anyone out there was a NI Branch Member in the early days, and who might like to be involved in these activities do contact **Ian Wolfe**, Branch Secretary.

Belfast City Council will be organising (with the help of the Royal British Legion) a dinner in Belfast City Hall in August 2005 to celebrate the ending of WW2. WW2 Veterans are invited. On contacting all of our WW2 members, only three, **Ernie Mansell**, **Arthur Atkins** and **John McMahon**, were available to attend.

As always, we issue an invitation to all serving and ex members of Royal Signals, regular or TAVR to join us at Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col(Retd) Hugh Nealon**

In late April, eight of us set out by coach for a tour in the North of England, a new venture, which proved to be a great success. Our hotel was close to Darlington. and had been something of a stately home in its day, complete with resident ghost. Personally. I believe I encountered the ghost twice, but the other seven very wisely decided to take no notice. During our tour, we visited the famous Beamish Open Air Museum, the City of Durham, Wensleydale and the very unusual Bowes Museum.

Despite rather long hours in the coach, I believe that everyone would like to do another tour, so congratulations to all concerned on being the very best of company.

Meanwhile, the rest of us have got on with the regular Branch activities, including a skittles evening, the quarterly Branch gathering and a POGs lunch (**Pauline's** Old Geezers/Gals/Guys). We also had representatives at the RSA AGM, in London, which was most informative; and teams in the Aldershot Branch Annual Quiz, where unfortunately neither of our teams were placed. We would like to record our congratulations and thanks to Aldershot Branch on organising the event, and also to Aldershot Garrison Sgts' Mess, whose chefs produced such a superb curry supper.

Our Standard Bearer, **John Mumford**, hasn't been heard of for a while. We know he made it to Falkirk in time for their WW2 Commemorative Parade at the end of May, and we can only trust that he made it home safely. **John** is going to have a very busy time during the rest of this summer and the WW2 Anniversary celebrations. He will be defending his title in the Standard Bearers Competition at the Blandford Reunion, followed by a Commemorative Service in Reading on 3 July, and the National Commemorative Day in London the week after. So he will be missing from home for three weekends in a row, but no doubt he will be able to talk his way around that. **John** always does us proud when he is on parade, and we look forward to supporting him at Blandford and at the various commemorative events

In the meantime the regular Branch programme goes on apace, and if any one would like to join in our activities, details can be found by following the links on the RSA website.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

In May, we held a very successful Annual Dinner in the Masonic Hall in Staines. This was well attended, and proved a most enjoyable evening. Our thanks go to the Committee, and all those who gave their assistance in making this so good an occasion.

Shortly before this, a number of our members joined 31 Sig Regt's party on their visit to Europe. This time it was to Ypres. We were able to witness the ceremony at the Mennen Gate, and none could help but be affected by the lingering sadness that still engenders the tragedy of the Great War. Earlier in the day, we had enjoyed an excellent lunch at *Old Tom's* in the market place, and in the many light moments on the trip, a good time was had by all.

It is with sadness that we report the deaths of **Bill Hicks** and **Douglas Bower**. Both were staunch supporters of the Branch. **Lilian** always attended our meeting with **Doug**, and in extending our sympathy, we must say how pleased we are to have her still attend as one of our Associate Members.

THE AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Dr David Vickers**
Secretary **Mr Dennis Eagan**

39 Members of the Air Formation Signal Regiments Association met at the *Corus Hotel*, Solihull, on Saturday, 7 May, for their 12th Annual Reunion and AGM. The hotel, a new one for us, proved eminently suitable for our purpose, with a large area to meet and greet, a quiet room with its own bar for us to take dinner and clean, and well appointed, bedrooms. It was a pity that only two Members had brought their swimming costumes to take advantage of the leisure facilities!

Chairman, **David Vickers**, who had found the hotel, welcomed those present, noting that rugby at Twickenham and VE Day celebrations had resulted in an exceptionally large number of apologies. He particularly welcomed **Shirley Cheshir**, a very brave lady to travel from New Zealand to take dinner with 38 total strangers! She shared with us a photograph of her husband, **Tony**, who had died in April last year, just 14 days after joining the Association.

Association Chaplain, **Rev Jim McManus**, blessed the Book of Remembrance created by **Arthur Smith**, and presented to the Association by him and Colin **Morgan**. He continued by listing those Members who had passed on since our last reunion, and then said an exceptionally appropriate Grace.

After dinner, **Maj Jim Lambert** gave members an account of 21 Sig Regt's activities over the past, year highlighting the continued involvement in Iraq, where luckily, the Regt has suffered no serious casualties. He mentioned exercise deployments to such exotic locations as the Antarctic, Norway, Cyprus and Morocco, and also listed the Regt's sporting successes in Athletics, Football, Rugby and Shooting. He said that it was very unlikely that the Regt will be able to host open days in the future, as the cost of insurance is now prohibitively high.

Lt Col Pat Soward thanked **Jim** for his comprehensive report, and went on to thank the hotel staff for the excellent meal, efficiently and promptly served and for the cheerful manner in which the staff had met our requirements. He thanked all the Committee Members in turn, for their efforts throughout the year, mentioning especially **Paul Quinn**, who had to relinquish the post of Newsletter Editor due to failing eyesight, and **Harry Waugh**, who has offered to assume this task. He pointed out that in an Association as widespread as ours, the newsletter is the lifeblood of the Association.

Chairman, **David Vickers**, expressed pleasure at the growing membership (an active membership, including widows, of 293) and the hard work of all the Committee members. The Meeting carried unanimously, a proposal by **Lt Col Pat Soward** that membership of the Association be opened to Air Support Signallers (The Red Hand Gang), who no longer have their own reunion association. This will allow membership to all members of 21 Sig Regt, regardless of when they served.

After a leisurely and generous breakfast, most members headed for home, but ten drove north to the National Memorial Arboretum where, between showers, **Rev Jim McManus** held a short service at the Air Formation Signals Crescent in quiet commemoration of the 60th anniversary of VE Day. His appropriate readings were from Psalm I, verse 13, and Revelations 22, verses 1 and 2. The latter refers to the 'Healing of Nations', a theme adopted as the ethos of the Arboretum.

The Committee, Colin Morgan, Chris Collier, Pam Morgan, Marion Collier, Maj Butch Maycock (2IC 21 Sig Regt (AS), Dennis Egan

254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

Friday, 18 March, and the first exboys and their wives started to arrive at the *Upland Park Hotel*, Droxford, before lunch - and in good time for dinner! This year, **Joan Cropper**, **Jo Martin** and **Ron Shuttleworth** reported sick, **Nick Nichols, Carole** and **Iris Emerson** were on holiday and business matters prevented others from attending, so only 34 sat down for dinner.

Newcomers to Droxford were **Frank** and **Hazel Sidey**, and **Ken Wood** was accompanied by **Joan** a charming and very brave lady to take dinner with so many strangers!

In his welcoming remarks, **Pat Soward** spoke of **Ken Wood's** daughter **Carol**, who had charmed us on previous occasions with her youthful exuberance and zest for life, and who should have joined us on this occasion, but who had cruelly been taken from us. Our condolences to **Ken**, on this second sad loss.

On parade for the first time was the recently acquired Catterick Old Boys Association RSA Standard, which presided over the proceedings. It was brought along by **Brian Fisher**, but it took a TOT to borrow a hammer and screwdriver to put it all together! Sharp eyed senior boy **Ron Gillman** thought that **Jimmy** was facing the wrong way but close inspection showed that he faced the hoist on both sides as in collar dogs!

The Catterick Old Boys Association Standard

Mine host, ex-RSM Boy (Harrogate) **Brian Lay**, was, in fact, on holiday (very wise perhaps), but his team looked after us in the manner that we have come to expect. As always, a wide-ranging menu with something for everyone including **George Severs'** favourite dish, pheasant. No question of 'one size fits all' here!

George and **Margaret Severs** were delighted to find that they had been allocated the bridal suite. A leisurely breakfast was followed by equally leisurely goodbyes and 'See you at Derby.'

The next Droxford Dinner has been arranged for Friday, 17 March 2006. Any member who would like to attend is asked to contact **Pat Soward** 01258 860647 and ask to be put on his mailing list.

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

Chairman **John Seymour**
Secretary **Geoff Scott**

Over the weekend 29 April to 2 May 2005, around 40 members from 260 Sig Sqn (SAM) Assn along with their partners held their Annual Reunion in Loughborough.

This year took in the laying up of the old Standard and the dedication of the new Standard at All Saints Church, Loughborough, the service being conducted by **Rev Derek Major Buxton**.

Our guests this year were **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and **Mrs Boyle**, who after attending the Service joined in the fun and comradeship that goes into making a Reunion a weekend to remember. Members had travelled from as far a field as Saudi

After the Church Service

Arabia, Cyprus, Germany, Holland and Belgium - not forgetting Scotland. Next year's Reunion will be at the new venue of Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Leicester 28-30 April.

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

This has been a busy period for some of the Beverley Ex-Boys. On 4 May **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** took a party of 15 members over to Guernsey on the Condor ferry from Poole. We were lucky enough to have been invited to attend the Dinner to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Guernsey from Occupying Forces on 9 May 1945, which was being held by Guernsey Branch on 5 May at La Villette Hotel. The Guests of Honour were HE the Lt Governor, **Lt Gen Sir John** and **Lady Foley**. It was also very pleasant to meet **Col Andrew Carter** and his wife, **Debbie**, again. One of our members, **Peter Harris**, and his wife, **Julie**, had travelled all the way from Australia to attend the Liberation Day celebrations in Jersey, and they flew over to Guernsey especially for the Dinner. A surprise of the evening was entertainment by a piper from Queens Gurkha Signals. It was an excellent evening, and we would like to thank two ex-boys, **Eric Le Quesne** and **Dave Bichard** for all their hard work in organising the event.

We all enjoyed the many events put on by the people of Guernsey for Liberation Day, and the sun shone all the week we were there. At one event, a collection of veteran British and American vehicles, all in beautifully restored condition, were displayed. On 9 May, Liberation Day, **Her Majesty the Queen** dedicated a memorial to the 60th Anniversary of Liberation Day, and then drove along the route of the Parade, where hundreds of people were waiting. The Parade included marching bands, samba dancers, the World War 2 military vehicles, and a seemingly endless display of Rolls Royce cars. There then followed a cavalcade, with many floats depicting life during the occupation. Everyone was either in period costume or the military uniforms of the day. The day concluded with a magnificent firework display.

Earlier in the year, we received details of the Falkirk weekend, so informed members in both Scotland and the north of England, and as a result, a number of people turned up for the event. On Saturday, 21 May, we attended the RSA in Scotland Victory Day Dinner Dance at the Cladhan Hotel. The Guests of Honour were the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and **Lady Cowan**, together with **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and his wife, **Ann**, **Brig John Thomas MBE ADC** and the Padre, **Rev Peter Clemett** and his wife. It was a very enjoyable evening, with plenty of laughter and dancing to a good band. **Jill Daniels**, a singer dressed in ATS uniform sang the old wartime songs and everyone joined in. Sunday, dawned wet and miserable, and those people who attended the wreath laying

Mary Wardle, Adelaide and Dick Hurel, John Wardle, Tony Hull, Julie and Peter Harris outside Hotel Hougue du Pommier, Guernsey

Service, arrived back at the hotel drenched to the skin. Coaches had been laid on to convey people from the hotel to the various events, but the Parade had to be cancelled and the Drumhead Service was held in the school hall, conducted by **Rev Peter Clemmet**. Then everyone was conveyed back to the hotel for lunch. The veterans were given tickets for a barge trip in the afternoon, but we went back to **Roy Lawson's** house at Lochore, where we stayed the night with him and **Isobel**, and were taken out to a very good Scottish high tea. We thank **Roy** and **Isobel** for their hospitality.

We welcome the following new members: **Ray Streeton** from New Zealand, **Dave Patch** from Guernsey, and **Tony Coleman** and **Mike Ellis**. We are very sorry to announce the death of **Bernard Welch** in South Africa on 21 April, and we extend our deepest sympathies to his widow, **Gail**.

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS ROYAL SIGNALS HEAD OF PUBLICATIONS

Applications are invited for the post of Head of Publications in Regimental Headquarters Royal Signals, which will become vacant in February 2006 on the retirement of the current incumbent.

Based in Blandford, Dorset, the Head of Publications' primary responsibility is the production and editorship of *The WIRE*, a well established, bimonthly magazine for serving and retired members of the Royal Corps of Signals. He/she also oversees the production of other, occasional Corps publications, and provides advice on publishing matters to the Regimental Colonel. Although largely office based, some travel will be involved when visiting Royal Signals Units, or Branches of the Regimental Association.

The successful applicant must be able to demonstrate excellent writing and editorial skills, though previous experience and formal qualifications in publishing are not essential. The ability to communicate effectively, and work with a broad range of serving and retired members of the Corps will be essential, as will a sense for what constitutes good design and publication layout. Good IT and photographic skills are also important. A comprehensive training programme will be provided and tailored to meet the needs of the individual appointed to the post. A military background, whilst not essential, is likely to be advantageous in allowing the successful applicant to demonstrate an understanding of Service ethos and Army life. The salary available for the appointment will be in the range £21K-£25K pa, dependant upon the suitability of the applicant. Travel expenses are also payable.

Anyone wishing to apply for the appointment or seeking further information should contact the Regimental Colonel, **Colonel John Ewbank**, on 01258 482076 or by emailing rhq@royalsignals.mod.uk

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

MONTE CASSINO ANNIVERSARY

– by Jane Knight

In May 05, whilst attending a ceremony at the Monte Cassino War Cemetery to mark the Anniversary of the Battle, I laid a wreath on behalf of the Master of Signals and the Corps.

I had already laid a wreath on the 60th Anniversary (2004), but to my embarrassment, the Warrant Officer in Latina who took the photographs, informed me that they 'had not come out.' So here I was, laying a wreath at this year's Ceremony to atone for last year's unfortunate omission.

Col James Aldous OBE, latterly CO of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, came to my aid to produce the photo below. The inscription on the wreath read: 'From the Master of Signals and all ranks Serving and Retired.'

Jane Knight about to lay the wreath at Monte Cassino on behalf of the Corps

GOLDEN ARROW

- by Ron Weldon

During WW2 I was a member of a Golden Arrow High Speed Mobile Section. Including drivers, cook, electricians and operators, we totalled about 23. We served in the Far East, shared letters, food parcels etc, and became very bonded. After demobilisation we kept in contact.

Some 27 years ago, one of our group suggested to me that we should have a reunion, and it fell to me to organise it. To my great delight and surprise, they came from everywhere (one even from Canada), and the event was a success - and it has been so every year since.

On occasions, we invite guests who can contribute to the festivities. Our most recent get together was on Tuesday 7 June, and we had invited **Sir Norman Wisdom OBE** (ex Royal Signals), but unfortunately he couldn't make it. But an old chum **Alec** and **Gladys Lee** had arrived from South Australia, so I

Alec Lee presents the shield from Riverton RSL

invited them to join us. **Alec** had phoned me from Australia to ask the name of our group. I responded that 'Golden Arrow' would be sufficient. This resulted in a presentation from his group, the Riverton Returned Services League, Riverton, South Australia. The presentation was a mounted shield and a framed certificate from that group.

It is interesting to note that the Riverton RSL was formed after WW1. The membership consists of mixed servicemen, widows of deceased members, and ex serving ladies. The membership is around 45-50, and they meet monthly in the afternoons. I have complete confidence that our newly-found relationship will continue. It may be of interest to your readership that there are links to be made.

THE PAIN AND THE PRIDE

- from Glasgow RSA Branch

The men and women of Erskine know the sacrifice of war, yet rarely do they talk of the horrors. Instead, they delight in the memories of comradeship. Many are unassuming, even unwilling heroes who consider the maelstrom they were caught up in was simply a case of doing their duty. One of these is **Jim Shields**.

Jim Shields with his treasured portrait

'I had to be a bit of a rogue,' says **Jim**, a former Lt QM in 5 Scottish Inf Div Signals. He was responsible for vital equipt being where and when his comrades needed it. 'If those in the thick of the action had a problem with their radio, either because it had broken down or been blown up, then I had to get them replacement equipt to keep their comms open. If that meant begging, stealing or borrowing from one unit to get it to our boys in the front line, then that is what I did. Their need was much greater.'

Jim, aged 95 years, can recall his service from 1939 to 1945 as if it was yesterday. In the Normandy Campaign, which changed the course of WW2 and our history, he landed at Juno Beach, and saw action in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. One of his most treasured possessions is a portrait drawing done by a comrade, which has pride of place in his room. 'My friend, **Capt Bill Tonner**, who was a teacher at Glasgow School of Art, drew that of me while we waited in camp to go into battle.' **Jim's** eyes show both pain and pride as he ads: 'I never saw **Bill** again, and later heard he had been killed in action. But I treasure his drawing and will never forget him.'

CORRESPONDENCE

INFORMATION WANTED BRITISH ARMY MUSICIANS

From: **Stephen Mason**
International Military Music Society UK
82, Southwell Road
Camberwell
London
SE5 9PG
Email: Masonste@yahoo.com

Dear Sir

I have been asked by the UK Branch of the International Military Music Society to collate details of British Army musicians who died on active service, or were awarded decorations. The aim is to publish this information to coincide with the 150th Anniversary of the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, in 2007.

I would therefore ask if any of your readers know of such musicians that they let me have their details. One problem I have is that the rank shown on Casualty Records/ Medal Rolls or the *London Gazette* lists them as Pte, Cpl or Sgt, with no link to their band role. So it would help me considerably if I can have details of name, rank, band and casualty/award, together with the source of your information.

Please note that, given the nature of my task, I am looking for details of musicians serving in only established Bn, Regt or Corps bands; unfortunately, I am excluding drummers, buglers and pipers. But I am including former band boys, who progressed to Regimental duty.

Yours...

REUNIONS

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH 50th ANNIVERSARY

In March 2006, the Northern Ireland Branch will be holding an event to mark their 50th Anniversary. They are particularly interested in contacting past Members.

Anyone who was a Member of the NI Branch in past years, and who wishes to be involved, are invited to contact their Secretary, **Ian Wolfe** C/- 66 Sqn, 40 Sig Regt (V) BFPO 806, or email ianwolfe@ntlworld.com

MALTA LIBYA CLUB

The Malta Libya Club will hold their Reunion on 2/3 September 2005 at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Loughborough.

Hurry up or you will miss a wonderful informal weekend with gala dinner and live music on Saturday. Wives and partners welcomed.

To book, telephone **Roy Andrews** on 01227 264551, or email him on roypat.andrews@ic12.net

60s 16ers REUNION CLUB

Our next Reunion takes place at the end of October this year. The location is the Ramada Hotel, Loughborough.

We already have 100 people booked for the weekend of gossip, fun and a few drinks.

We are still keen to recruit new members to our Club, so if you were with 16 Sig Regt during the 1960's please contact:

Chris (Bud) Abbott
Tel: 07768 266984
Email: chrisabbo@breathemail.net, or
Gordon Harper (REME) on 01302 844246.

P.S. Does anyone know the whereabouts of **Maureen Denmead** who was at 16 Sig Regt in 1967 and later married a chap called **Lofty**.

LANGELEBEN REUNION

The 12th AGM and Reunion took place over the weekend 27-29 May 05. 85 members and guests assembled at our favourite venue the *Königshof Hotel* in Königslutter Germany, many travelling by various means from all over the UK, and some from farther afield, e.g. Canada, Bahamas, Prague and Spain.

The weather was glorious, and all three days found temperatures reaching the eighties.

On the first night, the hotel laid on a barbecue/buffet for all the guests and old and new friends established and re-established friendships.

The AGM on the Saturday morning attended by 51 members, turned out to be a very hot affair because of the high temperature. Blazers and ties where soon abandoned when shirtsleeve order was suggested by our President, **Maj Gen Peter Baldwin**.

The local press, sensing a scoop, attended the AGM and reported our activities in the local newspaper, giving us a half page spread with photograph that appeared in the *Braunschweiger Zeitung* on the Monday.

The buffet/dance on the Saturday evening followed the pattern of previous years, wonderful food, lots of drink, and a great band that carried on playing until 02.45 hrs on the Sunday morning.

On the Sunday, after a late brunch, 42 of us where ferried to the town shooting club in Luttersprings, where on the invitation of the Schutzengilde, we all entered a shooting competition.

The club had generously donated three trophies to be presented to the top three marksmen, adding to the cup already donated by the Bürgermeister, to be presented to the best woman shot. We shot on a 50-metre range with small-bore ammunition at a 10cm x 10cm target.

The rifles were hair triggered (no first pressure), and after three practice shots, we acquitted ourselves very well, the top marksman winning with 34 points out of a possible 50.

The Annie Oakley Cup for women was won by **Elsie Armstrong**, with a commendable score of 27 points. The afternoon was a great success and made up for the disappointment of missing the Shutzenfest, which this year had been moved to the end of September.

On the Monday, most of the members and guests returned home. The lucky ones stayed to do their own thing, most exploring the Harz Mountains, or checking up on Berlin and the old Eastern sector. All together, another great reunion. We cannot wait to see you all again in Loughborough next year.

LAST POST

Alden - Maj MJM Alden	*Served* 1963/89	*Died* 10/06/05
Allan - Cpl JW Allan	*Served* 1992/96	*Died* 31/05/05
Baker - WO1 F Baker	*Served 1927/56*	*Died* 03/04/05
Bland - Capt TA Bland	*Served* 1954/67	*Died* ??/??/99
Bower - Sgt D Bower	*Served* 1946/71	*Died* 05/05/05
Briggs - WO2 GW Briggs	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/??/03
Bright - Sig JS Bright	*Served* 1939/45	*Died* 07/03/05
Bristow - Maj SA Bristow	*Served* 1928/67	*Died* ??/03/05
Brown - Capt D Brown	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 13/05/05
Caird - Sgt JG Caird	*Served* 1946/55	*Died* ??/03/05
Cairns - Capt G Cairns	*Served* ????/??	*Died* ??/06/05
Campbell - Maj PL Campbell	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* ??/??/02
Corris - SSgt JW Corris	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/03/04
Davis - Maj REC Davis	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 25/02/05
Dawes - Sgt EH Dawes	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 10/03/05
Dixon - Capt PV Dixon	*Served* 1946/76	*Died* 22/05/05
Duddell - SSgt PJ Duddell	*Served* 1972/94	*Died* ??/10/04
Eagleton - Cpl RE Eagleton	*Served* 1953/55	*Died* ??/02/05
Eaton - Sig H Eaton	*Served* 1950/52	*Died* 15/03/05
Edwards - Sig EW Edwards	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* ??/03/05
Elson - Sig JF Elson	*Served* 1945/52	*Died* 19/02/05
Firth - Cpl E Firth	*Served* WW2	*Died* 02/04/05
Franklin - Sgt CH Franklin	*Served* 1939/45	*Died* ??/11/99
Frost - Maj EM Frost	*Served* 1944/80	*Died* 14/03/05
Gibson - Sig VB Gibson	*Served* 1937/46	*Died* ??/06/05
Halsey - Lt Col SP Halsey	*Served* 1942/79	*Died* ??/??/04
Harty - Cpl MJ Harty	*Served* 1950/52	*Died* 11/04/05
Hathway - Sig EJ Hathway	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 04/06/04
Hopwood - Sgt RK Hopwood	*Served* 1947/72	*Died* 20/05/05
Howley - Maj WE Howley	*Served* 1939/75	*Died* 04/10/04
Hudgell - Sig FH Hudgell	*Served* 1944/47	*Died* 25/01/05
Johnstone - Capt DF Johnstone	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/03/05
Law - Cpl J Law	*Served* 1935/46	*Died* 17/09/04
Lewin - Lt Col RF Lewin	*Served* 1934/65	*Died* 13/09/04

Long - Cpl P Long	*Served* 1950/59	*Died* ??/05/05
Maclean - Sig JMR Maclean	*Served* 1946/48	*Died* ??/??/04
Manley - Cpl J Manley	*Served* 1952/61	*Died* 28/04/05
Marchant - Sgt RH Marchant	*Served* 1945/69	*Died* ??/??/04
Matthews - Maj FW Matthews	*Served* 1951/74	*Died* 25/02/05
Meehan - Maj JR Meehan	*Served* 1957/92	*Died* 13/03/05
Metson - Cpl AF Metson	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* ??/??/04
Nicholas - WO2 RJ Nicholas	*Served* 1942/56	*Died* 19/04/05
Nixon - Sgt JP Nixon	*Served* 1962/74	*Died* ??/06/05
Park - Capt G Park	*Served* 1951/87	*Died* 11/04/05
Pearce - Sig JE Pearce	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/??/04
Pearsall - WO1 RF Pearsall	*Served* 1943/69	*Died* 26/05/05
Poulter - Sgt RC Poulter	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* 12/04/05
Price - Maj Gen MD Price	*Served* 1935/70	*Died* 17/04/05
Richardson - Sig DC Richardson	*Served* 1942/46	*Died* 23/02/04
Roberts - LCpl GD Roberts	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* 05/04/05
Roberts - WO2 F Roberts	*Served* 1971/95	*Died* 21/05/05
Sadler - Sgt ER Sadler	*Served* 1964/86	*Died* 17/05/05
Salter - WO2 N Salter	*Served* 1949/71	*Died* 07/06/04
Sizeland - WO2 RG Sizeland	*Served* 1952/74	*Died* 15/04/05
Smith - Cpl G Smith	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* ??/??/04
Stewart - LCpl JA Stewart	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* 19/01/05
Stirrup - Sgt WH Stirrup	*Served* 1942/47	*Died* 11/03/05
Stock - Cpl G Stock	*Served* 1950/55	*Died* 24/07/04
Stretton - LCpl WJ Stretton	*Served* 1959/61	*Died* ??/06/04
Sweet - Sig FM Sweet	*Served* 1953/55	*Died* 12/10/04
Tait - Cpl W Tait	*Served* 1949/55	*Died* 06/04/05
Taylor - Maj LT Taylor	*Served* 1939/75	*Died* 20/05/05
Tomlin - Lt EF Tomlin	*Served* 1942/45	*Died* 20/10/04
Tompson - Sig TA Tompson	*Served* 1952/54	*Died* ??/06/04
Walker - Sig JC Walker	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* 14/03/05
Welch - Sgt BF Welch	*Served* 1950/71	*Died* 21/04/05
Whittington - Capt A Whittington	*Served* 1945/73	*Died* 03/04/05
Wiles - Sig R Wiles	*Served* 1939/59	*Died* ??/04/05
Willson - Sig DA Willson	*Served* 1946/49	*Died* 24/05/05
Wilson - Maj NG Wilson	*Served* 1940/66	*Died* 21/04/05
Winter - Sig FC Winter	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 28/11/04
Woodley - Sig LV Woodley	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* ??/03/05

OBITUARIES

LANG - Col HE Lang OBE TD (Hugh) died on 23 February 2005.

The last Honorary Colonel of 52(Lowland) Sig Regt TA, has died at the age of 79, after a distinguished military career.

Hugh Lang was born in Paisley in 1925, attended school in Stirling, and at Merchiston Castle in Edinburgh. He left school in the summer of 1942 at the age of 17 (in the middle of WW2), and went straight into the Army, joining the Royal Corps of Signals.

Hugh served in India, Burma and Malaya, and was commissioned in June 1945. Returning to Britain in 1947, he joined 52 (Lowland) Div Sig Regt TA in 1948, was promoted to Major in 1953, and went on to take comd of the Regt in December 1959.

He commanded the Regt for exactly four years, and was awarded the OBE for his services in 1963. After handing over command, he succeeded **Col T Murray Niven** as its Honorary Colonel, and continued in that capacity until the dissolution of the Regt on 31 March 1967. In 1965 he was appointed CSO 52 (L) Div/District, and served in that post until March 1967.

With the formation of the new TAVR, he was appointed the first Deputy Comd of 13 Signal Gp (Volunteers), whose HQ was in Glasgow. He continued in that capacity for two years, handing over to **Col Iain Wotherspoon** in April 1969. He subsequently was a member of the Lowlands TAVR Association, and was the Chairman of its Strathclyde Committee for several years.

On his return from wartime military service in 1947, **Hugh** went to Leeds University to study in the Leather Department, before joining the family firm of WJ and W Lang Ltd, leather manufacturers in Paisley. He became a Director of the firm in 1953, and rose to become Managing Director in 1981, a position he occupied until 1985.

He married **Elspeth Campbell** in 1952, and had three children. **Elspeth** died in 1972. Some years afterwards, **Hugh** married **Irene Breen**, who had been his senior WRAC officer in 52 (L) Sig Regt. Sadly, **Irene** died only a few months later in 1987, and thereafter **Hugh** withdrew from public life.

Hugh was a member of Ranfurly Castle and Royal Troon Golf Clubs, enjoyed sailing in the summer on the West coast of Scotland in his yacht *Trevora*, and was a member of the Royal Gourock Yacht Club. In retirement, he also devoted much of his energy to working on vintage cars, none of which, however, became roadworthy!

He is survived by his daughters **Pam** and **Libby**, and his son **James**, who has continued the family tradition by joining the leather industry.

MANNERS - Lt Joy Manners WRAC (née Traynor) died on 27 May 2005.

The accompanying photograph was taken on commissioning into the WRAC of **Joy Traynor**, then a Junior Under Officer. From there she was posted to 7 MTRAC Officers' Signals 'Q' Course which shared the old Helles Mess with Nos 3, 4 and 5 Royal Signals Subalterns' Part 2 Course, some of whom may remember her from that time. After completing her training, **Joy** was posted to 3 AA (M) Sig Regt at Edinburgh Castle, and subsequently to the Middle East, where she was Officer IC the telephone exchange at 3 GHQ Sig Regt. During the Suez campaign, she transferred with them first to Nicosia, then to Episkopi, neatly exchanging one emergency for another, that of EOKA!

On completing this tour, **Joy** was returned to UK, and it was whilst in Holding and Drafting Coy, that she met her future husband, **Malcolm**, then serving in the RAF. They happened to be on opposing sides in a tennis match.

After their marriage and on leaving the Services, the couple settled near Aldershot, and **Joy**, after becoming the mother of two children, trained as a primary school teacher. Still regarding herself as belonging to the Army, she took post at the Marlborough Lines Infant School an engagement that was to last for 19 years.

It is in this role, as **Mrs Manners**, rather than **Lt Traynor**, that she will be remembered by generations of Corps readers who passed though Aldershot with their families. **Joy** was a gifted infant teacher, whose proud and uncontested boast was that no child had ever left her care unable to read. In the light of today's statistics, this was quite an achievement!

Joy died at home, nursed devotedly by her husband **Malcolm** through the long and painful illness, which she faced uncomplainingly, and with exemplary courage. She is survived by him, their two children and five grandchildren.

CAIRNS - Capt G Cairns (George) died suddenly on 3 June 2005.

George Cairns served in Royal Signals from March 1964 till March 2001. Having become RSM of 37 Sig Regt, he retired from the Regular Army in and was appointed to a TA Commission, joining 35 Sig Regt as PSAO of 48 Sig Sqn in Sparkbrook, Birmingham. Here he served 48 Sig Sqn in his usual distinctive, dedicated and efficient manner until ill health forced him to retire from this post in March 2001.

Regimentally, **George** was also active as Officers Mess Treasurer throughout his tenure, and was renowned for his superb organisation of many Regtl functions, most notably the celebrated Council House Dinner. **George** will be sadly missed by his many friends and colleagues, and we extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, **Cath** and her family.

SADLER - Sgt Eric Sadler died on 17 March 2005 after a long illness.

Eric Rodney Sadler began his army career in 1964, training as a Special Operator. During his 22 years service with Royal Signals, **Eric** served in BAOR, Cyprus, the Far East, Bahrain, Belize and Northern Ireland. **Eric** seemed to know just about everyone in the Corps, be they Signallers or our 4 Star, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan**. On leaving Royal Signals in 1986, **Eric** joined GCHQ, where he remained employed until his untimely death.

Eric was never happier than when he was travelling to more exotic climes. Being very keen on military history, he would combine his holidays to include visits to historic battle sites. One of his ambitions was to visit all the Victoria Cross graves around the world. **Eric** lived his life to the full, and those fortunate enough to know him, could not help but to warm to this larger than life character, with his genial personality and his love of controversial topics (stirring it up).

Eric will be sadly missed by his partner **Brenda**, his adopted daughter **Claire** and his many friends throughout the world.

PARK - Capt G Park (Gordon) died on 11 April 2005.

Born at Hudswell, Richmond, North Yorkshire on 14 September 1933, **Gordon** joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1951, at the age of 17, and reached the rank of Capt, before retiring in 1987.

He trained as a Dispatch Rider, and although after 1963, it was no longer a trade, he always wanted to be known as a DR. Most of his appointments were IC DRs, MTNCO, MTO, and later as OC Army Motor Cycle Trials. **Gordon** was the last trained Dispatch Rider to leave the Corps Regular service.

He saw active service in the Suez Canal Zone, was a member of The White Helmets, served in Hong Kong during the troubles in 1967, had long periods of service in BAOR, and could speak fluent German.

He was a member of several clubs associated with Royal Signals - Dispatch Riders Club, 3 Div Sig Club, 16 Sig Regt (60's) Club and Suez Canal Zoners; he was also a Gold Badge RSA Member.

When **Gordon** left the Corps in 1987, he bought a guesthouse in Richmond, North Yorkshire, but after several years, family troubles caused him to sell up. He then met **Celia**, who became his rock, and they settled in Lincolnshire, spending the winter months in Spain and Portugal in their motorised caravan. He was happy doing what he wanted to do, until illness prevented him attending the reunions and functions that he normally attended. He sadly missed the holidays abroad with **Celia**, as they were always looking forward to the sunshine.

Celia would like to thank all the ex-Army pals who attended the funeral at the Darlington Crematorium on Wednesday 20 April 2005, and sends a big thanks to the Darlington Branch RSA, for the Standard Bearer and Guard of Honour. **Gordon** will be sadly missed in the Association and in the Clubs of which he was a member. Goodbye, mate you will be remembered. 'Yam sing!' We extend our condolences to **Celia**.

Notes by his pal for 48 years, Bill McKay

KRINKS - Cpl Henry Graham Krinks (Graham) died on 4 February 2005.

Graham Krinks was born in Salford on 27 September 1921, and was called up for Military Service on 10 April 1941, aged 19 years. After training in North Wales as a Dispatch Rider, he was sent to the Middle East via Cape Town to serve in Egypt, Palestine and Persia. In 1942 he was with 44 DR Section 2 Coy, 7 LofC Signals in Palforce, and later in 3 Coy, 10 LofC Signals in 1943 and 1944. These Units were in India Command.

Graham was described as 'a very smart man who took great pride in his appearance, a forthright person, intelligent and quick to learn, a hard worker and one who performed his duties willingly.' These qualities he still displayed during his long membership of the Southport Branch, RSA.

Graham was a founder member of the Branch, and served as a Committee Member, Chairman 1983/84 and was our President from February 2000 until he died. **Graham** was also our Standard Bearer for four years, taking part with some success in the Standard Bearer Competition each year at Blandford.

In his late twenties, and until his retirement in 1982, **Graham** worked for WH Smith and Co, and was Branch Manager of their Southport Shop. His friendly personality and approach won him a workforce of admiring, loyal and dedicated staff.

Graham married **Susan** late in life, and they had three children, **Emma**, **Rebecca** and **Robert**. **Graham** spent over a third of his adult life in retirement, and took a very active role in the raising of his young family.

His funeral Service was held at The Church of St Phillip and St Paul, Southport on 10 February 2005, followed by a committal at Southport Crematorium. The Service was conducted by **Rev Andrew Edwards**, and our Branch Padre, **Rev John Roberts** gave a eulogy on **Graham**. Branch Members provided a Guard of Honour at the Church, and afterwards, Bandsman **John Bilby** of the Corps Band sounded the Last Post and Reveille at the Crematorium, which was most moving.

Graham is survived by his wife, **Susan** and their children, **Emma**, **Rebecca** and **Robert**; his children of an earlier marriage, **Michael**, **Wendy** and **Patricia**; and his treasured sisters, **Margaret**, **Wendy** and **Sheila**. Our sympathy goes out to them all. We in Southport Branch have lost, not just our President, but a good friend - a friend of many years, who we will not forget.

ADVERTISEMENTS

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB (OFFSHORE)

AUTUMN SAIL TRAINING WEEK 3 – 9 OCTOBER 05

The Autumn Sail Training Week is always a very popular event, and places are quickly applied for. If you have never sailed before, this is an ideal opportunity to experience offshore sailing in the Solent, and even gain your Competent Crew qualification.

For those who are already Competent Crew and Day Skipper, this is the perfect opportunity to progress to qualify at the next level. Coastal Skippers will also benefit from the week, getting the opportunity to skipper those with less experience, including novice sailors.

If you are a Yachtmaster, please consider volunteering to skipper one of the yachts for the duration of the week. There are two Sail Training Weeks per year in the UK, and very often it is the same few Yachtmasters returning to give of their time.

The week is not just about sailing, there is plenty of opportunity for socialising in the evenings and a great week is always guaranteed!

If you are interested, you may obtain an Application Form or offer your services as a Skipper by contacting

Capt Elisabeth McLellan
Secretary, Offshore Sailing
Mil: 94331 3731, Civ: 01722 433731
Email: elisabeth.mclellan163@land.mod.uk

THE RED HAND GANG

Did you serve in the Red Hand Gang? In 244 Sig Sqn or perhaps in one of the earlier Air Suppt Sig Units or Close Support Bomber Controls? If so we would like to hear from you.

Members of 21 Sig Regt are eligible to join the Air Formation Signal Regiments Association (AFSRA) and this includes members of 244 Sig Sqn since it joined the Regt at Colerne in 1992. At their last AGM, members of the AFSRA voted unanimously to welcome all who served in the Red Hand Gang, at whatever time, as fellow Members.

Members of the AFSRA receive three newsletters each year and may attend the National Reunion which, next year, will be held in Solihull over the weekend of 6/7 May 06.

There are no joining fees or annual subscriptions, and more details may be obtained from the Membership Secretary,

Mr Chris Collier
32, Mason Crescent
Penn, West Midlands
WV4 4DU
Tel: 01902 338662

SERVICE TO COMMEMORATE THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO

On Sunday, 2 September 1945, an Instrument of Surrender was signed aboard *USS Missouri* moored in Tokyo Bay. This act marked the formal end to hostilities, and will be commemorated by a morning Service at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, in Staffordshire on Sunday, 4 September 2005.

19 Sig Regt Association is hosting this Service, and members of RSA Branches in the area have been invited to attend. This will be an occasion for Branch Standards to be paraded, and for wreaths to be laid. A buffet lunch will be available for those who wish to linger after the Service.

All Serving or Retired members of the Corps who live in the area, together with their spouses or partners and adult children, are cordially invited to join us.

For more details contact: **Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward**
Shipton
The Hollow
Child Okeford
Dorset
DT11 8EX
Tel: 01258 860647

A NEW AIRBORNE ASSAULT MUSEUM

A £5M appeal has been launched to relocate the current Airborne Assault Museum to a new site at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford. Already, £1,250,000 has been pledged from military sources and an active fundraising programme is underway. The need has been brought about by the redevelopment of Browning Bks, Aldershot, the historic home of the Parachute Regt, which will bring about the closure of the present Airborne Forces Museum.

The formation of 16 Air Asslt Bde and the move of many elements of Airborne Forces away from Aldershot has already prompted the need to relocate RHQ the Parachute Regt to Colchester. Consequently, it has been decided to create a new Museum on the site of the Imperial War Museum at Duxford in Cambridgeshire.

The new Museum will be more than simply a home for the heritage of Airborne Forces. *Airborne Assault Duxford* will be a new and unique military attraction, bringing to life the history and modern reality of Airborne Forces from the Second World War to the present day. Key to this will be multi-media and interactive displays of the historical collections and the heritage they represent.

Alongside will be an indoor activity centre, with demanding physical activities for all ages and abilities, containing standard equipt used in the military parachuting synthetic training programme, as used by the Parachute Regt and Airborne Forces. There will also be an outdoor activity area based on the Parachute Regt's recruitment drives, including jump towers, a death slide and 80m zip line.

Details of *Airborne Assault Duxford*, including drawings and plans, can be seen at www.airborneassault-duxford.com

Further information can be had from: **Col Mike Russell**
COS RLC
Dettingen House
The Princess Royal Bks
Deepcut
Surrey
GU16 6RW

THE FORMATION PARADE OF A NEW REGIMENT

On Thursday 23 June, 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt held their Formation Parade. In typical SF fashion, it was less formal than other Regts would have had, but very appropriate for this Unit. The Regt paraded in front of the newly installed flagpole, there were addresses by DSF and SOinC(A), the Garrison Padre delivered a short address and said both the Royal Marines and Royal Signals prayers, and to the sound of a lone piper, the Regt's new flag was raised. Then, after a group photo, everyone 'dressed down' and proceeded to the Sgts' Mess for a curry lunch. They were joined by family members and a number of retired signallers who had served as SFCs.

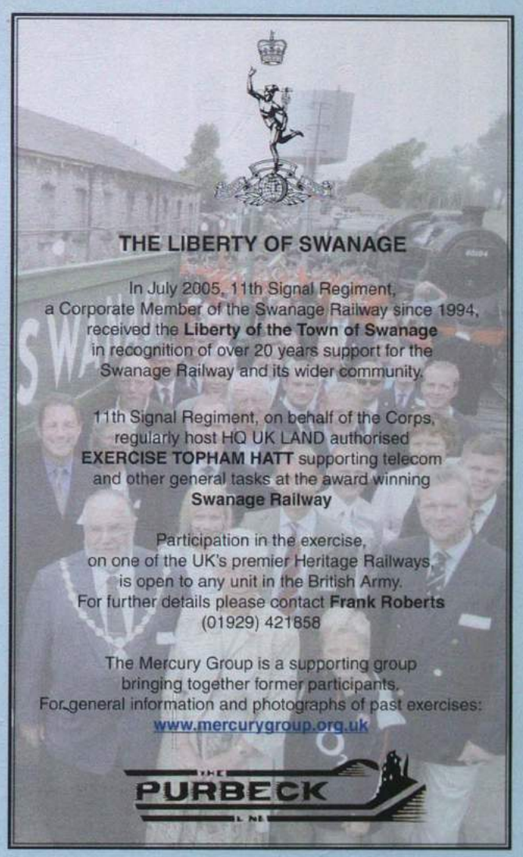
DSF reviewed how vital CIS has always been to the success of SF operations, and how Royal Signals have always delivered in this area. They are world class. He went on to thank everyone who had worked so hard on the formation of 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt, singling out the project team, the 2IC, and the 10% civilian component of the Regt. He also praised the SOinC(A) for the support he had given.

The SOinC(A) commented that SFCs operated at the sharp edge of the operational domain and frequently at the cutting edge of technology. He concluded with an apt quotation from a Commanding General in 1954: 'By your Regt men shall know you. By your loyalty, by your behaviour and by your technical skill they shall judge you as men, and measure your efficiency as soldiers.'

The Padre too, had an apt quotation, from Proverbs 13:

'A wise man with good sense is appreciated.
A treacherous man must walk a rocky road.
A wise man thinks ahead: a fool doesn't, and brags about it.
An unreliable messenger can cause much trouble.
Reliable communication permits progress.
If you refuse criticism, you will end in poverty and disgrace;
If you accept criticism, you are on the road to fame.'

On the way up! The new Regt's flag being raised



THE wire

October 2005

The Royal Corps of Signals

QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS RECEIVES THE FREEDOM OF BLANDFORD FORUM

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

The three QGS Sqns came together on Hawke Square, Blandford Forum for their first rehearsal on the evening of Friday 9 September: 246 Sqn from York, 248 Sqn from Colerne, 250 Sqn from Bramcote, and a number of QGS soldiers currently undergoing trg at RSS. They practised till 'bad light stopped play' that evening, and they were there again rehearsing in the pouring rain for most of Saturday. They had to get it right for Sunday: and get it right, they certainly did.

In recognition of their many years' loyal service and the strong bond that had they developed with the Town, Queens Gurkha Signals were to be awarded, on Sunday, 11 September 2005, the Freedom of the Town of Blandford Forum.

And on that Sunday, accompanied by the Band of the Bde of Gurkhas and Pipes and Drums of 1 RGR, and marching at Gurkha Bde pace, the assembled QGS Regt came into Market Square, to form up in front of Blandford Forum Town Hall - right on time. Immediately the dressing was complete and 'Eyes front!' given, the clock of St Peter's and St Paul's Church struck 14.00hrs. It was obvious that we were in for some precision drill.

The Mayor of Blandford Forum, Cllr Esme Butler, inspects 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn

Following a General Salute, the Mayor of Blandford, **Cllr Esme Butler**, and the Colonel of the Regt, **Brig NAW Pope** inspected the Parade, accompanied by the Parade Comd, **Lt Col (QGO) Duncan Warne** and the Gurkha Major, **Maj (QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**.

The Mayor of Blandford Forum, Cllr Esme Butler, presents the Freedom Scroll to the Colonel of the Regt, Brig NAW Pope

Brig Pope responds by presenting the Mayor with a mounted, silver encrusted kukri

A Gurhka dance troupe entertains, whilst QGS is away marching the bounds of Blandford

The Mayor then gave a short speech and presented the Scroll, granting the Freedom of Blandford, to the Colonel of the Regt. In turn, **Brig Pope** gave a speech of acceptance, and presented to the Mayor with a fine mounted kukri with a silver-clad scabbard. **Lt Col Warne** then requested the Mayor's permission for QGS to exercise their newly-received right to march through the streets of Blandford Forum 'with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating and bands playing.' Then off they went – at a staggering 160 paces to the minute. 'It helps that Gurkhas have short legs,' a Gurkha officer remarked to me. But I noted how difficult it must be for 248 Sqn's English subaltern, **2Lt Blair Addison**, who measures 2 metres!

At that pace, the Parade didn't take long to march the bounds of Blandford, and during that time, we were entertained briefly by a troupe of Gurkha dancers. Then, as the Parade marched past the dais, their eyes right was acknowledged by the Mayor and the Colonel of the Regt. A brilliant musical and marching display was then given by the Band of the Bde of Gurkhas and Pipes and Drums of 1 RGR, culminating in the Beating of Retreat and the playing of the National Anthem.

The Parade ended with the Mayor's Reception in the Corn Exchange. It had been a fitting and most spectacular ending for Blandford Forum's celebrations to mark the 400th Anniversary of the Town receiving its Charter from **King James 1**.

October 2005 Vol. 59 No: 5

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The Wire

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Editor Maj (Retd) BL Redshaw
Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER

'With Swords drawn, Bayonets fixed, Bands playing, and Drums beating' 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn gives a smart Eyes Right as they pass the dais, having exercised the rights granted by the QGS's newly-received Freedom of the Town of Blandford Forum.

BACK COVER

A Proud Moment for a Newly Graduated Royal Signals Piper
On his Pass-Off Parade at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming, **Sig Matthew Bailey** is inspected by **Lt Col David Steele MBE**, Comd Regional Recruiting in Scotland. He passed the Course with Honours.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

REDUCTION OF FORCES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The recent announcement by the Provisional IRA that they are to cease armed conflict will mean a massive drawdown of Military forces in Northern Ireland over the next two years. This will have an impact on all Royal Signals units currently deployed in the Province. As HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt report on page 368, more details will be announced soon, but their RSM is already planning the closing ceremonies.

BOWMAN UP AND RUNNING IN IRAQ

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228), now at the half-way point of their OP TELIC tour, report on page 381 that the establishment of BOWMAN in theatre has gone well. Most of the tech challenges have been overcome, and the system is really adding value, providing robust secure comms down to section level in many cases, as well as demonstrating the benefits of Situational Awareness.

SURVIVING A HELICOPTER CRASH

Cpl Tom Richards 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) has had a lucky escape. He was about to deploy in support of the 1 STAFFS BG, when the Sea King helicopter he was in crashed shortly after takeoff. 'After lifting off,' he says, 'we immediately experienced some turbulence, and after about three to four seconds, the helicopter impacted with the wall surrounding the corner of the airfield... The whole episode lasted no more then thirty or forty seconds, but it did feel rather longer!' Fortunately, injuries were only minor, and **Cpl Richards** suffered only a few bruises. 'Not too bad, when you consider that the helicopter that had just fallen thirty feet out of the sky!'

A full report and photo are in the Colour Section on page 381.

ROYAL SIGNALS SUPPORTS THE G8 SUMMIT

As part of the security arrangements for the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt played a major role, providing C2 CIS for OP ORETTA, 51 (Scottish) Bde's support op to the police during the Summit. The Bde Comd, **Brig Davey Kirk**, had nothing but praise for service support provided by 32 Sig Regt and 2 (NC) Sig Bde. 'This,' he said, 'was a text book model of how UK Ops will be supported from now on.'

32 (Scottish) Sig Regt's report is on page 366.

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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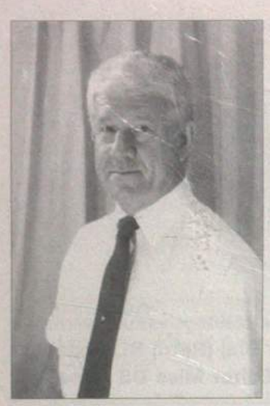


EDITORIAL

There has been a marked increase in the number of stories written by junior ranks recently. It's difficult to do an exact count, but probably most of the stories in this issue have been written by juniors. 11 Sig Regt's stories are a good example. These stories have a character all of their own. Young soldiers notice things, and this is reflected in their writing. It is fresh, vital and honest, and it helps us all to see things through their eyes, and to feel what they are feeling. In turn, their stories become more appealing to the junior ranks who read *The WIRE*. Taking things further, I guess it could also help the seniors to gain more of an insight into the thinking of their soldiers.

As many young soldiers will be aware, I give a talk on *The WIRE* to all Phase 2 trainees and troop commanders as they pass through Blandford, and during this talk, I encourage them to consider writing for the magazine. After all, they will become my 'ears and eyes' and will be in a position to notice things that will eventually become part of our Corps history. In my visits to Units, I also urge Sqn and Tp Comds to encourage more juniors to write for The WIRE. It would seem that this is all paying off.

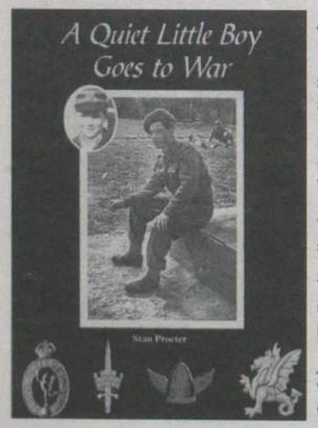
From time to time, we discover a Royal Signals component sitting in a non-Royal Signals Unit. On page 401 in this issue, we have a report from a contingent of seven Corps personnel in 1 MI Bn in Germany, telling us who they are and what they do in their adoptive Unit. It's good to hear about these isolated pockets of Corps soldiers. After all, *The WIRE* is their magazine too, and the rest of the Corps should hear about them. So, if there are any more out there, let's hear from you.

It's good to see a few more privileges being granted to Royal Signals Units. I have recently attended Parades to two mark two of these. 11 Sig Regt were granted the Liberty of Swanage in appreciation of 20 years work that Regt and Blandford Camp personnel have put into the Swanage Railway project. Queen's Gurkha Signals were granted the Freedom of Blandford Forum to mark the close association they have had with the town over many years. All soldiers concerned spent many hours practising for their respective events, and both Units performed spectacularly on the big day. The response of the public was amazing, and from chatting with the soldiers afterwards, it was an obvious morale boost for them. I congratulate both Units on their achievements, both in gaining this recognition, and for their performance on their respective Parades.

There are many of us who have watched yachts competing in sailing events, either on TV or from out on the water. We see the crews working frantically, changing or adjusting their sails as they change tack, and some of us may observe how hard they work. But most of us don't know what is really going on in these boats. TV cameras don't dwell long enough, and we don't hear the conversations between skipper and crew. On page 403, **WO2 Terry McIntyre** takes us with RSYC's *Skywave* on this year's Round the Island Race. It's almost like a documentary, giving us a great insight into how these events go. We see some of the many things both skipper and crew have to think about – watching for where the wind is, avoiding or taking advantage of tide flows, seeing what the other boats are doing. We also learn about the teamwork and trust that goes with the crew's hard work – traits that are also essential in their roles in their Corps jobs. This is one of the best bits of sports writing I have seen for a while.

After more than 30 years of hard and dangerous work by hundreds of Royal Signals personnel, many of whom are now retired, the Northern Ireland operation seems at last to be drawing to a close. We had already seen the disbandment of 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (203), and now, with the recent declaration by the Provisional IRA that they will give up their armed conflict, plans are in train for a rapid draw-down of forces in the Province. To quote 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, 'For those signallers of all ranks and trades who have served their time in Bandit country, been up the masts at midnight, manned the Ops rooms and been on the ground in riot gear, the Province will hold many memories, both good and bad.' It is interesting to note that the experience gained from anti-terrorist operations in Malaya so many years ago has been built upon to contribute to the successful conclusion in Northern Ireland. It is to be hoped that we can take this experience forward to our operations in Iraq.

BOOK REVIEWS



A QUIET LITTLE BOY GOES TO WAR - *by Stan Procter*

Stan Procter was born and bred in Carshalton, Surrey, and apart from his war service, lived there and in Banstead all his life.

He kept a diary from the time he joined Royal Signals in 1942 until the end of the campaign from Normandy to Germany with 214 Bde, 43 Wessex Div, including his attachment to 1 Bn Worcestershire Regt, training in the north and south of England.

This is a story (with a love interest) of an innocent young soldier as he experienced life and war some 60 years ago, and contains many photographs taken by him during this time.

The first edition has received so many favourable comments from so many readers (including many of his WW2 contemporaries), that the author has added two more chapters and many more photos to this revised edition. All royalties will go to the Royal Signals and 43 Div Associations.

A Quiet Little Boy Goes to War is published by, and available from Rite Time Publishing Ltd, 18 Woolmer Way, Bordon, Hants, GU35 9QF. The price is £16.00, including Packaging and Postage. Orders can be made by phone on 01420 487 747.

APOLOGY

We apologise to the OC and members of Cyprus Communications Unit for the errors that appeared on page 310 of the August 2005 issue of *The WIRE*.

The Unit should have been named **Cyprus Communications Unit**, and the OC, **Sqn Ldr Shaun McLaughlin**.

During the process of editing and proof reading of *The WIRE*, each piece is read seven times. Unfortunately, as anyone who has done this will know, whenever errors do occur, it is often the most obvious ones that get through.

TSUNAMI - SOUTHERN INDIA

- by SSgt Jackie Simpson, AFCO Birmingham

At the time of writing this article, it is 6 months since the Tsunami disaster struck, and the world stood still in sheer shock at the enormity of what began to unfold. The loss of life was incomprehensible, and the areas struck were left as though pulverised by crushing machinery. The heart-breaking stories of children left orphaned, eyes staring at you directly from your TV screen, left you saying inside you, 'Thank God it wasn't my family or my loved ones.' But at the same time you were feeling incredibly helpless, and wanting to take away the nightmare for them.

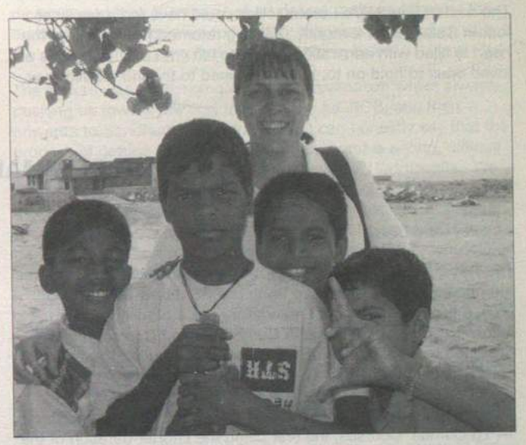
Two months into the disaster, I left UK and headed for Southern India to a place called Colachel. A small group of volunteers, we went to help in a small way in rebuilding one small fishermen's shelter for a village, not knowing what lay ahead. Perhaps inwardly we were hoping that things would be more or less back to normal for the local community, and we would be just adding something for them to utilise.

Arriving in India and being driven further south for 2 hrs, slowly the sights that had become so familiar from news reports, began to show themselves. Devastated areas, crushed buildings. Walking down the immense stretches of sand, every step you take are reminders of people: shoes, clothing, beautiful saris floating in pools of water half trapped in the sand, trying to pull themselves out to float away on the ocean waves; photos; personal items sticking out and reminding you that this beautiful place had been touched by mother nature at her worst. Then you start to realise just how little aid or assistance has actually reached this community, and you immediately question where has all the aid money gone.

With the nursing staff at St James' Hospital

Spending a month in this small town, and living in a little hospital that has dealt with over 17,500 casualties from and around the area at the time of the disaster, and remains treating people free of charge, makes you feel very humble. The local people always smile at you, want to speak with you, even when you do not speak each other's language - but you get by, and smile to each other.

They are pleased that we have come all the way from UK to help them, but they complain that their own government officials have not been.



With some of the children

The homeless are living in temporary corrugated iron shelters, some of which have been erected directly on the site of the devastated buildings, and this temporary accommodation could remain their home now for years.

The children still going to school, are immaculately turned out in school in uniform, they have pride in their school, and the school, with very little equipment or supplies, has pride in its students. It works because they want it to.

Spending time with young children who desperately want to practise their English with you, are always polite when asking you a question, but returning quickly to being a child when playing; this, and the joy on their faces from getting their own school pen from you, is something you simply cannot put into words. A small amount of money goes such a long way in this land.

The month was the most rewarding time for me. I turned my hand to many things: a digger, water carrier, cement mixer, load carrier, shelter erecter, platform builder, teacher, playtime supervisor, cricketer!, expert in Indian Cuisine (I never realised how my body could adapt so well to three hot and spicy meals a day).

Digging foundations

Mixing concrete

All I can say to those who have taken the time to read this article is that, six months on, people are still suffering from the disaster, and they do not think all is well yet, because it is not being reported on TV. They are still suffering in ways you cannot imagine. These people are not asking for major handouts; they just want to get back to a normal existence, of providing for their families and rebuilding their homes.

The cost of your NAAFI break today could have fed a family of four in Colachel for a month. Having returned from this trip, my heart is filled with admiration for those left with only memories of loved ones to hold on to, but determined to try and rebuild their shattered lives with the little they have left - and with little financial assistance that we could see. I feel humbled by the fact that those same people who have little in the way of material things and money, will still try and share their time, and show you such hospitality by inviting you into their temporary homes to have a meal with them. It has put into perspective for me what is really important in life, and I thank them for their kindness shown to me whilst I was with them. I hope to return to visit this area again in January 2006.

TA TROOP COMMANDERS' COURSE 2005

- by 2Lt Dom Leeds

The Royal Signals TA Tp Comds' Course is an eight-day event run once a year by Comd Trg Wing at RSS. For a TA Young Offr (YO), this course is the first mandatory piece of formal YO trg following attendance at the TA Commissioning Course, and is designed to educate him or her to the level required to perform competently the role of a Tp Comd in a TA Royal Signals unit.

There are two distinct differences between the Regular and the TA Tp Comds' Courses, the first being the shorter duration of the TA Course. For a number of reasons, attendance on a course lasting more than two weeks is not an option for the new TA Tp Comd. Consequently, the majority of their trg is delivered in-unit. The TA Tp Comds' Course is just one phase of a much longer overall programme.

The second difference is the course content. Although it would be desirable to educate TA YOs in how to command a Sig Troop in any role, using the full range of Royal Signals equipt, there is just not enough time to do this. So priority must be given to such areas as recruiting, equipt maintenance, individual professional development trg and so on. Given the variety and uniqueness of roles fulfilled by many TA Royal Signals units, and the different equipt they use, the majority of unit role-related trg is therefore conducted in-unit.

This year's course was conducted over the period 6-13 March 05, and was oversubscribed for the 25 places available. This says a lot about the current health of Royal Signals TA Offr recruiting. When we turned up at HQ Mess the evening before the course, we were pleasantly surprised to discover the Mess packed with participants on EX LIGHTNING STRIKE. Consequently, most of us commenced the first day of the course having had a shorter night's sleep than intended. For many this impromptu pre-course party set the tone for the week.

One of the week's most noteworthy sessions was **WO2(SSM) Driver's** EX CROWDED HOUR. His choice selection of welfare problems, brilliantly acted out by members of 11 Sig Regt, caught many of the Tp Comds totally off guard. But it was his unnerving interpretation of a pally Tp SSgt that deserved the Oscar nomination, a performance which he then surpassed by turning up in civvies the following day, pate dyed red for red nose day, and 'fining' us for being improperly dressed (i.e. in uniform).

If the mark of a good course is a high level of student contribution, then I believe our course was exceptional. A late night bet to **Lt Rawden Leigh** that he could not get the whole course on parade, inspect them and march them down to PMH was duly honoured the following morning. Sadly he failed on a technicality, because he forgot to inspect. Had he done so, he would have realised that three of the students had already made their own way down to PMH. And so, he dutifully obliged with the tradition bottle of port.

The week concluded with the Tp Comds' Course Dinner Night, at which we were honoured to have as our guest, **Col Keith Bruce-Smith**, Col TA, and members of the TA Sqn Comds' Course. During proceedings, **2Lt David Chalmers** succumbed to the bad influence of certain Sqn Comds, attempting to relieve Col TA of his spurs. Unfortunately, he had not reckoned on Col TA putting in a surprise effort to stop him, which left him bruised and shaken. Such is the stuff that careers are made of.

The TA Tp Comds' Course is brilliantly run. Designed to educate a Tp Comd in how to carry out their role, the course goes far beyond that. It also provides an environment for cross-pollination of ideas, and actively promotes thinking 'outside the box' in such areas as inter-unit liaison, trg and recruiting. It also encourages YOs to regard their work from the perspective of the Corps as a whole. It encourages them to work and think, and to consider theirs and their soldiers' long-term career development needs. In short, the course stimulates enthusiasm, and gives them the wherewithal to enable this enthusiasm to continue.

It is now the intention to go further and create an online community within Armynet to provide a continuous forum for sharing ideas, tips, information and resources.

Any thoughts or ideas on this would be gratefully received at leeds@armymail.mod.uk.

On behalf of all the students, our thanks to: **Maj David Halsall**, **Capt Mike Fayers**, **Capt Lucy Brereton-Martin**, **WO2(SSM) Driver** and all the other instructors for their enthusiastic and good-humoured delivery, and for making a huge effort to tailor the delivery for a TA audience; to **Maj Nick Ilic** of D CBM(A), for introducing us to Armynet; to **Maj Jez Bailey**, for being our mentor; and to **Lt Col Grindrod** and **Lt Col Richards** for putting together a superb training package and making it all happen.

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL OFFICERS DEVELOPMENT COURSE?

– by OCdt N Davis

How many times have you said or heard someone say they can do a better job than their Tp Comd? I was one of those people, and I decided to do something about it. So I submitted my application. Sure, I had all of the heckling from my peers, but after a while, the heckling and joking turned into support and confidence.

After attending my Regular Commission Board (RCB) Briefing, I found out that as of January 05, all serving soldiers could attend a Potential Officers' Development Course (PODC). What is that? Well the PODC is a personal development programme, designed to give serving soldiers an equal chance of success at the main RCB. The course is 11 weeks long, and crammed into that time is a series of physically and mentally demanding challenges, all designed to take an individual out of their comfort zone. I assure you, you can be the fittest person in the forces or the most intelligent, but there are aspects of this course that will pressurise even the most cool of people. From various London, theatre and museum trips, and visits to Wales, there is something here for everyone. I myself have totally enjoyed my time at the ASE (Worthy Down), and with support from a professional team of DS, you can also see the benefits of submitting that application and attending a PODC.

You wouldn't think that I am about to do a 24km march!

WHAT IS POTENTIAL, AND DO YOU HAVE IT?
- by PO SJ Rice

After 5 years in the field Army, I had gained promotion Cpl. My life as a Spec Op was interesting and varied, but I wanted a greater challenge. I thought that I had more to offer and I wanted greater responsibility. I was put forward for Commission by my former OC Sqn, **Maj Sutton**, whilst I was serving at 237 Sig Sqn (EW). I completed my Unit Selection Board (USB) just before I was posted to 15 Sig Regt, where I went away on my Class 1. This caused a pause on my Officer aspirations, but those aspirations remained. Then, after some stuttering starts due to work commitments, I continued where I left off some 8 months previously, and the Commissioning ball began to roll again.

After completing another USB, I was sent forward to the RCB Briefing, where I was told I had potential, and that I was to attend the PODC at Worthy Down. I left the safety of 225 Sig Sqn and my colleagues behind, and ventured off in early May 05 to see what being an Officer was about. The course is run over 11 weeks, and is designed to enhance the potential (that word again) in those selected as POs. It assists in the development of academic skills, problem solving and cultural development. We were put through various scenarios such as comd tasks, planning exs, map reading (apparently Officers are required to be able to read maps?) with PT thrown in for good measure. Cultural development took the shape of art gallery visits and theatre trips on three Wednesday trips to London; this also provided us with the opportunity to sample the local watering holes...

The course was challenging, and offered variation whilst always pushing us toward the final target of the full RCB, and then onwards to Sandhurst. Looking back, I can honestly say that the process of getting from your Sqn to Sandhurst is a long, difficult and possibly frustrating one - but it is definitely worthwhile. We all get only one shot at our careers. I for one, plan on filling it with as much as possible. If you fancy the challenge, why not speak to your Tp Comd? If you have the determination and self-motivation to give it a go, you're already ahead of the competition around you, so what have you got to lose?

GO FOR IT! *- by PO Innes*

When, as I did, you become bored with the musician's life and the easy half days, why not try a more challenging demanding job. Going for a Direct Entry Commission in the real Army is not the unimaginable unachievable task people would think. There are too many people wasted because they are not aware of the opportunities that are out there. Anyone can make an application for Commission. If you feel you have what it takes, go for it; you will never get anywhere in life if you don't take chances. What do you have to lose?

Once you have all your recommendations, it is on to the RCB Briefing. If successful, you will attend PODC at the Army School of Education (ASE), Worthy Down. This course will allow you to develop all the skills needed in your bid for a Commission. It will not teach you them, but will give you all the chances possible for you to be on a level standing for Main Board. The course runs for 11 weeks and is intensive, as you will find. Covering aspects such as essay writing, planning exs, comd tasks, debating, Army Defence Studies, plenty of cultural visits, which even include musicals, so you will have an edge over the other course members - but don't think this, will make it easy.

You are constantly under pressure to perform at your highest level; you are constantly in the light with presentations and speeches. But there is the lighter side of life, including raft building, rock climbing and plenty of social evenings to relax and gain insight into the Officer world, through chats with serving Officers. This is a course where you get out exactly what you put in; if you want to succeed the opportunities are there - you need to take them.

The course created many opportunities for me to see my own true worth and to develop areas that I needed to address. It was hard at times, but everything in life has difficulties at some stage; if you want success you have to put the work in. I enjoyed the course immensely, and working with different cap badges has opened my eyes to far greater things. There are so many opportunities out there if only people are aware of them, are willing to take the chance, and put themselves on the line. If you aren't scared of hard work and believe you have what it takes, then go for it!

A FAMOUS ROYAL SIGNALS OFFICER

– by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

The Rt Hon The Lord Howe of Aberavon CH QC, former Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister, was once **Lt Geoffrey Howe** Royal Signals. He kindly invited me to the House of Lords to tell me about what he now calls his 'extended gap year.'

Early in 1945, the 18-year-old **Geoffrey Howe**, having just left Winchester College, was planning his next move. WW2 was still being fought, and being liable to conscription, he decided to volunteer before he was called up. 'This enabled me to have at least some influence of my choice of regiment,' he says, 'and that choice was never in doubt. I had set my heart on Royal Signals. One of my schoolboy hobbies was constructing basic radio receivers, and I'd been in the Signal Platoon of my school's Cadet Corps.'

Initially, he enlisted at Bodmin Barracks in the Devonshire Regt, and went immediately on a six-month course in physics and mathematics at the University College of the South West (now Exeter University). Many things happened during that time, the most significant being VE Day in May and VJ Day in August. And so '...the war that we were being trained to fight was over before our formal military training had begun.'

His three years of military service proper began with basic training at Bushfield Camp, Winchester, with Corps and other training to follow at Catterick and Wrotham. This included a battle camp in the Lake District in January, where after a wet river crossing exercise, their clothes froze overnight in their tent. During OCTU at Mons, Aldershot, he was to enjoy 'the parade-ground magnificence' of the famed **RSM Britton**, whom he was to call on as an MP many years later, when the latter had retired to Caterham in Surrey. The good RSM offered his MP a large whisky in a voice that '...shook the tiny block of flats almost to their foundations.'

2Lt Howe was then posted to East African Signals in Kenya, where he became 2IC to the then **Capt David Legge DCM**, whom the Mess had, for understandable (and respectable) reasons, nick-named **Clem**. The Unit's task was to provide radio and land line links between the seven battalions of King's African Rifles and Northern Rhodesian Regiment, who were providing internal security from Kampala to Dar-es-Salaam, from Lusaka to Nairobi. His Unit comprised twenty British and one hundred African signallers. Their equipment included WS19 and WS 22 radios, and 40-line F and F switchboards. There was an SDS section, from which **David Legge's** predecessor, **Capt Pat Kelly**, trained a motorcycle display team for the Searchlight Tattoo.

'Kenya in the late 1940s was still a white settlers' paradise,' recalls **Lord Howe**, 'it was temperate and orderly. On the Kikuyu reserve a handful of fanatics calling themselves *Watu wa Dinyo Christo* (Men of Christ), staged a fierce outburst of savagery. Our radio trucks were briefly mobilised throughout the reserve, but the outbreak was soon quashed. It was nothing to compare with the brutal Mau Mau years to follow years later.

'Uganda too, was green and fertile - awash with bananas and cotton, and still safe for Asian traders. Makarere College was on its way to becoming an African university.'

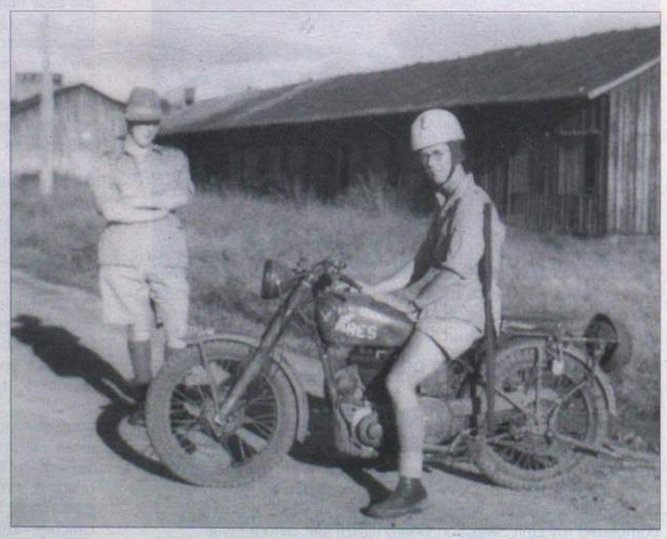
Most of the African signallers had seen service with 11 East African Division in Burma. One of them, **Sgt Mbela Kasema BEM**, went to London to represent them in the Victory Parade. And there was a growing feeling of equality developing between black and white soldiers. After all, they had all been equally ready to die for a common cause. 'Quite soon, I was happy to join **Clem** in a quietly successful campaign to secure the election to the all-white Sports Club of Nanyuki's first black police inspector.'

Lt Howe was lucky to enjoy many of the pleasures of peacetime soldiering before peacetime accounting caught up with the Unit. He enjoyed '...powers that a 20-year-old should never be entitled to exercise.' There were always jeeps and motorbikes available. They camped and safaried in Kenya's Northern Frontier deserts. They fished for Nile perch at Lake Victoria, and for trout in Mount Kenya's well-stocked streams. There were mountaineering ventures on Mts Kenya and Kilimanjaro – complete with guides, expeditions that cost but a few East African shillings.

He was quick to learn Swahili and enjoyed much of the local culture. 'The friendly loyalty of those with whom I served in Kenya, left me with a lasting affection for Africa and its peoples,' he says.

Before leaving Nanyuki in June 1948, **Lt Howe** was offered promotion to Captain, but only if he was willing to extend his engagement by 3 months to go to Mogadishu to command the Somali Signal Troop. This was going to make it too tight for him to take his place at Cambridge, and there was also a 'demob' climbing holiday arranged in Scotland.

'As I look back on those three years,' the Noble Lord reflects, 'I realise that they took the place (three-fold) of the gap year that many students take today. They were three glorious gap years!'



A young Lt Geoffrey Howe on a Matchless 350 motorbike

A HIGHLY QUALIFIED PIPER FOR THE CORPS

A dewy early autumn morning in Edinburgh, with mists clearing from the Pentland Hills, was the romantic setting for the latest pass-off parade at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming at Inchdrewer House. This was a unique occasion for Royal Signals, as it saw **Sig Matthew Bailey** pass with Honours in the top three in the course. It was an outstanding achievement for someone who was a beginner less than twelve months ago, and had to hold his own among others who had come with a head start in terms of instruction and playing experience. **Matthew** received his Certificate from **Lt Col David KP Steele MBE**, the Comd Regional Recruiting, Scotland. Proud parents **Alison** and **Peter** were there on their first visit to Scotland to witness the event. Also there were Corps Senior **Pipe Maj Gordon Rowan** and Corps **Pipe Maj John Taylor**, who were to see the fruition of an idea that a year ago, was only a fond dream.

Sig Matthew Bailey gives a smart salute to Lt Col David Steele MBE, who presents him with his Certificate

Matthew is a Rad Sys Op with 202 Sqn, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt at Bulford, and had voluntarily given up his spare time to travel to Blandford twice a week for some months prior to attendance for instruction in the basics of the Great Highland Bagpipe. His enthusiasm was such, that it inspired **Pipe Maj Rowan** to explore the possibility of Royal Signals soldiers attending the Class 3 course at Inchdrewer House. Early good relations established with **Capt Stuart Samson**, the Director of the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming, were important in securing this significant initiative, which has great potential benefit for the Corps.

The Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming has a long and distinguished ancestry, having its origins in the Army School, founded at the turn of last century, by the officers and gentlemen of the Piobaireachd Society of Scotland, who paid for an instructor. This School originally operated from the twin bases of Inverness and Edinburgh, something that caused more than a bit of inconvenience! Recognising the need for centralisation, an Army School of Piping was established in Edinburgh at the outbreak of World War 1, which delayed its actual implementation until about 1920. The redoubtable **Pipe Maj Willie Ross** was appointed as Chief Instructor, a post he held until 1957, when he retired at the age of 78! The School moved to its present location

Proud parents Alison and Peter with their son Matthew Bailey

in 1995, when it merged with the School of Highland Drumming to occupy the premises at Inchdrewer House.

Historically, the school has catered for the needs of the Scottish and other regts who maintained a pipe band, but it has now become the acknowledged training centre for aspiring pipers from all units in the Army. The Gurkha connection with bagpipe music is well known, and the Corps benefits from the services of several Gurkha pipers who have undergone their training at Inchdrewer House. On this last pass-out parade, **Matthew** was joined by several Gurkha players, in the presence of the Gurkha Major and other colleagues. All will now swell the ranks of established players in the Corps Pipes and Drums taking part in military, social and ceremonial events in Blandford and elsewhere, to bring closer our aspiration of soon performing at the Edinburgh Tattoo.

Matthew was enthusiastic in his praise for the course, which described as '...hard, but rewarding - and the Edinburgh night life is marvellous!' He is now trained to play musical pieces of competition standard, function as a fully trained piper, and able to maintain, tune and look after his instrument, as well as performing at all regimental and public occasions.

As such, he sees this is as an important additional skill, which he is confident will do much to enhance the enjoyment of his Army career. He is already looking forward to his first significant event as he travels to Ascension Island in October with the remainder of the Corps Pipes and Drums and a selected few of the Corps Military Band for a training camp designed to raise standards, develop teamwork and learn a new repertoire for the coming performance season. His CO is reportedly looking forward to his return and to making full use of his own personal piper!

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, AUGUST 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col IK Bucklow	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col AH Campbell-Black	MATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Lt Col JW Clark	JWC
Lt Col EA Davis	HQ ARRC
Lt Col G Hearn	TA and RES MCM Div
Lt Col JK Mckee	DSTL Info Mgt
Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen	SP SCM IPT
Lt Col SJ Vickery	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj SJ Abram	DSTL Electronics
Maj GN Addley	2 (NC) Sig Bde
Maj AR Aitken	DSTL P and CS
Maj TJS Allen	JSC and Staff College
Maj MGP Bohanan	R and LS Staff East
Maj NA Booth	TDT HQ SOinC(A)
Maj PA Buck	RSS
Maj AD Cathro	30 Sig Regt
Maj CD Cook	MS(B)
Maj TC Cooper	DCSA
Maj SL Copley	EC ISTAR HORG
Maj APJ Coulston	BATICS IPT 1
Maj TN Crapper	GSV HQ
Maj EA Dallyn	DI 60 DI (ST)
Maj SA Donovan	CD Branch HQ Land
Maj IG Favager	Exchange Officers Canada
Maj RS Gibson	LOG Div HQ Land
Maj AJ Gray	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj NJ Griffiths	LWC OP SP and Comd Dev GP
Maj FE Hargreaves	20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200)
Maj LJ Hawkes	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj RH King	HQ ARRC
Maj AR Knott	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Maj GB Lamb	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj AJ Large	7 Sig Regt
Maj CR Lawrence	37 Sig Regt
Maj LA Lawrence	DCSA DST Strat Change
Maj GR Leyland	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Maj A Long	16 Sig Regt
Maj GR Mason	System HQ SOinC(A)
Maj AS McCole	2 Sig Sqn
Maj PD Merry	40 Sig Regt
Maj SJ Morgan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj SPM Nesmith	1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (215)
Maj KA Owen	DCBM(A) Prog Branch
Maj DR Parkinson	30 Sig Regt
Maj P Pearce	DCBM(A) Capability Intergration
Maj MR Purves	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Maj LD Roddy	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Maj S Roden	BOWTAG(N)
Maj AG Ross	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Maj SG Scott	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj DMT Shipley	39 Sig Regt
Maj DA Simcox	JSC and Staff College
Maj SJP Spiers	HQ ARRC
Maj IP Stanton	BOWTAN(S)
Maj PJ Stoddart	DCSA (G) Strat and Tech Dev
Maj JP Townsend	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Maj J Turner	BOWTAG(S)
Maj JAL Vosper	10 Sig Regt
Maj SJ Whytock	IMATT (Freetown) Sierra Leone
Maj CM Wood	1 Sig Sqn
Maj DC Worden	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Maj NGC Yardley	GOC Theatre Troops HQ
Maj RC Young	RSS
A/Maj KT Wilson	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Capt CN Biddulph	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Capt MA Bosworth	JCU (NI)
Capt M Brooks	10 Sig Regt
Capt HC Cairns	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt PE Connor	CSD HQ SoinC(A)
Capt SP Cowan	DCSA (G)
Capt JW Dagless	7 Sig Regt
Capt RJ Darlington	LSP Oman
Capt JM Dawes	Flying Wing SAAVN
Capt JMW Ewart	1(UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt AS Foote	HQ Brignepal
Capt RL Francis	225 Sig Sqn
Capt S Gough	1 Regt AAC
Capt PA Gudonis	CIS 238 Sig Sqn 10 Sig Regt
Capt SJW Gunson	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261)
Capt DA Haslewood	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt HJP Hebblethwaite	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
Capt PS Hodson	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt SG Jackson	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(228)
Capt SC Jeffery	37 Sig Regt
Capt SC Keilty	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Capt CJ Kell	33 Sig Regt
Capt LD Kemp	31 (City of London) Sig Regt
Capt JA Lyons	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt W McCreath	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt M Nuttall	16 Sig Regt
Capt HJ Owen	31 Sig Regt
Capt SM Smith	2 Sig Regt
Capt PF Stowell MBE	TDT HQ SOinC(A)
Capt LJ Thirsk	20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Capt WA Walker	Joint Staff Div J6 HQ BF Cyprus
Capt JTD Wright	2 Sig Regt
Lt LC Gallacher	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt SJ Macpherson	RSS
Lt MR Mallett	RMCS Courses
Lt Speed	RMCS Courses

OFFICERS, SEPTEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col NJ Borrill	CBMJ6 CBM
Lt Col S Gregory	DHE HQ
Lt Col JP Hudson	33 Sig Regt
Lt Col SJ Turpin	HQ SACLANT (HQ SACT)
Maj MJ Chambers	JFLOGC HQ
Maj RJ Craig	RMCS Courses
Maj TN Crapper	G6 HQ Land
Maj JH Fraser	MS SLDRS
Maj PJ Hale	RMCS Courses
Maj T Hill	DII Future
Maj GB Ingram	RMCS Courses
Maj GR Leyland	Theatre and Formation Comms IPT
Maj RJ Lovett	RMCS Courses
Maj GE Marsh	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj CWS Miller	HQ 5 Div
Maj RJ Parkinson	UKD and SP Unit RHQ Afnorth
Maj A Roberts	51 (Scottish) Bde
Maj AC Sarginson	SANGCOM
Maj CP Shead	10 Sig Regt
Maj KA Townsend MBE	SANGCOM
Maj PI Turner	Director Equipment Plans
Maj CM Vaudin	39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213)
Maj FER Whichelo	OCE HQ Land
Maj TO Wood	16 Sig Regt
A/Maj PA Anderson	Birmingham University OTC
A/Maj BH Bryan	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj AD Clixby	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj JR Collyer	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj AKT Crapper	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj A Forbes	HQ ARRC
A/Maj KA Jeeves	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj JO Lambeth	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj RA Lane	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
A/Maj A Patterson	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj HJ Scott	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj NRD Shenow	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj AJ Smith	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj S Steven	SANGCOM
Capt CS Alexander	JSC and Staff College
Capt SJ Bristow	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Capt EJ Bruce	JSC and Staff College
Capt NC Bruce	JSC and Staff College
Capt AEA Corkery	JSC and Staff College
Capt OTB Courage	JSC and Staff College
Capt AR Fawcet	JSC and Staff College
Capt BJ Fitch	JSC and Staff College
Capt KV Fowler	HQ ARRC
Capt JC Fraser	JSC and Staff College
Capt OER Gardner	JSC and Staff College
Capt MJ Grierson	HQ ARRC
Capt SVD Hargreaves	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt JKR Hawkins	RMAS
Capt BJ Henderson	RSS
Capt AL Hill	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt WR Holbrook	JSC and Staff College
Capt HM Hughes	DCSA DEI IS Deployed OPS CO
Capt JR Jennings	JSC and Staff College
Capt RM Jones	JSC and Staff College
Capt LD Kemp	36 Sig Regt
Capt PRD Muir	JSC and Staff College
Capt JP Nichols	JSC and Staff College
Capt GJ Oliver	JSC and Staff College
Capt L O'Rourke	JSC and Staff College
Capt PN Randell	JSC and Staff College
Capt AJ Rickman	SANGCOM
Capt IG Rodger	JSC and Staff College
Capt M Rouse	37 Sig Regt
Capt AD Shakespeare	JSC and Staff College
Capt NH Smikle	HQ Land
Capt MS Tivey	2 Sig Regt
Capt PJ Waddell	JSC and Staff College
Capt RA Wilson	RMCS Courses
Capt AS Wilson	JSC and Staff College
Capt Wilson	ATR Bassingbourn
Lt JFP King	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Lt BB Price	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Lt PJ Stubbs	ATR Lichfield

WOs and SNCOs, AUGUST 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO1 RD MA Gilbert	OCE HQ Land
A/WO1 RD J Tinnion	11 Sig Regt
WO2 RD RD Burrows	21 Sig Regt (AS)
WO2 RD JF Lyons	16 Sig Regt
WO2 RD DA Welch	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 YofS RD Bleasdale	DSDC North
WO2 YofS SJ Boase	16 Sig Regt
WO2 YofS P Emsen	BMATT
WO2 YofS NJ Harrison	34 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 YofS DG Monger	DCSA (G)
WO2 Supvr Rad SK Clark	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 Supvr Rad PJ Petrie	DI(SI) TDT
WO2 Supvr Rad IT Prosser	JSSU (Cheltenham)
WO2 Supvr Rad M Robson	RSS
A/WO2 RD CA Hook	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD J McEwan	238 Sig Sqn
A/WO2 RD P Stroudley	15 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD PC Walledge	16 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD MA Wigmore	UOTC East Midlands
SSgt Supvr Rad G Campbell	JSSU (Cheltenham)
SSgt S Barrass	1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt PA Chambers	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt H Dunlop	DCSA DCTO
SSgt NR Elliott	7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt BA Flynn	600 Sig Tp
SSgt L Griffiths	DISC SU HQ
SSgt RD Heynes	2 Sig Regt
SSgt CA Hood	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt AJ Lockie	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt MA McNamara	39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
SSgt CR Pagett	1 Mil Int Bn
SSgt PJ Robinson	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt PH Shawcross	33 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt AN Smith	1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt J Webber	JSSU Cyprus
SSgt MJ Witham	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt J Wood	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/SSgt CD Brotherston	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt AD Dobson	RSS
A/SSgt AN Doyle	DISC SU HQ
A/SSgt LJ Francis	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/SSgt SP Harrison	225 Sig Sqn
A/SSgt EC Howard	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt AM Hyland	15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt JP McDonnell	16 Sig Regt
A/SSgt S Pearson	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt TCN Ralley	15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt BA Randerson	628 Sig Tp
A/SSgt SV Reynolds	20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/SSgt L Rigby	Config Man HQ SOinC (A)
A/SSgt CA Stansfield	15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt LA Starr	36 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt MT Turner	101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/SSgt K Young	34 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt M Yuill	34 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt MB Adams	Systems HQ SOinC (A)
Sgt MS Bagstaff	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt N Blenkinsop	HQ NI and15 Sig Regt
Sgt DJ Briscoe	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt

Sgt GP Campbell ..... 521 EOD Sqn
Sgt GA Cullen ..... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt DA Dales ..... 2 Sig Regt
Sgt DA Daniels ..... 94 (BY) Sig Sqn (V)
Sgt PE Farrington ..... 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt NS Fraser ..... 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt SP Glyde ..... DI(SI)
Sgt R Grice ..... 14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt AP Hawkins ..... 11 Sig Regt
Sgt GK Honeywood ..... 38 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt JW Jackson ..... 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt GA Jordan ..... CIS Henlow
Sgt KL Lewis ..... 11 Sig Regt
Sgt AJ Lloyd ..... 38 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt GW Lloyd ..... 32 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt KJ Meek ..... Signals Training Wing
Sgt SJ Morgan ..... Digby Ops
Sgt RJ Murray ..... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt S Paterson ..... SHAPE Regional Group
Sgt GA Paver ..... Trials HQ SOinC (A)
Sgt DW Powell ..... 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt AF Preen ..... 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt GW Proctor ..... 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt PM Robertson ..... 1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt SJ Sanderson ..... RSS
Sgt CR Simmonds ..... 7 Sig Regt
Sgt R Sirignano ..... Bowtag (G)
Sgt WF Stewart ..... Cyprus Commications Unit
Sgt I Taylor ..... Shape Regional Group
Sgt S Thomas ..... 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt M Watts ..... 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt A Wright-McCarthy ..... 16 Sig Regt
Sgt L Younger ..... 30 Sig Regt
A/Sgt CP Law ..... JFACC
A/Sgt NW McElhinney ..... JSSU (Cheltenham)
A/Sgt TP Scanlan ..... 321 EOD Sqn
A/Sgt WGA Watts ..... 16 Sig Regt
A/Sgt CA Wilkes ..... Digby Ops

WOs and SNCOs, SEPTEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO2 RD PJ Graham	UOTC Edinburgh
WO2 RD PA Reed	ATR Lichfield
WO2 YofS IJ Hughes	JSG NI
A/WO2 RD AP Ingham	35 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO2 RD AN Watkins	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/WO2 Supvr IS NA Coombs	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt TM Bishop	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
SSgt BJ Brown	Joint Warfare Centre
SSgt CKI Kielty	16 Sig Regt
SSgt JL Lawer	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt SR Lewis	RSS
SSgt MI Paver	16 Sig Regt
SSgt WPD Quinn	RSS
SSgt DJ Walker	RSS
SSgt SJ White	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/SSgt MA W Collins	21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/SSgt SP Davies	RSS
A/SSgt MP Ellis	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/SSgt DR Knowler	DCSA Def Crypto Security
A/SSgt RS Love	34 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt BD McLean	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/SSgt SC Read	RSS
A/SSgt GA Rickard	AS Centralised Services
A/SSgt SA Tonks	HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt
A/SSgt A J Watson	7 Sig Regt
Sgt SR Armstrong	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DOR Badger	224 Sig Sqn
Sgt IM Belshaw	2 Sig Regt
Sgt WM Blackmore	7 Sig Regt
Sgt GP Blezard	RSS
Sgt TAC Briggs	30 Sig Regt
Sgt KS Brown	RSS
Sgt J Chambers	Army School of Ammo
Sgt SP Chell	225 Sig Sqn
Sgt N Davis	2 Sig Regt
Sgt M J Eskdale	2 Sig Regt
Sgt RJ Evans	39 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt PA Floyd	RSS
Sgt CA Gaber	RSS
Sgt PA Grundy	30 Sig Regt
Sgt DL Gunn	RSS
Sgt MA Haigh	30 Sig Regt
Sgt IL Hamilton	251 Sig Sqn
Sgt IM Howard	RSS
Sgt SC Hurst	RSS
Sgt ID John	7 CTT
Sgt AG Johnson	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt M Local	PS2 (Army) CDT Programme
Sgt BM Lovick	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt DL Margle	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt WR Matthews	7 Sig Regt
Sgt DT Mawson	36 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt P McKenna	15 Sig Regt
Sgt HLM Moore	30 Sig Regt
Sgt MD Nordon	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt JB Omahony	30 Sig Regt
Sgt C Palin	7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt JD Parkinson	7 Sig Regt
Sgt GRW Paterson	RSS
Sgt DJ Paz	Trials HQ SOinC (A)
Sgt GA Place	30 Sig Regt
Sgt DG Randall	RSS
Sgt RP Randle	Digby Ops
Sgt SM Riley	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DE Salter	11 EOD Regt
Sgt JR Scott	DCSA (G)
Sgt T Searle	RSS
Sgt AW Setchfield	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt WW Simpson	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt JL Street	224 Sig Sqn
Sgt RN Teasdale	RSS
Sgt MS Thomas	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Sgt MJ Tiplady	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt JR Towers	4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt RGV Venables	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt CT Vickers	8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Sgt M Waite	DCSA (G)
Sgt JJ Waites	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt ID Wardle	RSS
Sgt MJ Williams	RSS
Sgt S Williamson	11 Sig Regt
Sgt PA Wright	RSS
A/Sgt AR Berry	8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
A/Sgt GW Bufton	36 Sig Regt (V)
A/Sgt WJ Merrick	11 Sig Regt
A/Sgt KL O'Connor	1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/Sgt JB Stephenson	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
A/Sgt DE Thompson	238 Sig Sqn

RETIREMENTS

AUGUST 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
O'Hara - Lt Col RT O'Hara	31 Aug 05
Tydeman - Capt JME Tydeman	01 Aug 05

SEPTEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Keith - Capt JR Keith	03 Sep 05
MacTaggart - Maj D MacTaggart	01 Sep 05
Stratton - Maj GE Stratton	16 Sep 05
Sulivan - Maj AM Sulivan	01 Sep 05

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Comd **Col MJM Dyer**

AREA SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Tony Urwin**
SSM **WO2(SSM) S Gurung**

EXERCISE TRIDENT DRAGON *-by LCpl Greenfield*

We rolled through the Scottish highlands, picturesque, calm, scenic, looking good for a great week's AT, I thought. As we neared our new home for the week, it appeared we had just rolled into Baghdad. But it wasn't; it was Tulloch mountain lodge, our five star shanty hut for the week. And the welcoming party of around eight million midges was out to greet us!

The first night consisted of a little prep for the next day's event, a small bimble up Ben Nevis. In the morning, we arrived at the car park at the base of Ben Nevis, and split into three teams. We all went our separate ways, with secret, but obvious goals to beat the others to the top.

Things where looking good, a clear dry day, the sun shining, but three quarters of the way up the mountain, the weather closed in. So a comd decision was made to retrace our steps back down the mountain. There we had a few rope lessons at the Nevis café, and headed back to our accn, to be met this time by twelve million midges!

With Day 1 out of the way, it was fun time, with all the groups splitting down to do activities such as rock climbing, kayaking and mountain biking. Two activities done and dusted, it was back to the lodge for another slap up meal of pizza and chips.

Day 3 started well with a spot of rock climbing, that is until **LCpl Cownie** exclaimed, 'I am scared of heights!' But the rest of the group conquered the Scottish highland rocks with pure grit and determination, and after a hard day on the rock face it was back to El Paradise for a few cheeky beers, which went down mighty well.

Day 4 was the best yet. A shot at the wolf trax mountain bike trail. Every thing was going great, until **Cpl Hepworth** tried to impersonate Superman! Unfortunately he'd missed the landing phase of his Superman course! Cut and bruised, but unbowed, he was patched up and ready for more action, the red route, a taxing route of twists and turns with the odd bit of airtime added. In **LCpl Cownie's case**, it was a bit of 'face in the dirt' time, but the day went well. This time on our arrival back at the Ritz, there were no midges! Amazing.

A spot of kayaking – laid back...

...and a spot of mountain biking – stressful!

The week drew to a close, with no fatalities, no serious injuries - just cuts and bruises, and the team headed back to Blandford. A well-deserved break, and fun had by everyone, a good week all in all.

RADIO SYSTEMS GROUP

OC **Maj Noddy Baugh MBE**
SSM **WO2(SSM) R Lawrence**

POWER SECTION - *by Cpl Sherwin*

Head of Power Section **SSgt Padfield**

During the last couple of months, Power Section has undergone some major organisational changes, as RSG begins to fully amalgamate with ASG. Under this drive, new staff have joined from ASG, who providec power support for the operators on ASBR and Comd Trg exs.

They have certainly joined the elite team of Royal Signals Electrician (RSE) Instructors and Civilian IOs, who are responsible for maintaining the Electrician ethos, and trg the Phase 2 and 3 RSEs. We welcome **Sgts Balaram**, **Kamal**, **Cpl Sherwin**, **LCpl Shirkey** and **Sig Platts**. **Sgt Kamal** replaces **Sgt Balaram**. We say farewell to **Cpl McBride** on his posting to the garrison generator bay in Blandford.

Recently **LCpl Bogart**, of ELBR 04/006 was presented with the Powerfield Outstanding Student Award.

This Award is a shield that was generously donated to Power Section by Powerfield, the sole manufacturer of the FEPS generators.

The Shield is not awarded on every course - in fact, very few students attain this level. Recipients are assessed on the highest level of consistent performance throughout the entire eighteen weeks, and performance is based on the following criteria:

Command and Control; Motivation; Confidence; Team Work; Discipline; Performance in the field; Examination marks; and Basic knowledge in the trade.

LCpl Bogart can now be a real asset as an RSE in 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SA Hadley**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert** RC Signals
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K Overton**

EXERCISE SOUTHERN LIGHTS - *by Sig Bradley*

EX SOUTHERN LIGHTS is a one-week Electricians' ex that tests, in a tactical environment, the mental, physical and educational attributes that the course has developed over the previous 16 weeks. The ex consists mainly of setting up the FEPDS (Field Electrical Power Distribution System). FEPDS provides the power requirements for a unit or battle situation such as a HQ, medical centre or just limited lighting needs.

On Day 1 we were deployed to Piddlehinton Trg Area, where the ex was underway as soon as we arrived. The NBC threat was high, everyone was fully 'cammed up' and the trg had begun! We set up the admin area with lighting and distribution sockets, and before we knew it, we were planning our first FEPDS set-up. Our lack of experience and practice in the field led to many initial mistakes. After some professional criticism from **Sgt Prem**, however, we had all learned from our mistakes and got our heads down.

On Tuesday, things were looking up, and on Wednesday the set-up was going OK, until the siren went and we had to get into full NBC kit. It took us two hours to finish, but things were still progressing, with the set-ups were looking smarter and neater all the time. With Thursday being the last set-up of the ex, everything needed to be perfect - and it was! Every load and bulb was where it needed to be, all the cables were labelled up, and the routing was all together. After packing up, everybody was tired, but morale was high, knowing that the last set-up we did had been a success. On Friday morning, we packed up all the admin and headed back to camp, where we then unloaded and stored away all the kit. On the whole, I really enjoyed the ex, although it was strenuous and tiring. I am proud that we worked well as a team, and proud of achieving the targets that we were set.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Carter**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Marlowe**

EXERCISE NAUTICAL SWORD
- by Cpl Reynolds, Beaufighter Tp

As the ferry from Southampton reached the port in Cowes on the Isle of Wight the sun was blazing, the crossing had been calm (but extortionate!) and it seemed that EX NAUTICAL SWORD, run by Beaufighter Tp may run smoothly and trouble free, and so it did... Almost!

On arrival at Jersey Camp in Newport, the trainees debussed and got the briefs and safety points (smoking area, bar timings, no rubbish etc!). The first activity was Orienteering and was a 10km route over fields and through woods. The fields were shared with the most mental, violent, vindictive and probably rabid cows! After half an hour, reports started coming through of Trainee's getting chased, herded, and being forced to climb trees and jump over barbed wire to escape! Obviously seeing the comedy value of this, **Cpl Mitchell** and **SSgt Fraser** decided to go and see the mad cows, and after an hour they returned out of breath, battered, bruised and wide-eyed admitting that the cows on the Isle of Wight had serious issues with the Army. Everyone came back safely, though shaken, and ready for hill-walking the next day.

The hill-walking groups got dropped off at the designated points at Freshwater and The Needles, with arrangements to pick them up at 'around 15.00hrs'. Meanwhile, the Sqn OC, **Maj Carter**, got dropped off halfway between both points and would meet up with the CO when he arrived at Yarmouth port. For those not familiar with this area, the walking is some distance!

The highlight of the weekend was a raft building and sailing activity. As none of us was qualified in the art of ship-building, it was decided that **SSgt Fraser** and **SSgt Hounsell** would help us, to ensure swift sailing and dry clothes. What **SSgt Fraser** failed to tell anyone was that he'd never made a raft, never been in charge of a group of people making a raft, or had even seen programmes where they've made rafts. The 'rafts' hit the water and initially stayed afloat - or at least **SSgt Hounsell's** team's did. Unfortunately, **SSgt Fraser's** effort began its maiden voyage as debris tied together, and it finished as debris being pushed along frantically by the good Sgt! Unbelievably, **SSgt Fraser's** team actually won, but it was the CO's decision to award first place to **SSgt Hounsell's** team, due to the fact that it resembled a raft and not a flat packed wardrobe with margarine boxes tied to them!

After a lengthy handover/takeover of the accn, including comments of 'Someone owes me a pillow cover... Leave it at the office anonymously, and no more will be said...' we left it in

Sgt Hounsell's team first over the line, but denied the victory

immaculate condition. With the sun still shining, we departed for the port. A quality time was had by everyone, and the weather was amazing. Well done to everyone who thought they needed a passport! And thanks to **Sgt Watters** of 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261) for cooking all weekend and harassing the ladies of Ryde.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Capt EA Pointon**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) JM SWANSTON**

SWANAGE PARADE - *by Sig Saunders*

On Saturday 9 July, 11 Sig Regt received The Liberty of Swanage, in recognition of the Regt's continued support for the Swanage Railway and its wider community over the past 20 years. The three Sqns were represented by their respective officers, and the Regt was led by the CO, **Lt Col Fensom**.

After a number of rehearsals at Blandford during the previous week, it was a 25-mile coach ride to Swanage on a warm Saturday morning, and swift change into No 2 Dress at the Town Football Club. When everyone and their weapons were checked out, the Regt marched down along the sea front towards the dais, where the Lord Mayor of Swanage, **Cllr Tony Miller**, addressed them, and presented the Liberty of Swanage Scroll to the CO, **Lt Col Fensom**. The crowd were treated to a superb medley of music played by the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals, including the recent chart-topping hit, *Is this the way to Amarillo*?

The CO, Lt Col MJ Fensom, receives The Liberty of Swanage Scroll from the Mayor, Cllr Tony Miller

Following a reply by the CO, and an inspection by the Mayor, the Regt marched through the streets of Swanage 'with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, and band playing' as traditionally granted by the Liberty of Swanage. The whole event neatly coincided with Town's events commemorating the 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ day; and many of the shops in the town displayed flags, bunting and posters relaying information informing the public why the Parade was taking place.

The Mayor, Cllr Tony Miller inspects 3 (Harrogate) Sqn, accompanied by its OC, Capt EA Pointon

The parade finished on the Town Green, where we were all hosted to a Civic Reception provided by the Town Council, and organised by the local Branch of the Royal British Legion. The buffet was superb, and all the soldiers on the Parade made the most of it and the free beer. Each participant also received a commemorative glass tumbler for taking part - something we were all very proud to receive. Overall, it was an excellent day that I was proud to be involved in!

EXERCISE HARROGATE FOLLY 2
- by Cpl Dibbert

On the weekend of the 01 – 03 July 05, 40 soldiers of the Sqn deployed to Chickerell Camp on EX HARROGATE FOLLY 2, the second AT ex to be run this year. Events included Windsurfing, Kayaking, Abseiling, potted sports, Horse Riding, and a Coastal Walk on the Sunday.

Sig Chadwick did really well overcoming her fear of heights and abseiling down the rock face. It took her a bit of time, but she did conquer it in the end. Well done to her!

SSgt Foster had a run in with a horse. Whilst he was stroking it, it decided to take a chunk out of his T-shirt. It cost him all of two pounds, but we never heard the last of it all day. The potted sports went well, with the left handed throwing competition, where we saw some excellent throwing, honest!!

On the Saturday evening, **Sig Blandford** entertained the troops in the evening with his guitar and outstanding vocals. He also had a helping hand from **Sig Cockburn**, who had a go on the guitar as well. Well done to everyone who took part in the ex, and a big thank you to all of the Upgraders who helped made it such a success.

Sig Vaughan shows how to abseil the cliffs of Dorset with confidence

THE ANNUAL DEFENCE ROAD SAFETY AWARD
- by WO2 Leigh Crossing, MTO

The aim of the Annual Defence Road Safety Award is to promote safe driving standards, and to reward effective safety initiatives by the presentation of a high profile and prestigious Award, The Silver Rose Bowl with a winner's Certificate signed by **Gen Sir Kevin O'Donoghue**. This Trophy is a Tri-Service Award and has

been awarded to the Army only once before. This year, on 26 July, it was presented to 11 Sig Regt - the first time to a Royal Signals unit.

The Presentation of the Defence Road Safety Award to 11 Signal Regiment MT

Each year, RTAs account for the greatest number of deaths in the Armed Forces. In 2004, there were 8,466 accidents resulting in 72 deaths, 81 very serious injuries, 75 medical discharges and 631 serious injuries. The cost, both in human and monetary terms, is enormous. The estimated losses on veh repairs and medical costs last year were over £135.92M. Armed with statistics like this, and the fact that there had been several RTAs on Blandford Garrison in the space of only a few months, it was decided to focus on Road Safety, including driving standards and road improvements.

This meant a lot more work for 11 Sig Regt MT, who had to carry out numerous Road Safety initiatives throughout the year. Two electronic speed signs were purchased, providing a useful tool to remind drivers of their speed, slowing them down and collecting speed data for our database.

Road improvements included new road markings, raised pedestrian crossings, speed humps, new road signs and a new one-way priority road system outside the Garrison School. During the drink driving campaign, both of the gates were manned and posters and road safety literature was given out to road users to promote awareness. A Falcon speed detector was purchased to help the local MOD Police to enforce the speed limits on Blandford Camp

LCpl Whittenstall collecting data and making speeding drivers aware of their offence

The Road Safety Week in November 2004 enabled us to promote road safety in different ways. It included various initiatives, such as free winter checks on civilian vehicles, speeding checks using the electronic signs, and drink driving presentations. The MOD Police helped out by carrying out voluntary 'morning after' breath tests, which gave a few people quite a shock! Popular stands were the cross-country familiarisation driving stand, and the skid control stand run by **LCpl Rodgers**.

Blandford Camp is a small community, with schools, shops and other amenities. Like on all camps, the area has a large volume of traffic and pedestrians; so road safety is a serious issue that must constantly be addressed. Whilst we didn't set out to win the Award, it is great recognition of all our hard work and efforts throughout the year, to make our Camp and driving standards safer. We are all looking forward to the legendary off-road Land Rover Experience Day, which was donated by the sponsors of the Award!

Skid control trg was available for all Blandford personnel

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM**

FREEDOM OF HERFORD PARADE - *by LCpl Dixon*

After a couple of weeks of practice and a lot of rifle drill in the heat, and under the close eye of **WO2(SSM) Fleming**, the Regt exercised its Freedom rights during the Herford Vision parade. The Parade began on Hammersmith Bks, and, accompanied on the parade by the very loud RTR Cambrai Band, the Regt set off with swords drawn, bayonets fixed and band playing.

As we marched through the streets, we were greeted by a whole host of well-wishers, from Hells Angels to school gymnasts.

Once we were halted in the main square, the Burgermeister gave a speech and thanked the Regt for the parade, and their support for the local community.

Overall, it was a very enjoyable parade and everyone was pleased with their efforts, although there were a few near misses with all the wobbling swords and swaying bayonets.

EXERCISE PREMIER CHAIN 2

212 Sig Sqn have not allowed the incredibly hot German weather to slow down the pace of life in any way over the last few weeks. After a 6-month deployment to Bosnia, a 3-day driving ex, EX PREMIER CHAIN 2 was much needed to blow away the cobwebs. This was the perfect opportunity to ensure all drivers in the Sqn refreshed themselves with the skills and drills required for packet moves. It should prove to be perfect prep for the long and winding drive to Poland in November on EX ULAN EAGLE.

The ex started with an easy drive from Harewood Bks to Achmer Trg Area, where there was a demonstration and practice of setting up in a hide loc. After a suitable break, it was a long but problem-free run down to Sennelager, where the troops successfully disappeared into the woods, under cam nets and artfully placed natural cover, to overnight. The cam was so good, that when the MT SNCO **Sgt Ibbinson** arrived after sweeping the route, he struggled to find them!

Packet comds were swapped over after every move, which meant suddenly Sigs and LCpls found themselves in positions of responsibility. They had to ensure not only that the packet was heading in the right direction (most of the time), but also that they set off at the allocated time with all the right personnel and equipt in the right order. For most, such as **Sig Smollens**, this was a challenge to be relished, and he was often seen cutting about with much confidence and motivation. It was great to see the guys grasping the mantle.

The next day it was off to Hameln, engineer country, where the MT boys really came into their own. Important driving skills lessons were put on, included reversing a Bedford and a Landrover into a 'garage' made up of cones. **Sig Baker** loved the authority of running a stand, and duly fined anyone who didn't make it in one go, a crate of beer! The RTA scenario on a junction was extremely challenging, and thoroughly honed the drills of the drivers and comds, testing their team work to the maximum. Even the visiting POs got an opportunity to demonstrate the successful parking a Bedford!

Later that evening, it was a long trek down to Elmpt Station. Wednesday was spent on the cross-country driving range, which for most of those on the ex, was their first experience of this type of driving. The lads loved it, especially battering over the top of Hill 60, and pushing their skills to the limit. Then it was the long return trip to Herford. So with a collective 29,900 kms under their belts, no RTAs and only 2 vehs deciding to hitch a ride with the LAD, 212 Sig Sqn all arrived back, weary but safe and well-practised at 01.00hrs on Thursday. A cracking ex was had by all!

ANNUAL BATTLECAMP - *by LBdr Kirkup*

It was a very hot day when 212 Sig Sqn deployed on EX PREMIERE CHALLENGE 2, the annual Regt Battle Camp. On arrival at Haltern Trg Area, we were divided into our sections, with **Cpl Steve McNally** and **Cpl Scott** getting into green mode in full Royal Signals fashion.

During the first three days, we conducted dry trg such as VCPs, Anti-Ambush drills, BCDT, NBC and cross-country driving. Special mention must go to the Regt MT for the cross-country driving phase of the ex. They did manage to get the vehs bogged in on a number of occasions, but this was obviously always our fault, due to the lack of driving experience on soft-skin vehs - being an armd Sig Sqn.

After the dry trg, which was enjoyed by all, we moved into the Live Firing phase of the ex. This took the form of an IBSR, then Pairs Fire and Manoeuvre, culminating in an FTA and a section in defence range. This gave JNCOs and Sig/Gnrs the opportunities to exert their leadership qualities and military prowess (Some with a little more prowess than others).

On the Thursday evening after the BBQ, the Sqn had their turn at orienteering, in which **Sigs Wood** and **Kitson** took a wrong turn that cost our section 340 points.

The final day started well, as the sun had stopped shinning and it was finally raining. This was the culmination of what we had learned, taking the form of a patrol competition. During the day, stories from other sections were reaching us. **Cpl Jim Bartlett** had got geographically embarrassed - nothing new there then! At the end of the day's competition, we were relieved to hear that the ACFT they had planned was cancelled, due to the heat. **Sgt Robson** and his PT staff were not happy.

The winners of the patrol competition were decided on the orienteering results. As this was a two-way tie between a section from the 'other armd Sqn' and my section, it was decided that the other section were the winners, with us being runners up.

As the prizes were being awarded, a special mention was given to **LCpl Cook** for his section winning the overall Orienteering competition. A big mention goes to all the trg staff for a very enjoyable week.

The Runners-up, 6 Section, 212 Sig Sqn

BA(G) SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS
- by Lt Grant Brown

At 05.00hrs on Wednesday 01 Jun, the 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt Swimming Team departed Hammersmith Bks to take part in the BA(G) Swimming and Water Polo Championships at the blue pool, JHQ.

In the Swimming, both the Men's and Women's teams performed well in a fiercely contested competition. Whilst not placing as high as last year, the team deserves credit for their performances, especially the Women, as a few of their number were new to competitive swimming.

Next came the Water Polo Championships. As defending champions, we took to the pool as odds-on favourites. Many of the team members had not played the sport before, and this was a baptism of fire for them. The guys picked up the rules and tactics quickly, and although we played hard, we were knocked

out of the competition in the semi-finals by the eventual winners, 16 Sig Regt.

HAWK TROOP ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

On 12 June, Hawk Tp, 201 Sig Sqn embarked on an AT exped to Kiel on the North West Coast of Germany. Choosing a water sport is always a challenge at Kiel, as there are so many on offer - each coming with expert tuition and instruction. Hawk Tp decided to try a bit of everything, and on the final three days, they concentrated on obtaining a qualification in Powerboat handling.

It proved to be great fun, and due to the lacklustre weather, the ocean was quite empty when the guys decided to let rip and rag the powerboats at top speed. Well done to **Lt Bell,** who managed to get stopped by the coastguard for flying around Kiel harbour at 25 knots when the speed limit is only 6. He looks forward to paying the fine. **Sigs Manning** and **Marshall** did a superb job at trying to split the quay in two by continually ramming the boats. All in all, it was a great week, which was rounded off by an end of course dinner and a morning at the local U-boat museum.

OFFICERS' VERSUS SERGEANTS' MESS CRICKET
- by Lt Bell

On a blistering hot Tuesday afternoon the Sgts' Mess took to the cricketing battlefield to avenge the thrashing they had taken the previous year at the hands of a skilful and talented Offrs' Mess. The Offrs' Mess took to the field and with a mixture of spin and medium pace bowling, and had the Sgts' Mess on the ropes. Good bowling from Offrs kept the Sgts' Mess heads down, but determined striking of the ball from **WO2(SSM) Fleming** helped the middle order dig in, and notch up a very sizeable total of 176 all out.

The CO and the GOC opened the batting for the Offrs - on paper a mighty partnership that established a good base for the rest of their team to build upon. Unfortunately, what amounted to a minor middle order collapse took place, and with swift and accurate bowling from the Sgts' Mess, the tail-enders where soon holding their tails between their legs.

The Sgts' Mess won by 7 wickets, and took much joy in presenting the runner's up prize to the Offrs' Mess - a wooden toilet seat! Egos remained intact, and the Sgts enjoyed good banter at an evening BBQ in the Offrs' Mess.

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON WINS THE INTER-SQUADRON SWIMMING - *by LCpl Winters*

On Monday 25 July, the Regt descended on 'Im Kleinen Feld' better known as the outdoor swimming pool in Herford. Although a very busy time at the Regt, individuals dragged themselves away from commitments and threw themselves into the competitive spirit of the Inter-Sqn competition. Whilst rules had to be bent to allow for full participation, this did not detract from the day, and some fine displays were put on. The first event splashed off at 10.20hrs, and with a slow start but stirling effort, **Cpl Leigh Necrews** and **Sig Sarah Bain** came home in second and first place respectively in the 50m freestyle.

Next came the real swimmers' race, and with only one volunteer for 201Sig Sqn, **LCpl Chris Matthews** did a great job to power away and win the race. The day was off to a good start for 201 Sig Sqn, and with yet more impressive performances, **WO2 (SSM) Joyce** and **LCpl Anna Morgans** brought home more second places. Soon after, came the 50m backstroke, and with **SSgt Abbott** in the water, we pretty much embarrassed the opposition.

Next up was everybody's favourite race, the infamous butterfly race. **SSgt Abbott** kindly volunteered **LCpl Jimmy Wilson** for the 50m butterfly, and despite never competing before, he did the Sqn proud with a brilliant effort, finishing fourth!

The Victorious 201 Sig Sqn swimming Team

The day was going well, and the Sqn had notched up some good points, but we knew it would all come down to the relay races. With a huge effort from the relay teams, we gained enough points to pip HQ Sqn for the Trophy.

Mention must be made of **Lt Col Robson**, who appeared to be the dark horse of HQ Sqn, and **Cpl Pullen**, who unfortunately was forced to compete in every female event due to a shortage of personnel.

201 Sig Sqn are now the Regimental Swimming Champions, and look forward to retaining the title next year. A big thank you goes to all swimmers and personnel for brilliant efforts all round, and to the gym staff for organising the day.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AG Hill**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) P Griffiths**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj K Bailie** R Irish
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Burdus**

REGIMENTAL FUN DAY - *By Sig Neil Key*

The Regt Fun Day, organised by HQ Sqn, took place on Saturday 9 July 2005 for all Regt personnel with their families to relax, socialise and get away from the normal busy schedule. Throughout the day, there were various stands for families (i.e. Bouncy Castle), stalls for children; lucky dips and a networked games suite (whoever said ATacCS isn't useful!), a live band and disco.

There were also a number of inter-Sqn competitions; volleyball – won by HQ Sqn, and Tug of War – won by 222 Sqn. Of course, no day would be complete without the warm weather, hot food and cold beer.

In all, the day was a massive success, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all Regt personnel and their families.

SERVICE GS DRIVERS COURSE

The Service GS Drivers course, run by the Regtl MT, was a good two weeks of hard trg in both a classroom environment and local trg area. In all, twelve students achieved the high standards required.

Week 1 consisted of mainly classroom work, then, after all the boy racers had been weeded out and moulded to the instructor's way of thinking, the second week saw some good road driving skills.

It was at this point that things started to go slightly wrong. **Sig Curtis** decided to break his Landrover by blowing the water pump, leaving the rest of his team stranded without wheels. Whilst the remainder of the group went on their way in the capable hands of **LCpls Muz Murray** and **Ash Liverton**, **Cpl Powell**, being a bit of a hero, decided he would wait for recovery. Being only six miles out, how long could the recovery be? As quick as a flash, five and a half hours later, to be exact, the AA turned up. Come back REME, all is forgiven.

With that small matter dealt with, students progressed onto the cross-country phase, where they were all very eager to get stuck in. As luck would have it, the RA were very accommodating by demonstrating to our students how not to do it. When attempting to negotiate one of the Seven Sisters (Tidworth cross-country area) one of their Landrovers barrel rolled three times down the hill.

Thankfully, nobody was hurt, but our students couldn't have been given a better example. Many thanks to the Gunners! Needless to say, this soon got rid of any budding rally drivers just in time to introduce water crossing/wading, self-aid and recovery drills. **LCpl Walton** and **Sig Bilsby** were first up to carry out the wading drills, but appeared a little upset as the water cascaded over the tops of their boots.

however, **Sig Kelly** could not see what their problem was as he was in it up to his neck! He had dropped and lost his shovel whilst carrying out a recce on the water crossing. As you can tell, a few lessons were learned the hard way!

The final part of the course was a night drive. En route to the hide loc, all went well, with drills carried out as per unit SOPs, and the DS couldn't have been happier! That was, until **Sig Emma Bilsby** compromised the first hide loc by tooting the horn of her Landrover. After bugging out to the next loc where all the students practised putting their cam and concealment lessons into effect, they were again compromised. So it was time to bug out again.

With the DS obviously very weary of the night drive by this point, everyone headed back home. With the vehs then washed down, it was time for the eagle eyed **LCpl Muz Murray** to inspect them, complete with white glove. All said and done, all enjoyed the course, and all students passed with flying colours.

EXERCISE BLUEBELL'S BIMBLE

EX BLUEBELL'S BIMBLE was a coastal path walk, organised by **Cpl Aaron Nessling** for the lads of the gene bay and LAD. After a scenic drive through the countryside of Wiltshire and Dorset, we arrived at the picturesque hamlet of Lulworth Cove. Once out of the minibus, there were a few cries of 'Look at the size of that chuffing hill!' followed by a reply of 'That's only the first one, Ha-Ha.' But once we had fully conquered the first four hills, it was easier going for a while.

Our first stop was at Ringstead Bay for an icecream. We then trekked all the way to the *Smuggler's Inn* for more icecream. After a leisurely lunch and a few thirst-quenching pints of *Thirsty Ferret*, we proceeded onwards to Furzy Cliff, in Weymouth. Overall, we had quality weather for the duration, a nice bimble, and well-deserved break from work. If you've never been down this part of the world before, then you are definitely missing out.

REGIMENTAL GOLF COMPETITION

On 14 July, the Regtl Golf Championships were held at The Leckford Golf Club with a turnout of about 30 people. Despite the lack of funds, some serious begging and scrounging was done by **SSgt Chalky White** to ensure that we had some prizes on offer. A thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all, and 206 (Mexican) Sig Sqn won the inter-Sqn competition, with **Sig Gorton** winning the individual prize. Fortunately, the weather held off, and everyone returned to the *Sportsman's Bar* for a curry; and while watching the British Open on big screen, the prizes were presented, on behalf of the CO, by **Capt (TOT) Pete Stowell**.

The winners were:

Individual Winner	**Sig Gorton**, 206 Sig Sqn
Runner Up	**Sig Hayward**, 222 Sig Sqn
1st Female	**Lt Berry**, 222 Sig Sqn
Nearest the Pin	**Mr Mel Millar**, Guest
Longest Drive	**SSgt White**, HQ Sqn

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Meadowcroft BEM**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Reed**

EXERCISE DRAGON SURF

EX DRAGON SURF was this year's Regtl AT Camp held at Penally Trg Camp in South Wales. Each Sqn was allocated a one-week period, with additional personnel from the Div HQ in the second week. A total of 240 soldiers from the Regt and Div HQ successfully completed the package.

The primary aim was to develop personal qualities, to encourage Unit cohesion, and to introduce soldiers to different AT disciplines.

There were a number of activities including Kayaking, Coast Walking, Rock Climbing, Mountain Biking, Land Yachting, Clay Target Shooting, Orienteering and Coasteering, which produced some interesting results and injuries.

Maj Paul Smith's mountain biking group set off in the wrong direction, and covered twice the usual distance, resulting in some very sore rear ends. **Cpl Smith** of 202 Sig Sqn provided the funniest spill on the land yachts with a complete mid-air flip. Each week, soldiers were also offered organised but self-funded R and R activities, such as Sea Fishing, Quad Biking, Go Karting, Paintballing and Horse Riding. The first of these resulted in the inaugural Mackerel Olympics being played at the obligatory BBQ.

A secondary aim was to enable some soldiers to gain recognised AT qualifications. 24 soldiers achieved the Kayak Foundation Course qualification. A further 6 soldiers attended the RYA Competent Crew Course, a 5-day cruise on board a Victoria 34 Sail Training Craft, which included night sailing.

Finally, 4 soldiers from the Regt attended the Basic Freefall course at the Joint Service Parachute Centre (JSPC), Netheravon. They began with a short ground trg package, before quickly progressing on to static line, and then freefall jumping, working their way through a category system with a view to earning an 'A' licence, qualifying them to jump solo anywhere in the world.

A worthwhile trg package enjoyed by all who took part, EX

DRAGON SURF clearly achieved its aim and was a great success.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj B Farrimond**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Ward**

EXERCISE ANOLECRAB TREK DRAGON

With the emphasis on adventure and fun, 9 members of 222 Sig Sqn set off for the peaks of the Spanish Pyrenees. The exp consisted of 5 days arduous trekking from west to east along the Grand Recorrio 11 trail near the Ordesa National Park. Everything we needed was carried on our backs, and we camped wild or took refuge in mountain huts at the end of each day.

The route challenged even the fittest members of the group, with our greatest climb involving a climb of 1,200m, and on the loose rocky terrain, the descent was just as punishing. The views from the peaks were stunning, and the sense of achievement more than made up for the effort required in reaching the top. Although not everyone shared **Sgt Stan Knowles'** enthusiasm for contours, the navigational ability of all members of the group showed a marked improvement.

On completion of the trekking phase, the group travelled to Barcelona for some R and R. After some sightseeing on the open top tour bus, we retired to Port Olympico to soak up some culture in the local nightspots. After much hydration, and sleep deprivation we completed our visit with a paddle in the Med.

Members of the exped take a well-earned breather

EXERCISE IRON STORM

Another month and another ex for 222 Sig Sqn. This time we were deploying on EX IRON STORM, a field ex in support of the RA. Leaving the hallowed ground of Bulford and moving to the desolate wastelands of Salisbury Plain, Masirah Tp would once again be the lynch pin for another successful deployment.

The Switching Centrals were as always in great demand, providing the necessary access for the mobile subscribers. Suffering with initial gene faults, the troops excelled themselves, managing to work through the problems to ensure that a high level of comms was achieved. The ex was a great success, and much was learned by all those involved. After turning around the vehs on their return, the Tp took a few well-deserved beers and looked forward to their imminent future deployment on more exs.

EXERCISE FIRST TRY - *by Sig Neil Key*

On Sunday 5 May 2005, the very best of Sharjah Tp deployed on EX FIRST TRY, supporting 1 Mech Bde. After all the preliminaries, including the usual convoy briefings before deployment from **Lt Berry** and **Sgt Knowles**, we were on the road heading towards Sidbury.

On arrival, as predicted, the rain began - and continued! We immediately began the initial setup, the relay dets working hard at getting in their relevant shots to both Tidworth and elsewhere within SPTA. We also had a Switching Central in loc - each extra pair of hands helps for the security plan of the area! **SSgt Miller** seemed a little upset with the time it took us to get our cam nets up, and to sort out normal routine, but we kept telling him that you can't rush perfection! Actually, we hadn't deployed on a comms ex for a while, so we were all a little out of practice. I believe the Tp will be practising quite a bit in the near future!

With **Cpl Mundy** heading up the night shift, the first night in the field came and went with no problems, as expected. 1 Mech weren't in loc until the morning, so comms weren't a problem - we had none! As night turned into day, the rain eased and the sun rose, and link by link, 1 Mech Bde came slowly into the ex.

A static ex can become very monotonous, even if only for 6 days, so everyone was relieved when ENDEX was called at 09.00 hrs on the Friday. As anticipated, the teardown was much quicker than the setup. Everyone was back in camp by 11.30 hrs. Then began the mammoth sprint to get everything done as quickly as possible, to expedite a hasty retreat home on Friday afternoon! All that was left was the Troop OC's inspection. And by 13.00hrs, everyone had mounted their metal steeds, and ridden off into the impending sunset. Another job successfully completed by Sharjah Tp.

D-DAY ANNIVERSARY VISIT - *by LCpl Lisa Walton*

I joined 206 Sig Sqn on an ex to Normandy. The purpose was to commemorate the 61st Anniversary of D-Day, through numerous parades and a sponsored walk to raise money for the Normandy Veterans' Association.

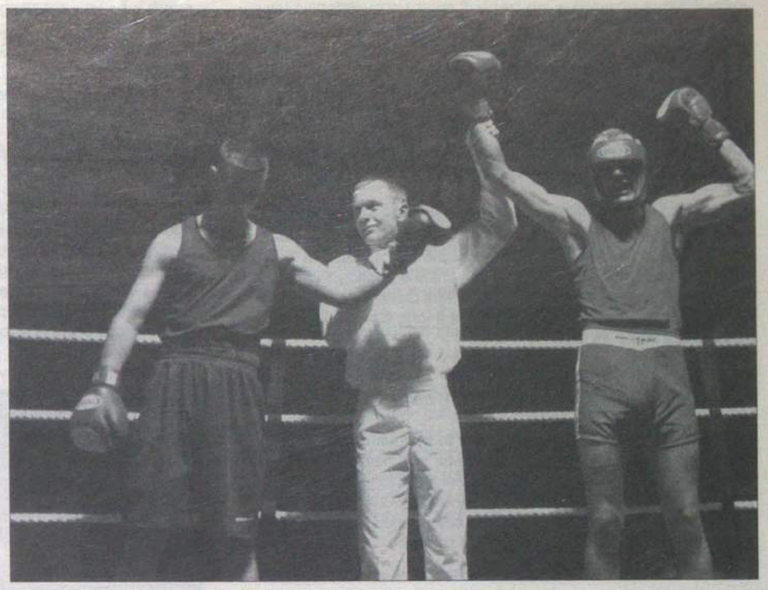
We took the overnight ferry from Portsmouth to Caen, and on the journey we met some of the Veterans from 3 Div who had landed on SWORD Beach on D-Day. This was one of the highlights of the ex, being able to meet and talk to the veterans about some of their experiences on 6 June 1944.

On arriving in Caen the next morning, we went straight on a battlefield tour of Normandy, where we first visited the American cemetery. This was a very moving experience, because of the way the thousands of graves brought to light the extent of the devastation that occurred during the war. We then continued to OMAHA Beach, Pegasus Bridge, Pegasus Museum, SWORD Beach, where 3 Div landed, and where the 3 Div symbol is in the paving. To raise money for the Normandy Veterans' Association, we did a sponsored walk from OMAHA Beach to Pegasus Bridge. This was done in groups, with each group doing about 20 miles. This raised just over £500.

On 6 June we attended two D-Day ceremonies, one in the morning in the centre of Caen, and the other in the evening on SWORD Beach. The latter was the main ceremony, and the one that meant the most to us, because we had to march the one and half miles from the beach to the cemetery where the 3 Div soldiers who died on D-Day are buried. It was a very emotional ceremony for the veterans, because some of their friends and comrades had been buried there. I remember standing at a grave with one of the veterans, and he said to me that it was his best mate who had been buried there.

On 7 June, we had two more ceremonies before boarding the ferry that night. The morning ceremony was in Caen, and the afternoon was at a different 3 Div cemetery that had not been commemorated in previous years.

Overall, the ex was a great success; we all came away with a greater understanding of what D-Day was all about, and a huge amount of admiration and respect for the veterans. Overall, a very worth while ex, and I'm looking forward to next year with great enthusiasm



Victory!

REGIMENTAL BOXING NIGHT
– by Cpl Steve Austin

When we started boxing trg for the inter-Sqn boxing team, we knew we weren't in for an easy ride. From the start, the PTIs were showing us that if we weren't serious about it, we wouldn't make it through the six weeks of trg.

Although the fitness trg was hard, what I found more difficult was gaining the technical proficiency in the ring. Because I have never done any kind of boxing trg before, I had to start with the basics of how to throw a jab correctly, how to stand and move correctly in the stance, but most importantly of all how to defend myself.

After those six weeks, we all felt a lot fitter and stronger - physically and mentally. There were to be 11 fights on the finals night on 7 July. My fight was number 9, a Light Heavyweight fight between **Sig McKenna** and myself. The whole Regt was seated around the ring in their No 2 dress. When the first boxer started his walk to the ring, I could hear the crowd cheering from the changing room. This started to make me very excited about what I was about to do.

After waiting what seemed like an eternity for the first 8 fights to pass, it was finally my turn. My Second on the night was **Sgt Dave Moore**, who I thank a lot for his help and enthusiasm. As the music started, I walked out first to the red corner, my Second helped me into the ring, and took my attention away from the crowd by telling me what I had to do in the ring.

No matter how much trg you have, after one round of boxing, you start feeling very tired because you want to put on a good show for the crowd. The first 2 rounds we were going out pretty much jab for jab. By now my nose and lip were bleeding quite profusely, and my Second was telling me this is the third and final round, and that I had to go all out.

I went out forgetting how tired my arms and legs were, and just gave it my all. My opponent did the same, but with his having 2 standing counts, the fight was over and I was the victor. When all the fights had finished, all the boxers got suited and booted, and we headed off up to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, where everyone proceeded to clap us for the show we had put on for them. I'd like to thank all the coaches, PTI staff, organisers and my Tp seniors for giving me the time to do the trg required.

REGIMENTAL MEDALS PARADE – *by Sig Stebbs Stebbing*

On 8 July 2005, the Regt formed up ready for one of the proudest parades for some of its members, to receive their medals for their efforts on OP TELIC 1, 2, 3 and 4.

On the day, the weather was fine - not too sunny, not too cold. Then the moment of truth - the music was playing, families were watching, and everybody was marching smart as carrots.

All was OK up until the CO was presenting the medals to the lucky boys and girls who made it back safe and sound from OP TELIC. After that, because the parade was long, a few were struggling to stand to attention for so long, and received a sore nose as a result. But soon after, we were all marched off and then paraded at the Sportsman's Bar to kick-start the Regtl weekend.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

The sun never sets on the 7 Sig Regt. 232 Squadron's deployment on OP TELIC ensures that we have soldiers across Iraq; 229 Squadron are covering pan-Balkan CIS needs; officers and soldiers are currently on exchanges to Australia; and individuals have volunteered to augment other operations such as in the Sudan.

This Regt now covers most continents and the Regtl flash is proudly worn in most time zones; globalisation knows no bounds.

Eager to maintain the operational ethos and tempo, the remainder of the Regt based in Elmpt, Germany, has started planning for next year's probable 9-month deployment to Afghanistan. The following articles give a flavour of what 7 Sig Regt is doing at the moment, in the Balkans, Iraq, West Germany, Bavaria and Egypt.

THE MULTI NATIONAL iNTEGRATED SIGNALS UNIT (MISU), BALKANS *-by Maj David Hay RASigs*

We have been very busy so far, to the point where we hardly see our Dagger operators, and are beginning to forget what they look like! You will all be pleased to know that the Sqn, located in BLMF, are taking full opportunity of the chance publicly to ridicule the Australian cricket team to our boss, Maj David Hay RASigs. However, as he keeps reminding, us it is a long summer...but we'll enjoy it while we can!

DAGGER OPERATIONS *- by Sig Tom Whitehead*

We rose at 06.00hrs and made our way to the guardroom to collect our weapons. The early morning air was heavy as we made our way across the Banja Luka Metal Factory. Questions raced through my mind. Was I good enough? Would the Bosnians forget to set their alarm clocks and be caught sleeping? But one question plagued me the most: Would I make it back from this one?

LCpl Dave Laing and I arrived at the Cazin cement factory at 14.00hrs on 31 June 2005, and after a quick sweep of the building, we set about the business of establishing comms. Now, this is usually a very simple process, and for years Dagger ops around the world have thanked the Dagger gods for blessing them with such an easy time - but not this day. For over four hrs we argued and fought over which buttons were not being pressed hard enough, and other ways we could resolve the problem. Suddenly, as if guided by the hand of the Dagger Lord himself (**Sgt Collard**), comms dropped in. And in a rush of adrenalin, we set about laying out the build as if there were 10 men in our crew.

The build was simple: two blue phones, one laptop - easy. With our newfound enthusiasm, the ops room was soon ready to go, and we could almost hear the call of the X box that was simply dying to be played. But our happiness was to be short-lived - the link dropped out. 'No problem' we thought. 'I'll sort it oot maan,' **LCpl Laing** cried, as he bounded towards the stricken Dagger Det. I continued with setting up, but became concerned after hearing repeated banging and cries of despair coming from the direction of the Det. I approached, and on looking inside, saw an outraged **Dave** chanting ancient Celtic noises at the Promina. I promptly offered my assistance.

After three hours, and some unintelligible Brummy swearing, we were ready to accept defeat, when, at 02.30hrs on 01 June, the link dropped in. We ensured the phones were working and went to bed content in the knowledge that no problem was too great for the crew of Dagger 96. We slept the sleep of the dead that night.

The sun rose on the second morning and we had not yet stirred from our dreams of past Dagger adventures. Then at 06.30hrs a young private from the Argylls bravely poked his head into the Dagger tent, 'The phones are doon, laads!' After fighting the temptation to kill him right there, I climbed out of bed and set about doing my thing. For the next few hours, we threw all of our skills and knowledge at the kit, but it was not to be. We accepted defeat and called upon the Dagger Lord for aid.

Dagger 99 arrived like a white knight, and we knew we were saved. The link was up and working in no time, much to the relief of everyone, and we were once again left on our own. The op went almost like clockwork from then on, although once a day, at 08.30hrs each morning, the link would drop out, just to remind us just how powerful it is. But after a short while, it came back, allowing us to rest again.

At sparrow's on the morning of 4 June, we packed up and left the cement factory. After a hero's return and a little rant from me because I had missed karaoke the night before, we turned the Det around and made our way back to the block, to share our tales with the other Dagger teams that had returned safely.

HQ (UK) NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT SIGNAL TROOP IN IRAQ

The COMMCEN is operating on a strict regime of two days, two nights and two off. The IT section is rotating around an earlies, lates, day off pattern; and TECHCON are on days, with a duty tech on call, and grabbing at least one day off a week. The Tp itself is expertly run by **Capt Cooper** and **SSgt Jones**. Days off are something that other people have, although a bit of down time is occasionally grabbed here and there.

Of course, there are always those that have to look elsewhere to find work. **Sgt McCallum** is now the official HQ (UK) NSE bar manager of the *Dog and Vixen*, and is doing a sterling job keeping the morale of the two hundred or so HQ staff high, with his various schemes and organised events.

We have two members of the RAF Tac Comms Wing (TCW) attached to us, and they have integrated perfectly into the Tp. They change over every two months, but a fresh face is always welcome.

HQNSE Sig Tp in Iraq

The gym is fully equipped, and thankfully air-conditioned, or so I'm told. Running is only possible before 07.00hrs, as the temperature quickly climbs, and by 10.00hrs it's oppressively hot. Volleyball is certainly the sport of choice here. We've even had guys involved in an international competition organised by the Czech Army. Most evenings the techs and ops can be found battling it out for title of 'which trade is best'. Currently the techs are winning.

Other outside activities help to keep the guys busy, and a while ago we helped the EOD with the disposal of twenty-one tonnes of UXO. And yes, they did it in one big bang! A weekly trip to Kuwait is another welcome change of scenery, and we usually manage to get between four and six members of the Tp away each week. The recent Comd's Cup has been hotly contested, with our team finishing second overall, following running, cycling, orienteering, jerry can carrying and rowing events. The next Cup is based around pub games (darts, pool, etc), so we can expect a well-deserved gold in that one.

With people getting away for R and R, and the temperature still climbing, the future looks rosy, if not a little hot out here!

REGIMENTAL BATTLECAMP

After weeks of intensive build up trg, on a scorching Friday afternoon without a cloud in the sky, 229 and HQ Sqns set out to Haltern trg area. The afternoon was taken up by briefings and

updates of the situation. As we settled down for a nice kip that night, we still hadn't heard from the militants, and hopes were high that a political settlement could be found, avoiding any violence and bloodshed. We responded to the heightening tensions in the area by conducting more trg: i.e. VCPs, veh ambushes, and riot trg over the Saturday and Sunday. We heard from the militants briefly on the Sunday night, during a night navex as we passed close by their Camp.

On Monday morning, we had to move from our camp to establish a FOB closer to the threat, and by this time, the locals knew of our loc, and came round to investigate and make a nuisance of themselves. On the Tuesday, the locals became more violent, crashing a veh into a VCP, and the RLC bomb disposal team came out to detonate a suspect IOD. Then local violence started to escalate, because there was bad feeling against our taking control of their car. So we responded by sending out a riot team, and after 2 hours of confrontation in the baking heat, we calmed them.

7 Sig Regt hold the line against rioting local militants

That night, the militants conducted a drive by shooting of the camp, but not before taking photos, which suggested they were planning some sort of attack. On Thursday there were talks held between the Caliban leader and the President of Granoristan, which broke down. This resulted in the Caliban kidnapping the President, so we then had to recce the enemy's known position, and plan an attack to rescue him. The feeling of euphoria was overwhelming, as the militants' resistance was crushed by a well-organised plan and the steely boots of 229 and HQ Sig Sqns. It seemed that each man had grown a foot in height over the course of the Battlecamp.

Then the weary battle-hardened troops tore down camp we'd called home for a week, and returned to base. The victory celebrations were complete, when finally we tucked into brattie and beer on the post-ex BBQ, secure in the knowledge that never again would the rogue elements of Granoristan dare to rise up against the formidable might of the glorious 7 Sig Regt.

EX ARRCADE RIDGEMASTER 05, BAVARIA

Sigs Bramwell and **Bingham** of the QM(T) Dept were given the opportunity to take part in EX ARRCADE RIDGEMASTER 05. The ex was conducted from the AT Centre in Gunzesried-Sage, located in the Allgau region of Bavaria.

'EX ARCADE RIDGEMASTER was amazing,' says **Sig Bingham**. 'Most of the activities I'd never done before, but enjoyed every single one of them. The three that stood out the most for me, were the kletterstieging, white-water rafting and canyoning. We went kletterstieging for the first two days, covering about 5 miles the first day, then stayed in a mountain hut overnight that was 2,900 metres above sea level. The next day, we travelled back to the Lodge. On the Tuesday, we went white water rafting; and on Thursday, Canyoning down waterfalls, which was quite scary! I had a great time, and met a great bunch of mates. And all the staff up there were really helpful. I would definitely go again if the opportunity arose, and I would seriously recommend these types of activities to anyone who has the chance to do them.'

Sig Bramwell comments, 'I found EX ARRCADE RIDGEMASTER really challenging, but fun. I'd never done anything like it before, so I was really happy when I completed it, and I got a real sense of achievement. I enjoyed staying at the Lodge, because it offered me the opportunity to meet new friends, not only from other cap badges, but also from other countries. Each evening we were briefed on the next day's activities, and then we were given the chance to choose an event that we would like to take part in for that day. For the first day, I picked glacier skiing, even though I'd never done skiing before. This event took us to Austria, and so I also got the opportunity to visit that country for the first time. Two days' kletterstieging and hill walking were compulsory for all, but very enjoyable all the same. Even though I am a weak swimmer, I challenged myself to all the water events, and left having felt that I had done myself justice, learned a lot about myself, and had had a great time throughout.'

EXERCISE PHARAOH'S PLUNGE BACKSTOP

EX PHARAOH'S PLUNGE BACKSTOP was a Sub-Aqua expedition to the Red Sea, run earlier this year by 7 Sig Regt. The Red Sea sounds like a holiday, but two weeks of exhaustive non-stop diving, in one of the windiest months in the year, with only a day of R and R in the middle and at the end, can hardly be classed as a leisure period. The R and R days were essential to 'de-fizz' (preventing excessive nitrogen build-up in the divers' bodies).

To cut out time wasted travelling to and from the shore to dive sites, diving from a live-aboard vessel gave us maximum diving opportunities. The *Sea Queen* was an old Russian naval boat that had been converted to a live-aboard after WW2. Prior to our arrival, it had been standing in dry docks for repairs in the Suez Canal - and was still in a state of disrepair upon our arrival back in Hurghada. However, keen and eager as we were to start diving, and after checking all safety essentials, we left port only a few hours later than scheduled, with the crew continuing repairs at sea. As soon as we were out in the open sea with the boat was tossing around wildly from side to side, it dawned on us what we had let ourselves in for. The group all agreed that even if no diving had taken place during the ex, merely surviving the suicidal steering of **Captain Farouk** and the wrath of the waves, would have fulfilled the Army's criteria of Adventurous Training!

Diving on one of the many wrecks

As for the diving, there was a lot of it! We dived the world famous *Thistlegorm* wreck no fewer than four times. We dived the controversial *Salem Express* wreck twice. We dived the stunning reefs in Ras Mohammed, and also the pristine reefs further south, near Safaga. We dived the wrecks of the *El Mina* and *Susanna*, both close to Hurghada, on two occasions. Other wrecks dived include the *Ghiannis D*, the *Carnatic*, the *Kimon* (tile wreck), the *Ulysses* and the *Dunraven*.

These wrecks were conveniently surrounded by coral, so that we could be dropped on the wreck and then make our way back to the boat via the reef. There were various night dives, and these were spectacular in their own right, with the various forms of life seen only at night, such as the spiky urchins that feed on the coral and the eels coming out to feed. Turtles were often spotted, and we saw schools of dolphins twice, although both times we were on the boat at the time.

After only two delayed flights, having overcome the challenges of living on board a boat with 28 people (including 9 boat staff) for two weeks, and with only one hospital visit later (a sprained ankle due to a slip), I can truly say that this ex would not have been such a success if it were not for the cheerful and willing attitudes of all involved. Many thanks go to all participants for their hard work and enthusiasm.

GLASGOW AND LANARKSHIRE ACF VISIT

7 Sig Regt annually hosts a visit from UK Cadet dets, and this year it was the turn of Glasgow and Lanarkshire Army Cadet Force. The aim is to let the cadets have a 'look at life' in a regular Royal Signals Regt.

On arrival on Friday 1 July, the 20 Cadets and 4 adult instructors were given a gentle introduction to the programme, with a cultural visit to Fort Eben Emael near Maastrict.

On Sunday, it was out to the Jever Indoor Ski-Slope at Neuss. Within 10 minutes of the Cadets taking to the slope (most of whom had never skied before), the majority of them had managed to get to the top of the black slope. The result was chaos, with skis, ski poles and bodies in various impossible positions littered the slope, and a look of absolute horror from the RTO!

Under the paternal glare of **Cpl Watt**, the Cadets were issued with all the equipt needed to survive 24hrs in the arduous wilderness at the end of the Elmpt runway. Unfortunately, it seemed that the Cadets had brought some of the famous Scottish weather with them, so Plan B swung into effect.

Cadets are treated to the indoor assault course

Cpl Watt, complete with the back of his fag packet, kept the troops entertained with a programme of various military lessons and PT. The scariest part was to take them to a secluded area for a survival lesson - knives, snares, live animals? After doing his best **Ray Mears** impression, **Cpl Watt** tasked the Cadets to construct a survival shelter, which resulted in a severely depleted first-aid box, and some rather precarious structures that may not have resulted in survival.

Thursday morning saw **LCpl Edge** and **LCpl Ions** give an excellent demonstration of Radio Tp's equipt in the face of adverse comms weather, and a Rad Op in Northern Ireland who, after the tenth radio check, got bored and went for his NAAFI break. As well as doing radio checks, certain Cadets also found the Personal Role Radios rather useful for singing to each other.

The final major event of the week was a visit to 12 Flt AAC based on Elmpt Station. **Cpl Bell** gave the Cadets an overview of the role of the Army Air Corps and introduced them to the Gazelle helicopter. During the week, the Cadets had completed 2 DCCT shoots, and their scores counted towards a flight for the top six shots. The expressions said it all, when the top six were handed their flight helmets and given their final safety brief for their Gazelle flight. **SSgt Woods** AAC then very kindly gave them an aerial tour of Elmpt Station and the surrounding areas. It was of course pointed out to the Cadets that all Royal Signals Regts have Gazelle helicopters, not just 7 Sig Regt! The week finished with a barbecue and presentations at the Station Trg Wing for the Cadets and all DS involved with the visit.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Sykes**
SSM	**WO2 J McEwan**

It has been a busy period for the Sqn, heavily involved in Ceremonials, the G8 Summit, trg hard for the Regtl Cricket competition and finally finishing off PROJECT DELAMINATION – it's been all go!

The Summer period has seen an unusually high number of people leaving the Sqn, most notably the OC, **Maj Ian Dobson**, who left the Corps and the Army in style (in a rather unusual golf buggy/ kayak contraption)!

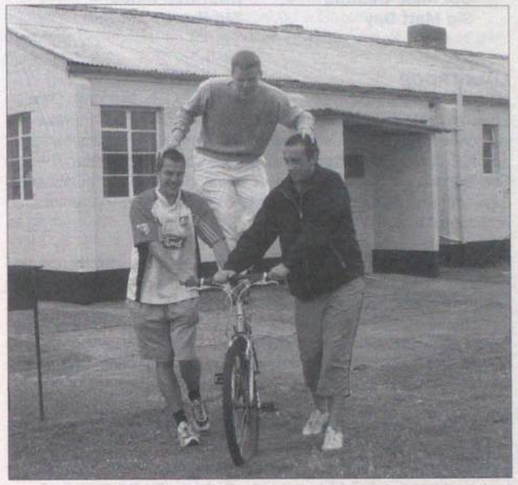
He served 29 very successful years in the Corps, progressing from Sig to Maj, even managing to fit in an All Arms Commando Course along the way. He leaves to continue his work in the world of comms at Harris. We wish him, **Alison** and the girls all the very best for the future.

Capt Jo Wilson moves on to Bassingbourn, and in her place from Lichfield the Sqn welcomes **Capt Paul Gudonis**. **SSgt Jasper Marritt** has nearly completed his HO/TO with the Sqn and has moved to 600 Tp, Corsham - keeping it in the Regt- all the best to him and his family. The new SSM is also in post; we welcome from Cyprus **SSM James McEwan** - a new team to push things onwards and upwards.

EXERCISE COCKNEY SURF - *by Capt Jo Wilson*

In mid June, the Regt deployed once again to Fremington, North Devon for two weeks of fun packed AT. On the programme this year was surfing with the Army No 1 **Sgt Dave Holden** as the instructor. Also available were walking (on Exmoor), Climbing (on Dartmoor), Mountain biking and Paintballing.

The Week 1 students were also involved in an *It's a Knockout* style competition, with such stands as 'Blind Rider'- having put together a mountain bike blindfolded, and then riding it over a mini course, also blindfolded. The other stands were a quiz and a karaoke based competition, where contestants were challenged to choose a track and to perform it with a dance routine. Not surprisingly, from the tunes on offer, all three teams chose *Amarillo*, putting on performances with varying amounts of panache and style.



Another variation on riding a bike

242 SIGNAL SQUADRON - THE END OF AN ERA

On 15 September 2005, 242 Sig Sqn, with personnel in Grampian Tp Edinburgh, Pennine Tp York, Catterick and Preston, will disband. Our civilian personnel are changing to DCSA, and all remaining military will be posted. The OC, **Maj Tudor Hill** will be moving to DII, Corsham; OC Grampian Tp, **Maj (TOT) Lee Brown** will be retiring after 36 years service; and OC Pennine Tp, **Maj (Tfc) Crosby** will finishing out his service with the Sqn.

242 Sig Sqn has been in existence since 1922, when it was known as the Scottish Comd Sig Coy. Over the past 83 years, the Sqn has undergone various name changes, and has seen its AOR expand from Scottish units and ranges to Scotland and the North of England, encompassing 15 Bde, 42 Bde, 51 Bde and 52 Bde areas. It became ACISG and finally part of 10 Sig Regt in recent times.

Alongside the normal day-to-day military Comms and IT commitments, the Sqn has provided PA for the Edinburgh and Berwick Military Tattoos since 1951. Some of the civilian personnel have worked on over 20 of the shows!

Mr Ian Ingham worked the Tattoo as a Sgt with the Sqn, and when he was discharged in 1992, found himself remaining with the Sqn and continuing with the Tattoo, as a civilian. More recently, the Sqn has been at the forefront of Delamination with 10 Sig Regt. ISM teams have been working throughout Scotland, the north of England and Brunei to complete the Delamination process.

To celebrate the history of the Sqn, we extend an open invitation to all military and civilian personnel, who have served with the Unit, to a disbandment party on 16 September 2005 to be held in Edinburgh. Any further information required on timings and possible accn should be directed to the Chief Clerk on 94740 2364.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

MILITARY PARACHUTING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

SSgt (YofS) Nige Brewin travelled to the Czech Republic, where he gained Czech Republic military parachute wings at Pára Pribrám ve spolupráci s Armadou Ceske Republiky. Three jumps were required to be awarded the Czech Republic wings from an Antonov aircraft and Mi8 helicopter. The parachutes used were the standard Czech Republic OVP68 main parachute and ZVP80 reserve.

This parachute system is a hybrid free-fall/static line parachute. It operates by static line that releases a drogue parachute, putting the parachutist in free fall for a pre-determined amount of time before activating the main round canopy. The parachutist does have the option, if they lose their bottle on the free-fall phase, to activate the main at any time they wish. It must be remembered that this parachute system is 1960's Warsaw Pact technology, but it is an extremely capable and responsive parachute.

The most noticeable thing about the way the Czech Army parachutists operate, is that no-one other than the dispatchers on the aircraft or the Kontrollers on the ground are allowed to fit the parachute. The dispatchers hook the parachutist to the anchor cable while the parachutist is in his seat, before the aircraft has taken off. The parachutist does almost nothing for himself. There are no words of command inside the aircraft: simply amber, red and green lights with hand signals to stand up and move the first man into the door. At this point it becomes strange, the first man is not afforded the time to adopt a pre-exit position and is simply just pushed out, as are all those that follow. It is extremely quick, and as a result, some very interesting exit positions attained. It was soon realised, that it is best to use the Russian method of adopting the foetal position, rather than the British exit position.

The Czech Republic is a beautiful country, well worth visiting both on a professional and leisure basis. The Czech military were extremely professional and hosted their foreign military parachutists very well.

600 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt (TOT) Ian Rutherford**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Jaspar Marritt**

We farewell **YofS Marcus Bailey**, who leaves on promotion for 33 Sig Regt; SSgt **Scott Cain** also leaves on promotion he joins **SSgt Jim Hawkins** in the GOSCC; and **Cpl Radar Noott** goes to 21 Sig Regt (AS). We wish them all well and good luck for the future. New arrivals include **SSgt (YofS) Stu Bailes** from the YofS course; **SSgt Jaspar Marritt** from 238 Sig Sqn; **SSgt Brian Flynn** from Herford; and **Cpl Nikki Donnelly**. We also belatedly welcome **FofS Mick Oliver**.

LOOK FORWARD (AND BACKWARDS)

The ongoing support to the PROMINA network continues. For those readers familiar with the OSCA nodes or the CLEO/MYRA installations in the Balkans, you will not be surprised to hear that the PROMINA is still alive and the network may be increasing in size once again in support of OP HERRICK. The current OP OCULUS staff are led by **Sgt Randerson** from 7 Sig Regt, ably supported by **FofS Mick Oliver** and his RSSST(UK) team. **FofS Paul Wright** and **Sgt Taff Tanner** are currently preparing for the first phase of work in Afghanistan.

PTARMIGAN support offered by **FofS Mick Brown** and his team continues. They have worked very closely in support of RSIT throughout the past 18 months to improve the overall standard of the PTARMIGAN fleet. Ashchurch is now like a second home! The PTARMIGAN hub is still well utilised for exs, and it has

recently benefited from the installation of a new remote management by Drumgrange.

On the operator front, the BOWMAN Comsec Management Support Cell (BCMSC) role is continuing to grow. The team are responsible for supporting the numerous non-aligned BOWMAN units, and we eagerly anticipate the arrival of the additional BOWMAN equipt to allow this support to develop.

The PSC 506 System is anchored from within 600 Sig Tp. This has brought an additional 13 personnel to the Tp, much needed for the main sporting event in Corsham, the COs Cup. In October, as part of the restructuring of 10 Sig Regt, the Tp is due to join 243 Sig Sqn, and we look forward to developing our working relationships with Wilton.

NIJMEGEN MARCHES 2005 - *by SSgt (FofS) Mick Brown*

After the long wait and copious amounts of trg, the JSU Corsham team, strongly supported by 10 Sig Regt, finally departed on the morning of 16 July for Holland and the 89th Nijmegen Marches. The team was an amalgamation of 10 Sig Regt units and a couple of RAF members to add a bit of colour (and age) to the team. **LCpl Rob Innes**, a Scot from 238 Sig Sqn, mistakenly took the train to Cosham (Portsmouth) instead of Corsham, but after an additional 2 hrs on his journey, arrived in Corsham fit and well, having learned a little more of English geography.

The team finally reached Huemensoord Camp, Holland, in good spirits and after the first of many team leaders' briefs, settled into the Nijmegen spirit, by venturing down to sample the delights of the festival atmosphere in the City Centre. Nijmegen was packed with partygoers with large stages erected throughout the town, playing live music, and loads of beer and food stalls, all ensuring that you could forget what we had actually come across to Holland for.

The Team – before the event!

Eventually the early morning call came at 02.00hrs on the Tuesday morning, with the lights and piped music, calling the troops to a Nijmegen breakfast. With full stomachs, the team formed up, and with the two RAF members setting the pace, the Team blistered (literally) round the first day in 8fi hrs.

Day 2 saw the Team with new front markers. **SSgt Dave Clayton-Batty** struggled around the first leg with an injury, until the medics withdrew him from the march. The team was reduced in size again after the second day, with **Sig Matt Day** being withdrawn due to tonsillitis, and **Sig Rowe** having blisters on his feet.

The remainder of the team soldiered on, with **Cpl Danny Hogg** and **LCpl Innes** putting on an extremely brave face and biting through the pain, continuing through Day 3 and onto Day 4. After 75 miles, the final day proved to be the easiest. The Team had a few morale stops on the way around, taking a breather in the aptly named town of Beers to sample the local delights. Another couple of stops later, the Team finally dragged their aching limbs across the finish line for port and medals.

The JSU Corsham Team members were:

SSgt (FofS) Mick Brown	**Capt Neil Clements**
WO Bruce Paterson	**WO Tony Paterson**
WO2 AQMS Nick Sparrow	**SSgt (YofS) Stu Bailes**
SSgt Andy Fisher	**SSgt Dave Clayton-Batty**
Sgt Gareth Scott	**Cpl Danny Hogg**
Cpl Nikki Dearing	**LCpl Rob Innes**
Sig Matt Day	**Sig Rowe**

LIMA TROOP

Lima Tp has been quite busy recently, and has seen a number of personnel changes. The OC, **Capt Graeme Clarke** leaves us, and his replacement, **Capt Neil Clements** joined us from Shrivenham. There have been the usual trickling-in of LCpls and Sigs, with the Tps' strength soon to be bolstered with the addition of 4 more Sgts.

The Tp now consists of 3 deployable teams, each with the same capability, which encompasses installation, maint and repair of secure and non-secure CIS. We are extremely busy, with troops just coming back from, currently serving in, or about to deploy to: Brunei, Bosnia, Ascension, Falklands, Norway, Iraq as well as various UK-based jobs.

EXERCISE DEXTEROUS DRAGON

To take some time out from our busy schedule, the Tp recently took part in a weeks' AT in the Lake District. EX DEXTEROUS DRAGON was a walking and climbing ex, designed to allow the troops to let their hair down and enjoy some good weather, good food (well, that's arguable) and good company.

The 3 teams conducted the different activities on different days. Ambleside hut was our base and proved a useful, if not very spacious place from which to set off; the exception being when each team spent a night camping at one lake or another after a day's walking.

The first night saw rain and storms – resulting in a very sleepless and wet night for **Sigs Kelly** and **Evans** with their leaky tent! Luckily, the rest of the time was dry. The last night saw us camping next to Angle Tarn, along with a group of school kids a short way from us. **Cpl Gaz Hatton**, **LCpl Morrison** and **Sig Cheesewright** thought they would liven up the evening by leopard crawling up to our neighbours and frightening the life out of them. However, we think they need to work on their fieldcraft, as they were spotted with about 10m to go!

A TOUR IN THE LIFE OF A SIGGY - *by Sig Worsey*

I was employed in the Sigs Maint And Repair Team (SMART) on OP ALTHERA from October 04 – March 05, attached to 1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. During this time, I was a member of a team that was responsible for the installation, repair and maintenance of all secure and non-secure CIS. This includes the NATO secure systems as well as the British secure systems and all internets (excluding Paradigm).

While I was mainly based in Banja Luka Metal Factory, the team was also responsible for most other sites' CIS. This included all Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) sector HQ's (where there is NATO sensitive information) and other nation's camps. Although there were battlefield trips laid on, I did not get to go on these due to the busy nature of my job. I also got to go to SMART in Kosovo, doing the same job for a short stint.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col RD Meinertzhagen**
RSM	**WO1 Reid**

VISIT BY SOinC(A) – *By Capt Jon Malcolm*

The arrival of senior visitors out here at Brawdy is always a bit of a lottery. They have invariably booked a Gazelle and are therefore dependant on the weather and the Army fly-boys to get here.

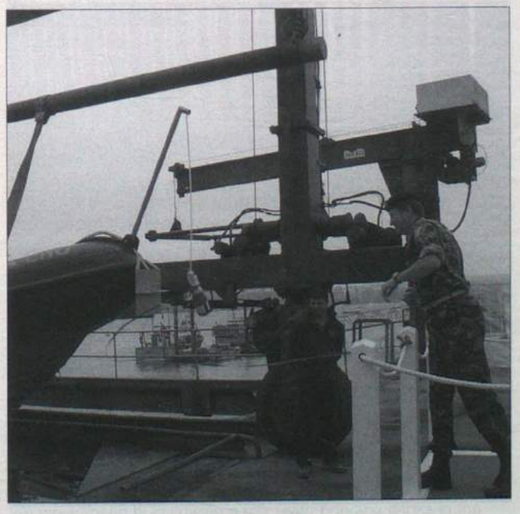
As a result of this, our spirits noticeably sank on the windy and overcast morning of the day chosen for the SOinC(A) to visit us, to present some LS and GCs and launch our shiny new RIB (speedboat, to the rest of us). This was confirmed by a call informing us of the no-fly. Almost simultaneously, another phone rang telling us that the SOinC was driving out and would be with us on time. Back on the bus!

The first port of call for the day was the WOs' and Sgts' Mess to present three LS and GCs. The SOinC is very keen on these Awards, and left us all in absolutely no doubt as to their worth, and the credit that should go to those presented it. Congratulations to **SSgt Stuart**, **Sgt Pargin** and **Sgt Anthony**. After some small talk and champagne, the SOinC departed to leave the Mess to an afternoon of noisy talk and beer.

After a quick change out of No 2s, everyone piled into a minibus and headed off to Neyland Marina while the SOinC followed in a bit more leisure.

As previously reported, 14 Sig Regt (EW) has a rather well equipped AT Wing. AT Group (Army) are very generous with their support, and recently splashed out a good deal of cash on a brand new RIB, with a huge engine and all the gadgets you can imagine. This fantastic piece of maritime engineering had been put together with the help of Dale Sailing, and on the 16 June was suspended over the water, Champagne bottle at the ready, awaiting the SOinC.

Now the fun really started. Attached to the front of the RIB was an ingenious contraption made by the LAD that was supposed to guarantee that the bottle of champagne would smash once the SOinC let go. Painted gold and consisting of a pretty fearsome strip of spiked metal it certainly looked the part, but would it work? Money was changing hands in prediction.



...and the bottle bounced back!

The SOinC raised the bottle well above his head, ensured that the bottle was pointing naturally at the target. He ensured his sight alignment was correct, and then released the bottle and followed through, without any deviation from the position. Sadly, the bottle failed to smash. On the third attempt, the SOinC swung the bottle with such force that it bent the LAD's wonderful device, and still failed to break. Eventually it was smashed with a hammer in something of an anti-climax.

Despite this, *Certa Cito* was launched successfully and everyone present enjoyed a little cabby around the bay. She is now doing sterling work on Advanced Powerboat Handling courses run at the AT Wing.

The SOinC(A) taking a very wet ride

The day now being complete, the SOinC departed on the long drive back to civilisation and we all got on with the business of enjoying our Regtl Weekend. We're still taking the mickey out of the LAD.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

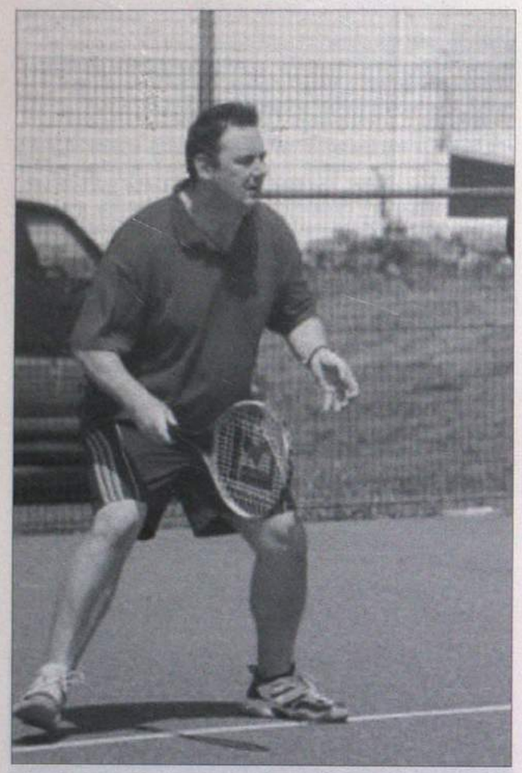
OC	**Maj CN Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 Conlon**

INTER-SQUADRON TENNIS COMPETITION

An Inter-Sqn tennis competition was held as part of this year's Regtl Fete Weekend. Each of the four participating Sqns entered four players for the singles competition, and one team for the doubles.

After a keenly contested first round and quarter finals, the semi-finals saw **SSgt Ingam** (226) take on **Sig Anderson** (226), and **Sig Collins** (245) take on **SSgt Pengelly** (237). The results of these matches meant that **SSgt Ingam** met **SSgt Pengelly** in the final. During the final, the level of play was excellent, but the experience of **SSgt Ingam** was made to count and he eventually won the singles title 6-0, 6-1. He was also named Player of the Tournament.

The doubles final was a much tighter affair, with **Capt Tez Brown** and **LCpl Ridgeon** (HQ) holding their own against a much fancied line up of **Lt Parkes** and **Sig Carter** (226). After the longest and most exciting match of the Tournament, 226 prevailed, 6-3, 2-6, 6-2, with **Sig Carter** demonstrating tennis skills at Corps level at least!



Capt Tez Brown, trying to keep up with his partner, LCpl Ridgeon

The winners' trophy for the competition as a whole went to 226 Sig Sqn, with prizes being awarded by **Mrs Meinertzhagen**, the COs wife. The event was well supported, given that the Inter-Sqn rugby was being held simultaneously. A big thank you goes to **2Lt Mandeep Rai** and **Cpl Gabriel** for organising the competition. The event certainly demonstrated a healthy appetite for the sport within 14 Sig Regt (EW), and it is hoped that a Regtl team will be raised ready for next year.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SL Copley**
SSM	**WO2 Smith**

EXERCISE MOUFLON WARRIOR

Earlier this year, the rear party element of 245 Sig Sqn deployed to SENTA for a five-day battle camp. The first two days were devoted to teaching and refreshing previous military trg. Led by **Sgt Davis**, they contained the usual mix of section battle drills, anti-veh ambush drills, harbour areas and defence. Monday morning also saw the platoon carrying out bayonet drills, and leopard crawling for what seemed like miles.

On Tuesday at 03.00hrs **Cpl James** (acting Platoon Commander) was woken by **Sgt Flanagan** and given orders that initiated the tactical phase of the ex. The first task was patrolling, followed by advance to contacts, where the platoon was engaged on numerous occasions throughout the morning.

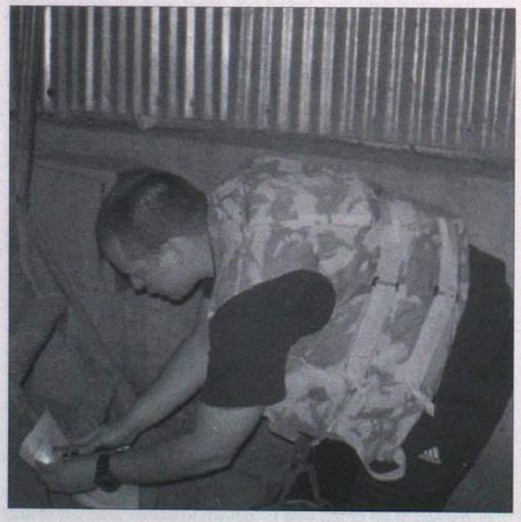
Cpl James leading rehearsals during anti ambush drills

On Thursday, **LCpl Smith** led the platoon on a FIBUA attack. The DS certainly thought we had made a great deal of progress since Day 1, and one might even have thought our platoon of Sig/Int/RAF soldiers had been replaced by a well trained Infantry rifle platoon! On the whole, the week went well, and the weather held up quite well for Brecon - even if everyone was soaked through by ENDEX.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW) DEPLOYED IN BAGHDAD

Another day in paradise! Our last few months as Baghdad Sig Sqn (245). As usual, we have organised various events to keep the lads entertained, with the highlight being the Easter Egg Hunt.

LCpl Graham Martin rallied the troops and issued cryptic clues for the location of the eggs; which baffled the engineers and led the signals team to victory.



Sig Kiff at the Easter Egg Hunt

This month we said hello to **SSgt Gaz Robinson** and **Sig Shaun Hardy**. And we said goodbye to **Sig Michael Kiff**, who has left to do his Cl 1 Inst Tech Course; and **SSgt Dave McCall**, who is posted to Kuwait.

BRIT HOUSE

As usual, it has been all hands to the pump in Brit House, Camp Victory. As well as the usual tasks and faultfinding, which involves repairing cable that the Americans have kindly pulled out, we have been assisting Staff Offrs in the complex the art of using a telephone! We have also been busy developing the social scene for the Brit community in Camp Victory. In the process, we have been making lots of friends and contacts amongst the various Coalition Forces.

We had a very successful St Patrick's Night, which all agreed was the best they had ever seen - at least in Iraq - and all enjoyed their mandatory 2 cans. Then we had a successful St George's Day bash; although not as raucous as St Patrick's Day, it was nevertheless a very enjoyable affair.

We especially enjoyed the musical efforts of the Camp Victory choir. In between all that, we still have our weekly Multi-National quiz night, and we are now fully up to speed on American and Australian history, thanks to the questions from the colonies!

As this issue of *The Wire* goes to print, all personnel who deployed with 245 Sig Sqn (EW) elements to Iraq are now safely back in Brawdy.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Steve Morgan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Anthea Burdus**

Following a successful three years in comd of the Sqn, **Maj Steve Morgan** is now leaving us to become 2IC 14 Sig Regt (EW). The highlights of his tour here have included his deployment as Regtl J4 Advisor on OP TELIC 1, closely followed by the day he arrived for Officers' Coffee 24 hrs early – it was some time before he realised that a lack of fellow officers and coffee meant that something had gone horribly wrong!

We wish **Steve**, **Allison** and **Monty** best wishes for their tour at Brawdy.

EXERCISE SPANISH BEAUFIGHTER DRAGON
- by Cpl Lee Beardsley AGC

EX SPANISH BEAUFIGHTER DRAGON was a trekking exped in the Spanish Pyrenees. It was conducted in 5 phases, each a week long, and followed the GR11 international footpath route through the heart of the Pyrenees, finishing on the Spanish coast.

I was a member of the Phase 5 team, the final stage of the exped. Flying in to Perpignan Airport, we were collected by the admin team and driven to our hotel to overnight before setting forth on the trek the following morning.

We were issued the required stores and equipt, and had a very big meal to take on board as much stored energy as we could. We would need it! Following a few team-bonding drinks in the bar, we settled down to get a good night's rest.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DL Williams**
SSM	**WO2 Linton**

REGIMENTAL FETE – *by WO2 Petts*

The clouds lifted and the sun came out, signalling the start of the Regtl Fete. This was the climax to a Regtl Weekend comprising many social and sporting events. The aims of the Fete were to provide a fun and cheap day out for the Serving members of the Regt and their families. The secondary aim was to raise some money for charity.

All Sqns and Depts provided the 21 stands, which included an interactive computer game, stocks, bungee run, Panzer rides, climbing wall, clay pigeon shooting, SAT Range, face-painting, and many more. By far the most popular stand, and the one that raised the most money, was the Hit Squad. Individuals or syndicates could pay to have their mates or their seniors hit. A hit consisted of shaving foam and high-powered water pistols. The price of a hit was rank ranged from Lt Col at £10 to Sig at 50p. Over the years the Regt has fostered very close relationships with the Royal Signals, REME, Int Corps and RAF Associations. All 4 Associations attended, and were impressed to find their areas decorated with memorabilia from their respective backgrounds. The Corps Band was positioned centrally, and played a medley of excellent music to entertain the 400 or so people that had attended. The day was a great success, mainly due to the effort of all the individuals tasked with organising the stands. In total, we raised £1,250, which has been distributed to local, national and international charities.

The next day we set off under the guidance of exped leader, **Capt Caroline Lovett**. The nav was relatively easy, GR11 being identified by the red and white markers. The trek seemed to be up, up and up (with only a little down) through some spectacular scenery and in generally good weather. For the next 8 days we marched onwards through the dramatic landscape until, as the end of the route approached, we caught our first sight of the sea.

On completion of the trek, we were rewarded with a hard earned period of R and R, spent in the vibrant city of Barcelona. Barcelona is a fantastic place and the group really enjoyed the sights, sounds and social activities.

SPANISH BEAUFIGHTER DRAGON proved to be a real physical and mental challenge, far harder than I had imagined when I put my name forward to take part. That said, it was entirely worthwhile, and a real opportunity to get away and do some real, heavy-duty AT in a very spectacular environment.

ARMY ATHLETICS FINALS

21 Sig Regt (AS) Athletics Team travelled to Aldershot for the Army Finals, with a strong reputation to uphold. With a large number of Combined Service and Army athletes in our squad, there was plenty to cheer throughout the day.

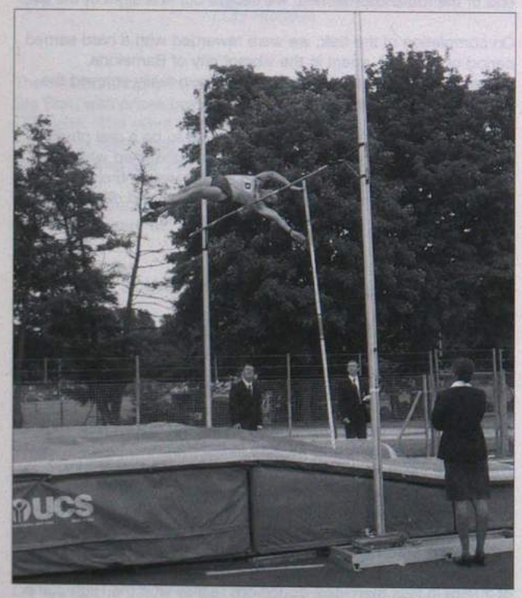
The field eventers kicked off, getting the Regt highlighted from the start. **Sig Rob Young** hit 40m in the Hammer, to reinforce his claim for an Army berth by coming second, and **Cpl Nicky Harrison** achieved a new personal best, to take second in the Female Pole-Vault, forcing the opposition to need a new Army Record to win. The track events got off to a good start, with **LCpl John Gilding** running a very strong race to take second in the 400m Hurdles. On the field, **Cpl Spud Williams**, with a jump of 2.05m in less than ideal conditions, easily won the High Jump. He then made a couple more attempts at improving his own Army

Record to 2.12m. After that, he went on to win the 110m Hurdles in a very tight race. **Cpl McSween** took on RLC's Nigerian Sprint Team, and recorded a season's best, breaking the 11 sec barrier, with a time of 10.95secs in the 100m. **Sig Chepkwony** and **SSgt Jock Castle** took maximum points in the 5,000m. This was followed by a big haul in the 3,000m Steeplechase by **Cpls Smudge Smith** and **Neil Allen**.

The women were also working hard on the track, with **Cpl Michelle Scott** achieving a personal best in the 5,000m. Combined Services No 1, **Cpl Sophie Morris** was a clear winner in the 800m, and **2Lt Ashton** rounded off an excellent season over the hurdles with second place.

Cpl Spud Williams with the bar at 2.05m

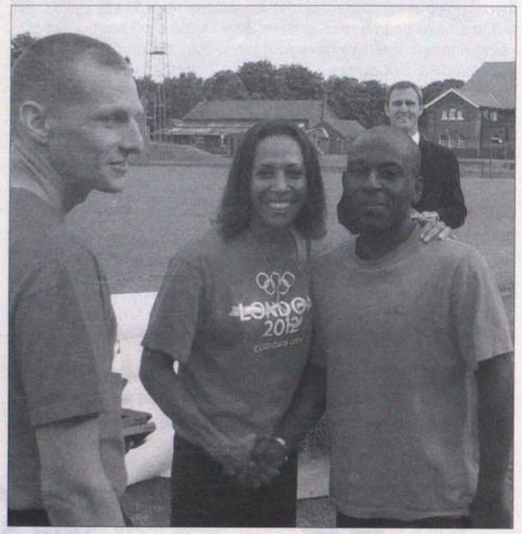
Capt Harriet Cairns had a busy day competing in the Triple Jump, Hammer and 400m Hurdles, and **2Lt Holly Dyer** made a dash from the Tp Comd's Course in time to pick up maximum points in the Discus and second place in the Shot. Overall, the Regtl team had a very successful day, but the final results went in favour of 3 CS Regt RLC for the seventh consecutive year, with



Capt Frazer Keith – Army Pole-Vault Champion

21 Sig Regt (AS) claiming the runners up spot in the Male and third in the Female competitions. Consolation came in the form of a kiss from double Olympic Champion, **Dame Kelly Holmes**, who presented the prizes.

With over 30 competitors from the Regt taking part, there is not enough space to mention every athlete, but congratulations go to each and every one, not only for their performances in the final, but throughout the season.



Sig Johnson-Tackie receives his prize from Dame Kelly Holmes

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JA Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Ganesh**

We say farewell to the Sqn Ops Offr, **Capt Jules Tydeman**, who is now **Mr Tydeman**. He is off to the windy city of Chicago to start an MBA course. The SSM, **WO2 Ganesh** leaves us for his Nepal leave, and then a posting to Blandford as a SSM. The Sqn YofS, **SSgt Ian Wilson**, has left for 71 Sig Regt (V), and J Troop say farewell to **SSgt Bhola**, who leaves us on Nepal leave, and joins 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn in York in October 05.

We congratulate **WO2(SSM) Surendra**, **SSgt Til**, **SSgt Praveen**, **Cpl Manbir**, **Cpl Dev**, **Cpl Bhupal**, **Cpl Khagendra**, **Cpl Ganesh**, **LCpls Santosh**, **Kajiman**, **Bishnu**, **Samar**, **Manoj**, **Praveen**, **Sujan**, **Chandra**, and **Krishna** on their recent promotions. We also congratulate **Cpl Suresh** on his recent selection for promotion to Sgt.

We welcome **Capt Russ Plested**, **WO2(SSM) Surendra**, **SSgt(YofS) Russ Menzies** and **SSgt Praveen** and promise them a busy and challenging tour.

DIVISIONAL SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 05

The Div SAAM 05 was held on Bulford Ranges over the period 18 to 20 May. As in previous years, the 21 Sig Regt (AS) Team were given permission to compete in 3 Div SAAM. 2 Teams of 5 and 2 individual firers from the Regt competed against 29 other unit teams in the Championships.

This year, the team had excellent scores, both individually and in the team events, which led the Regt to win almost all the silverware, including the Championship Trophy.

The successful Regt Shooting Team and their haul

A number of individuals also received medals for winning their respective matches. All firers worked very hard in both the pre-competition trg and the Competition itself, and the results are a testament to the skill and focus of all those who took part.

GURKHA CUP FOOTBALL 2005

The third Gurkha Cup Football Competition took place in Aldershot on 29 May. This event is open to any Nepalese team, Civilians and Army personnel, living and working in UK. All together, 40 teams took part, including eight teams competing in a veteran competition. The remaining 32 teams were divided into 8 different Groups and played in a League system, followed by a knockout for the top teams. A team from 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn entered the competition as 'Colerne Village Boys'. After topping our Group in the League, we went on to beat the Brecon Demo Coy team, and then the Phulbari 7 team from intake 2001 in a sudden death penalty shoot-out. The Final was played out between two teams from QGS, with Colerne Village Boys eventually triumphing over Bramcote Village Boys 2-1 to take the title. This is the first football title won by the Sqn since its reformation in May 04. Colerne Village Boys look forward to defending the Cup in 2006.

Jai 248 GSS!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj RJ Lovett**
SSM	**WO2 W Dunbar**

With the paperwork stacking up and the brew area starting to look a bit tatty, it was decided that SHQ should do a bit of overdue spring-cleaning to tidy the place up. Not wanting to do anything by half-measures, it was decided to get rid of most of the Sqn hierarchy, which was also looking a bit tatty. Out go the OC, **Maj Bob Lovett**, **YofS Clinton Barker** and **FofS Mark Ebdon**.

New incumbents, **YofS Mount** and **FofS Landregan** will have a hard act to follow during their time in 220. Also leaving us are **Lt Izzy Bangurah** and **SSgt Chay Hook**. The new ringmaster in the Big Top BFOT is **2Lt 'TJ' Hooker** who comes to us from his Tp Comds Cse, along with **2Lt Johnny Pauline**. Neither of them bothered to unpack before deploying straight on ex. Welcome to the Regt.

EXERCISE RED BEAUFIGHTER II

With the Britslavian nation once again proving themselves incapable of managing their own internal security, 21 Sig Regt (AS) were again deployed to Salisbury Plain to assist in the repatriation of UK personnel. Despite being oddly similar to the region in UK bearing the same name, it was quite clear from the weather (which was hot and sunny throughout the deployment), that we were indeed in the Mediterranean.

Thankfully, the Regt found a local supplier of cold drinks at exorbitant prices, and **Sgt Pope-adopolus** did a roaring trade around the various locs. With 244 Sig Sqn sitting this battle out, it was left to 220 to do the business with the BFOT. **SSgt Chay Hook** merrily whiled away the time by counting down the number of builds he had to do, before being posted as a SSM at 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, whilst the OC happily regaled anybody who had the time to listen about his adventures on his previous 7 (or was it 8) deployments on RED BEAUFIGHTER.

It came as no surprise when he suddenly had to be returned to UK in a straightjacket, leaving the 2IC, **Capt Frazer Keith** to steer the ship. Half way through the ex, a reporting team from *The Britslavian Herald* started arriving at various locs to report on the deployment. Had it not been for some truly terrible shirts that no self-respecting officer would wear, many people would have sworn that the reporting team were in fact the 2IC Regt and OC 220 Sig Sqn.

There were some excellent opportunities for airborne manoeuvre on the ex, with deployment of assets by both Hercules and Chinook, and **Sig Keeling** just about managing to keep her lunch inside her this time round. RED BEAUFIGHTER II proved to be a very worthwhile ex to prove and refine both procedures and trade skills before the demanding RB 3 and 4 deployments in the autumn.

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGaw**

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JHN Harrington**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Tesharjang Gurung**

TRAILWALKER (UK) 2005

Trailwalker (UK) is an annual charity event organised by the Queen's Gurkha Signal Regt in aid of Oxfam (UK) and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. The money raised supports education and welfare projects in Nepal run by the GWT, whilst Oxfam provides support in more than 80 of the world's poorest countries. This year the event took place over the sunny weekend of 16-17 July, and saw 321 civilian and military 4-man teams enter. 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn are the lead organisers, but the ex sees the deployment of all available QGS personnel, with personnel from 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 2 Sig Regt, 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, 21 Sig Regt (AS) and RSS, Blandford taking part.

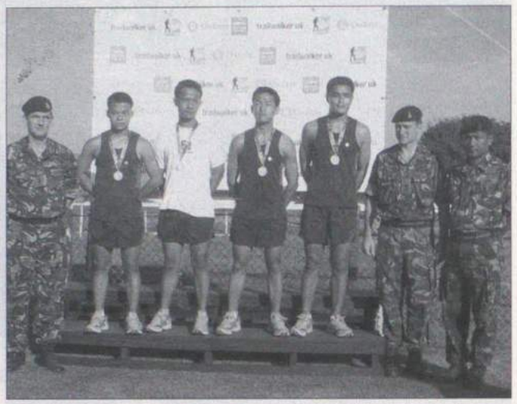
The event is a sponsored 100km walk/run from Queen Elizabeth Park near Petersfield to Brighton Racecourse via 10 CPs manned by QGS personnel. Teams began at 07.00, 09.00 and 11.00hrs on Saturday 16 July, having electronically registered that morning or the night before. Those registering on Friday night were treated to a BBQ, cultural show and are woken on Saturday morning by a Gurkha piper, heralding the start of the breakfast.

Along the route, teams are provided liquid refreshment, and hot food at CP7. The Red Cross also provides excellent medical cover at all CPs. Those completing the course are welcomed at the finish point by a medal presentation, team photo, hot shower and a well-earned Gurkha curry. The fastest team, the QOGLR, completed the course in 10 hrs 42 mins 18 secs, whilst the slowest team finished in 30 hrs 13 mins 51 secs. However, all teams make a valuable contribution to the event, raising much needed cash for both charities, and it is expected that around £750,000 has been raised this year.

The winning team, QOGLR complete Trailwalker (UK) 2005 in 10hrs 42mins 18secs

The full results are as follows:

Fastest Male Team – QOGLR
Fastest Female Team – Debs Mountain Goat Whippets
Fastest Mixed Team – Montrial Patagonia
Fastest Veterans Team – Cygent Old Boys



The first QGS team with Col of the Regt, Comd and GM. They finished third

Planning has already begun for next year's event, as we now wait to discover how much was raised, and how many will return next year. Possibly, all those who took part this year.

VISIT BY THE NEW COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT

The new Colonel of the Regiment, Queen's Gurkha Signals, **Brig NAW Pope** paid his first official visit to RHQ QG Signals and 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn on 16 May 05. He was received and welcomed by **Lt Col DB Warne**, Comd QG Signals and **Maj(QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO**, GM QG Signals along with other officers of the Regt at the Officers' Mess, Bramcote, where he joined them for lunch.

After an office call with the Comd and the Gurkha Major, he visited 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, and was met by **Maj JHN Harrington**, OC, **Capt (QGO) Mahendra Limbu**, 2IC/SQGO and **WO2(SSM) Tesharjung Gurung**, SSM. He was briefed on Sqn's current role, other issues and received an update on current operational commitments from the Ops Officer, **Capt S Bennett**. **Brig Pope** paid a quick visit to the Gurkha Temple on his way to the comms stands. First he visited the recently arrived CORMORANT, currently undergoing its System Acceptance Test (SAT), after which he saw various Dets including ABTF being briefed on each by the Det Comd.

The second phase of the visit was a competitive basketball match, organised among all the Offrs and SNCOs. After quick drinks and tipan tapan, every member of the Regt gathered in the Himali Club.

The Comd gave a welcome speech, and with the GM and 2IC, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, garlanded **Brig Pope**. The Colonel expressed his joy on taking over the appointment, and briefly talked about his job and agendas. Top table dinner, entertainment and Khusiko Natch followed. A warm welcome to Colonel of the Regiment saheb; we look forward to seeing you again on many occasions.

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING
– by Sig Shiva Gurung

The Regt entered two teams at minor unit level, and 4 individuals, led by **Lt (QGO) Nirmal Gurung** into the Corps SAAM. This competition was run alongside other Corps of the British Army, and all together 10 major units and 8 minor units took part in the competition.

There were two difficulties to deal with prior to the competition. 30 Sig Regt is an extremely busy unit, so the requirement of finding a young Offr and young soldiers was a real challenge. Secondly, as the competition itself was very tough and the matches directly mirrored the Queen's Medal Competition, proper and effective training was a must. With a month's training and all the problems overcome, the team enjoyed great success, winning nine trophies. The battle for the championship was fought very hard, but sadly we lost to our closest rivals 2 Sig Regt by a marginal difference on the overall score. However, there were some worthy individual performances; **Lt (QGO) Nirmal Gurung** won the Champion At Arms with highest aggregate score in all weapons, and **Sig Sachin Thapa** won the Class B Rifle Champion.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Chambers**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Eastman**

EXERCISE RAM ENDEAVOUR - MILITARY SKILLS CAMP

On arrival at the farm, our home for the next week, we were introduced to our new surroundings and the programme for the week by the SSM, **WO2 Matt Eastman**. This was swiftly followed by a brief from the 264 Sig Sqn recruiting team and an introduction to some of their weapons, a really good insight into what they get up to. The next day was live firing ranges, consisting of a number of firing positions ranging from a small ditch to a building window, as the targets fall you moved to a different position. Over the next few days, the whole Sqn was trained and trained again, until we all progressed from basic firing in different positions, to live pairs fire and manoeuvre, and then onto the final live fire shoot. The 264 Sqn boys, waiting for us with all their specialist weapons, provided the concurrent activity for this part of our trg.

The final shoot was awesome, taking place in a valley (well we were in Wales). We were entrenched on one side of the valley, with the enemy on the other. When we got the signal, **Sig Farrar** and I leaped out of our trench, and made our way down the valley to rescue a 'fallen comrade.' Once we got hold of him, we started our slow ascent back up the valley slope, to rejoin our section and help with the firefight.

With the live firing completed, it was time to move on to the blank firing stage at Sennybridge's FIBUA trg area. The day was split into a morning's training and an assault in the afternoon. The section was first shown how to enter buildings with the use of ropes, ladders and the grappling hook. We then moved on to building fortification and room clearance, which the section seemed to pick up quite well. It was then time to move to the underground confidence course; a series of tunnels, which we had to navigate through in the pitch black dark - not for the faint hearted.

We were then ready for the final assault. We received our Orders from the Platoon Comd, **WO2 (SSM) Matt Eastman** and the Platoon Sgt, **SSgt Rory O'Neil**. Our task was to clear the first buildings of the village. Once the fire support started, we made our way across the road and into the first house, which had all ready been cleared by one of the other sections.

We then waited to move to house B, the Section's main objective. **Sig Stallard** placed the ladder, and no sooner was the ladder in place than I was up it and in the first room, which was clear. The rest of the Section swiftly joined me, and in a matter of minutes, the whole house was clear. After further buildings were taken and replacements came forward to replace our wounded, we were ordered to abandon our newly captured building, and make our way through a long tunnel to the next house, which was being held by one of the other sections. Once we got to the next house, we were to provide fire support for the final assaulting section. After a small skirmish, the battle was won and ENDEX was called. Following a quick clean up and de-brief, we returned back to the farm for a BBQ and a well-deserved rest.

EXERCISE CYGNET ROCK

The exercise began with an early start of 02.00hrs. Bravo Tp, led by **Lt Goldsmith**, finally made it to RAF Lyneham in the hope of flying to Gibraltar. Things seemed to be going to plan. We even made it into the air, until we were woken to the news there was a fault with the radios, and we were landing back in Lyneham. We were delayed for 36 hrs. When we finally arrived in Gibraltar, a day behind schedule, there was no rest, as we moved straight into the comms phase. Our battle scenario consisted of weapons being smuggled into Gibraltar, and we were soon in a high alert state. Morale was high and comms were in and working, until high winds carried the ICC tentage away.

As the plot thickened, we were called into a FIBUA battle, having to clear buildings and take hostages. As H-hr descended upon us, we split into our fire teams and successfully cleared the buildings. However, **Sig Fuller** and **Sig Sladen** became casualties, and we made stretchers out of bivvy bags to carry them to safety.

ENDEX was gratefully followed by a feast in Pizza Hut, and plenty of water sports. Despite a rocky start, the ex was enjoyed by all.

EXERCISE CYGNET VINE

After the cancellation of EX CYGNET VINE in May, Bravo Tp were lucky enough to find ourselves deploying to another hot climate to test our comms capabilities and practise our military skills.

After arriving in Cyprus, we had a few days to adapt to the scorching temperatures, with the military skills phase having to take place in the hrs of darkness. Our first mission was to recce a loc and gather int on the enemy. We split into our sections, and found ourselves having to navigate around the Cyprus outback. Our biggest challenge was avoiding the prickly bushes, mosquitoes and snakes, as **Sigs Nicholls** and **Kane** were soon to find.

After an arduous two days, the pressure was on to reach Paramali Village for H-hr. We prepared to attack Paramali under the instruction of Platoon Sgt, **Cpl James**, and managed to capture the enemy who were being played by **Cpl Claridge** and **Sig Durham**. To relax in the evening, **Cpl Pember's** room was transformed into the Cpls' Mess where we enjoyed our ENDEX toga party.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JS Hiorns**
SSM **WO2(SSM) MacPhee**

EXERCISE CELESTIAL BEAR

On Sunday 19 June, Echo Tp deployed to Carter Bks with JTFHQ 2 for a week-long plug-up and Staff demo. This was a new experience for many members of the Tp, but the HQ was erected without too many setbacks. We needed a lot of water to combat the unbearable heat, but luckily we deployed with the Regtl chefs, who saved us with their refrigerated lorry and cold juice. As the Tp settled into a shift pattern, the techs and 501 crew leapt into action, headed by **Cpls Pete Crowley** and **Kev Smith**, trying to

Soldiers of 256 Sig Sqn de-bus in an impressive display of military prowess

secure comms. Unfortunately, tech faults were discovered at some of the terminating stations, which limited our use of the tails equipt. After the Staff walk around, the order for tear down was given. With greater speed and enthusiasm Echo Tp dismantled the HQ, and then set to work on JTFHQ 1 helping Delta Tp with their much larger complex. The morning after, the vehs were lined up, a great moral booster for the lads as they were stood down for a well-deserved weekend.

EXERCISE ALPINE TIGER 2005

EX ALPINE TIGER was a white water kayaking exercise at the small French Alpine town of L'Argentière-La-Besse. Having had previous experience of white water in Norway, **Sigs Jones** and **Ferguson** had an advantage, but by the end of the ex, the ability of our group had increased dramatically. In the second week, our instructors introduced us to harder stretches of water.

The most memorable stretch for us was the 2km stretch of the Lower Guisanne River leading towards Briançon. There are about 500 metres of calm Grade 2, before things really start to hot up, and the river starts to throw boulder after drop after eddy, at any paddler brave (or crazy) enough to take it on. There is one rule you have to remember at all times in this situation: Pick a line and stick to it. If you lack decisiveness at any point, the river has a habit of making up your mind for you, and it's usually one you're going to regret!

Our group of 15 people were taken through The Canoe Safety course, which covers everything from 'T' and 'X' rescues, to safety equipment and situational trg. Both sigs achieved 4 star level BCU, with **Sig Jones** also achieving his Level 1 Kayak Instructor Certificate.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Duckworth**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Coupland**

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT OPEN DAY 2005

After the unfortunate cancellation of the 2004 Regtl Open Day due to Operational commitments, it was with great gusto that planning and prep began for this year's Open Day under the ever watchful eye of **Maj Duckworth**, OC Support Sqn. He was supported by **Capt Keilty** and **WO2 (SSM) Wilford**. With bookings confirmed and only a week to go, the build began in earnest. **WO2 (SSM) Wilford** gathered his 50 happy volunteers from around the Regt , and under the watchful gaze of **SSgt (SQMS) Mandabahadur** work commenced. After 5 days of sweat and toil, everything was ready.

At 11.00hrs on the morning of the 10 July the gates to the Camp were opened, and the first of the thousands of visitors passed through to descend upon the waiting arena. It was difficult for the masses to decide what to look at or play with first, with stalls surrounding the main arena, military stands, rally car rides, shot gun stands, quad bikes, mini bikes, donkey rides, a complete fun fair, not to mention **Maj Duckworth's** pride and joy a good old fashion village fete - all for princely sum £2.50! There was also plenty to watch in the main arena, with displays by the White Helmets, Naval Field gun crews, The Northern Band of the Royal Corps of Signals, and a very professional display of Military prowess performed by 256 Sig Sqn under the direction of **WO2 (SSM) Eastman**.

Contact, wait out!

The day ended at 16.30hrs, and after a quick tidy up and securing of tents, the soldiers retired for brief refreshment, before going home for a well-earned night's sleep. When the dust had settled and the cash counted, it was with much satisfaction that the final total was announced. Around £18K had been taken, of which £11K will be distributed to various charity organisations. The day was deemed a great success, and planning has already begun for next year's event - only this time bigger and better!

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

ARMY

CO	**Lt Col Sarah Streete**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Johnston**

31 Sig Regt (V) continues to set a hot pace. Recruiting is up by 6% and the joint recruit trg conducted with 36 Sig Regt and 71 Sig Regt is now fully bedded in and rapidly turning recruits into fully trained soldiers. 52 recently passed their TAFS trg on the last weekend.

Congratulations to **Lt Col Hutchinson** and **Sgt Brown**, who both successfully completed the London Marathon, raising copious amounts of money for the Lord Mayor's appeal. Commiserations must go to **WO2 (YofS) Cochran** whose sore knee prevented him from completing. Other activities include the formation of a Ceremonial Mounted Tp by 94 (BY) Sig Sqn, who are training hard every Monday night in Windsor Great Park, a battlefield tour to Messines Ridge, accompanied by the Regtl Assn, and a Permanent Staff team building trip to Windsor Castle in what **SSgt Brooksbank** calls Henley Regatta Chic.

Finally congratulations to **2Lt James Cleary** for passing out from Sandhurst and volunteering for a years worth of duties as Mr Vice. Well done.

41 (PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj John Kendall**
SSM	**WO2 Ian Mackay**

The Sqn welcomes 6 newly qualified soldiers into its midst. Congratulations to **Sigs Browne**, **McMillan**, **Hopkins**, **Shand**, **Neilson** and **Longland** for completing their GAPS trg and becoming fully trained soldiers.

Dep Comd of 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Col Nigel Beacom**, presented OP TELIC medals to two members of the Sqn when he visited in June. **Cpl Chris Hunter** served with 19 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on OP TELIC 2 from June to November 2003. **WO2 (SSM) Ian Mackay** served on OP TELIC 3 with 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, and 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn from November 2003 to November 2004.

The Mayor of Croydon with WO2 MacKay and Cpl Hunter and their OP TELIC medals

As well as recognising the soldiers themselves, the Sqn is also keen to ensure the support of those who permit us to spend our spare time on ex or mobilised service is recognised. **WO2 (SSM) Ian Mackay's** boss, **Garry Reynolds** a Director of Interior Design Management in London attended a reception for employers, hosted by **HRH The Prince of Wales** at Highgrove in July. This reception was specifically to thank employers who had been exceptionally supportive of their employee's mobilisation. **Cpls Ollie North** and **Chris Hunter** took their bosses and partners to a summer concert hosted by the Regt at RCMM Kneller Hall. **Cpl North** works for Legal and General Group plc. **Cpl Hunter** is a vehicle tester for Croydon-based Morgan Elliot Ltd.

LE MANS 24 HOUR - *by SSM Ian Mackay*

On 16 June 2005 four senior members of 31 Sig Regt left our green and pleasant land to rip up some foreign tarmac and watch a bit of car racing at the world famous Le Mans 24 Race. Propelled by nearly 600 horses, **WO1 (SVWO) Matt Cahill**, **WO2(SSM) Ian Mackay**, **Sgts Dave Gunter** and **Simon May** left the metal enclosure of a cross channel ferry on what would be a 1,000 mile round trip, incorporating such sites as Mt St Michel, Samur and the Loire Valley, not to mention 4 nights camping within 100m of a race track hosting the spectacular 24 hour race. On the return, **Sgt Gunter** was reported to have said, 'Great roads, great company, great weather, food not bad either – shame its all in France.' And he's got a house there!

WO1 (SVWO) Matt Cahill, WO2(SSM) Ian Mackay, Sgt Dave Gunter and Sgt May at Le Mans

ADVENTURE TRAINING BAVARIA JUNE 2005

Twenty-six members of 31 Sig Regt travelled to Southern Bavaria to take part in a week's AT staying at the REME lodge in the German Alps. The ex comprised mountain/hill walking, climbing, abseiling and kayaking. It was led by the OC LAD, **Capt Helen Currie**, and her instructors all came from the Regt.

2Lt Ruth Woodward and **Sgt Darren Brown** instructed in kayaking and hill walking, and **Cfn Ollie Noakes** was our climbing guru. Many thanks to the PSI LAD, **SSgt Mick Green** and our armourer, **SSgt Mick Stone** for providing the driving and admin support and the advance party.

The adventurous training team

The activities all proved to be very physically demanding, and pushed every individual to the edge of their comfort zone. The climbing took place on a very well set up group of crags, right on the Austrian border. Everyone attempted several Grade 4 or 5 climbs, and abseiled at least 40 metres during the week, and several of the groups walked up to the Austrian border. We shared the rock face on a couple of occasions with the German Army, who were training in full combat kit. As the temperature soared, we were happy to climb in shorts and tee-shirts.

The walking consisted of two routes, one of which broke above the ice line on and around the 2,000-metre point. The REME lodge had just received lots of new kit for the season, and we were the first group to use most of it. This included some excellent walking boots and walking sticks. Both walks were about 14 miles in length, but up and down mountains, this seems a lot longer and harder. Most people burned off over 6,000 calories during each walk, but soon replaced these with some fine German beer later in the evening. One walking group carried on the PT late one night, dancing in a German nightclub after several shots of Jagermeister! However, the Jagermeister seemed to make them walk up the mountain a lot quicker, as well as sweating a lot more the next morning! **WO2 Jim Paine** and **WO2 Mick Dowds** proved that SAGA holidays are still very active in the German Alps. The two gents, aged 50 and 49 respectively, gave some of the younger soldiers a run for their money. **Cpl Paul Hawes** and **LCpl Dave Mac** provided that special element of squaddie humour throughout the trip.

The kayaking took place on a local lake, and all participants passed the British Canoeing Union One Star exam during the week. All the basic drills were taught and attempted, and a fair amount of underwater canoeing took place as well. The CO and Adjt came out for a flying visit over the weekend, and took part in a couple of the activities. A quick visit to the picturesque Eagle's Nest, Hitler's holiday home in Bavaria, a final farewell dinner, and a game of kugelbahn (indoor bowling) at a local restaurant, concluded a very successful and enjoyable trip. Hopefully, the seeds have also been sown for some TA personnel to now go on to become AT instructors to lead future expeds!

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col RJH Sutherland TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Ironside**

EXERCISE MAIDEN VOYAGE

Early August witnessed three hardy souls from the Regt embark on EX MAIDEN VOYAGE. These salty individuals were **Maj Steve Holt**, **Capt** (now Maj) **Colin Alexander** and yours truly **WO1(RSM) Ironside**.

The trip started off well, after we had got over the shock of the size of the yacht that we were to spend the next seven days on. Under the watchful eye of the skipper, **Brig Mike Lithgow**, the crew, supplemented by **Lt Col Eric Heritage**, **Capt Iain Affleck** and **SSgt Stu Staylor** of 38 Sig Regt, cast off for Tobermory on the Isle of Mull. The journey involved coming to terms with the layout of the yacht, practising man overboard drills, and generally getting our sea legs. It was generally agreed that the best bit of the day was when we arrived at Tobermory - just in time for last orders!

The next day involved sailing up to Invererie, where the visit to the remotest pub (officially) in mainland Britain was the highlight of the week. The rest of the week was spent sailing around the Western Isles of Scotland in various weathers, ranging from Force

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ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE 128

- by LCpl A Huish, 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (261)

The course formed at MLG, Blandford, at 15.00hrs on Sunday 29 May 2005. Initially there were twenty students, and we all turned up in our best suits for the short brief by **Capt Limb**, **SSgt Ashford** and **SSgt McDonnell**. We were introduced to our DS, our course comd chain, and PTI, and informed that there was to be no rank on the course; at all times we were to refer to each other as 'Mr' or 'Miss'. We were also informed that we were to be the guinea pigs for a slightly new style course. After that we were straight in to the course proper!

The whole first week was quite a shock to the system, as we were put through our paces on a series of hard PT lessons after minimal sleep. These were usually run as an inter-syndicate competition. The highlight of the week was EX ADMIN IN THE FIELD, better known as 'Black Thursday'. Let's just say it didn't have that much to do with admin, but a lot to do with big mountains in Wales! After raiding a service station en-route, we arrived back at Blandford, where we had our standard daily diary entry to write, and syndicate news brief to prepare for the morning.

The next big adventure was EX LAMB'S HEAD, based from 21 Sig Regt (AS), Colerne. After some emotional mapreading and comd-tasking, we finally boarded the fun-bus back to Blandford. By this stage, everyone's strengths and weaknesses were starting to show. **Mr Fellows** had particular problems with his 'pig's feet', and clear leaders were also emerging, in particular **Miss Balshaw**, who managed to impress everyone with her fitness.

After what seemed like a week in the resources room, preparing various briefings and presentations, everyone was glad to see the back of the place when we deployed on EX BOMB BURST. After having all our possessions confiscated and being driven blindfolded, in to the middle of no-where and kicked out in pairs, we had 60 hrs to make our way to a pre-determined place, completing as many tasks as possible en-route. **Mr Chadwick** and **Mr Fellows** managed to get to Edinburgh, earning them the 'furthest from the start' (within the UK!) award. Another task was to spend a night in a five-star hotel, which, without any money or possessions, was some challenge. Even so, a few groups managed it, although none with quite so much style as **Mr Huish** and **Miss McGrath**, who managed to blag a night at Bovey Castle – one of the most exclusive hotels in the country! The staff couldn't do enough for them, and even offered to fly them in their helicopter and hot-air balloon, amongst other tasks that needed completing. **Mr Huish** and **Miss McGrath** polished off several bottles of expensive wine and a couple of rounds of expensive cocktails, all billed to the hotel manageress' account! However, not everyone had such a good time. **Mr Ashmore** and **Mr Thomas** spent both nights sleeping on various floors around London! It was then straight on to EX BLACK CAT, which basically consisted of experiencing many different comd and leadership scenarios and environments to put our new skills into practice. Through the ex we were 'entertained' by the Navy, the Royal Marines, the Fire Brigade, the Police riot-control unit, and by no means least, our very own DS. Without giving too much away, the ex proved to be highly intensive, and kept everyone on their toes. But looking back, everyone really enjoyed the course and feels a real sense of achievement having completed it.

A little adventure with Dorset Fire and Rescue Service

COURSE CHARITY FUNDRAISER

- by Sig L Balshaw, 16 Sig Regt

As part of the Leadership Course, students were required to organise a fundraising event for a registered charity. It was decided that our charity would be Buzzy Bee's, the Garrison pre-school.

The date for the event was set as 23 June and was to be completely wrapped-up, including presentations, by 12.00hrs. We were tasked with this at the very beginning of the course so we all thought we would have ample time to prepare, but with this being the Leadership course... To cut a long, emotional story short, we found ourselves with a day and a half to organise the entire event, but with a lot of work from all 14 surviving members of the course, the day ended up a roaring success.

The morning began with a bed race around the camp, starting at Hawke Square, where we managed to harass all the Phase Two

Miss McGrath and Annabel on the mini assault course

Up-graders in to handing over their hard-earned cash. The bed, containing the much-loved Blue Professor, was run around camp at a rate of knots. It's amazing how you get used to carrying strange-shaped heavy objects over the course of four weeks! The next phase of the event was possibly the funniest thing the Museum Café has ever seen, with **Mr Rone**, **Mr McKenna**, **Mr Ashmore** and **Mr Chadwick** bombarding the place, microphone in hand, and delivering *Drive-by Karaoke* for only £1 a song. Strangely enough, they made more money from people paying them to shut up... If this wasn't the funniest thing the Café has ever seen, it was definitely the worst sounds it has ever heard.

From there, the course headed up to the pre-school and set up a mini assault course for the children (and us) to complete. The kids, all under age 4, had a great time – but not nearly as much as we did! The slides and tunnels were almost too much for some of us, as it brought back memories of our day on the RM assault course at Lympstone. This wasn't a problem for **Mr McCluskie** though, as he put on his yellow fireman's helmet and flew through the course with a 3-year-old under his arm.

The day was a complete success - and probably wouldn't have gone any better had we had the whole month to prepare. The total amount raised was well over £500, for which we would like to thank everyone who donated raffle prizes, and all those who donated money. A great ending to a great course.

Tutor's Note The Royal Signals Leadership Course is currently run three times a year, and is a voluntary course for soldiers who have been identified by their units as potential Supervisors, Foremen, Yeomen, or Potential Officers.

Each course lasts four weeks, and is mandated to 'develop and assess the leadership potential of selected soldiers.' Students are given excellent opportunities to practise leadership in a wide variety of situations, and to exercise with tri-Service and Civilian agencies.

The course is tailored to individuals' development requirements, and is invaluable preparation for those going forward to Selection Boards.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**
RSM **WO1(RSM) SE Littlefield**

The Regt is entering a period of significant change associated with the political climate recently developing in the Province. At the end of July, following an earlier submission by Sinn Fein, the Provisional IRA declared that there would be an end to its armed conflict. The nature of the statement was such that the Northern Ireland Office, and subsequently the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, stated that the conditions were now set for Northern Ireland to commence a process known as Normalisation. Although the process would be undermined if the PIRA does not deliver against its promises, the GOC NI, **Gen Sir Reddy Watt**, has started planning an end to OP BANNER, with a target date of August 2007. This is a momentous occasion that will have an impact on all Royal Signals units over the next 2 yrs. More detailed information will be issued through HQ SOinC(A), but the RSM is already planning the closing ceremonies.

Operations still continue at pace in Northern Ireland regardless of Normalisation planning. In addition to OP BANNER, the Regt is now supporting OPs TELIC and HERRICK. Reorganisation has already commenced and R Tp is growing to become a Sqn-sized unit, with a long term future will beyond the end of OP BANNER.

Despite the news, Regtl life continues, with the most significant event in the last quarter being the visit of **HRH The Princess Royal**. Sport and AT remain very high on the CO's priority list. Battlefield tours would also have featured highly, if it were not for the disabling influence of British Airways and their in-house catering problem!

US AWARDS FOR ECM TROOPS IN IRAQ

On 10 August 05 a number of special awards were presented to members of 15 Sig Regt by the Chief of Staff HQNI from the US Government for outstanding effort, commitment and dedication to fighting Terrorism on OP IRAQI FREEDOM II. With their expertise and experience from ECM ops in NI, troops from 15 Sig Regt have been deploying in support of the Combined Explosive Exploitation Cell (CEXC) in Baghdad to conduct threat analysis and to develop tactics, techniques and procedures for the troops confronting IEDs there.

During the Period 6 February to 7 June 04, **WO2 Mason** served as the ECM Advisor Supervisor to CEXC in Baghdad, where he was responsible for the management of all IEDs in the constant fight to stay ahead of terrorist activity. His findings and diligence were instrumental to changes in the tactics and procedures of force troops, and he developed new ways to develop the skills of his peers in adapting to the ever-evolving capability of the terrorists in their development of remote controlled IEDs. For his dedication and commitment to fighting terrorism, **WO2 Mason** was awarded the US Bronze Star.

Sgt Andrea McNeil also served with the CEXC from 21 August to 21 December 04. Her role was with the analysis of any recovered IED components, especially from remote controlled IEDs, and the following post blast investigations, often in hostile terrain. For her outstanding efforts both in dedication and technical expertise, **Sgt McNeil** was awarded the US Army Commendation (ARCOM).

Sgt Philip Eaves deployed with the CEXC from 11 December 04 to 28 April 2005, and as the Lead Electronics Exploitation Technician, conducted over 50 post blast investigations on vehicle-borne IEDs. In addition to his primary role, he personally coordinated and supervised the laboratory analysis of recovered electronic components from over 500 terrorist devices, and with his technical expertise and diligent research, was able to advise Coalition Force Comds on how best to defeat the threat. For his role in support of the Global War on Terrorism, **Sgt Eaves** was presented with a Certificate and a personal letter of thanks from the Director of the FBI.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Hanby**
SSM **WO2(SSM) TJ Bickerstaff**

NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION GARDEN PARTY – BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Early on the morning of Friday, 22 July 05, **Lt Colin Northridge**, **Sgt Andrea McNeil**, **Cpl Kelly Sharratt** and **LCpl Scipio** set off on their journey to Buckingham Palace. We were to act as hosts for the Not Forgotten Association Garden Party. It would be a long, but rewarding day, with a few of us hoping to be doing a bit of celebrity spotting in the process.

We arrived in London with no problems, despite the disruption caused by the recent terrorist attacks, and we were warmly welcomed by the Royal Navy at DCSA St Vincent's, where we had arranged to wait and get changed into our No 2 Dress. Having walked down the Mall from Admiralty Arch, we arrived at Buckingham Palace just in time to see the Airmen of the Queen's Colour Sqn, RAF Regt changing the Guard in front of the Palace.

The members of Armed Forces assigned to hosting the veterans received a short brief on what tasks had to be done during the course of the day, and soon everyone was in place to meet the veterans. Throughout the day, we listened to the stories from the veterans, and told them about our experiences from recent operations. After the band of the Life Guards played a number of old favourites for the gathering, the Serving troops were paraded before **HRH The Duke of York**, who expressed his gratitude for the day's work.

Lt Northridge and Sgt McNeil with the WW2 Veterans at Buckingham Palace

EXERCISE DOLL FINN 2

TM Tp arrived in Wertach, Bavaria late in the afternoon of 13 June 05, and after a brief by the lodge staff, indulged in imbibing a small amount of the local culture, before heading off to bed for an early night after their long journey.

The two main activities of the ex were hill walking and kayaking, with the groups ably led by **Cpls Osborn** and **Corkin** from 253 Fd Ambulance. After an early start on the first morning, we set off to the trg areas in high spirits. The blue sunny skies were a very welcome sight after the usually rain and gloom of Northern Ireland.

Day 1 for the hill walkers saw the group heading to the top of the Steinberg. The hot and humid weather made the ascent hard, especially during the walk up the steep incline, but the group set a solid pace and reached the summit in good time. After a hearty packed lunch and some stunning views, the group signed the route book, and began the descent. On Day 2, they headed into Austria to climb Daniel Mountain, but after an endless long slog uphill, they disappeared into the cloud, and from then on, missed any chance of observing the scenery. On the third day, we hired mountain bikes, and headed back into Austria to Daniel. After the previous day's endless slog uphill, the ascent on bikes was a lot quicker and more enjoyable, and the downhill journey just seemed to pass in a blur. The afternoon was spent at Lake Eibsee at the foot of the Zugspitze, Germany's highest peak, conducting some well earned sun bathing time, while others chose to float about on the icy cold water on pedaloes.

The first day of the kayaking package began simply with the group picking up the basic skills. With still flat water, this was easy enough for most, but **SSgt (FofS) Openshaw** decided that being submerged was not for her, and spent the rest of the day fighting to keep her head out of the water. Day 2 involved more skill development out on the lake, but **Sig Hayes** failed attempts at rolling his kayak, **Cpl Corkin** was happy with our proficiency, so we had an early finish, and headed off into town for a meal. The final day saw the group finally get out onto some moving water on the river. This was the highlight of the trip, with everybody practising their falling out skills over the obstacles. After the almost white-water section of the river, it was good to sit back to enjoy the views of the snow capped mountains, while drifting along with the current. With the kayaking package concluded and most achieving their BCU Level 2 Award, interest now turned to the R and R phase.

TM Tp's R and R day had the group heading back into Austria for a day's white-water rafting. Joined by some American backpackers, we split into two raft groups, and paddled down the river with our guides leading from the rear. There were plenty of large rapids to contend with along the way, and a few people opted for swimming downstream when the going got too tough to paddle.

The journey back was long and tiring, but we made good time back to Calais and indulged in a game of football before getting on the ferry. In 48 hrs we had arrived back in NI, just in time for a block inspection.

TM Troop Relaxing on Lake Eibsee after another hard day's Adventure Training

ARMY SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIP
– by LCpl Wood

After qualifying from the NI Championships, it was off to Aldershot for the Army Finals. The HQNI and 15 Sig Regt team left behind the ever-present wind and rain of NI, and headed for the sunny south of England, where we were under no illusion that the next two days would be intense.

Arriving in Aldershot, everyone was fired up for a good result. From the beginning, RMA Sandhurst was pulling away from the competition, so we needed something special to catch their lead. The first success in our counter attack came from **Cpl Chris Yapp**, who came in with a very tight second place in the 100m backstroke. Our next taste of glory came from **Capt Brown** RE,

who won the 4 x 50m individual medley, storming home in a time of 2m 40.95s. Our relay team, consisting of **Maj Hanby**, **Sgt Jeffs**, **Cpl Simon** and **Capt Brown RE** earned us second place in the next two races, which narrowed the gap further, and allowed us to finish in third place overall in the Swimming Competition.

Fatigued from the previous day, we entered the Water Polo Competition, eager to prove our worth. With a wealth of Corps and Army players, our opposition looked formidable to say the least. As the games progressed, we could see that both 30 and 16 Sig Regts had very strong sides. At half time we were down 4-0 against 16 Sig Regt and things weren't going our way. After a half time chat by **Sgt Jeffs** (comparable to Shakespeare's Henry V), we emerged hungry for victory. Despite a heroic effort that closed the gap to 4-2, we failed to win.

The last game saw us arrayed against 2 Sig Regt. Keen to end the competition and on a high, we adopted a 'he who dares' attitude, and the goals flooded in. Memorable goals came from a cheeky chip by **Cpl Murdoch**, landing on the hand of **Cpl Yapp**, who cannoned the ball into the net, the first of five in that game. The favour was returned, when **Cpl Murdoch** scored twice using a back shot. Just before the end, quick thinking **LCpl Wood** passed on the break to **Maj Hanby**, and with the defence

The Regimental Water Polo Team

confused, he took full advantage finishing with a swift goal. The final score didn't matter, but we left safe in the knowledge that we won 12-0, leaving us with a respectable third place in the Army Water Polo Championship.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj C Vaudin**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Spiers**

MARCHING SEASON 2005

The Marching Season signals the start of the busiest time of year for everyone at 39 Sig Sqn. The pre- season work begins early, with equipt being tested and trialled, and temporary ops rooms fitted out in various locs throughout 39 Inf Bde AO. As always, there are some last minute flaps, with everyone running around sorting things 'headless chicken' style'.

This year has seen OXBOW, the heli-teli surveillance asset, used more than ever; assisting both the police and military comds on the ground, gaining real time situational awareness during various marches and demonstrations. Numerous people from Comms Tp have found themselves either on task with the Inf Coys on the ground, or permanently poised to deploy at reduced NTM.

The FRTs have been busy fixing faults with some of the dated equipt in use in the Province, ensuring that the users retained

Cpl Smith briefing Staff on the joys of OXBOW

comms throughout the conduct of ops. Significant work was also undertaken to create bespoke comms nets to provide for the additional Inf Bns deployed onto the ground over the Marching Season.

While in general, the Marches proved relatively non-contentious, the scenes of violence from the 12 July Parade were flashed around the world by the attendant media. These events made for some long hrs for those involved in assisting the Police to restore order, and maintaining comms with the various Ops Rooms and call-signs in Belfast. As Marching Season 05 draws to a close, we all hope that the remaining parades pass off quietly, and without too many of those dreaded last minute flap jobs!

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The Sqn bids a sad farewell to **Maj Sophie Evans**, who leaves us to take up a staff appointment in Upavon. During her time in the Sqn, **Maj Evans** has been noted for her meticulous attention to detail regarding all soldiers' career issues, and her direction to the RSM to ensure the Sqn enters every sporting event in province.

As a small Unit, even on the minor unit scale, this saw the more athletically inclined members of the Sqn competing in a multitude of sports that many had had no experience of...often in the same week. Should there ever be an event combining Squash, Tug of War, Swimming, Athletics, Golf and Fishing, then 213 Sig Sqn stands well prepared! We wish **Maj Evans** all the best in her new job and suggest her staff start training now.

The Sqn welcomes **Maj Colin Vaudin**, who, if current rumours in Province are to be believed, may well be the last OC of 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn.

While there is much work to be done before the lights are turned off and the last man out shuts the gate, we would like to suggest that its never too early to start planning the inordinately large series of parties that should accompany the end of an era... Sir?

The Sqn said a fond farewell to **WO1(RSM) Downie** in July. The now **Capt Downie** has moved on to bigger things as Families

Offr at 2 Sig Regt. Warm congratulations on his promotion to Capt - and also on scoring such a plum posting!

The new RSM, **WO1 Spiers** arrived on promotion from 102 Log Bde and Sig Sqn. After settling in and attending her NIRTT course, the RSM began the process of getting to know her Sqn. For the living in members, this started with a 'stand by your beds' inspection of the bks. Soldiers welfare being at the forefront of the RSM's mind at all times, an additional inspection was conducted before she felt that she was well enough acquainted with the tasteful 1950's décor, and was able to put names to faces.

In her second week, **RSM Spiers** held a parade, and was generally pleased with the turnout. Although she was still asking some people their names, after the third block inspection, she had most of these remembered. After this, the RSM was able to move onto the jobs the members of her Sqn actually did. This gave the Riggers a chance to get the RSM up a mast, and to be thrown around in a helicopter whilst visiting one of the many sites which the Sqn visit. We welcome **RSM Spiers** to the Unit, and pray fervently that she doesn't notice we nicked the AGAI 67 out of her office during the hand-over.

AN OUTBREAK OF PEACE?

As **Bob Dylan** once sang, 'The times, they are a-changing...' and in few places in the Province are **Bob's** words not applicable than today! The political scene in NI has come full circle from the start of the year, when the Northern Bank Robbery had cast a long dark shadow over the ever-struggling peace process.

Within the space of a few weeks, we have moved from the organised chaos of Marching Season to the announcement from the IRA that they are dumping their weapons and ending their armed struggle.

Subsequently, the wheels of change, so often mired in the intricacies of NI politics, have turned at a speed predicted by few, and rarely seen by any. Following the IRA announcement, the powers that be declared that the environment was right for 'normalisation' to take place. This will be a two-year process, which will see the end of OP BANNER, and the downsizing of the military in NI to normal, peacetime garrison levels.

The Towers of South Armagh, so recently bequeathed to 39 Inf Bde by the now disbanded 3 Bde, have already begun to be dismantled. Sites familiar to many in the Corps are also in the process of being, or are scheduled to be dismantled in the near future. R12, G40 and Divis OP are all down to go, until in August 07, the process will be complete, and even 39 Bde will disappear.

For those signallers of all ranks and trades who have served their time in Bandit country, been up the masts at midnight, manned the Ops rooms and been on the ground in riot gear, the Province will hold many memories both good and bad.

Hopefully the next few years will see the end of this era and the start of a new chapter for the military in Northern Ireland.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DP Sheerin MBE**

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt A K Reid**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Sowden**

After successfully completing a hectic PIP period, Alpha Tp welcomes **Cpl Stevie Ware**, **Sig Kat Beaver** and **Sig Andy Penneck**, from 30 Sig Regt; **Cpl Rob Robertson** from 101 Log Bde and Sig Sqn; **Sig Si Brown** from 21 Sig Regt (AS); **Sig Scott Marshallsay** from 14 Sig Regt (EW); and **Sgt Dave Marshall** from 1 RBY Sig Sqn (SC). We farewell **Sgt Billy Matthews**, to 7 Sig Regt ARRC HQ **Cpl Teese**, to 3 (UK) Div and Sig Regt; and **LCpl Michelle Thomas**, to DCSA JHQ, Germany.

Congratulations to **LCpls Jim Walker**, **Al Coakley** and **Dave Moorhead**, on their selection for promotion to Cpl.

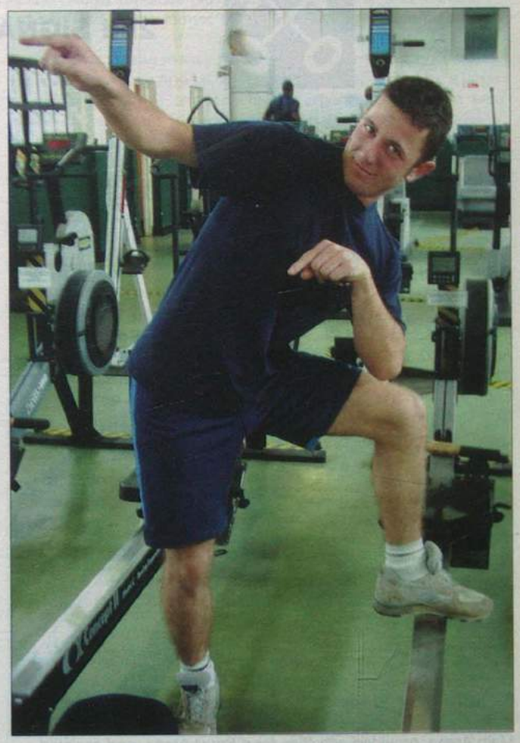
BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt K M Dunwoody**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fitzgerald**

We welcome **Cpl Sims**, **LCpl McGuire**, **LCpl Wake** and **Sig Kerr**. And we farewell **LCpl Marsh** and **Sig Oldridge**. Thanks for all the hard work, and good luck for the future.

THE GREAT ESCAPE - *by LCpl Claire Linton*

On 06 July, Bravo Tp set out to raise funds to aid improvements in Glasvey Special School in Ballykelly. The event was organised and run by **Sgt Andy O'Neill** and held in the 2 R Anglian gym. The aim was to complete the long journey from Ballykelly to



LCpl Murray stops to ask for directions to Blandford

B Tp prior to beginning their mammoth journey from Ballykelly to Blandford

Blandford – by running from Ballykelly to Belfast, rowing from Belfast to Stranraer, then finally the mammoth cycle from Stranraer to Blandford. The goal was to complete this in 24 hrs. We began at midday with all members of the Tp starting the journey by running 5km each. The next stage was to row the distance from Belfast to Stranraer; an average of 2.5km was completed by all participants.

Then there was the longest and, may I add, the most gruelling part of the 24 hrs – the cycle from Stranraer to Blandford. This was a punishing 45km each, which carried on through the night. A mention must be made to **Sgt Paul Meredith** for keeping morale high during the evening with his DVDs, in an attempt to further our knowledge of the Russian language! Due to the hard effort put in by all we achieved our aim, finishing at 08.00hrs the following morning.

Special thanks to the Sandes staff for providing refreshments throughout the day and also to **Maj Parsons**, OC Sqn, for taking part in the event.

QARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

RQMS	**WO2 J Kielty**
SQMS	**SSgt D Maw**

The QM Dept has been very busy over the last month with the PIP period and with postings in and out of the dept. Postings out include **LCpl Devlin** and **Sgt McCabe** to 9 Supply Regt; **Sgt Taylor** to SHAPE; **Pte Hughes** promoted and posted to HQNI; and **Cpl Custance** to 14 Sig Regt (EW). We thank all those posted for all their hard work for the duration of their tour. We welcome **Cpl Peacock**, **LCpl Standen** and **LCpl Snow**; congratulate **Cpl Jeannie** on his promotion to **Sgt**.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

ARMY

CO	**Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

The Regt continues CORMORANT trg, but as June and July unfold, the other main events have been the traditional Regtl summer activities, such as Sqn Battle Camps, the Inter-Sqn CO's Cup competition, Regtl AT, Dragon Boat Racing on the River Ouse, and the Army in York Open Day.

The CO's Cup Competition consisted of 3 sporting events (Football, Hockey and Cricket), 3 military events (Regtl SAAM, Assault Course Competition and March and Shoot Competition) as well as a final day of activities based on the Strensall Trg area. Each event was scored, and points awarded to the overall CO's Cup final score, with the final event carrying double points.

Each event was hotly contested, but by the time of the final one, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn had built a sizable lead that was going to be difficult to beat. And despite their poor performance in the final event, they still emerged as the overall CO's Cup Winners 2005 – well done.

The 2005/06 CO's Cup will start in September, with the first event being Football; and the Competition is expected to be hard fought!

The biggest event in the summer calendar has been the Army in York Open Day. Primarily led by 15 (NE) Bde, the manpower for the event is predominantly from the Regt. This year we provided 4 'streets' of Sqn activities, coordinated all the events on the Main Arena, provided activities for a Small Arena, and assisted with a wide range of other events.

The only thing we could not organise, was the weather, but on the day, the sun shone, and the crowds flocked in. It was a highly successful Open Day for the Army in general, and the Regt in particular. Thanks must go to the Corps Band and the White Helmets Display Team who, as ever, did a marvellous job of entertaining the crowds.

In July, the Regt bid a fond farewell to **Maj Krishna Gurung BEM**, who retired after some 30 years in the Army. We wish him and his wife, **Hari**, all the very best when they return to Nepal.

EXERCISE NORTHERN TRAVERSE – *by 2Lt B Coles*

The Regtl AT, EX NORTHERN TRAVERSE, was this year held at Capel Curig in North Wales. Over a 2-week period, a total of 110 of the Regt's junior ranks took part in the AT activities.

Groups rotated through activities that included hillwalking, rock climbing, canoeing and mountain biking. The fifth day consisted of a multi-activity day, where soldiers could choose to repeat an activity, or try deep-sea fishing or golf.

The hillwalking utilised the surrounding area, including Snowdon via Crib Goch, Tryfan via the North Ridge, Glyder Fach, Glyder Fawr, Carnedd Llewllyn and Pen y Ole Wen.

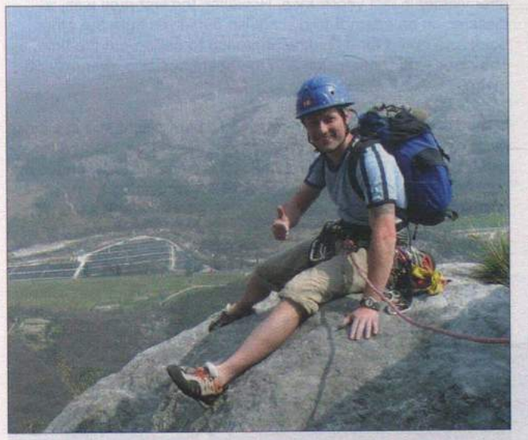
The mountain biking took place over a 25km route called the Marin Trail, a purpose-built route in the Gwydr Forest. It has big climbs and big descents, with some brilliant scenery, making this a mountain bike trial to remember. One of the groups had a particularly memorable day on the trail:

*'With mountain biking seeming the least strenuous of the 4 activities we were all raring to go. We set off at 08.30hrs on a nice downward trail, all optimistic of an easy day ahead. It soon became apparent when we hit the first hill, that the day would be a little harder than anticipated, although we all faired better than the CO, **Lt Col Botterill**.*

On one of the steep downhill sections, he was seen practising for the White Helmets. His mis-timed landing resulted in a broken collarbone and a bruised ego. Twenty five kilometres, three inner tubes and one broken CO later, the group returned to camp to share an ice cream and a joke whilst nursing our sore backsides.'

Canoeing was located close by at Plas y Brenin and Llyn Padern. Although trips to *Pete's Eats Café* were a regular occurrence for the groups, plenty of canoeing was fitted in. Finally, all the groups took part in rock climbing, located 45 mins away at Tremadog. Nearly everybody managed all the climbs, graded up to Very Severe.

The challenge came in the afternoons, however, when everyone was given the opportunity to tackle a multi-pitch route. Instructors took people up 3 pitch (200ft) routes to give us the taste of 'real' climbing. There were a few 'disco legs', but no one more so than **WO2 Groves**, who had to have a rope thrown down to him (by a woman) and be rescued. In all, an excellent trg package that was enjoyed immensely.



Sgt Brown enjoying the view after successfully completing a multipitch climb

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Clarke GM QGM**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) D Leask**

EXERCISE KEY TRAVERSE – *by Cpl Lyons*

Everything started as planned on EX KEY TRAVERSE, a climbing expedition to Arco in the Lake Garda area of the Northern Italian Lake District. The advance party managed to get to the airport on time, the flight even left on time, until they got to Milan Bergamo airport in Italy, where **Sgt Richie Brown** was surrounded by sniffer dogs and taken to a side room for a more intimate conversation, much to the amusement of the party leader, **Cpl Ian Lyons**. More amusement followed on the first recce, with some naked deep water soloing from **Sgt Dan Shirley**; being a PTI he couldn't resist a good photo opportunity. The main body made it to the airport 6 hrs early. There were no problems on this flight, and there was even someone to collect us at the other end! After an extremely long day travelling, we finally got to bed at 02.00 hrs for some well-needed sleep.

The first day was spent relaxing at the hotel, with a little refresher instruction about how to put a harness on, basic belaying technique, and rope management. The next few days were spent with the students starting climbing on bottom ropes, progressing to leading sports climbs, and a few on traditional gear. The group all took to it well; in particular, **Sig Vicky Pennington**, who took to it like a duck to water, with some quality multi-pitch routes that were bagged by most. The most notable ascent of the exped, was the East face of Monte Casale by **Cpl Ian Lyons** and **Sig Ricky Henstock**. At just over 1,600m, it involved a full day's climbing and an overnight bivvy on the way back down.

All the students had an excellent time experiencing the variety of climbs in the area and gaining their RCP qualification.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

The Sqn continues to be extremely busy, with the main focus being on the rapidly approaching take-over of the SLE role from 30 Sig Regt on 1 December 05. In preparation for this, Viking Tp have stepped up their trg, and have already been involved in several demonstrations – one of which was for the local press. The following months will see the Sqn becoming increasingly busy as preparation for SLE continues and OP HERRICK 3 Tp is formed.

GREAT TORNADO PULL 2005 – *by 2Lt D J Corcoran*

On Saturday 9 July, an intrepid Regtl squad of 17 travelled the short distance to RAF Leeming in North Yorkshire, for what is becoming an annual sponsored Tornado pull. The event involved pulling a 22-tonne Tornado F3 over 150 metres - and on a slight incline! North Yorkshire provided a gleaming day, and the heat just bounced off the tarmac into the already overheated team.

The day was raising money for DebRA (epidermolysis bullosa), the Jonny Kennedy Appeal, and was widely supported by a large number of Army, RAF and local civilian organisations. There were 2 pulls on 2 different Tornados, and the nature of the incline on the runway meant that one pull was slightly easier than the other. Nevertheless, the competition was strong, but 2 Sig Regt put in a determined and aggressive effort, eventually coming sixth from a field of 16 teams. The event was a success, with total funds raised coming to over £20,000. The background activities and family atmosphere made it a good day out. All Signals units are recommended to give the event a try next year.

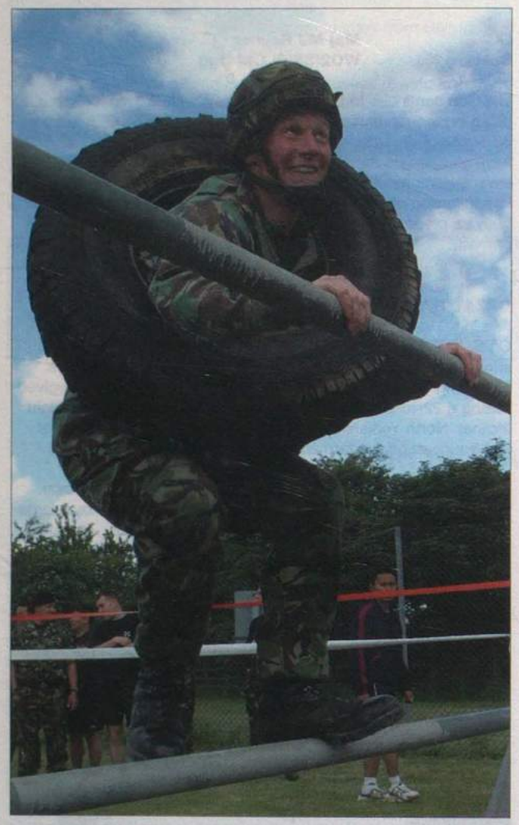
The 2 Sig Regt team taking the strain - with a 22-tonne Tornado

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) NL Hunt**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S ASSAULT COURSE COMPETITION – *by Sgt Knapman*

219 Sig Sqn managed to get two crack teams of eight gallant men and women and a team of six for the CO's Assault Course Competition, held on a burning hot day in June. The objective was to get an old land rover tyre over the assault course, in the quickest possible time, without it touching the ground. An additional bonus was awarded if an egg could be carried around the course without it being broken.



A face of determination – the RSM in the Assault Course Competition

Race 1 went well - loads of aggression, hardly any damaged body parts, and no one fell off the rope bridge, even the tyre, which was a good thing. The good news for two members of Team 1 was that they had to reinforce Team 3 and go for it again, once their breathing and pulses had returned to normal - pending no heart attacks. **LCpl John Kama** and **Cpl Kev Bishop** took the news well. Team 2 tore around with an easy victory, and the egg got through.

Eventually Team 3, complete with attachments, stormed around, once again surprising everyone by not dropping the tyre or sustaining any permanent damage to limbs or extremities. On to the prize giving, and the biggest surprise of the day, 219 Sig Sqn won by about 5 seconds. A well deserved victory.

The 2IC presents LCpl Kama with the Competition Plate.

DRAGON BOAT RACE – *by 2Lt B Coles*

The third annual Dragon Boat race took place on 10 July 05 on the River Ouse. The event, organised by the Rotary Club of York, involved 36 teams from the local area. The 2 Sig Regt Team, the *Imphal Dragons*, had high hopes of regaining the winner's title after victory in last year's race. However, the first race was, a disaster. In an attempt to distinguish ourselves from the other boats, we opted for a Gurkha approach to calling out the time. The result - utter confusion and the boat capsizing after only 50 metres.

In the second race, the team regained its cohesion, and in a close race where only 1.5 seconds separated the four teams, the team came last. The third heat was the last chance we would have to qualify for the grand final, and after careful coaching from our helmsman, we blasted our way to victory by a clear 8 seconds. Alas, it was not enough to qualify for the grand final; we finished eighth overall. The day was a massive success for everyone, and in particular, all the charities that had been supported, with the *Imphal Dragons* raising over £1,200.

The 2 Sig Regt Dragon Boat team attempting to stop an inevitable dunking

EXERCISE BRAVE BATTLE – *by SSgt Tosh*

EX BRAVE BATTLE was the brainchild of **Maj Dave Duggan** (OC Sqn) and **2Lt Talitha Kelly**. BRAVE BATTLE was to be a testing and arduous military trg ex that would see all ranks in the Sqn pushed to their limits. As with all things military, no plan survives first contact, and this was to be no exception. 219 Sig Sqn was stood up as on-going Ops Sqn. OP HERRICK Tp 1 was formed up and deployed, OP HERRICK Tp 2 was formed, **2Lt Talitha Kelly** went off on her Tp Comds' course, leaving **2Lt Becky Coles**, **SSgt Liam Tosh** and **Sgt Dave Knapman** to run the ex.

Sunday 26 July 05 saw some 38 Offrs and soldiers from the Sqn, and a contingent from HQ Sqn, deploy on the ex. The ex saw Tps carrying out a combination of Fighting in Woods and Forests (FIWAF), Operations in Built up Areas (OBUA), and various types of patrols – all of this living and coping with the ever-changing weather of Catterick Trg Area (CTA). Special mention must go to **Cpl Lee Cote**, who ran his section hard and on the edge for the period; and **2Lt Jon Markendale** and **Sgt Rob Smith**, for doing a Platoon's worth of work with sixteen lads. On the final attack, it was clear to see from the skill and professionalism of all, that the ex was a great success. It was then pack up, clean up and back to camp for tea and medals (or, on this occasion, 2 crates of lager from OC Sqn).

YORK OPEN DAY

The people of York were welcomed to York Garrison on a glorious sunny day for an entertaining displays and fun activities. In addition to such attractions as historical re-enactments of the civil war and World War 2 and a parachute freefall display, the White Helmets wowed the crowd with their world famous motorcycle display. All the Sqns in the Regt used their imagination and ingenuity to contribute activities for the public to view and take part in. The children of those soldiers in 246 Ghurkha Sig Sqn demonstrated the beauty and intricacies of Nepalese dancing. **2Lt Damien Corcoran** was more than happy to volunteer to be a recipient in the Cream Pie Splat. During his hour on the stand, the number of paying customers increased three-fold, although rumours of them being his Tp and other Offrs are wildly unfounded. Everyone enjoyed themselves, and the good relationship that the Regt has in York, proved to be as strong as ever, with a huge turnout that was well above what was expected.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AJ Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

The Sqn as always remained focused with CORMORANT trials, demonstrations and 2nd line inspections. Most notable was the provision of highly successful ICS support using CORMORANT during the Combined Warfare Inter-operability Demonstration (CWID 05). The rest of the year looks set to be even busier with numerous exercises being planned in the UK, Norway and Portugal.

EXERCISE SCOTTISH KHUKRI
– *by Cpl Surendrakumar Rai*

EX SCOTTISH KHUKRI was a Sqn field firing camp, held at Barry Budden Camp in NE Scotland. The aim was to improve shooting skills and also to conduct some ITD trg. Although the journey took nearly 7 tiring hrs, morale increased rapidly on seeing the impressive camp facility and Bhat waiting! The progressive trg started with WHT, APWT, moving targets, IBSR, NBC, First Aid, and finally the March and Shoot competition. The team led by **Cpl Akash** became the winners, by luck!

On achieving the aim, ENDEX was called by the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Krishna Gurung**. A BBQ was enjoyed by all - especially the free drinks kindly offered by those personnel who were recently selected for promotion. All in all, it was a successful ex, and we thank **WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai** for the co-coordination of it.

EXERCISE NORTHERN KHUKRI – *by LCpl Gokuman Rai*

EX NORTHERN KHUKRI was an AT exped to Northern Ireland. On 12 June, 28 members of Sek Kong Tp under the comd of **Lt Whittley**, left Imphal Bks and, after a long drive and ferry ride, arrived at Grosvenor Bks in Enniskillen. We were to make use of the Lakeland Adventurous and Recreational Trg Centre. Highlights of the week were water skiing, jet skiing, banana boat riding, doughnut riding and kayaking. We also visited the Enniskellen Fusiliers Museum, the Tyrone Crystal factory and the Old Bushmills Distillery - the world's oldest whiskey distillery. The ex also included hill walking and mountain biking. The most amazing places seen were Marble Arch Cave, and the exciting underworld in Cailcagh Mountain Park.

During our stay at Ballykelly Bks, we explored Ballycastle, where **Marconi** transmitted the world's first commercial radio signal to Rathlin Island in 1898. Finally, on 19 June, we returned to England, with unforgettable memories and bags full of souvenirs! An excellent time had by everyone. Our thanks to **Whittley Sahib** and **SSgt Shanker Tamang** for this opportunity.

TRAILWALKER 2005 – *LCpl Arbind Gurung*

EX TRAILWALKER (UK) was held from 16-18 July 05 in South Down Ways. It is a charity event jointly organised by QG Signals and OXFAM (UK), with competitors entering in teams of 4. The event starts at Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Petersfield and finishes at Brighton Race Course, a total distance of 100kms. This year, a total of 321 teams took part, with approximately the same numbers of supporting teams. We were responsible for the admin – manning the CPs for the participants and their support teams. Each Sqn within QGS including RSS Blandford shared the different sectors. Last year the event raised approx £450,000 and there is no doubt it will easily double that figure this year. The fastest team completed the event at 10 hrs 42 mins. It was good to meet the Royal Signals unit teams taking part in the race - long may it continue.

Jai 2 Sig Regt! Jai 246 Sqn!

A group photograph before the start of water activities. The water temperature still unknown!

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Jason Renshaw**

EXERCISE LION SUN

EX LION SUN was an AT and trg ex held on Cyprus. The AT phase gave people the opportunity to experience a range of sports that they had never done before. **Sig Cridland** stole the show on the knee board as he didn't understand that he had to keep hold of the handle for the board to move. Eventually he got to grips with it!

Throughout the rock climbing, there were a number of different climbs, but the one person who stood out was **Sig Cunnington**, who got up to six foot off the ground then froze and refused to move.

However, she did extremely well, and although she did not overcome her fear of heights, she did scale the rock face. Meanwhile, out on the sea, **Cpl Whyte** was having a whale of a time in the sailing group.

He found that capsizing and self-righting his boat was the only way that was able to change direction. With good instruction, many people gathered valuable skills in kayaking, which was running in conjunction with the sailing. As the final training ex dawned upon on us, morale was still high, although we knew we still had five days of hard work to come – the dry trg phase.

It didn't take long for **Sgt Morrison** to get us back into the military swing of things for the dry trg phase. This began with lessons on basic admin in the field, including the building of bashas in a warm climate - a nice easy day to start off with.

The next day was anything but nice – 'Black Monday' as it became known. It was a gruelling slog of patrolling in platoon formations up and down hills in the blazing heat. To finish off the 'fun', there was a section stretcher race over 1 mile.

SSgt Craig Wilson prepares Cpl Luck for bayonet practice

Sailing on Adventure Training Week

Pl Comd Lt Ollie Lees

From then on the dry training all seemed a lot easier. We were versed in the skills of ambushes, OPs and platoon attacks. Coupled with this trg was an inter-section night nav ex, where the bonding between individuals definitely increased.

Towards the end of the week, the platoon built mock-up buildings using toilet shrouds to simulate a FIBUA village. Morale was high, and the platoon finished off with some heroic action scenes, full of adrenalin-fuelled aggression. The final day was over by lunch, and it was time to depart to Dhekelia for the range package.

And then came the final ex. After a busy 3 weeks of trg, we were prepared for anything that came our way. We loaded onto the TCVs and made our way down to Lemmings Beach to conduct beach landings. After two dry runs, 3 rigid raiders were loaded with members of 1 Platoon, who would later storm the beach. As we set off, the boat operator tried his hardest to throw us around, but to no avail.

On arrival at the beach, **Cfn Murphy** and **Sig Hambleton** decided to throw themselves head first into the water, complete with LSWs. After a fierce battle, 1 Platoon secured the beach, and twenty minutes later 2 and 3 Platoons came forward screaming and shouting, only to find 1 Platoon had already cleared the beach of enemy.

After the objectives were achieved, the company started on the long tab to the harbour area. It was at this stage that OC, **Maj Mark Schofield**, pulled up in his Toyota Landcruiser (complete with air con) and said 'A bit cheeky this, isn't it?'

That evening, 1 Platoon was tasked with setting up an ambush, but the DS got lost and then try and pass the blame. DS never makes mistakes, do they? The second day we were all treated to a helicopter ride to our new loc, which was enjoyed by all. Later in the day, **Cpl Pell** was given his orders to carry out a recce patrol, which he was told would take about an hour.

Three hours later and after climbing up and down one of the steepest quarries in Cyprus, he finally returned. Later on that evening, a successful fighting patrol was carried out by 1 Platoon.

On Wednesday, we practised the company attack on Paramali village, the main effort, which was to be that evening. All three platoons were ready for a good hard battle. The route taken was up and down a large valley. As we approached, we saw flares going up in and around the village, got us all hyped up.

At H-Hr, 3 Platoon decided to take the whole village single handedly. By this time, three quarters of 2 Platoon had already been wiped out. When 1 Platoon arrived, there was only the HQ building to destroy, which was surrounded by friendly casualties.

After being bogged down by enemy fire, **Sig Drysdale** climbed onto the roof with **Sig Holmes**, and took the building, scaring the OC half to death in the process. After a re-run of the initial attack, all three platoons had a chance of assaulting the village.

ENDEX was then called, and there was a further treat in store, helicopter rides back to Radio Sonde for the majority us.

LAD OPEN DAY - *by Sig Ferguson.*

On Tuesday 5 July, 16 Sig Regt held an Open Day for Andrew Humphries School, Wildenrath and Brüggen School, Brüggen. The idea for the open day came about when Andrew Humphries School approached the LAD and asked for a BBQ for their summer ball. The LAD decided to give the children an open day and present them with the BBQ at the end of it.

On the day, there were a variety of events set up for the children to participate in. There was Craig's Crazy Kids Gun-Ho Challenge at the SAT range, organised by **Sgt Bowman**. Another stand was Crafty Craftsman's Crazy Crane Assault Course, which used the Foden recovery veh.

Cpl Vicky Miller designed a course in which a bucket of water was guided around obstacles. Meanwhile, **Sig Lock** organised a Lightning Lighting Light Bulb Challenge, **Cfn Stu Adams** supervised a gas cutting session and there was also Batey's Brilliant Bright Blue Blowtorch Bonanza.

LAD Open Day. Gas cutting

Sig Brown in a line-out of the Leicester Trophy rugby competition

Accordingly, the Lord Mayor of Leicester, **Cllr Mary Draycott** was invited to the Regt to present the Leicester Trophy to the winning Sqn. The competition had included events such as swimming, cricket, athletics, football and x-country.

The Lord Mayor of Leicester was among the spectators at the culmination of this sporting competition, the tug of war and rugby, which saw 230 Sqn emerging as the winners of the Leicester Trophy. Afterwards she took the opportunity to thank her hosts for what was an outstanding display of determination and sportsmanship.

The afternoon was followed by the Sportsman's Dinner, where colours were awarded to the top sports men and women, as well as the Sports Personality of the Year won by **Cpl J-Lo Lowe**.

At the end of the day, when all the events were finished, the winners of each event were presented certificates.

Finally, the BBQ (expertly designed and constructed by **Cpl Jase Batey**) was brought out.

Photos were taken with the LAD and the School, then some of the children gave a small speech thanking the LAD for the BBQ and the open day.

LEICESTER TROPHY

The Leicester Trophy is an annual inter-Sqn sporting competition. It got its name through Leicester and Krefeld being twinned cities.

16 Sig Regt used to be located in Krefeld, but although it is now located in Elmpt, the Regt is preserving its links with the city of Leicester.

The CO, Lt Col M Baines OBE and The Lord Mayor of Leicester, Cllr Mary Draycott, present the Leicester Trophy to Cpl Whyte of 230 Sqn

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj J Gunning**
RSM **WO1(RSM) C Coates**

MERSEA ISLAND HALF MARATHON – *by Sig Jones*

Sunday was a brilliant day for the annual Mersea Island Half Marathon; a perfect day for a run, but by no means a day for breaking records. Members of all Tps in the Sqn were involved in the big event (as they are each year), joining another 250 civilian competitors. There were prizes for the winning runners, but the emphasis of the event was raising money for charity.

The race covered ranging terrain. It started on a shingle beach, which lasted about 2 miles, and ended up on concrete roads.

The smooth running roads were short lived, as the route took you down some very sketchy overgrown paths, where injury was easily picked up if care wasn't taken. This part of the route slowed runners down dramatically for about 4 miles! These horrible paths opened up into a wider island walkway, and after a comfortable steady 2 miles along the scenic route, the worst was to come - a 3-mile stretch of sand! By this stage the legs were beginning to feel like lead, the thick sand taking away our last energy reserves. All you could do was dig in and hope the end was near.

All of the 216 Sqn competitors were in the top 40 places, the best being 6th. It was amusing to see the professional runners chatting about how they had trained for the event and how you get these 'naturally fit' soldiers, who turn up (some after a night on the town), still get good finishing places. In all, a cheerful bright day, with some hard physical trg involved - and all for charity. Well done to all those who took part.

FINAL JUMP WITH 216 SIGNAL SQUADRON
– by Lt RJ Agnew

On Thursday 4 August, **Sgt Paul Robertson** completed his final parachute descent with the Sqn. He has now been posted to the Army Foundation College in Harrogate. **Robbo** has been the Tp Sgt of Bravo Tp for a year and a half. His personality and zeal for his job and the Sqn is infectious. Most of the 'Airborne' blokes in Bravo Tp managed to get on **Robbo's** final lob, and quite a few were violently sick during the low level flight, including the Tp Comd, **Lt Rob Agnew**, who was jumping with the Sqn for the first time.

Once on the DZ at Froghill (STANTA) we RV'd on the Tp Pinzgauer, where members of the Sqn were waiting for us with the mandatory light refreshments. **Cpls Corbett** and **Miller** presented **Robbo** with the Sqn DZ marker panel, and the Tp Comd presented him with a bottle of the Sqn's very own Starboard Port.

A great day; the weather was fabulous, and a fitting end to this chapter of Tp and Sqn life. **Robbo** will be missed greatly... we like to look on it as Harrogate's gain rather than the Sqn's loss.

Robbo gets the DZ panel

EXERCISE SCHLESWIG SIGNAL II – by Sig O'Connor

At 05.00hrs on 9 July 05, ten soldiers from the Sqn paraded under **Capt Balfour** and **SSgt Goldsmith** to participate in EX SCHLESWIG SIGNAL II. This was a 5-day trg package in Southern Germany, working with the Kommando Spezial Krafte Support Company (Germany's Counter Terrorist SF Signal Unit), and included parachuting from helicopters into water. After 6hrs comfortable driving in the minibus and Pinzgauer, we arrived at Elmpt Camp in Bruggen. In true Airborne fashion, we did some phys, and then proceeded to the bar.

On arrival the next day in Calw (home of German SF), we were greeted with a few beers by **Hptw Thomas Hempfler** (Ops WO), our host for the week. Day 3 saw complete range package, firing the German G36 and the Sig Sauer Pistol in a variety of shoots and scenarios. The second shoot proved quite scary, as it involved firing the modified pistol, which has no safety catch. As the day progressed, it was soon clear who the good and the bad shooters were, with **LCpl Steel** storming in with an overall victory, and **Cpl Marshall** finishing in a close second. In true Bundeswehr fashion, we then returned to camp for a few beers in the bar, again.

Weapon training with Hptw Hempfler, LCpl Steel, SSgt Goldsmith and LCpl Peevor

Day 4 was Jump Day, beginning with an early reveille and long drive to the DZ at Lake Schluchsee in Bavaria. After some ground trg which consisted of a detailed verbal introduction on what to do in German, and a brief familiarisation package on the T10 American parachute, we quickly DFC'd (Draw and Fit Parachute) and proceeded into the holding areas, waiting for our turn to throw ourselves out of a helicopter into water. In various cramped positions we boarded the Huey, and at 1,500 ft, we were given the equivalent to our green light, which consisted of a slap to the back of the neck. One by one we exited 'der machine' in the foetal position, dropping 500ft in a matter of seconds due to the downdraft of the rotors, instead of the usual slipstream of the Hercules C130. On the way down, we proceeded to carry out similar drills to our own parachute drill, but removing the reserve chute at 100m above the water. On contact with the water, we collapsed canopies and were retrieved from the lake. Unfortunately, **Capt Balfour** was unable to collapse his canopy, and proceeded to water ski around the lake, much to the annoyance of the safety boat operators. The other highlight of the day was when **Sig O'Connor**, assuming it was just like going down to the local swimming pool, paraded with his pair of silver shadows and towel rolled up in a Tesco carrier bag. Half the German bks was awoken with the whole team howling with laughter.

Day 5 began with a German SF PT test, involving some of the local hills in the area. We all managed to keep together and finish strong. The afternoon consisted of a guided tour of some of the radio equipt, and as a special treat for our REME man **LCpl Ben Peevor**, he was taken to the workshop to look at some spanners.

Day 6 saw another early morning for 30 km weighted route march. Naturally, we were pleased when the first 9 people in were from our team, and our last man only eleventh. The farewell

Capt Balfour's water skiing interlude

barbecue in the afternoon was a perfect way to complete the week. We were presented with our German wings, PT Badge and Shooting Medals. There was a presentation to the KSK Sig Coy, and **SSgt Bob Goldsmith** also made a presentation to his counterpart, **Hptw Thomas Hempfler**, who had planned and prepared for this event for many months. May this relationship with our fellow Airborne Unit continue.

Capt Balfour presenting farewell gift to Hptm Propper

EXERCISE STRIDING TIGER – *by 2Lt Jeyes*

A car wash, a cake sale or a 1,110-mile walk in aid of charity. **Mr Derek Scott**, 66 yrs old and a 216 Sig Sqn veteran opted for the tougher choice. Walking from John O' Groats to Land's End is no mean feat for anyone, let alone a person who is attempting to settle into retirement. 'I had always wanted to do the walk,' he commented. **Scottie**, as he prefers to be called is local to Winchester, and is completing the walk to raise funds for a seriously ill local Winchester child named **Georgia**. She has physical and mental problems, and has recently become blind. **Scottie** started the walk at the end of May and is hoping to finish on the 30th July. The route followed the Pennine way, and he is currently heading down towards the South West of the Country.

216 Sig Sqn got wind of this fantastic achievement and decided to lend a hand. Six members from the Sqn travelled early on a Tuesday morning to the Peak District National Park to RV with him at 1000 hrs at the *Snake Pass Hotel*. Unfortunately, the party was delayed en route, and missed the RV by 15 mins. **Scottie** had already left. But, following some very rough directions from the hotel manager, the team caught up with him on the side of a hill, and carried on with him for the rest of the day. The route followed a set of ridgelines along the Pennine way ending at Castleton.

On arriving in Edale there were two options: follow the road around the Castleton, or take the scenic route back up on to the ridgeline and follow it down. The decision was taken for the latter, a shorter but slightly harder route. And a couple of hours later and we were all sat in a local pub in Castleton, listening to **Scottie's** anecdotes of the past month of walking. The day was a success, and the party had to leave that evening for Colchester, with **Scottie** preparing himself for another long day ahead of him.

EXERCISE DARK PEAK TIGER – *by 2Lt Jeyes*

They arrived on an almost indescribably perfect day, amongst the green rolling plains of the UK's most beautiful locations, settling into their tented accn, in their own private field. Edale Valley in the heart of the Peak District National Park was the forward mounting base for Bravo Tp's 4-day AT adventure, in the warmth of a great British summer. The aim was to achieve and log three quality mountain days towards the MLT instructor's course to be completed at a later date.

Led by 3 Mountain Leader Instructors: **LCpl Stridgeon** and **Pte Patterson** from 23 Pioneer Regt RLC, and **LCpl Sagar** from 30 Sig Regt, the three groups had to complete a round robin of planning, and undertake 3 separate routes during the week. Each MLT instructor took a group under his wing each day, allowing students, where possible, free reign of decision making, and providing the navigation. The standard of mountain skills became more fluent and effortless as the week progressed.

As can be expected, a successful AT exped would require a watering hole for evening rehabilitation and mountain stories. *The Old Nags Head* was discovered only 50 metres down the road! And the support team felt that it would only be fair to organise a barbeque for the arrival of the troops after each long and hot day on the hill. The party was even invited by the campsite owners, to an evening pub quiz. For the final day of walking, the routes changed totally, with the introduction of new intelligence from the tourist office. A list of grid references of downed aircraft was provided to the teams, and some tough navigation was undertaken, but to little avail. The only find was a discarded aircraft wing. But, nonetheless, an interesting and challenging day. The ex aims were achieved, the troops had a new taste for the challenge of the mountains, and everyone enjoyed themselves. Mission successful!

Somewhere in the wilderness

NEWS FROM THE GULF

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj RJB Spencer**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Phil Hay**

The Sqn is now at the halfway point in its OP TELIC tour. The establishment of BOWMAN in theatre has gone very well. Most of the tech challenges have been overcome, and the system is really adding value in theatre, providing robust secure comms down to section level in many cases, as well as offering the benefits of Situational Awareness. The focus is now beginning to turn toward the referendum for the new Iraqi Constitution, which is scheduled for mid October - a crucial final test before the handover to 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn at the end of that month.

The Bde is currently undergoing a significant turnover of Offr manpower, including the Bde Comd, **Brig Chris Hughes CBE**, who will handover to **Brig John Lorimer MBE** in mid August. Three of the Sqn Offr appointments are also changing. **Capt Toby Courage**, 2IC, is heading for ICSC(L), and is being replaced by **Capt Chris Dixon**. **A/Maj Mark Rouse**, QM, is leaving for 37 Sig Regt, and handing over to **Capt** (soon to be A/Maj) **Steve Jackson**. Finally, **Lt Zoe White** hands over to **2Lt Dale Taft**, and is off to 15 Sig Regt. A fond farewell to all those who are leaving, and a warm welcome (literally) to their replacements.

EUPHRATES TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Zoe White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Stu Foster**

Outside of Basrah Air Station, the RLDs are now fully embedded with their BGs, **Cpl Cranswick** (COLDM GDS RLD) has taken to wearing the Blue, Red, Blue patch; **Cpl Brittain** (SLB RLD) is sporting a R ANGLIAN beret; and **Cpl Eldridge** (1 STAFFS RLD) now knows where Dudley is.

OPERATIONS WITH 1 STAFFORDS BATTLE GROUP
- by Cpl Tom Richards

As part of the 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn Rear Link Det supporting the 1 STAFFS BG in Al Amarah, I get the opportunity of escaping Comms Ops to deploy out on the ground either as a Pl Sig or in an inf role. Over the last few weeks, the BG has been preparing for an op, for which it was augmented by the LD and 1RRW. The main aim of this op was to arrest insurgents believed to be responsible for attacks against MNF.

The op was to commence at 02.30hrs, and I was to deploy as 2IC B Coy's sig. My team were to be taken by helicopter to the outskirts of a local town, from where we would patrol into the town and RV with the rest of B Coy.

Once the company was together, strike teams were to enter their respective houses, make the arrests and then wait, while the search teams went through the buildings, looking for any incriminating evidence. We were then to move by foot to a different LZ, before being flown back to Camp.

The crashed helicopter – a lucky escape!

Unfortunately, we didn't get very far, as our Sea King Helicopter crashed. After lifting off, we immediately experienced some turbulence, and after about three to four seconds, the helicopter impacted with the wall surrounding the corner of the airfield. This caused us to spin for approximately two revolutions. We then felt the helicopter receive another two impacts, which I assumed was the ground and another barrier, and then we came to rest. The whole episode lasted no more then thirty or forty seconds, but it did feel rather longer!

We had to wait until the ground crew could reach us before getting out, as we had no idea what injuries had been incurred. Once everybody was out, all the weapons were accounted for, and injuries were treated, it was business as usual. But it was rather unsettling immediately to be told, 'Prepare to cross-board'! Fortunately, this didn't happen, and after giving statements, we were allowed to return to our lines to prepare for the second phase of the op.

It was only the following day, when all adrenaline had worn off, that I felt all the aches and pains I'd obtained from the nights activities. One of the passengers received a broken cheekbone, and there were a few back and neck injuries, but thankfully nothing too serious. Not too bad, when you consider that we'd been in a helicopter that had just fallen thirty feet out of the sky!

Despite our absence, the op was a roaring success. Hopefully those responsible for the attacks on MNF will be brought to account under the steadily evolving Iraqi justice system.

WITH THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS - *by Cpl Richie Cranswick*

Life at the exclusive riverside Shaat Al-Arab Hotel is a tough one, and I don't mind admitting it. Any op brings its ups and downs, and testing a person's mental and physical resolve to breaking

point is part and parcel of any soldier's life away from home. But there is always the straw that breaks the camels back. And I'm shocked to tell you that it happened to me last Wednesday at the weekly garden party, when the stock of Pimms finally ran out during the croquet competition!

It wouldn't have been so bad if the cucumber sandwiches had not ran out half an hour earlier. I've already applied for the 'Pay for Work of Objectionable Nature' rate because of this.

I'm attached to the 1 Bn Coldstream Guards during my stay out here, acting as their Rear Link. Anyone who has been lucky enough to be at the Hotel in previous tours, may not recognise the place now, as it has been done up to a standard that is acceptable in the Guards.

A lick of paint here and there, a few doors strategically placed and hundreds of signs in the 'Blue Red Blue' style would have made **Lawrence Llewellyn-Bowen** proud. In fact, if you stand around for more than five minutes, they'll stick a Blue Red Blue patch on your arm in the blink of an eye, and claim you for their own. I've cleared my diary for next year, just in case of a call-up for Trooping the Colour.

With the deployment of BOWMAN into theatre at the start of the tour, my work was cut out assisting the five ops rooms that are based at the Hotel, plus the ones in OSB and the Palace in the initialisation phase.

The units that come under my jurisdiction, at first had skills ranging from 'capable' to 'that's a nice big green calculator'; and after the initial skill fade problems were overcome, BOWMAN is now running smoothly without any major problems, and can be considered a success. Now, halfway through the tour, it is rare that I receive phone calls to assist in any comms problems. But that could be due to the fact there are no phones in the gazebos located in the well-kept hotel gardens.

As it stands now, comms are in and working fine. Even the data has decided it likes the Iraqi environment more than Salisbury Plain. All that's left to do, is to get the aircon working and fill the swimming pool - not necessarily in that order!

TIGRIS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Ed Cuthbertson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Warren Jones**

Tigris Tp has been its usual busy self over the recent weeks, involved in comms trials in Al Muthannah, Al Amarah and Shaibah with the new HF Broadband antenna, and the usual multiple taskings to Um Qasr, Safwan Hill and Basrah City.

Comms trialling has played a large part of our time on OP TELIC VI, and is an important role for Tigris Tp. During this period, we have been tasked with trialling the new HF Broadband antenna, which enables us to cover greater distances, and with more ease, than antennas already in use by the Bde. This is due to the braid automatically cutting itself to length when the operator changes frequency - a welcome respite, if the weather outside the det is less than desirable! We conducted this trial by deploying Comms Dets to the far reaches of the British AOR and conducted 72 hrs of solid testing. Although the antenna is an improvement on the Dipole, it is a nightmare to put up.

Multiple Taskings is another predominant part of our work while we have been deployed, and we have escorted comms assets all over the country. It is an important part of the Mobile Tp's taskings, as it not only allows the soldiers to have a good view of the country, but also enables the Sqn to be able to deploy comms assets with no outside help from other units.

Tigris Tp has also been to visit and re-sup the SYNERGY Dets based at Um Qasr Port, Camp Ur in Tallil, and Basrah Palace. These Dets work independently of the Tp, and are therefore quite isolated, so it is important that we visit them and bring mail and news from the Tp. They are at present doing a stirling job, and working industriously for the Units they are attached to. Often with little infrastructure around them, the SYNERGY Dets continue to provide an excellent service. **Sgt Lloyd** looks after the SYNERGY cluster on attachment from 7 Sig Regt, and is doing an excellent job juggling everything that comes with the job.

Overall, Tigris Tp has maintained its high tempo approach to OP TELIC VI. We continue to be very busy day-to-day, although we are now beginning to find the time for some relaxation with the odd Tp BBQ or Pizza!

This is usually to celebrate birthdays - or anything that gives us the excuse to have a little party! Also R and R for everyone is now in full flow. Those who have been home are refreshed, and those who haven't are waiting with baited breath! Over half way through the tour now!

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRAH MT - *by LCpl Mark*

Since our last article, morale in Joint Support Unit Basrah (JSUB) MT has gone through the roof due to receiving Sky TV in the rest room prior to the forthcoming football season, and a chance for the lads to catch up with what has been happening in East Enders and Coronation Street

The rising temperatures are making operating very difficult. Twelve men operate in three vehs to form a 'multiple', providing Force Protection (FP) to convoys. Completing tasks whilst wearing full body armour, helmets and carrying weapons and equipt at temperatures of 51 °C, has been truly testing for the men of JSUB MT.

Constant power cuts have made working conditions hard for **Cpl Ryder** and **Pte Nicklin** in the Central Servicing and Inspection Bay (CSIB). The heat has help shed a few pounds of their beer bellies, and early morning runs and gym work have turned them into bronzed gods.

All personnel involved in the successful completion of the LSI have been congratulated on their hard work. A big well done goes out to White Fleet Mgr, **Sgt Morgan** and Green Fleet Mgr **Sgt Hall**, for being out of the gym long enough to complete their work prior to the Inspection. There is little time for respite, as the balding management team focus has now moved towards the Equipment Care Inspection in August.

Working with all kit on, and at 51° C. Thirsty work!

continued from page 366

7 winds changing a foresail in those conditions is no joke to some slightly more relaxed weather. We saw several porpoises and seals, and enjoyed the beautiful scenery that the Western Isles are renowned for. When the week was over, we were pleasantly surprised to hear that we had covered some 400 nautical miles - a feat that Gulliver would have been proud of!

All in all, the sail trg ex proved to be an excellent experience. The PSIs of the Regt will definitely support this ex again. It is not often they get rid of the Trg Maj, Adjt and RSM in one foul swoop for an extended period of time! However, on a serious note, the sailing was a challenge, with the individuals finding themselves in unfamiliar surroundings and having to learn quickly to prove their worth on the yacht.

I thought the boat would be a tad bigger than this

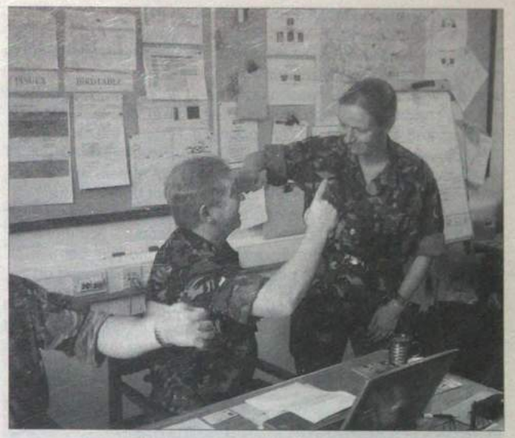
OPERATION ORETTA

The G8 Summit at Gleneagles heralded the start of a roller coaster UK Ops mission for 32 Sig Regt. With the guiding hand and 'can do' approach of **Brig Mike Lithgow**, the Regt rose to the challenge of providing C2 comms in support of 51 (Scottish) Bde.

OP ORETTA consisted of providing integrated military support to the Scottish Police Force at 12 key locs, with the potential to escalate this military presence to a full-scale callout, should the need arise. Although the Military presence was virtually invisible to the general public, a hint of it showed in the form of 2 Chinooks and one Gazelle, swooping in low over Gleneagles to disgorge 100 riot police, who charged straight into a group of 300 startled anarchists.

They had broken away from the main 'Make Poverty History' protest group, and were trying to pull down the outer cordon of Summit venue as well as trying to burn down a police watchtower. Most of the anarchists broke ranks and fled when they saw the Chinooks, with the remaining hard-core protesters retreating is disarray when faced with a determined wall of riot police. A spokesman for Strathclyde Police said that this was the biggest police operation ever mounted in Scotland.

Overall, the ICS provision to OP ORETTA was an overwhelming success. This was in no small part due to the small band of TA and co-opted Regular soldiers, who provided a comprehensive service to the Bde Staff for 14 days. **Brig Davey Kirk**, Comd 51 (Scottish) Bde, had nothing but praise for the ICS provision and service support provided by 32 Sig Regt and 2 (NC) Sig Bde. 'This,' he said, 'was a text book model of how UK Ops would be supported from now on.'



Maj Steve Holt, discussing a technical point with 2Lt Lorna Craik

51 (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Andrew Thompson**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Dave Riach**

EXERCISE TARTAN TERRAIN – *by Capt Paul Bennion*

I've just finished watching *The Longest Day* for the second time in a week, and I'm still shouting 'Been there!' at every other scene. Watching films and documentaries is certainly not the same as standing on the beach, looking up at the bunkers and strongpoints that seem randomly to dot the high ground above you. And it's not until you visit these structures, that you realise they are far from randomly placed, but form a well thought out and deep defensive line, that the Allies had to fight through to secure the beachhead. Each day of the tour proved very different in both content and execution, and all were equally enjoyable. Although each group contained a mix of abilities when it came to the hikes and bike rides, everyone seemed to enjoy the experience, with varying degrees of expletives and sweat. A good source of exercise came from trying to keep the 52 Sqn contingent in my group in sight, as they disappeared up the next hill. 51's resident mountain bike guru excelled himself by singlehandedly puncturing and repairing more inner tubes than the rest of the Regt put together. The week was filled with tales of heroes and hardship, and actually standing on the beaches and ridges where these deeds were performed, gave us all a true sense of humility. The tour provided a real sense of history, and brought home the scale of the operation - and what was at stake, should it have failed. It was a week of mixed emotions, at times humorous and at others quite emotional, but certainly an experience I would not have wanted to miss. We are all looking forward to the next Tour, where more real life history can be revealed.

52 (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Phil Donegan**
SSM	**W02 (SSM) McCracken**

THE G8 SUMMIT FROM THE SHARP END
- by Sig Brian Campbell

As an introduction to live ops, the G8 Summit was an enjoyable, challenging, and even sometimes exciting experience. The first few days consisted of briefings and allocating locs to each team. With **LCpl McGilvary** as Det Comd and me as Signaller, we were in the Scottish Police Incident Coordination Centre (SPICC) in Glenrothes Police HQ. We started our first day in loc by meeting the Offrs for whom we were to be working. **LCpl McGilvary** was

to work day shift under **Lt Col Grant**. I was to work night shift under **Lt Cdr Valentine** (RNR). The first thing was to re-test equipt and familiarise the Staff with its use (while trying desperately to remember how they actually did work). On the whole, information was passed swiftly and accurately, with only minor disruptions resulting from an overbooked VTC facility. Working with the Police was (surprisingly) a pleasant experience. They did everything they could to make us comfortable, ensuring we had whatever was needed. With a constant stream of information passing through our loc, it could, at times, be frantic. Trying to operate three types of equipt at once can leave you feeling like you have just come off of a roundabout - you move around a lot, you haven't really got anywhere, and you feel disorientated. The only low point during the op was coming on duty to find out about the bombings in London. The mood in the SPICC changed from happy and efficient to quiet professionalism. Apart from that, the experience left me feeling I had contributed to a very important and professional operation that the whole world was watching.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Bruce**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Sproul**

June and July have been surprisingly busy for the Sqn. In June, some of us travelled to Normandy to take part in a Regtl battlefield tour. The last trg night in June saw the long awaited presentation of **Sgt Scott's** OP TELIC medal in a ceremony at RHQ in Glasgow. Speaking of Iraq, **LCpl McRobbie** is enjoying himself so much providing top cover around Basrah, that he has extended in theatre till February 2006. He will soon be joined by **Maj Andy Bruce**, who is heading out at the end of August to look after equipt contracts for the Iraqi Security Forces.

Members of the Sqn were deployed throughout Edinburgh and Dundee, ready to support the police during the G8 summit at Gleneagles in July. The Sqn is now looking forward the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in August, before starting preparations for Annual Camp in September.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Gene Maxwell**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Ross Dunn**

New to the Sqn in the role of SPSI, **SSgt John Love** arrived from 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218). A local lad from Glasgow, **John** is accompanied by his wife, **Jackie** and daughter, **Chloe**. We wish him well in his time here.

CALEDONIAN CHALLENGE 2005

The Sqn entered a team of six walkers and had a support team of four. The walkers were **Maj Donegan**, **SSgt Pete Lawler**, **Sgt Tony Cryans**, **Sgt Graeme Smith**, **Sgt Woody Wood** and **LCpl Mike Anderson**. The support team were **Sgt Wendy McBride**, **Sgt John Flook**, **Cpl Debbie Carruthers** and **LCpl Christine McCormack**.

The event was a 54-mile walk over the West Highland Way, between Fort William and Milngavie, just north of Glasgow. Medals are awarded depending how far is walked. After a good nights sleep in the campsite, the team set of at the 09.00hrs start time. With good weather, we were making good time.

The scenery was good too, but it was nice to get to the first CP, where the support team did us proud and fed us well. We moved off on to the Devil's Staircase, but **LCpl Anderson** was beginning to feel the effects. Luckily, he made it to the Bronze CP, and was awarded a medal. A sorrier story was to follow, with **Sgt Graeme Smith** falling at the same point as he did last year; better luck next time. The rest of us all finished at the Gold medal CP, some worse than others. Next year, the Sqn hopes to enter two teams. At the finish **Maj Donegan** was quoted as saying 'This was a very arduous task, but the sense of achievement I have got from this can only be compared with some kind of religious miracle witnessed by a few good men.'

EXERCISE ENDURING HELP 2005

EX ENDURING HELP is a Military cross-country motorcycling event, held on the Longmoor Trg Area. HQ Sqn managed to put together a team of near suicidal volunteers to participate. As we didn't have much time prepare, we were very grateful for the help of 153 Wksp in Grangemouth for our pre-event trg. This, at least, allowed us to cross the start line in good order. The team consisted of **SSgt Williams**, **Sgt Adens**, **Sgt Flook** and **Cpl Norwood**. The admin support came from **Sgt Cryans**, **Sgt Wilson** and **Sig McVey**. We set up on the Friday, and then joined the pre-event festivities, which include an all-girl band and some lager called *Gurkha* that none of us had ever heard of before!

The course itself was graded as suitable for novices, which we thought should be right up our street! Hindsight is a wonderful thing. In this case, it taught us that novice must span 510 yrs' experience. But of course it did not faze the team, who were well up for it and raring to go.

The course was approximately seven miles long, and was over some very serious terrain. The aim was to complete as many laps as possible in a 24-hr period. Within the first three hrs, we had a 100 per cent attendance at the Field Ambulance Marquee - and it was nothing to do with the nurses! This may be a record for this event. Even with all this happening, we somehow managed to get our team photograph with the visiting celebrity, **Caprice**. All in all, a very worthwhile ex, which provided us with the knowledge and experience that will allow us to prepare for next year's event. It will also allow us to open the event to the whole Regt, and perhaps enter two or three teams for next year. The experience and rider skills gleaned from this type of riding are invaluable to Military motorcyclists.

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

Thursday 14 July 2005 was the day that **Lt Col Garry Hearn** handed over the reigns of the Regt. What lay in store for his departure was a well-kept secret by everyone at Brambles Farm TAC. With the RSM following his every footstep to ensure the secret was kept until the last moment, a fairly emotional day was had by all involved. Stage 1 was fairly tame, it was the photo call for the official handover (the smile in the photograph says it all!).

Stage 2 was a presentation from three of the stalwarts of the JRC, **LCpls Julie Wilkinson**, **Alison Bibby** and **Donna Smith**. This did take the CO by surprise, as they had gone to the effort of writing him a very apt poem, and presented some very thoughtful gifts from the ORs. Stage 3 was probably the biggest surprise for **Lt Col Garry**, since his final tour of the TAC was to be on horseback. Now this is where the RSM's career was in the

Lt Col Garry Hearn hands over to Lt Col David Sixsmith (Why the big grin?)

balance ('What happens if it bolts?') Luckily **Cpl Becky Williamson** ensured the CO viewed his 'Manor' for the final time in style on the back of the superb show jumping horse.

An emotional CO views his manor for the final time from horseback

The final stage was the lining of the route and the drive past. The staff car, as if by magic, appeared escorted by two outriders from the Junior Motorcycle Club, *Right Trax*, an initiative that the CO had got involved in. A quiet moment was shared by all, as he said his final farewells and was escorted from the premises by his young son, **William**, a quite touching end to his tour with the Regt.

We also say a fond farewell to **Maj Dougie MacTaggart**, **Capt Harriet Hebblethwaite**, and **SSgt Dave Maxwell**. And we welcome the new CO, **Lt Col David Sixsmith**; the new Adjt, **Capt Kerry Larsen**; the new QM, **Capt Mick McKenna**; and the new HQ Sqn SPSI, **SSgt Tom Woodhall**.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Keith Williams**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

Congratulations to **Maj Keith Williams**, **SSgt Wood**, **Sgt Ford**, **LCpl Downes** and **LCpl Benjamin** on their thoroughly deserved promotions. Sadly the final promotion brings to an end all the Pte Benjamin jokes. Farewell and Good Luck to **Maj Mark Finch** and **Lt Doc McKerr**, the former moving to a staff appointment at 15 Bde and the latter to RMAS for his Regular Commissioning course.

THE WETHERBY PRAM RACE – *by LCpl Kev Downes*

Sunday 3 July was a very successful day for 49 Sig Sqn. As well as running a recruitment stand, we also took part in the Wetherby Pram Race, a local community event organised by the Wetherby Lions.

The Sqn team consisted of **SSgt Frank Mason**, **LCpl Mark Melnyk**, **LCpl Clare Norton**, **Sig Jo Ferris**, **Sig Mandy Humphries** and **Sig Waterson**. **SSgt Frank Mason** displayed one of his many talents by producing the best pram on show, a miniature Landrover.

The Wetherby Pram Racers

25 teams took part, including teams from the Fire Brigade, the Prison Service, Scooter Groups, Young Offenders, and Youth Groups. It was a rather wet and tired team that completed the course in an impressive time of 27 mins 36 secs, the race ending with a wade through the River Wharfe. This was the first time that the event had witnessed a Military presence, and both the race team and recruitment stand, consisting of **Lt Doc McKerr**, **LCpl Melissa Bertuzzi** and **LCpl Kev Downes**, generated a great deal of interest.

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Smith**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) CA Phillips**

Since the last *Wire*, we have said goodbye to **Lt Karen Ford** transferring to 3 MI Bn (V), and au revoir to **LCpl Freddy O'Brien**, deploying on OP TELIC. **Sgt John Wightman** and **Lt Jo Burke** have both rejoined the Sqn from their OP TELIC tours.

Recruiting in the Sqn is going well at the moment, thanks in particular to **Sgt Gary Fletcher**, who is frequently to be seen around Darlington Town Centre, trying to lure in any unsuspecting individuals. This has led to a significant number of recruits attending Phase 2 trg recently, all performing well, thanks to the efforts of the Regtl Trg Team. None have done better than **Sig Andrew Clark**, who was awarded the prize for Best Recruit on his Phase 2 course at ATR Lichfield in May.

50 Sqn has also had its own little bit of luck recently. Having been persuaded to buy tickets for the 7 Sig Regt Charity Draw,

Sig Clark with the prize for Best Recruit

we wrote off the cost as a donation, and forgot all about it. Months later, we were extremely surprised by the phone call to say that we had won a prize, and more importantly the top prize – a brand new Mazda car.

It has now been delivered, and the plan for what to do with it is taking shape, although 'EX SANDY BEACH IN THE BAHAMAS' is the OC's personal favourite.

Maj Smith with the winning ticket and the 50 Sqn Car Display Team

PICTURES IN AN EXHIBITION

50 Sqn 2IC, **Capt Paul Denning**, showed his artistic side with a recent photographic exhibition at the Georgian Theatre Royal in Richmond. His photographs taken over the last few years, ranged from his home in the Yorkshire Dales to international destinations such as New York.

The collection was principally of land and cityscapes, with a juxtaposition of detail abstract and grand open scenes. The exhibition was also a fundraiser for Swaledale Mountain Rescue Team, to which a percentage of the profits will be donated.

There were a number of notables at the exhibition opening night, including our own very important OC, **Maj Simon Smith**.

SQUADRON ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

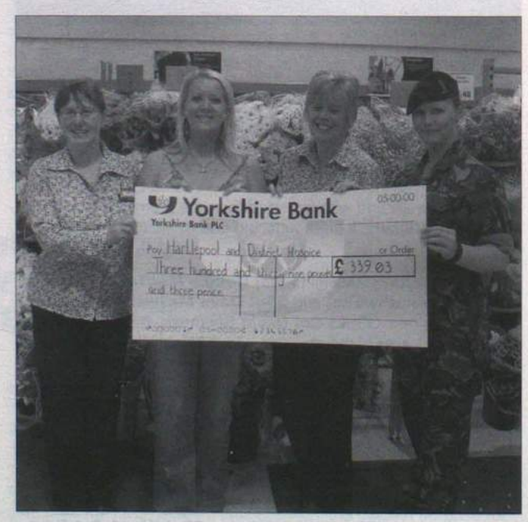
It has been a good month for AT. First the Regt held the annual AT weekend at Halton Camp near Lancaster. The QM had booked the weather well in advance, and the sun shone for the whole weekend. This meant a good collection of red faces, as everyone took advantage of the sun, while they tried their hands at walking, climbing, canoeing, abseiling and mountain biking during Saturday, with some practical partying in the evening. This included the Offrs' Mess who dined out the CO, **Lt Col Garry Hearn** in a local hotel. As a result, everyone a little subdued for the Sunday morning raft race, won by the latest batch of recruits, and ably supported by **Sgt Cliff Readshaw**. Finally, the CO was ferried away in style from his last Regt weekend, by the SVWO, **WO1 Neal Dixon** and his safety boat - or more accurately, he was dragged away down the river in an old tyre, never to return.

This was followed by 50 Sig Sqn's AT weekend, EX HARDRAW HAWK 05. This year, we went to Hardraw near Hawes in upper Wensleydale. For a number of years, **SSgts Ross Blair** and **Pete Robinson** have been keen to push the very limits, by daring to go caving. Sqn tech, **Sgt Milligan** discovered just how challenging both caving was, and collected a number of 'injuries'. While the truly adventurous Sqn members pushed themselves to the very limit in Crackpot cave and Hell Ghyll, those with a more delicate disposition, undertook a navex, led by **Lt Jo Burke**. **LCpl Pat Hutton** having completed the navex, then went on to go caving, a fine effort! Having completed Crackpot in the afternoon, **SSgt Ross Blair** commented that caving was not for him. The AT events thus completed, we all returned to the campsite at Hardraw to enjoy the fruits of the hard labours of **WO2 (SSM) Carole-Ann Phillips** and **SSgt (FofS) Sandy Sanderson**, who produced a barbeque that went on forever! The whole of the Sqn enjoyed themselves, none more so than **Sig Lance Nixon**, who entertained us all well into the small hours. This report would not be complete without special mention of **SSgt(SQMS) Colin Ridley**, who celebrated his birthday on the Saturday. Well done to all who dared to go caving, even though their heads told them not too, and a special note to **Sig Chris Readshaw**, who persevered and succeeded.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj RB Lenton**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) LD Stimson**

TA Day in May not only provided 90 Sqn with the opportunity to raise the profile of 34 Sig Regt, but also to raise money for The



The fundraisers in Asda

Hartlepool and District Hospice and the Army Benevolent Fund. Teaming together with Army Cadets from the Light Infantry, who parade at The New Armoury TAC in Hartlepool, 90 Sqn invaded a local Asda store, collecting donations from the general public. In total, nearly £400 was raised, so well done to all concerned.

Whilst in the fundraising mood, members of the Regt joined forces to complete a charity run at Stewarts Park, Middlesbrough. Well done to **SSgt Evans**, **Sgt Kitching**, **Sgt Ross**, and **LCpl Tate** on completing the race in record time.

The Sqn held a families' weekend in Keswick at the end of June and a good time was had by all, with **Sig Turnbull** proving his cooking skills are not to be sniffed at! **SSgt Durnall** showed off his 2 year-old-but-never-been-used tri-legged tent, which could have housed the whole Sqn!

Best wishes for a successful tour in Iraq are extended to **Sgt Belt**, **Sig Turnbull**, and **Sig Murphy**. We welcome back **SSgt Heather Fraser**, who rejoins the Sqn after various postings. We also wish her the best of luck for her marriage to **David** in August. We also welcome our new Foreman, **FofS Potts** and our new MT Sgt, **Sgt Hitching**. Goodbyes and best wishes go to **Sgt Hatchard** in his new posting, and **SSgt Heynes** in his posting to 2 Sig Regt in York - and also congratulations on his recent marriage.

XXXV

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

REGIMENT TRIUMPHS AT MOTORBIKE EVENT

When the QM, **Capt Steve Lockwood**, was approached by the organisers of the Barry Sheene Run with a request to feed up to 1,200 bikers from all over the country, he was initially stunned. The Barry Sheene event takes place every year, usually in the Midlands, to celebrate the life of the famed racing biker, and its aim is to raise thousands of pounds for cancer, MENCAP and heart disease charities. The event this year took place in Rugby on Sunday 3 July, with thousands of bikers and other visiting spectators descending on that town. Happily, the Regt took up the challenge, by jointly arranging a feeding ex tied to a Regtl recruiting and publicity event. In effect, we almost took over the town centre of Rugby, with a vast catering and field kitchen display that showed the public we could cope with huge numbers to provide a unique bikers' big breakfast. And with this, we deployed an equally impressive recruiting display!

LCpl Jethro Towers supporting MENCAP

As expected, it was a massive logistical ex, requiring a huge amount of initiative, support and effort from all Depts. In particular, the Chefs deserve special praise for responding so well to this challenge. And **WO2 Mick Keanrey** and his team, including **SSgt Paul Holland**, **Sgt Kay Yeubrey**, **Cpls Steph Gibbons**, **Chrisse Castle** and **Karen Dilley**, are to be congratulated for their efforts. Praise also goes to our LAD, who designed and put together purpose-built hotplates, guided by **Sgt Rob Neale** and his team of **Cpls JC Corbett**, **Lee Bates** and **Pete Gribbin**.

Finally, the QM's Dept mustered help from all over the Regt to meet the huge tentage and equipt demand. 4 GS Regt RLC, also helped by kindly providing two of their best bikers, **SSgts Wigston** and **Horner** to complement the Recruiting and Publicity display, manned by **Lts Rachel Stanley** and **Penny Mell** and their team.

To say the Regt triumphed at this event, would be an understatement. Not only did we meet the objective of feeding hundreds of bikers successfully, but we were also highly visible amongst the local community, who were clearly impressed by our efforts. And in the process, we raised £1,000 for donation to MENCAP. A cheque for this amount was presented to the organisers by the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, towards the end of this memorable day.

The cheque presentation

EXERCISE JEBEL TARIQ

The Regt has also been busy preparing for its main annual trg effort that takes place in Gibraltar during August. This will give us the opportunity to train in a unique, quite different and

extraordinary environment. The name chosen the ex comes from Gibraltar's history. **Tariq-Ibn-Ziyad** was the Berber leader of the Muslim invaders of Spain in AD711, and Gibraltar is named after him, the Arabic name being Jebel-al-Tariq (i.e. Tariq's Mountain). Somewhere back in history the name became garbled into Gibraltar.

To prepare personnel for this intensive ex, which will involve tunnel ops, Inf tactics, OIBUA trg and even some of our traditional assistance to the local community, a series of preparatory exs have taken place during the past few months. The final one of these took place at Nescliffe trg area during the weekend 20/21 July. We used the area to good effect to mimic some of the conditions (but not the searing heat) sections would experience in Gibraltar.

2Lt Mayur Patel briefing Sgt Martin Winstanley

We couldn't find 34 miles worth of suitable tunnels in UK, so trg for the tunnel warfare ops will take place in Gibraltar with the assistance of the Gibraltar Regt. The trg has placed huge demands on 95 Sig Sqn, who have been tasked with the trg, deployment and recovery of all Regt troops exercising in Gibraltar on EX MARBLE TOR 06.

They too have responded well to this challenge, and coped brilliantly with the pressures, though at times the OC, **Maj Chris Lewis**, suffered one or two sense of humour failures with the ever-changing Orbat. Nonetheless, he has had excellent support from his PSIs, led by **SSgts Dave Pope** and **Martin Barringer**, who put together a superb package for the final ex.

Their TA counterparts have also provided first-rate support, and **SSM Dave Dewfall** is to be commended on his section battle drills package, while newly commissioned **2Lt Mayur Patel** fully utilised the skills he acquired on his recent RMAS course. Their final report on the exercise itself is eagerly awaited for inclusion in our next *Wire* notes.

In the meantime, **Capt Alec Rodgers** and **Maj John Middler** are mustering support for their leadership exped to Bavaria, an interesting option to trg in Gibraltar. EX BAVARIAN DRAGON will take place over the period 8 –18 August. More about this in the next edition of *The Wire*.

While all of this intensive trg groundwork was going on, recruiting took centre stage for the remainder of July, with 89 Sqn and HQ Sqn throwing open their doors on the 19 and 26 July respectively for a TA Open Evening. Despite vast amounts of advertising, the number of visitors to both events was disappointing, which resulted in a temporary blow to morale. To our immense surprise however, out of a combined total of twenty visitors, six recruits have now been enlisted.

A little bit of FIBUA

Elsewhere, we have said farewell to our outgoing Adjt, **Capt Pat Pritchett**, and welcomed her replacement, **Capt Ross Collins** from 36 Sig Regt. We have also said farewell to the outgoing FofS **WO2 Ray Edge**, who leaves us on retirement. We wish him well with his new employment with Orange, and welcome his replacement **WO2 Kev Peters.** Finally congratulations to **SSgt Paul Coxon** and his wife, **Malissa**, on the birth of their son **Knighton** on Saturday 30 July.

Cpl Michelle Carvell with Lt Rachel Stanley and Sig John Copson ready to recruit

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col AD Smith MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Simcock**

CAPTAIN DAN MILNOR'S WEDDING

Capt Dan Milnor managed to set aside the jitters and was married to the lovely **Becks** in a little country church near Bath. A number of Offrs of the Regt were in attendance to witness the ceremony (and partake in the celebrations afterwards!) Our Padre, **Maj Sean Robertshaw**, conducted the marriage.

He had promised he would 'try something different', since he was in someone else's church, and the majority of the congregation would never see him again. So the Service included a PowerPoint presentation, a comparison of a small gifted cross with a pistol grip and a recommendation for *The Joy of Sex*. This hit just the right note for the majority of the congregation, although one or two of the slightly older and more traditional wedding goers did require use of the smelling salts!

Clearly the happy couple had an outstanding day (despite the weather!) We wish them all the very best for the future, and hope that the honeymoon lives up to expectations!

The happy couple and their Honour Guard

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Piechota**
SSM Vacant

During recent months HQ Sqn has endeavoured to hone its resup techniques for Regtl exs. On the Regtl 4-day ICS ex in the Newark area, this work was put to the test under the close eye of **Capts Rod Cowan** and **Gary Cundy**.

The QM had prescribed an early start (03.30hrs) on the Saturday morning, so there weren't many smiles about, just a lot of cursing! All in all, things went well, and, as an unexpected surprise for the dets rolling through the replen, there was a cooked breakfast prepared by our chefs, **WO2 Medley**, the RCWO, and **SSgt Melanie Widdows**. The remaining members of the Sqn ensured that the comms people were, as usual, pampered in the traditional G4 style; no change there then!

The PXR indicated that all had gone well for the Sqn, and we look forward to the next 4-day ICS ex in November. The QM, of course, hopes he will be posted by then!

SSgt Melanie Widdows slaving over a hot cooks' trailer

EXERCISE NORTHERN TREK – *by Sgt Swift*

It all started so well, but was soon to go downhill. HQ Sqn was primed and ready to hit Jersey for our AT weekend. At Doncaster Airport, I was the one to fall at the first hurdle. As I was checking in at 06.00 hrs on Friday 1 July, the nice lady informed me that I was not booked on that flight.

I had booked for the Thursday morning flight, not the Friday! After a 20-minute wait, and £70 extra, I was checked in and on my way through Security.

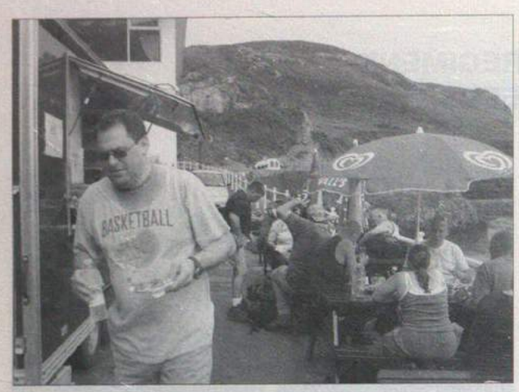
Then **Sgt Boulton** was at Security with a look of horror, as the officials ripped his hand luggage apart looking for a pair of scissors - only for him to advise them that he had no scissors in his bag. Maybe it was his knife they were looking for! Relieved of his KFS, he scurried off to buy an envelope and stamp to post them back home.

After much mickey-taking we then boarded the plane, buckled in and were ready to go. The captain then kindly informed us that there was a dent in the aircraft's wing, so we would all have to get off and wait for the plane to be inspected. After waiting over an hour, we were told the plane had been grounded.

Four hours later, they had found a spare plane, and just as we were about to board it, the fire alarm went off, and the airport had to be evacuated. After a further 20 mins, we were finally allowed to board and we were off, leaving sunny Doncaster for rain-drenched Jersey.

We arrived at the Air Cadet accn, and all we could see was rain. Because of the 5-hr delay from Doncaster, the battlefield tour had to be scrapped. We had a quick brief, and off we went to the German hospital tunnels for a tour. Bomb bursting at the entrance, we went our separate ways through the tunnels, looking at Island life during the Nazi occupation.

All back together again, we went back to base for the traditional BBQ. In the rain-soaked compound of the Flight Club, we sat round the barbie looking like proper tourists, in shorts and teeshirts in the pouring rain. With the QM and Master Chef at the helm, the feeding of the 5,000 began - 4,850 of whom were the locals invited to help demolish the Food Mountain.



Maj Will Carr heads off for that all important pie replen

A quick sleep, and up we got for a sunny trek, courtesy of **Capt Cowan**. With **WO2 Rooney** as our hill-walking barometer, we set off to take in the sights of the coast. With a few stops to allow the hill barometer to change back to normal colour, we hit the first planned pit stop, to be greeted by **LCpl Brown** tucking into his full English with all the trimmings.

Ready for Stage 2, and up pops the CO, flown in especially to give the troops a bit of moral support on the rest of the walk. Pit stop 2, and the hard-core walkers were ready for Stage 3, whilst the rest of us retired to hit St Helier and take in the sights of the town.

Whilst most of the locals gathered in the park to watch *Live 8* on the big screen, we split up and went to explore the town. The Castle seemed to be the main attraction, so off we went.

Whilst waiting for the transport back to base, the only thing left to do was hit the beach. With the rays beating down, it was time for **LCpl Warren** to show the world how *Baywatch* should be done. So with total disregard for the onlookers' eyesight, off came the shirt, and into the sea he went - with just one problem: no change of shorts. For the return journey, he became the bag lady, sitting on a plastic bag to protect the bus seat.

Back at the ranch, it was time to scrub up and sample the nightlife, with a farewell drink for **RQMS Crawford** and a welcome-to-the-Regt drink for **RQMS Haughton**. After sampling a few local beverages, it was time to head back to base to pack for the trip home.

With everyone now safely back home, it only leaves me to say a very special thanks to the advance party and all the members who attended the weekend for a terrific time.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC **Maj Debs Simcox**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Joe Krikorian**

SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS COURSE 1/04
- by Cpl Whitfield and LCpl Honey

SCC1/04 began in late October 2004 with a full compliment of 10 students who had been selected through one of the three Assessment Courses run during the previous year.

Phase 1 of the course consisted of learning some of the Sqn's specialist comms equipt, a week-long Inf ex run by **SSgt Gaz West**, and a 2-week comms ex in Folkestone, run by **Sgt Nick Hill**.

The Inf phase began at a rapid pace, with the students swarming into Yardley Chase trg area from a Puma, and straight into ex routine for the week. The week involved learning the various types of attacks, the orders process, CFTs, a night navex, and other Inf skills. The ex built up to a CFT, followed by a full-scale attack against the DS positions. Inevitably, the students reigned supreme, and enjoyed their journey back to Bletchley in the rear of a luxurious Bedford!

Phase 1 ended with a comms ex in Folkestone, which covered the various different dets they could be deployed on, and culminated with a successful comms link to Cyprus.

After a Christmas break, the course spent a week hill walking/navigating in the Yorkshire Dales. It was here **Sgt Nick Hill** came up with the quote of the course, 'Don't let Navigation spoil a good walk...' Phase 2 ended with the dreaded 50 wpm typing test, which thankfully all students passed.

After this point the pace of the course really took off, with briefings and several specialist courses, including a personal protection package and advanced driving. Phase 3 ended with EX GLOBAL LYNX, in which the remaining 6 students reluctantly deployed to Singapore, Malaysia and Australia (times really are hard).

This saw the final test of all the skills and procedures learned throughout the Course. Each Det spent a week in a foreign Military camp, followed by 2 weeks in hotels, working in the British High Commission in their various countries. Singapore Det DS were **Cpl Andy Stephen** and **Cpl Paddy Morrison**, who passed on their expert knowledge to **Sig Helen Bailie** and **LCpl Max Honey**. Malaysia Det DS were **Sgt Nick Hill** and **Cpl 'Scouse' Hardy**, who worked with **Cpls Matt Whitfield** and **Ritchie McColm**. Australia Det DS were **Cpl Chris Elliston** and **Sgt Steve Pritchard** with **Cpl Don Donaldson** and **Cpl 'Rodders' Rodwell**.

And so, nearly six months after beginning, the successful 6 soldiers left as Special Communicators, to clear from their respective units and move into their brand new houses in central Milton Keynes, to begin their new jet set lives! In general, the Course was very good, with pressure maintained throughout. If you are interested in trying out for the course, the Sqn runs three assessments a year. So don't be frightened; fill in a PD 206 and try it out!

EXERCISE FALLING LYNX *- by LCpl Reeve*

This year's AT was skydiving in California. Eleven brave souls and four instructors set off from Bletchley for a 2-week trip of a

The Dakota Jump, with the DC3 in the background

lifetime. After a long flight that would have killed any civilian, we arrived at Ellsinore Skydiving Centre and checked into the luxurious accn.

Next day, we started the advanced freefall course, which consisted of 8 progression jumps, and then 10 consolidation jumps, with the aim of achieving our Cat A Freefall Licence. The jumps are progressive, starting with an instructor on each side of you, until jump 7, where you do your first solo jump.

The first day went well, with everyone managing to complete their first jumps safely. After this first jump, everyone was hooked and couldn't wait to get back into the air again. Everyone progressed through the rest of the course well, with just a few small errors. Once the final weekend arrived, it was time for some well deserved R and R. Some decided to go to San Diego, and some went to Las Vegas, whilst the really hardcore jumpers decided to stay at Ellsinore to get some more jumps in over the weekend. After a great weekend, everyone returned to Ellsinore ready for the rare chance to jump from a WW2 DC3. Then, at the end of the two weeks, it was time to return to Bletchley, with everyone going for a Freefall Licence achieving it. All in all, a smashing time was had by everyone.

10th ANNIVERSARY DINNER – *by Cpl Voller*

A Dinner to mark the 10th Anniversary of the amalgamation of 602 Sig Sqn (SC) and 1 Sqn, 39 Sig Regt (SC), to become 1 RBY Sig Sqn, was held at the Manor House, Bletchley Park.

Guests included Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Lithgow**; the Hon Colonel, **Sir Nigel Mobbs**; **Sir Nicholas Bonser**; **Mr IR Taylor**, representative of RBY; and a number of ex Ops Officers, Yeomen and Foremen.

Two of **Maj Simcox's** predecessors, **Lt Cols Raleigh** and **Gregory** were also present to join in the celebrations, and both gave a speech commenting on how the Sqn had changed since the amalgamation, and describing things that had happened in their time. There was also a speech from the OC herself, who amongst other things, talked about the successful link between the Regulars and the TA.

After an excellent meal provided by the chefs from 30 Sig Regt, the tables were cleared and the port came out for the toasts. After this, we were entertained by Mr Vice, **Cpl Jay Dine**, who told a few clean funnies. Everyone then adjourned to the bar, where a huge collection of sand bags, cordite smoke and swinging lanterns were waiting. The event went off smoothly, and a good time was had by all.

EXERCISE FLANDERS FIELDS *- by Sig Robbo Robertson*

On Friday 6 May, eleven TA personnel from the Unit deployed with 96 Sig Sqn on a joint battlefield tour of Normandy.

Led by our tour guide, **Mr Ian Taylor**, the tour began with a visit to Hunters Bunker, and then on to the British landing beaches of SWORD, JUNO, and GOLD. At JUNO the group inspected a Churchill AVRE, complete with modified 95mm 'Dustbin Bunker Buster' gun. It had been recovered and restored by the REME in 1976.

The usual suspects with the Churchill AVRE on JUNO Beach

This was followed by a visit to Arromanches for lunch, and a tour of the Musée Débarquement, then on to the Longues Battery, one of many of the defensive positions in **FM Rommell's** formidable Atlantic Wall. The day's activities concluded with a visit to the War Cemetery at Bayeux, and after a wreath laying ceremony to commemorate those who gave their lives in Normandy, everyone took the time to visit some of the 4,500 war graves of many nationalities, solemnly reflecting on the sacrifice they had made for the freedom of Europe.

After a brief visit to the Hypermarket (for obvious reasons), it was time to head for the hotel, and after fresh-up, it was on into Caen to sample some Normandy cuisine. After a collective Sqn map-reading ex, the 20-minute walk back to the hotel mysteriously took a whole hour.

The next morning started with a brief trip to The Grand Bunker in Ouistreham, and then to Pegasus Bridge, the site of the glider landings by the Ox and Bucks Light Infantry, led by **Maj Howard**, and where the first French house was liberated, the famous *Café Gondrée*.

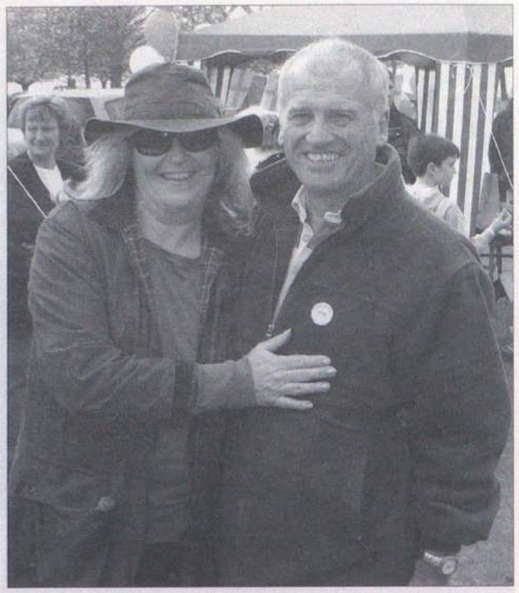
After a tour of the Airborne Museum, it was on to the final battlefield site, the Merville Battery, taken by elements of 9 Para, under the comd of **Lt Col Ottray**. **Ian Taylor** gave a detailed account of the Bn's actions, and after a quick tour of the site it was time to head back to Le Havre for the 15.30hrs departure to Portsmouth.

The ex was very informative and enjoyable, and as with any Battlefield tour, everyone felt very humbled by the experience of actually being on the sites where so many lives were lost, and where extreme bravery took place, in order that we now live in a free Europe.

HARRY'S DAY - *by LCpl Anna Yates*

St George's Day saw elements of the Sqn, both TA and Regular, converging on Woburn Abbey for Harry's Day, a fund raising event in memory of **Harry Simcox**, who died last year. There was a good turnout of people, many of whom were dressed up as knights, ladies - and even dragons - for the fancy dress competition, which was won by a little lad called **Daniel**. The prizes were awarded by Radio 2's **Sally Bowman**, otherwise known as the trucker's moll in *Sally Traffic*.

Also appearing were the Bedfordshire Fire Service, who demonstrated how quickly a chip pan fire can spread. And the Army Air Corps put on a display with a Gazelle, much to the delight of all of **Harry's** young school friends, who had travelled some distance to get there. The *HMS Collingwood* Band provided



The SSM with Sally Traffic

the music. The Guide Dogs for the Blind, and St Tiggywinkle's, were present, as well as many fundraising stalls run by **Harry's** schoolmates and teachers.

The Picnic was followed by a high-speed 'walk in the park.' Although non-competitive, some Sqn members were bent on getting to the finish first. The 2IC, **Capt Fensome** and **SSM Krikorian** were so determined to win, that they took a short-cut up the grass.

Next was the auction, hosted by **Harry's** dad, **Paul**. After frantic bidding, a football signed by the Chelsea Football Team went for a well over its reserve. Then **LCpl Vernon** looked on in horror, as his wife pumped up the price for a picture of the Red Arrows signed by the 2004 Team – and then received it for his Birthday. Other items included a *Langham's* meal for two, a 'Sneakibeakiness Weekend for Children', and a day out with the Royal Marines in Poole. The day was a great success, raising over £10,000, for Guide Dogs for the Blind, St Tiggywinkle's Animal Hospital, and the Headway Head Injuries Trust.

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj Addley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Lloyd**

ADVENTURE TRAINING

Having returned from Iraq and taken some well-earned POTL, the Sqn returned in June keen to get into the main priority of the summer, AT (that is, after the obligatory Board of Officers).

Most people managed to get away, with everything from sailing to parachuting on offer. Of course, for some bizarre reason, some people (**Cpl Crutchley** for instance) decided that it would be far more exciting to do an Assault Pioneer Course rather than spend time in Bavaria or the Baltic. Maybe his time spent on OP BRACKEN had addled his brain!

THE ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS REGATTA

Prior to the Signals Regatta in Kiel, **Lt Nicklin** had arranged for many of the crew to attend Competent Crew courses, or in her case, a Day Skipper Course, so they were well prepared to be drilled by race skipper, **Maj Addley**.

Of course, the OC still had to pry his team out of bed in the morning with cups of tea, as the crew had also been preparing on the social side as well (which may have explained why they won the Spirit of the Regatta Trophy).

Despite the delayed start to the mornings, the OC skippered the 204 Sqn crew to a respectable fourth place overall, with **Lt Nicklin** winning the Novice Skipper Race.

EXERCISE BAVARIA RAT

EX BAVARIA RAT came in two halves, comprising of two 10-day periods at AT lodges in Bavaria. The aims of the exercise were to qualify members of the Sqn with either their Kayak Foundation Course or Summer Mountain Proficiency. As the Sqn's only Kayak instructor, **WO1(RSM) Lloyd** had the delights of trying to drown members of the Sqn for the whole period. Clearly intent on breaking the Sqn, he also introduced both groups to the delights of downhill mountain-biking – Bavaria style.

Sig Jackson tackles one of the easy downhill sections

To the uninitiated, this largely involves a cable car ride to the top of a suitably steep hill (otherwise known as a sheer cliff), aim at the bottom and scream (vocally) towards the finish at speeds of up to 30mph, whilst trying to avoid rocks and pedestrians – which isn't easy. First time round, the only injured party was **SSgt Newton**, who managed to damage his knee and hand when he came off and head-butted a grass bank. In the second period, **Sig Smith** managed an impressive injury to her leg whilst **WO2 (RQMS) Watt** needed 4 stitches for his knee (this number doubled on his return to camp though - along with his tale of woe!). Needless to say, the mountain bike hire shop owner was not happy with the wrecks that were returned. We even had to persuade **Sig Jackson** to buy one of the bikes to placate him. For both periods, members of the Sqn enjoyed mostly good weather and were successful in gaining their Kayaking or Mountaineering qualifications; although during the first period some people were questioning the 'Summer' part of the mountaineering, given the amount of snow falling in July!

And this is Summer Mountaineering?

SIG DINSDALE MEMORIAL SERVICE AND CRICKET MATCH

Although all of the Sqn returned from ops safely, tragically, **Sig Dinsdale** was killed in an RTA in November 2004. On their return from ops, the Sqn wanted to mark the sad loss by holding a Memorial Service, to which **Sig Dinsdale's** family were invited. Following the Service, the Sqn held the Officers and SNCOs versus Juniors Cricket Match. Cricket being one of the late **Sig Dinsdale's** favourite sports, his parents were kind enough to award The Dinsdale Trophy to the winning side. Despite a valiant effort by the Seniors, the Juniors won easily. New arrival, **LCpl Woods**, had his cards marked for extra duties by the RSM for having the cheek to turn up with his own bat, complete with bat warming bag (for optimum playing temperature). Just to rub it in, he then used the bat to score a 6 and several 4s, before the RSM sent him off the field for showing off.

Winning cricket team with the Dinsdale Trophy

SQUADRON MEDAL PRESENTATIONS

While OP TELIC 5 medals may still be a little way off, many members of the Sqn are veterans of the first OP TELIC. As his last duty with the Sqn, outgoing OC, **Maj Addley** had the pleasure of being able to present several members of the Sqn with their Iraq medals. The Sqn would like to wish **Maj Addley** and his wife **Claire** all the best in his new job as COS 2 (NC) Sig Bde.

Sig Woodley receives his OP TELIC 1 medal from Maj Addley

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj MS Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Forrester**

VISIT TO RAF LINTON ON OUSE – *by Sig Burgon*

In the interests of inter-Service co-operation, 19 Lt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) agreed to provide target veh on Catterick Trg Area for pilots from RAF Linton-on-Ouse, in the hope that this would reduce our workload! The Gucci payback came in June, when four lads from the Sqn were invited to the airbase to get a flight in an RAF trg aeroplane.

On arrival, **LCpl Creswell**, **Sig Thompson**, **Sig Wood** and **Sig Burgon** were met by the pilot for preparation trg before the flight. Pre-flight medicals revealed **Sig Thompson** and **Sig Wood** had excessively sticky ears, presumably due to their activities on the previous evening. They were unable to progress beyond the simulator.

The pre-flight prep didn't take too long, with the fundamentals of ejection, seatbelts and what to do in a crash. We then moved onto the cockpit simulation, to enable us to know where all the buttons and switches were for when we got into the cockpit. Then we got kitted out with the special flying clothes. Once changed we had lunch nice and early, which proved to be a good decision for later on.

At 13.00hrs the pilot came to collect us and take us through the final briefs before the flight. The briefs were mainly for the pilots; what they were talking about went straight over our heads. Then there we were, sat on the runway in formation, and ready for takeoff at 13.30hrs.

The pilots took off in a formation, with one plane one at the front and two at the side – what is called the Venus Formation. Once we were in the air, we split up to do a bit of low level flying, and at this point the pilots handed over control so that we could have a quick go at turning and controlling the plane. After flying over Harrogate and Settle, the pilot decided to perform aerobatics at higher altitude, which consisted of inverted flying and some vomit-inducing turns. Having pulled some Gs, we flew over Gaza Bks, and then landed. The day was a great experience and enjoyed by all - once the sickness had worn off.

EXERCISE RAMPANT PANTHER – *by Cpl Lister*

Having worked very hard during the past few months, the Sqn was rewarded with two weeks' AT at Penhale Camp in Newquay. The ex included hill walking with **Sgt Venni**, an 8-mile walk down to Lands End, finishing at the beach for a body board session. **Cpl Calvert** conducted the rock climbing and abseiling phase, which proved that most of the Sqn can dance like Elvis.

The last activity, Clay Target, was organised by **Cpl Lister** and **Sig Beaumont**. This was a 25-bird shoot, with some testing targets - as **2Lt Marie Hunston** found out. **Sigs Bill Reddy** and **Mick Westbury** achieved the Top Shots during Weeks 1 and 2 respectively. During Week 2, **Cpl Calvert** noticed **Cpl Wicks** loved rock climbing so much that he's been recommended to attend the All Arms Rock Climbing Instructor's course.

ARMY UNDER 21s FOOTBALL TOUR OF MALTA
– by Cpl Castledene

During the period of the 1-10 June, the Sqn was pleased to give five players the opportunity to experience the football and culture of another country – an Under 21s football tour to Malta. They were **Cpl Castledene**, **Sigs Mcguire**, **Chesworth** and **Davidson** and **Cfn Dyball**.

On arrival in Malta, we were greeted by **Marco**, a PTI in the Maltese Forces, who would be our right-hand man for the next 4 days. On the Friday it was time to face our first challenge, our showpiece encounter with the Armed Forces of Malta.

This was a big occasion for us, as the Army FA President himself, **Maj Gen Wood** was the guest of honour. After meeting the two teams, he proudly took his seat to watch the game. The result of the match justified all our preparation and trg: we ran out 2-0 winners, with a brace from **LCpl Pickup** (2 Sig Regt). Post-match celebrations included sampling Malta's nightlife into the early hours of Saturday morning.

After 4 days being accommodated very comfortably by the Maltese, we then moved to a luxury 4-star hotel, complete with rooftop swimming pool. The hotel was ideally located, with only a short 300m walk to the main nightlife area. On Monday we were treated to a relaxing cruise around the island, which went down very well with all the lads!

It was back to business Tuesday, and we were up early for trg. We took time out to relax that evening, but with a drinking ban imposed on the team by the manager. We needed to be fresh for Wednesday's game, against the Maltese Div 1 team, Melita.

The match was a 19.30hrs kick off, and to our team manager's credit, our previous dry night paid off, as we comfortably won the game 4-1, with goals coming from **LCpl Pickup** (2), **Cpl Castledene** and **Spr Griffiths**. No one was to be left out for this fixture - the whole 20-man squad got a run out.

On the Friday, it was time to head home. Our Malta experience had far exceeded expectations, with the whole squad enjoying themselves immensely. We now look forward to the new season with the Army U21s, which begins in September.

THE GREAT TORNADO PULL – *by Sgt Evans*

On 9 July, the Sqn Tug of War Team and a few hardy volunteers took part in the Great Tornado Pull, which took place at RAF Leeming. The day started at 09.45hrs, with the teams booking in (16 in all).

The first two teams, 10 Fd Sqn RE started the day with a sub 2-minute pull, setting the standard for all the following teams. Our first pull was at 10.30hrs, for which we were grateful, as the temperature was starting to rise. Our first pull was a reasonable time of 2 mins 43 secs, which eventually placed us eighth for the first round.

After our first pull, the team then went about the rest of the area to check out what else was going. Some of the team decided to get their faces painted. I had the St Andrews flag painted on my cheek.

Our second pull was almost as good as the first: 2 mins 45 secs. Having achieved fourth place, we headed back to camp as the Seniors had to get ready for the Sgts' and WOs' Mess Summer ball.

Although we left early, everyone had a great day, and we raised in excess of £300 for the three charities involved: DebRA's Jonny Kennedy Memorial Appeal, The Army Benevolent Fund and RAFA's Battle of Britain Wings Appeal.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj JP Hazlewood**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RC Douglas**

BA(G) SWIMMING AND WATERPOLO CHAMPIONSHIPS
– by Sig Willmore

The BA (G) team swimming and water polo championships were held recently at Rheindahlen outdoor Blue Pool, JHQ. The event saw male and female teams from both Major and Minor units participating. 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (262) conducted an in-depth search in for likely participants, and emerged with the finest specimens that the Unit had to offer.

The day itself arrived with the full force of the German summer, a fact felt deeply by those of paler complexion, who expected an indoor event. After a quick warm-up, the teams were settled, and the competition kicked off. The effort put in by our two teams rivalled that of the Major Units, as did the support we gave them. And the fact they also had their eyes on the possibility of a UK trip to represent the Unit in the Army Championships, simply added to the tension and excitement.

When the male team events came up, we found we had a shortage in the breaststroke department. Luckily, the OC's driver, **Sig Gardner** volunteered for the task, and did us proud. He had arrived expecting a trip to the PX to be the most stressful event of the day!

It came down to the wire in the final race, the Medley Relay. The female team needed to beat 16 Sig Regt by two places, but managed only one place. However, it still gave them a proud third place amongst the eight other Major Unit teams. The men managed to pip 1 AAC to second spot behind 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204), and gained a place in the Army Championships in the UK.

In the Water Polo, 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204), got a bye to the final, leaving 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (262) and 1 AAC to battle it out once more in the semi-final. Towards the end of the game, we were trailing by 2 goals to nil, but after the end change, we took advantage of the shallow end and clawed back, to win with a score of 3 - 2.

The final arrived - us against 204 Sig Sqn. And quite soon we took the lead with 2 goals in the first half, only for 204 Sig Sqn to draw level, with just seconds left on the clock. And so, it went into sudden death! 204 suffered a setback when **Cpl Sean Peart**, their star player was expelled for the remainder of the game, leaving them a man down for the remainder of the match.

An opportunity arose when we were awarded a penalty, but **Capt Psaila** still hadn't found his range, sending the ball wide. However, he soon redeemed himself with a lobbed shot that clinched the win. The game ended with the same sporting spirit that had run through the entire day's events, as both teams exchanged handshakes and congratulated each other on an excellent game.

EXERCISE MERCURY QUEST - *by 2Lt Hunt*

Earlier this year, 18 personnel from the Sqn deployed on a 10-day AT ex in Bavaria. The first 3 days were an introduction to each activity: trekking, kayaking and rock climbing, with 6 people in each group. This gave everyone a taster to decide which activity they would like to do for the 5-day Course Trg Programme. For the trekking group, the introduction walk began at Grasgheren, at a height of 1,300 metres. The kayakers went to the Alpsee, a picturesque lake on a very busy road, which made loading and unloading the kayaks an extreme sport in itself!

The climbing group used the walls at Tiefenbach, an ideal place for beginners; though some proved not to be beginners but monkeys in their previous lives.

Skiing in summer – a bonus!

The remaining five days were spent with each group following a Course Trg Programme. Unfortunately, it was only the kayakers who were able to attain a qualification; there weren't any qualified instructors available for the other activities. But it was still an extremely worthwhile development package, which challenged all those partaking.

We also had problems with wet weather. The climbers had to spend 3 of the 5 days on the indoor wall, though the two days that were spent outside were very productive days. Despite the weather, the kayakers weren't so badly affected. The entire group attained their 2 Star qualification, and to a very high standard.

The trekkers were also hampered slightly by the inclement weather, but the instructor, **Sig Macpherson** of 7 Sig Regt found plenty of alternate routes. They actually walked the furthest and highest during the worst days' weather, covering around 45km and climbing around 2,500m; a big achievement for them all.

Confined to the lodge the night before departure, the group enjoyed an indoor barbecue. The final morning was a swift clean and handover of the accn to be on the road by 08.30hrs, for a smooth 6-hr journey back to Guttersloh.

EXERCISE MERCURY WARRIOR 05 - *by LCpl Russell*

Deploying under the comd of **Cpl Jeffreys**, the Halterian Government Forces (i.e. 25 assorted ragamuffins from 102 Log

Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (262) found themselves in the deep south of the Haltern Trg Area, with an initial mission to protect a comms det and await further instructions from HQ.

While setting up defences at our harbour loc, a fighting patrol, led by **LCpl Scott**, caught the Halterian Appreciation Fanclub (HAF) – (more assorted ragamuffins posing as terrorists) napping and scared them off during the ensuing fire fight.

A further patrol, under the comd of **LCpl Lawson**, successfully evacuated two casualties from a burning FFR, and under extreme duress. One of the casualties (**Lt Wartemberg**) is apparently immune to morphine, as he continued to moan and wail, despite administration of said opiate.

The week saw further tests of soldiering skills for the platoon. **LCpl Crane** managed to guide 2 Section (blindfolded) through a maze of obstacles, while in another first aid scenario, **Sig Colquhoun** managed to comfort casualty **LCpl Reid** (sucking chest wound) by singing his favourite Glasgow Rangers terrace chants to him through gritted teeth.

LCpl Russell took 1 Section through a gruelling NBC scenario, evacuating two casualties at speed in 4 Romeo. It's quite possible that one of the casualties was brown bread by the time he reached substantial medical aid though – **LCpl Studholme** made a slight misdiagnosis in treating atropine poisoning with another combo pen…

Back at the harbour, Pl Comd **Cpl Jeffreys** was kept on his toes by the nosy civilian population. It all came to a head on the afternoon of the fifth day, when **SSgt Moore** tipped up with a large posse and a known terrorist in tow. The terrorist (**Cpl Duncan**) was apprehended in a 'vigorous' manner by **LCpl Morgan**, leading to all manner of insults from the Civ Div.

The HAF were a considerate enemy, attacking at approximately the same time each night. **Cpl Jeffreys** kept morale up amongst his troops with rallying war cries: 'If you run out of ammo, throw your boots at 'em!' 'On my signal, unleash hell!' and other such Hollywood gems. On one occasion, it appeared to be a contest to see how many miniflares could be fired. The night sky practically became daylight for a 20-min period.

3 Section kept busy with lots of sneaky-beaky CTR stuff, culminating in an attack on the HAF on the fifth night. This led to a counter-attack on the sixth morning (after breakfast, naturally), leading to the whole platoon bugging out and bizarrely pushing FFRs up hills, sprinting with ammo boxes, jerry cans and stretchers… but I'm sure you don't want to here any more …

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL WING (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt Rigby**

THE WILKINSON SWORD OF PEACE

H Tp, 13 Sig Regt won the greatly coveted Wilkinson Sword of Peace in 1982 in recognition of their efforts to foster cordial relations between their isolated Unit and the local German community.

When the Tp and, in turn, the Regt were closed at the end of the Cold War, the Sword was sent to the Royal Signals Museum, where it has remained until 2005. Now, as a result of an initiative by **Maj (Retd) Dennis Weir**, staunchly supported by **Lt Col David Whimpenny**, the Sword has been given pride of place within JSSW(Digby) which, as the legacy unit of 13 Sig Regt, can rightly claim to be the most appropriate custodian of this very important piece of Regimental history.

Lt Col Whimpenny and Maj Weir install the sword in its new home

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OC **Maj Dougy Wright MBE**
USM **WO2 Abbott**

Another busy couple of months in JCUFI have seen numerous improvements in the services that we provide to British Forces South Atlantic Islands. The Forward Repair Team, ably led by **SSgt Amber Gurung**, has been working on a number of small projects with varying degrees of success. Extension of ISDN ccts over copper and fibre has enabled us to supply digital lines to previously unreachable locs. Integration of INMARSAT base stations onto the Realitis Falkland Island Telephone Exchange Network (FITEN) is nearing completion, after many hrs of engineering investigation by **Sgt Paddy Partington** and his team. When complete, this will greatly enhance connectivity to the remote sites and mobile dets across the Islands, especially during the arduous austral winter, on dangerous roads and terrain, when comms are absolutely essential.

The Configuration Management Cell continues to develop, in the hands of **Sgt Dan Reade** and **PO Doug Stevens**. The Cell is responsible for the coordination of all new ICS works, and changes to existing infrastructure, in accordance with CIDA requirements. The ever-changing Theatre requirements ensure that 6 challenging months of small project management lies ahead of the team. As well as being an essential piece in the J6 projects jigsaw, the Cell provides the opportunity to develop the individual management and engineering skills of any potential FofS.

The Unit has been giving a good account of themselves on the sporting front, especially in the BFFI Cup. We are currently in second place, two points behind RRS. At the beginning of July, **WO2(FofS) Arundel** and his team, competed in Ten Pin Bowling, in which they finished 5th overall. At the beginning of August, it was decided the next event would be Dodgeball (like the film).

The event itself was amusing, with quite a lot of rules just being thrown in while the game was being played. After a poor start, we managed to win our last three games to end up third

As usual with JCUFI, faces come and go weekly. We say goodbye and thank you to **WO2 (USM) Kinsey** who goes back to 7 Sig Regt; **SSgt(UQMS) Chris Hoggard** and **Sgt Jaman**, who both go back to 2 Sig Regt; **SSgt Amber** and **Sgt Tanka**, who return to 30 Sig Regt; and **Sgt Paddy Partington**, who returns to 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn. Good luck in the future and keep in touch.

We welcome **WO2(USM) Abbott**; **2Lt Finn Aldrich**, who is now ICS Ops OC; **SSgt (UQMS)Rob Green**; **SSgt Mike Joyce**; and **Sgt Royston**. Have a great Falklands summer.

And of course, **Maj Paul Anderson** has handed over the Unit to **Maj Dougy Wright MBE**.

Maj PA Anderson hands over the flag and Comd to Maj DA Wright MBE

MY TOUR OF THE FALKLANDS - *by LCpl Potts*

When I landed in the Falklands, on 10 January, I had no idea what to expect. Although I had heard horror stories about the Falklands weather, it was very pleasant when I arrived. I was welcomed to the Islands by the Line Section.

After the initial rush of briefings and slide shows, I decided I wanted to get fit, and do something for charity. With the assistance of the USM, I organised a Marathon distance Rowathon challenge, to coincide with the Flora London Marathon. This gave me 2 months to train. My build-up consisted of rowing 5-10km every day, with 20km on Sundays.

Interspersed with this trg, I took part in some of the BFFI Cup events. Part of this was an 8-mile run, in which I had the great pleasure of beating the UQMS. I also competed in a swimming gala, and the Superstars team as the rowing element. The Gym staff challenged all the Depts on the Island to a 3km row race, with three members in each team doing 1km each. The team from JCUFI, **Flt Lt Rowe**, **SSgt Honeywood** and myself, thrashed all challengers, with an awesome time of 9 mins 37secs, sending the gym staff away with their tails between their legs!

The day of the London Marathon arrived, and all I had to do was sit in a rowing machine and row 26.2 miles. The first hour went by without problem, and I seemed to be coasting along. Then I hit the wall at 1hr 45mins, as my back started to seize up. So I got off the rower, stretched, eased my back into a normal position, and restarted.

The last 1hr 25mins were pure torture, and the only thing keeping me going was the support from **Maj Paul Anderson**, **FofS Arry Arundel**, and all the guys from Line Section, as they cheered me on. Then the real work started - collecting all the money that I had been sponsored. When it was all in, I had raised £360, which was put to the Charity Committee. They added £290 to make it up to £650 for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Overall, I have enjoyed my tour in the South Atlantic. I have had the chance to work in a busy and challenging comms environment, and the experiences I have gained will stand me in good stead for the rest of my career. A Falklands posting is what you make of it. You can be a hermit; or alternately, take part in battlefield tours of the likes of Tumbledown and Goose Green, go go-karting, endless sporting opportunities, sailing, fishing, walking, wildlife spotting trips, (penguins, sea lions, vultures, dolphins etc) or globe trotting in Stanley on a Saturday night, where there are some very friendly locals! You can't go clubbing in Stanley any longer though; the seals are a protected species!

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO **Lt Col IG Standen**
SSM **WO1(RSM) SK Cook**

AYIOS NIKOLAOS STATION FETE 2005
- by WO2 (SSM) Mac McDonald

It was on Monday 07 January 05 when the newly formed Fête Committee met up for their first planning meeting. The meeting lasted some 2hrs and laid down the foundation for the 2005 Stn Fête.

The day would be a fun and entertaining day for all personnel within the local area. Direction came from **Maj Terry Crane**, in his position as Supervising Officer, supported by **WO2 (SSM) Mac McDonald** as the Committee Chairman.

Countdown commenced on 12 May, which saw the stores arrive: 250 benches, 250 chairs, 85 12x12 tents, 20 9x9 tents, not to mention 18x24s. After 6 days and more blisters than anyone would like to recall, the build was complete! Sighs of relief could be heard all the way back to UK.

So Saturday 21 May was upon us, and an early start ensured all where ready for the long day ahead. Over the next few hrs, we saw some 60 stallholders arriving, made up from a varied combination of Civilian and Unit clubs, the hard work of **CPO Lou Bingley**, **Sgt Charlie Howard** and the 1 Sqn Committee.

Other attractions included GoKarts, Quads, Paintballing and a Fun Fair, all organized by **Sgt Steve McKie** and his 2 Sqn Committee.

To ensure that the heat of the day would be kept at bay, two theme bars at the northern edge of the arena were organised and run by **WO2 (FofS) Martin Frangleton** and a band of volunteers, mostly wives. The Jazz Bar presented a classy drinking environment, and boasted a wide selection of made to order cocktails that could be sipped whilst listening to a live Jazz duet.

The Tavern, based on a spit and sawdust style Irish theme, gave the punters an almost authentic Gaelic surroundings, and was greatly enhanced when the Ghurkha Pipe and Drums later dropped in to do a couple of busking sessions. Some of the Bartenders even had a traditional Irish accent.

Where's that flag pole?

12.00hrs saw the Fête open, with the Band of the Brigade of Ghurkhas doing themselves proud. We then saw the youngster's kick off with the Football tournament, which involved teams from both the Military and Civilian community.

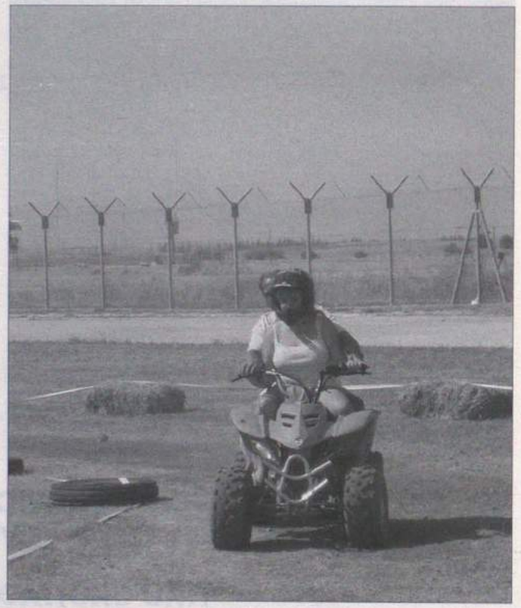
The day continued with a Parachute display with a difference. Firstly one of the parachutists managed to land on and snap a flagpole. Next, just as the last parachutist had hit the ground, he ran off in search of a young girl, who was celebrating her 18th birthday to present her with a box of, yes you've got it 'All because the lady loves Milk Tray.' Next we had the Unit MT complete a humorous display, similar to the Red Arrows, but without real planes. The teams flew around the area doing a display to the *Battle of Britain* soundtrack. This culminated in a dramatic closing sequence, resulting in a crash, and requiring the broken cardboard plane to be removed from the arena by the Red Arrows (Unit MT) recovery team.

MT's Red Arrows

Next saw the start of the first all-Island Tug-O-War competition. Teams came from all over the Island and included 1 Queen's Lancashire Regt, 1st Regt RHA, as well as one from every Sqn in JSSU. The event was well received, and culminated in pull-off between QLR B Team and HQ Sqn, JSSU. Unfortunately for QLR, JSSU won.

We then saw the varied but impressive display from the blue light services: EOD, Dogs, Fire and Medical, and SBA Police. The displays were perfectly timed and extremely interesting, ensuring that all present were entertained.

During the Fête we also had the all-Island Catering Competition. This had a similar theme to the TV *Ready Steady Cook* programme, although the chefs were given Compo rations rather than the normal fresh Tesco's produce. There were 3 levels: Open Field Cook and Serve, which involved only rations; and the Junior and Senior Class competitions, involving Juniors and SNCOs from I QLR, JSSU, I RHA and RHF. A resounding success, with most units taking at least 2 medals.



Just how safe is this?

In the background, a variety of other entertainment was taking place, in an attempt to prevent the kids rioting. This included a magician, who entertained the kids by his unusual use of balloons. A big well done must go to **Cpl Nick Budd** and **SAC Daz Robertson** for getting the Paintballing and GoKarts all running smoothly; and to **Cpl Nicky Kelly** for her Noddy Train, which puffed around all day transporting exhausted kids from area to area.

For the last event of the day, we had the usual *It's a Knock Out* event, with each Sqn entering a team. The Royal Navy also entered a team - and won!

As a finale we had the Band of the Brigade of Ghurkhas; with more than 1,000 people up clapping, they had to be proud of their performance. We were! In short, the day was a resounding success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY
DIRECTORATE OF CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

ENGINEERING OPERATIONS - *by Maj G M McCrindle*

The Royal Signals element of Eng Ops are some of the busiest people in DCSA. They deploy worldwide on short-term comms engineering tasks in support of PJHQ, Front-Line Commands, Integrated Project Teams and other Govt Depts. However, it is not all work, as the following article shows.

TOUGH GUY CHALLENGE 2005 - *by SSgt Elvis Hemstead*

I had heard about the Tough Guy Challenge and, after some detailed research, decided this was the next arduous event I wanted to take part in. The Challenge is an 8-mile assault course, with plenty water and climbing frames to have fun on. Every now and again, you come across a scramble net, some tunnels, barbed wire, hills, bogs, logs, tyres, and lots of other things participants love to see when they are cold, wet and tired.

I wanted to encourage some of the younger members of Eng Ops to come along and enjoy the fun with me. As you can imagine, I had to be quite selective to handle the rush of volunteers who came forward to take part in the demanding challenge that lay ahead. The elite **WO2 (SSM) Harry Harris**, **Sgt Les Welsh** and **Sgt Dave Healy** were first choice, as I knew these seasoned veterans would not let me down when the going got tough. Because all other Royal Signals personnel were deployed, the rest of the team was made up of fit, young RAF lads who looked like they could do the course twice.

The unsuspecting Team before the event

We arrived at our transit accn in RAF Cosford the day before the event, to discuss tactics, and to iron out who was going to lead from the front, and who would play a supporting role. As this was the first time any of us had taken part in the Challenge, this meeting of minds did not last long, and thoughts turned to the delights of the surrounding area that evening.

Race Day arrived, we leapt out of bed and were soon heading enthusiastically towards the Challenge. It is held on an old farm somewhere in the middle of nowhere, where no-one wants to be - but our spirits were high. We soon changed and lined up at the start point, together with the other 2,000 competitors, managing to elbow our way into the front group. Everyone waited with bated breath for the off. When it came, it was one massive free-for-all towards the first obstacle 3 miles away. Obstacle 1 was a slight gradient that we had to run up and down (8 times), then it began to become apparent why the event was called the Tough Guy Challenge.

Sgt Dave 'swamp monster' Healy

After crawling under numerous scramble nets, leaping though flaming hay bales and wading through bogs, we came to the killing fields. This is a circuit consisting of numerous obstacles designed to test the most enthusiastic fitness freak. One lap of the killing fields is more than enough to wipe the smile from anyone's face. Then, just when you think you're done and dusted and have achieved something, a group of chirpy race Marshals present you with a rather fetching purple wrist band and politely ask you to do another circuit of the killing fields! This is where your true colours come shining through. You also get to shred the parts of your body you missed on the first lap, together with the bonus of tasting that vintage stagnant water again. This is what we call team-building. I'm not sure what the young RAF members of our team call it, but by the looks on their faces, they were having jolly good fun. However, their earlier suspicions of never trusting a Royal Signals SSgt who says 'It's only a little obstacle course over a couple of miles' were confirmed.

Well done to everyone for completing the course, but in particular to **LAC Brock**, who finished in 246th place. All in all, it was a great day, and I would highly recommend it to anyone in a position who wants to volunteer their lads to do something a little bit different.

SAC 'I'm still looking good' Hill

628 SIGNAL TROOP

OC **Capt Kelvin Grice**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Randy Randerson**

INTRODUCTION

628 Sig Tp is unique. It remains the only Royal Signals unit permanently under OPCOM of NATO's top four-star General, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). When I became 628 Sig Tp's first OC on 1 Dec 04, the day 280(UK) Sig Sqn became 628 Sig Tp, I was well aware of my Unit's role as part of the newly formed 1 NATO Sig Bn. In NATO speak, 628 is known as UK Deployable Comms Module Alpha (UK DCM A). 1 NATO Sig Bn is made up of four of these DCMs; the other three are manned by German troops doing exactly the same job as us.

EXERCISE ALLIED ACTION 2005

SACEUR decided to test for certification his newest HQ in NATO, namely Joint Comd Lisbon, in Portugal. EX ALLIED ACTION 2005 was the certification ex used to certify JCL for its role as NATO Response Force 5 (NRF 5) Deployable Joint Task Force (DJTF) HQ. UK DCM A was tasked by 1 NATO Sig Bn to provide two points of presence for EX ALLIED ACTION 2005 to train for supporting JCL in NRF 5 from 01 July – 31 December 2005. We achieved this by deploying Comms Gateway Shelter (CGS) 2 to Zaragosa and CGS 4 to San Climent, Spain. The crew of CGS 2 lived in a desert under canvas, eating mostly seafood for every meal, while the CGS 4 crew lived in hotels on the Costa Brava, near Girona and fed themselves on what they liked. Who said that life in the Royal Signals was not a varied one? Comment was passed at the highest levels that EX ALLIED ACTION 2005 was a CIS masterpiece. 628 Sig Tp, along with a multinational presence from 1 NATO Sig Bn did themselves very proud.

COMMUNICATIONS GATEWAY SHELTER 2 IN ZARAGOSA
- by Sig Steven Bland

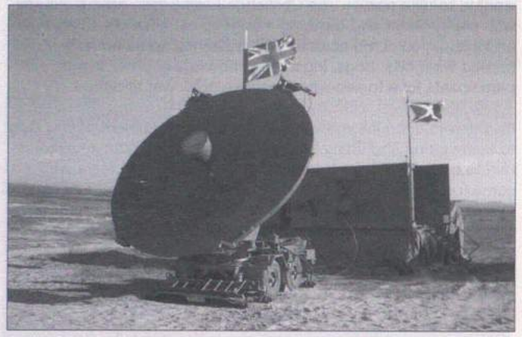
In April 2005, I embarked on my first NATO ex with 628 UK Sig Tp. It consisted of 2 months multi-national Comms Support to NATO forces in the hot Spanish sunshine, near the city of Zaragosa. After a memorable one-night stay in Barcelona, closely followed by a six-hr convoy, we arrived at the ex loc, an arid mountain top plateau, close to the Spanish Military Academy.

We soon discovered it had a very similar climate to our well-known Brecon trg area. In the short time spent there, we experienced gale force winds, ferocious storms, torrential rain, scorching sun and sub-zero nights. Not quite what I had in mind for sunny Spain. The food provided by the Spanish was ... unique, especially tasty if you enjoy fish with everything! The hospitality was good, and we were invited to a number of social evenings including a paella night.

The tallest to the shortest: L – R: Sig Bland, LCpl Mann, LCpl Gaz Hilton and Cpl Tony Ash, CGS 2 in Zaragosa

The ex gave me the chance to work with a variety of IS equipts, dealing with various nationalities such as American, German, Dutch, Italian and Greek. The language barrier was a challenge, but the lessons and choice phrases learned, will be invaluable as I continue my NATO role.

Overall, the ex was a great success for the UK contingent at Zaragosa. We received praise for our efforts, and every member of the CGS2 team came away with a feeling that we played a major part in the achievement of a successful NATO ex.



Transportable Satellite Ground Terminal OL 3X on loc at San Gregorio, Zaragosa

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Since its inception as 628 Sig Tp, a great many people have been posted in and out on the drawdown of 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. While listing about 40 people is not good *WIRE* text, the following deserve special mention. **WO2(FofS) Dicky Dickinson** went to Gibraltar in May 2005. **SSgt (FofS) Neil Mitchell** and **SSgt Kev Ingley** went to DCSA(G) at JHQ. **Cpl Steve Sanders** was promoted to Sgt, and went to DCSA (UK). **Cpl Jo Freeman** left the Army in September, to pursue a new career as a Paramedic. **Sgt Matt Thomas** went to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, and **SSgt Mal Pavier** to 16 Sig Regt.

WO2(FofS) Taff Ceaser joined us as FofS/Ops Officer et al. **SSgt Randy Randerson** arrived in August on promotion from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. **SSgt Tony Rosen** and **Sgt Dave Sawyers** arrived to run the IS Engr section. **SSgt Bill Owen** AGC(SPS) is the new Chief Clerk. **Sgt Paul Lomas** has arrived to fill the unit's Crypto Sgt job. **Sgt Matt Davies** comes in on promotion to augment the Tp Stores.

CONCLUSION

Based in Elmpt Station, 628 Sig Tp is the youngest unit in the Royal Corps. As such, it enjoys semi-independent status and a demanding schedule of both major exs and deployments. Since last December, members of the Unit have deployed or visited the following Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Afghanistan, Iraq, Italy, the Netherlands and UK. Life in the Combined Arms environment brings with it unique challenges, and a posting here brings with it exposure to NATO people and equipment. If you're looking for a challenging experience, in a unit with two names, two reporting chains, and part of a Bn that is spread over 3 countries in Western Europe, look no further than 628 Sig Tp.

1 MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

QM **Capt A Scott**
Supvr R **WO1 K Fogg**

INTRODUCTION

1 MI Bn is based at JHQ Rheindahlen in Germany, and has a Royal Signals establishment of 1 Offr and 5 ORs.

Spec Ops **Cpls Dean Jones** and **Jinna Garner** work within UKNIC 7 MI Coy. Tech Supt is provided by **SSgt Brett Spruce** and **Cpl Si Young** of Tech Section HQ Coy.

The Magnificent Seven. Capt A Scott, Maj J Smith, WO1 K Fogg (front) and SSgt B Spruce, Cpl D Jones, Cpl S Young, Cpl I Garner (rear)

THE YEAR SO FAR

In March 2005, UKNIC deployed to Elmpt Station for the bi-annual ARRC CPX, ARRCADE GUARD. Joint Ops Comd System (JOCS) and associated systems were deployed to support the UKNIC mission. A VSC501 Det from 30 Sig Regt provided the comms platform.

The annual Battle Camp, EX THIN GREEN LINE took place in April 2005 on the Haltern Trg Area. All 6 Royal Signals members took part in the ex, which was based on Int gathering, war fighting skills, and navigation. The ex was arduous, and tested soldier's mil skills in an environment where sleep deprivation was a major factor. An FFR was provided by 16 Sig Regt to aid comms throughout the ex. The Bn performed well, and all soldiers left the trg area having learned something new or having gained more experience.

May 2005 saw the annual ARRC Deployex. This year's focus was on the Early Entry Command Post (EECP) deployment to RAF Kirton in Lynsey. The move went ahead by land, sea, and air from Germany to UK, and took the best part of a week to complete. This was followed by a further five-day ex period, in which the EECP complex was built, and a period for the Spec Ops to migrate successfully the comms platform from VSC501 to VSC700 TALON, prior to extraction back to Germany.

THE FUTURE

Without the need to look into a crystal ball, we can already see the next year being very demanding for 1 MI Bn. With the possible ARRC deployment on ops, work is already taking place to ensure the Bn is battle-ready. The diary currently includes several demonstrations, support to other Div's, ARRC exs, as well as OPTAG trg as part of the build-up to deployment.

All Royal Signals personnel look forward to a busy period ahead in an exciting and flourishing MI Bn.

SPORT

WTF TAEKWANDO SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP 2005

– by LCpl Bhimsen Lama

There is a relationship between the Gurkhas and martial arts. Amongst them, Taekwando is also the part of the basic trg for the Gurkhas.

There is a saying 'When Taekwando strikes, there will be an encounter of kicks and punches.' Martial arts being one of my favourite subjects, it has been a very good friend of mine. **Sig Hasta Tamang** and I have been playing Taekwando for the Army since 2003.

2005 came as a challenging year for us, as we were selected for Combined Services Martial Arts Team in UK. It meant we were not only representing the Army, but the services, RAF and RN.

It was decided by **Col Hopwood** (Chairman of Combined Service Martial Arts Association) and his secretary, **Maj Howells** that Combined Service Martial Arts Team would take part in the WTF Taekwando Southern Counties Championship 2005.

This Championship was totally Civilian event, and was held in the Totton Recreation Centre, Southampton.

On 2 July, the day before the Competition, we went to RM Poole for pre-match trg and a weigh-in. Ghurkhas from 1RGR were also supposed to take part in the Championship, but for some reason, they didn't.

There were about 200 fighters, all Civilians except the 13 of our team. Everyone was excited and a bit nervous. It happens to everybody.

The event started with children's matches, followed by adults. Everyone has to fight in weight category and under the rules of World Taekwando Federation.

Gurkhas are known as fearsome soldiers – especially in Taekwando!

Matched against a member of one of the professional clubs, I lost in my final fight in the Featherweight category, but I made second in my weight division, to win Silver Medal, which I am proud of. **Sig Hasta** demonstrated great Taekwondo skills, and won a Bronze Medal.

He also won a Bronze Medal in his Flyweight category fight. Overall, the Combined Services Team won 6 Gold, 5 Silver and 4 Bronze Medals, a really great achievement. I really enjoyed competing with Civilian fighters; it was a different experience.

Taekwando is not all about kicks, punches, and fitness, but also about spirit, discipline, concentration, tactics, and stamina. Gurkhas are known as fearsome soldiers.

Their anger makes them fearsome, but it doesn't always help to make things better. I felt the fight that I fought was not all about anger, but was about skill and speed.

Jai Queens Gurkha Signals!

CANOEING

THE CAPTAIN JAMES ACTON MEMORIAL TROPHY

Capt James Acton was one of the leading lights of Royal Signals Canoeing when he tragically drowned whilst paddling on the Waikaia River in New Zealand on 22 February 2003. Following the accident, his parents presented the Capt James Acton Memorial Trophy, which is awarded annually to the officer or soldier who has contributed most to Royal Signals Canoeing.

The second recipient of the Trophy is **WO2 Pete Howson**. **WO2 Howson** started canoeing as a junior soldier, and then left the sport up for several years. He took the sport up again in 2002, when he was posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS).

He created the Regtl team from scratch, enthusing individuals to take up the sport, and equipping the club. Under his coaching and direction, 21 Sig Regt (AS) became the best Army unit at the Sprint and Marathon, and provided the majority of the female squad for the Army Inter-Service Team. **WO2 Howson** represents the Army for Sprint, Marathon and Wild Water Racing, and continues to coach the 21 Sig Regt (AS) team.

WO2 Pete Howson receives the trophy from last year's recipient, Cpl Mark Stafford

His greatest achievement this year was coming in as the first Services boat in the K2 class of the Devizes to Westminster race.

CANOE SLALOM CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Canoe Slalom Championships were held at Llandysul in South Wales. The water levels were low, but provided a technically demanding course for the Land Comd, Army and Inter-Services Competitions. There was a disappointingly low turnout from Royal Signal Units, but the quality of the four individuals who turned up allowed the Corps to hold second place against the Gunners. Performances of note were 11 Sig Regt, winning the inter-unit team event.

Cpl Mark Stafford won the men's K1 and came second in the men's C1 and the men's C2 with **LCpl Pete Bale**, who also won the intermediate men's K1. The Inter-Corps competition was one that the Corps could have won, had people turned up. If you want to paddle for the Corps in any discipline, speak to your Canoeing Officer or email **Capt Stuart Gunson**, the Royal Signals Canoe Club Secretary, at acu@armymail.mod.uk. All admin instructions are available on ArmyNet on the Army Canoe Union community.

Cpl Mark Stafford and LCpl Pete Bale in the C2 competition.

SAILING

OFFSHORE SAILING

It has been a busy time for Offshore sailing on both the racing and sail training fronts. The annual Kiel Regatta, EX MARITIME DRAGON, took place from 13-23 July in the Baltic Sea. This Regatta caters for all abilities from novice to Yachtmaster, and combines racing with trg, the aim being: 'To qualify and encourage novice sailors, to develop and further qualify those intermediate sailors, and train skippers in order, that they support Offshore sailing as a sport, and thereby provide benefit for the Corps.' 27 soldiers gained their Competent Crew qualification, and the following awards were achieved:

Award	Crew	Yacht
First Place	ATR Lichfield	*Petrel*
Second Place	36 Sig Regt	*Widgeon*
Third Place	39 Sig Regt	*Curlew*
Novice Skipper	WO1 Mark Gould	*Grebe*
Passage Race	36 Sig Regt	*Widgeon*
Homeward Bound	39 Sig Regt	*Curlew*
Spirit of event	3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt	*Pochard*
Round the Cans	39 Sig Regt	*Curlew*
Best Improved	14 Sig Regt (EW)	*Pintail*

Rounding the can with full kites flying

The last few months have seen the Royal Signals Yacht Club compete in a number of racing events. On each occasion the race team has done the Corps proud, and at the time of this article going to press our team are on the homeward straight in the FASTNET race. Hopefully, a good result will be recorded in the next edition of *The WIRE*.

If you are interested in race sailing, or perhaps have not really considered it, then the article below about the Round The Island Race 2005 should provide you with a taste of what is involved. If you have some sailing experience, and think that you have what it takes to be at sea for long hours, or even days and weeks, working as a tight team under pressure, then please get in touch with either **Capt Jason Kennedy**, 248 Sig Sqn, 21 Sig Regt (AS) Mil Tel: 93508 4019; or **WO2 Terry McIntyre** RQMS 39 Sig Regt (V), Mil Tel: 94381 3716.

The RSYC AGM will take place on Friday 28 October 2005. Offshore members should contact **Capt Elisabeth McLellan**, Secretary Offshore Section, on 94331 3731/01722 433731 for further details or email elisabeth.mclellan163@land.mod.uk or LAND-CBM-G6-OpsCts-SO3.

ROUND THE ISLAND RACE – 2005 - *by WO2 T McIntyre*

This year's Round the Island Race attracted 1,692 yachts of varying size and speed, ranging from **Ellen Macarthur's** record breaking multihull, *B & Q* to the 22-ft day boats that are dragged out once a year just to enter this prestigious event. It was the first year that RSYC has entered our Elan 333, *Skywave*, in the race. There were 13 other Elan 333s in our class of 216 boats. Our aim was to finish in the top half of the class, and in the top 5 Elan 333s.

We gathered on Friday afternoon and began preparing the yacht. This involved removing any non essential equipt to keep the weight down, changing the Dacron cruising sails for state-of-the-art carbon/Kevlar racing sails, and ensuring that the whole set up is ready to be put under the extra demands required for racing. We finally slipped from Gosport and headed over to Cowes. Final checks were made before we settled down to a well-deserved chicken curry, cooked by the Skipper, **WO2 Terry McIntyre**.

We rose early Saturday morning to glorious sunshine, but unfortunately the essential ingredient for sailing was missing – the wind! We left Cowes to get into the starting area ready for our planned start of 08.00 hrs. But, with the lack of wind, there was an hour's postponement. Finally, small zephyrs of wind started appearing, and the larger boats were away. We observed what the Open 60s and the huge multihulls were doing. Where was the best wind? What about the tidal flow off Gurnard Ledge? All questions vital for us to make the best possible start.

Skywave and her trusty crew

The Royal Yacht Squadron canon sounded, and we were off at 09.10 hrs, with over 200 boats jostling for a good position at the start line. Our strategy was to start about a third of the way down the line, and make use of the fair tide close inshore. Unfortunately, the rest of the class had similar ideas! Our helmswoman, **Lt Rachel Thompson**, had put us in the right position, but we were struggling to keep the spinnaker full, as boats behind us stole the clean air. Our only options were to gybe away from the boats behind us, thus keeping clean air, whilst at the same time, trying to keep in the best of the ebbing tide! Easier said than done. However, thanks to the skills of our bow team, **OCdt Rachel Clayton** and **Cpl Luke Cemlyn** and our pitman, **Sig Josh Seller**, we managed to keep our noses clean and out of bother! The wind was extremely light, and it looked like we would have a long race ahead of us.

Although we were travelling through the water at only about 3-4 knots, the tide helped us glide gently down the western Solent. Our strategy had paid off, and the boats in the middle of the Solent were left struggling, as we slipped past them. We were all starting to converge through Hurst Narrows, when suddenly the boats rounding the Needles seemed to be on a different point of sail, and travelling at a higher rate of knots than us! The colourful spinnakers were no more and the boats seemed to be heeling over. We could see a wind line in front of us, and one by one the boats in front of us took off. We had to wait an agonising 4 or 5 mins before this new breeze hit us. It was time to drop the downwind spinnaker, and hoist the Genoa, so that when the wind hit us, we could take full advantage of it.

'Breeze on in 5-4-3-2-1' came the call from the bow, then whoosh, we were off! We were back up to full speed as we skipped along at 7 knots towards our first turning point of the course – the Needles Lighthouse. This involved a tight hairpin bend to the left. It is an area where navigation is of utmost importance, as there is Goose Rock and the Varvassi wreck awaiting for unsuspecting punters trying to take the shortest possible route. 'Where's Goose Rock?' asked the helm, and as if by magic, an enormous 'Clunk!' echoed around the race course as the yacht *Aztec* hit it full on. We rounded the wreck safely, before going onto starboard tack, and heading inshore to keep out of the tide.

Our strategy for this part of the course was to stay inshore and dodge the tide, but at the same time, ensuring that we didn't go so close in, that we would loose the building sea breeze. A careful eye was needed to be kept on what the other boats around us were doing. We short-tacked our way into Freshwater Bay; this leg of the course was certainly keeping our trimmer, **Sgt Flaky Smith**, on his toes. We had other boats around us to gauge our progress. Every time we went inshore, we crossed tacks in front, and then when we headed out, they would cross back ahead of us! More tacks were needed, as it was showing that the tide was having a greater effect than anticipated.

We rounded St Catherine's Point, the southerly most part of the Island, in a good position. The important part of this leg was to stay in good breeze. The boats that had stayed inshore started to slow down, as the wind started to die. We hedged our bets, and stayed in the middle of the course, keeping a clear lane. A breeze line was spotted, and we made for it. Once again, we were off in 12 knots of breeze in flat water, whilst the rest of the boats were left floundering. We approached Bembridge Ledge in high spirits, as we bore away and hoisted our spinnaker for the run home.

For the first time in 69 years of the Race, No Mans Land Fort was no longer a mark of the course. We could afford to cut inside it, thus keeping out of the foul tide, and sailing a shorter route to the finish. Once again a close eye had to be kept on navigation, as the shallows of Ryde Sands approached. The sight of two boats running aground only 50 metres to leeward of us, reassured us that we were in the right position. There was another Elan 333 slightly in front of us, and we hounded him, taking away his clean air, and once again we made huge gains. He was forced to gybe onto port tack, whilst we stayed on starboard, giving us the right of way. A close race ensued to the finish, but had we done enough to beat him? We were jubilant as we finally crossed the finish line. It had taken us 9 hrs, 16 mins and 27 secs to complete the course, but how had we faired against the rest of the pack? We had to wait until we were ashore to look in the results office before we would learn of the outcome.

And the result? 13th in our Division of 68 yachts, 22nd in our Class out of 216 yachts, and 73rd overall! We were extremely pleased with our result. We had managed to achieve our aim of placing in the top half of the Class and be in the top 5 Elan 333s (3rd Elan 333). After a tiring race, both mentally and physically, we managed a few beers in Cowes before retiring to bed! Our thanks go out to our sponsors, Paradigm Services and General Dynamics UK in their continued support for RSYC Offshore Racing. Without there generous financial assistance, the Corps would not be represented in this high profile event.

ROYAL SIGNALS CREW ARE J24 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

With the World Championships following a week later, the 2005 J24 National Championships in Weymouth were always going to be a hard fought and tough event. Competitors from America, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, the Netherlands, Japan, Ireland travelled to Weymouth to join the British fleet for this vital event prior to the World's. With 41 yachts, the start line was a busy place, and without a good start, a top 10 placing was almost unachievable.

In Race 1, the predominantly Royal Signals team on yacht *Hitchhiker* made a strong start to their campaign, with a third overall and first British boat, firmly stating their intentions for the Championships. Over the next 2 days, the wind was light, and it was a test of consistency and mental stamina, as the long days started to take effect on some of the crews. *Hitchhiker* remained at the top of the fleet, and after day 2, the was fourth British boat, with only 5 points separating the top 5 yachts.

Day 3 and the penultimate day proved to be critical for the success of *Hitchhiker*. The wind had increased, and the fitness of the Royal Signals team shone through, as they powered to three top 5 positions during an intense 8 hrs on the water. The National Championship was within grasp, and with one final race to be sailed, only one team could steal the National title away from us. After a close fought battle, *Hitchhiker* managed to hold onto their lead, and on the afternoon of Sunday 04 September, they were crowned 2005 J24 National Champions.

Hitchhiker's crew were:

Helm	**Lt Col (Retd) David Ellis**
Tactician	**Miss Jo Burchell**
Trimmer	**Maj Simon Spiers**
Mast	**Capt Ewan Watson**
Foredeck	**Lt Rachel Thompson**

Hitchhiker with her full Genoa

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: MajGen A H Boyle CB

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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

BRANCH NEWS

Unfortunately, lack of support has led to the formal closure of the Bradford Branch. Those few branch members remaining were contacted and invited to consider joining the nearby Leeds or Huddersfield Branches. Our thanks go to Hon Sec **Dr Gerard Reynolds** for trying to keep the Branch afloat. **Harry Waugh** has succeeded **Paul Quinn** as the newsletter editor for the Air Fmn Sig Regts Assn. **Harry** can be contacted on 01581-600350.

REGIMENTAL BRANCHES

As a result of the Chairman's paper on the future of the RSA, the formation of Regimental Branches is well in train. These are Branches based upon existing Royal Signals units, and the committee for the 14 Sig Regt Branch has already been determined. The14 Sig Regt (EW) Assn is open to all ranks, all cap badges, and all Services who served with the Regt since it formed in 1977. If you are interested in becoming a member of this Branch, please email 14sr.assn@bigfoot.com or contact **Capt MR Wallace** at 14 Sig Regt (EW), Tel: 01437 725656.

HISTORICAL NOTE

It is now 10 years since RHQ Royal Signals moved from Regency Street in London to its present home in Blandford Garrison. **Mr Alan Wilkinson** (Corps Accountant) is the only person to move from London, who is still here. Of those who started with the move, only yours truly and **Mrs Jan Cornick** (Welfare Secretary) remain. **Cliff Walters** who was Reg Col at the time is now the Corps Museum Director.

REUNION 2005 VIDEO

By the time these notes are published, the video/DVD showing the highlights of the 2005 annual reunion at Blandford, should be ready for purchase. This excellent production shows all aspects of the RSA Weekend, from members checking in at Reception, through the Princess Royal Day Parade, indoor firing range, static displays, arena display (including all the WW2 veterans' march past), the gathering in the Sgts' Mess on the Saturday evening, the Sunday Church Service and ending with the final March Past. Please contact Assn HQ to find out details of the cost and to place your order (video or DVD).

REUNION 2006

Full details, including application forms for vehicle passes and meals, should be available on the Assn website from March. Those without Internet access who wish to attend, are invited to request their name be added to the mailing list for these details. Please bear in mind that Reunion details are sent only to members who ask for them!

LOST CONTACT

I am pleased to report that the RSA Lost contact Internet page has recently been instrumental in the reuniting of several former friends. This is a free service to all RSA members.

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life Members. It is hoped that those not shown with a Branch will make contact with their local branch.

Name/Rank	*Service*	*Branch*
Capt Michael McKenna	1976-date	Middlesbrough
Sig Herbert Brain	1957-59	Coventry
LCpl Norman Coombes	1954-56	
WO2 David Rodgers	1965-89	
Sig Mark Adamson	1995-98	
WO2 Eddie Fisher	1978-02	
LCpl George Locke	1942-47	Australia
Lt Ross Anderson	2001-date	Hull
Cpl Darren Ford	1988-date	Hull
LCpl Brian Harp	1961-69	
Sgt Keith Johnson	1982-05	
LCpl Ian Winterbottom	1972-83	
SSgt James Henderson	1957-77	
WO2 Kenneth McGirr	1983-05	
Lt Col Bob O'Hara	1970-05	
Cpl Alan Deans	1980-90	
WO2 Kev Donaldson	1958-83	
Sig Dafydd Davies	1991-94	
Sig Tony Mongan	1945-48	Reading
LCpl Mike Rooney	1949-50	Cambridge
WO1 Pete Goodliff	1982-05	
Sig Mick Wright	1990-99	
Capt Fiona Stewart	1998-05	
Capt Nic Muirhead-Smith	2001-06	
Capt John Keith	2000-05	
Maj Dougie MacTaggart	1972-05	
Capt Joanna Jones	1999-05	
LCpl Paul Cahill	1976-89	
WO1 Paul Barnes	1981-05	
Maj Paul Wood	1970-05	
Capt Christian Barker	2001-05	
Capt Adie Knight	1981-05	
Sig Barry Stocks	1965-77	
Maj Nick Caleb	1984-05	

Maj Richard Webb	1990-05	
Capt Liz Warhurst	1991-05	
Capt Pat Pritchett	1992-05	
Capt John Griffiths	1994-05	
Sgt Les Webster	1980-99	
Sgt Steve Beverley	1978-00	
Sig Andy Watson	1988-96	
Sgt Daniel Beattie	1979-04	Glasgow
Sgt John Dollen	1961-03	Glasgow
Sgt Anton McGregor	1972-81	Glasgow
Maj Ian Dobson	1976-05	
Maj Julie McColl	1993-05	
Cpl Lee Thompson	1982-date	
LCpl Neil Baxter	1993-00	
Cpl Leaham Bradley	1986-00	
Martin Davis	1963-89	
LCpl Bryan Westerman	1985-96	
Lt Col Richard Hewitt	1969-05	
WO2 Peter Allen	1961-04	Reading
LCpl Ken Clark	1842-46	Reading
Cpl Tony Mottram	1983-99	
Sig Sandy Sanderson	1962-71	
SSgt Steve Bartleet	1981-05	
WO2 David Fraser	1963-94	Glasgow
WO1 Stewart Little	1975-05	
WO1 Frank McAleer	1969-93	
Sgt Derrick Whiting	1950-66	
Sgt Debbie Gosnell	1977-00	
WO2 Bill McAlister	1960-87	
Sgt Bill Graham	1943-54	254 OBA
WO1 Mark Hardy	1976-00	
WO1 Geoff Hawkins BEM	1978-00	
Sig Andrew Jones	1992-00	
Sig Ronald Heninghem	1942-46	
WO1 Chris Hardwidge	1976-00	
Cpl John Trollope	1944-47	
Cpl Michael Buckley	1955-57	
Cpl Rob Culliford	1988-00	
Cpl Kenneth Riach	1961-70	Exmouth
Capt John Trout	1938-46	Exmouth
LCpl Andrew Collins	1996-00	
Cpl Pamela Buttle	1943-46	
Sig Darren Saxelby	1990-96	
Sgt Geralynn Harbage-Brown	1980-00	
Sgt John Paine	1969-86	
Sgt Barry Postings	1975-92	
LCpl Mark Mutch	1990-96	
Cpl Alan Revill	1978-93	
WO1 Eli Pearson	1981-05	
Sig Daniel Clark	1996-01	
Sgt Matthew Murray	1976-00	
Sig George Griffiths	1942-47	West Wales
SSgt Ray Ramsay	1976-00	
SSgt Alan McGibbon	1982-date	
WO2 Peter Lamont	1980-05	
SSgt Lee Johnston	1983-date	
WO2 Brian Marsden	1972-date	
Cpl Alan Dawtry	1958-60	West Wales
SSgt Kevin Young	1991-date	
LCpl Nick Graham	1995-date	
Cpl Tom Atkinson	1995-00	
Sgt Paul McKenna	1982-99	

DONATIONS

James Phillips	£20.00
Closure of 5th (London) Corps Signals OCA	£160.81
Cheques in memory of **Maj (Retd) Vic Clarke**	£210.00
Anonymous	30.00
Dennis Scott	£10.00
Jim Jarman	£15.00
Stan Procter	£30.00
Maj (Retd) James Robinson	£500.00
Lt Col (Retd) Gordon Hencher	£10.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Estate of **Geoffrey DK Woolrych**	£100.00
Mr L & Mrs M Grafton, in memory of **Jack Cullingford**	£20.00
Cheques in memory of **Lt David A Pocklington**	£300.00
Chesterfield Branch	£25.00
Louis Haig	£25.00
Robert Waldron	£20.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig Noel Moss**
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

In June we were pleased to note the excellent performance of our Standard Bearer, **Fred Bridges**, in the Annual Competition. To come third is no mean achievement, and our congratulations go to **Fred** for this and for his general support of Branch events.

For our July meeting we were able once again to travel to the Tower of London to enjoy an evening tour, followed by watching the age-old Ceremony of the Keys. Yeoman Warder **Tom Trent** very kindly hosted us, and gave a fascinating and amusing view of the history of the Tower. We are also grateful to him and his wife, **Andria**, for inviting us into the Yeoman Warders' Club for an excellent buffet supper.

Shortly after the Tower trip, we made our annual visit to the final concert of the year at Kneller Hall. It was a lovely evening, and Members enjoyed their picnics before joining the throng in the open-air auditorium. The trainee bandmasters all performed splendidly, building up to the grand finale with Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* accompanied by an impressive firework display.

One week later, we attended another annual event: the Commandant's Parade at RMA Sandhurst, which is the final rehearsal for the Sovereign's Parade two days later. We were joined as usual by friends from West London, Reading and Southampton Branches and, for the first time, by a group from Brighton Branch, led by **Tony Allibone**. A total of about 80 Members and friends enjoyed picnics after the parade.

There was a shadow for us across the Sandhurst Parade, because of the untimely death a few days before of **Maj Hywel Thomas**. Both he and his wife, **Carole**, were staunch supporters of the Corps and the Association, and it is with great sadness that we record **Hywel's** tragic death whilst away on a business trip. A large party of his colleagues from the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists who attended the Parade, raised their glasses to an absent friend in a fitting tribute to **Hywel**. We extend our deepest sympathies to **Carole** and her family.

BATH AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Chairman **Lt Col (Retd) E Pickup**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) RG Vale**

On Friday 12 August 2005, the Branch held a Commemorative Lunch to mark the end of hostilities of WW2. Sixty Members and guests attended, including the RSA Chairman, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and his wife **Anne**. 13 WW2 veterans also attended, which gave real meaning to the occasion. Headed by **Maj Gen David Horsfield**, they were: **Roy Baldwin**, **Robert Ballinger**, **John Bradbury-Williams**, **Don Capon**, **Patricia Edridge**, **Edgar Harrison**, **Betty Keating**, **Charles Lushey**, **Geoff Oakley**, **Jim Peck**, **Audrey Stevens** and **Mike Willway**.

Guests arrived at 12.30hrs and met in the entrance hall of the Sgts' Mess, 21 Sig Regt (AS), where a display of WW2 memorabilia, (kindly loaned to the Branch by the Museum), was on view. This caused much debate and discussion on who had used what against whom. The only item that the ex-Offrs were unable to identify was the map case.

At the end of the lantern swinging session, the group gathered on the patio, where members of the Bristol University Air Sqn laid on a fly past, in a tight V formation - the traditional sign of victory. This was greeted with much cheering and waving, and any attempt at dignity was lost. It was then the turn of the Press to push and pull the veterans in all directions to get the best photo call. As ever, the veterans stood up well to all the pressure.

During lunch, anecdotes were related between courses. They were all different, and showed so may sides and aspects of war. **Audrey Stevens** related a saucy tale of how she and the members of her night shift redeployed a large joint of tongue and a trifle that was destined for the Offrs' Mess, but never quite made it. So if there is some ex-Offr of the Corps who went hungry because of a mysterious disappearance of tongue and trifle, please contact **Audrey**. **Edgar Harrison**, who for a time organised military comms for **Winston Churchill**, explained, how whilst being a hard task master, the great man was also a compassionate one, giving thought to the smallest details regarding his staff. **Edgar** was ordered to stay in Cairo after a conference that **Churchill** had attended. On hearing of this, **Winston** immediately told **Edgar** to go out do whatever shopping he needed and return it to him, saying he would personally see to it that it would get home and be delivered to whoever it was addressed it to. He proved to be as good as his word. **Edgar's** shopping got home.

To end the lunch, the Chairman **Maj Gen Tony Boyle** presented all the veterans with a Royal Signals Veteran's Badge. None of the members were expecting this, and it came as a wonderful surprise and fitting end to the Lunch.

BEDFORD BRANCH

Chairman **Capt (Retd) Alan Newbery TD**
Secretary **Mr TE Holyoake**

Much has happened in the Branch since we last reported. Here are some of the more recent happenings. More can be found on our Branch website, www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/Bedford.

16 Members visited the D-day beaches of Normandy, 25 - 29 April 2005. We were collected at Bedford Bus station, taken to Dover Docks for the interchange to our destination coach, with our tour guide and drivers for the week. Our hotel was at Ouistreham, and we spent the next 3 days visiting the Normandy Battlefields. On Day 2 it was Pegasus Bridge, Café Gondrée, Ranville Cemetery, SWORD, JUNO and GOLD Beaches, Arromanches, Mulberry Harbour, and Bayeux War Cemetery.

On Day 3, Merville Battery, American War Cemetery above OMAHA, the town of Ste Mère Église with its museum, then along UTAH Beach. On Day 4, the Battlefields of Caen, Jerusalem Cemetery, via Tilly-sur-Seulles to Villers Bocage, the Scottish Corridor for OP EPSOM and Hill 112, Falaise, St Lambert and Montormel to walk the Corridor of Death (the only escape route for 2 German armies), and lastly the Polish War Memorial, Maczuga, to view the Falaise Pocket. On Day 5 we made the return journey home. As you can see, it was a rather busy week. All returned informed and tired.

During the Veterans Awareness Week 4 - 10 July, Branch Members, **Bill Gardener** and his wife, **Ann** attended the garden party Lunch in Buckingham Palace; **Den Wenman** carried our Branch Standard on the Mall Parade; and **Ted Hunt** went to Westminster Abby Service on 10 July. Our Branch Chairman, **Alan Newbery** attended Chicksands Priory Parade, and Branch members attended the Bedford and District RBL Service of Thanks, Celebration and Gratitude on 17 July.

On 6 August, we had another good day with the gentlemen In-Pensioner at Royal Hospital Chelsea. 47 Members, friends, wives and partners attended. **Mac** gave a 2-hr tour, then in the evening, entertained us with a supper before we left for home. We are now looking forward to a Visit to Chicksands Priory on 2 October 05, for a tour around this old Monastery

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Allibone**
Secretary **Phil West**

The Branch held a very successful Summer Lunch at our usual venue, the Courtlands Hotel, Hove. Twenty-four Members attended and enjoyed an excellent meal in good company. One Member had a cake made in honour of his birthday.

This time of the year is usually a quiet period, but the Branch has been represented at a number of events recently. Some six members attended the annual Corps Reunion at Blandford. Some of these stayed locally, and were able to be present both days. All the Members enjoyed the usual highlights of the programme, but his year, the Branch was able to participate, as **Ken Brown** marched in the Veterans' Parade, and four Members were in the Parade after the Church Service.

The 60th Anniversary of the end of WW2 has been commemorated across the country, and Branch members attended at three of these, namely the Drumhead Service in Worthing, organised by the Borough Council and CESA and held in gardens in the town centre. It was a small-scale event, with only a token Service presence. The other local event attended was the VE/VJ Celebrations held in Preston Park, Brighton. This was a much bigger event, organised by RBL, starting with a Drumhead Service, and ending with Beating the Retreat and a Sunset Ceremony. Both events had displays of vintage military vehicles and NAAFI tents. One Member was fortunate to obtain tickets for the London event on Horse Guards Parade. No doubt many readers saw this event on TV, but our attendee found the sight of a small elderly Queen driving back to the Palace in an open Land Rover, accompanied by thousands of veterans, very moving, given the backdrop of the terrible events of that week.

Many direct links with WW2 are ending, and the Burma Star Association is one of the many organisations that are closing. Our member, **Ken Brown**, attended one of the last big events, a service at Guildford Cathedral on 14 August.

Finally on a lighter note, the Branch had a very well attended evening meeting on 1 July, when a local historian gave a lively illustrated talk covering the development of Brighton from a fishing village to its present size as a busy city. The Branch has a full programme of events starting in September.

CHESTERFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Ken Silcock**
Secretary **Dennis Croot**

We have had a very busy time here at Chesterfield, with lots of visits starting in late May to the Derby Branch, who entertained 35 of us from Chesterfield. We were looked after by **SSgt Tim Bishop** from the Derby TAC, who gave us a talk on the role of the Unit and showed us the equipt currently in use. We were then privileged to attend a Medal presentation ceremony by **Lt Col SJ Richardson**, CO of 38 Sig Regt. We concluded a very pleasant visit with a delicious buffet supper and some liquid refreshment.

The next visit in July took us to the corridors of power in Chesterfield, the Town Hall, where we were hosted by the Mayor and Mayoress of Chesterfield, **Cllr** and **Mrs Keith Falconer**. They gave us a very informative talk on the workings and the various Committees of Local Government in the very impressive

Medal presentation ceremony by Lt Col S J Richardson, CO 38 Sig Regt, at Derby TAC

Council Chamber. We were then invited into the Mayor's Parlour to view the many treasurers and documents of the Town's illustrious history. Afterwards, we retired to the British Legion and enjoyed a fish and chip supper organised by **George** and **Sheila May**, accompanied by the Mayor and Mayoress.

At the end of August, we organised a canal narrow boat trip at Loughborough, and in mid November, an early Christmas shopping trip for the Ladies is planned to the Trafford Centre in Manchester, whilst the Gents visit the War Museum.

Chesterfield Branch Members in the Council Chamber

DORSET BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Ken Hadfield**
Secretary **Dave Walker BEM**

It's been a long time since we appeared in *The WIRE* to let you know we are still around. It's been a fairly busy time in our Branch. We have established our new venue for the monthly meetings in the Constitutional Club in Blandford, and with the closing down of Humph Bahadur's Gurkha Restaurant at Blandford Camp, our entertainment gurus, **Wait** and **Sandy Disney** have been busily finding a new venue for our quarterly meetings, which entail eating lots of food.

So our first quarterly meeting was held in the Crown Hotel, Blandford. The evening was well attended by members and their wives/partners. Following a quick opening address by our Chairman, **Maj (Retd) Ken Hadfield** and an even quicker run through the minutes of the last meeting by our Secretary, **Dave Walker BEM**, we all proceeded to tuck into a very enjoyable and plentiful cold salad buffet plus pudding followed by coffee. Although this venue may not be the permanent one, for the first since Humph's closure, it was a good start. Our thanks go to **Walt** and **Sandy Disney** for their efforts in organising the evening.

Changing the subject, our website is now well established, with news, events and lots of photos for you to peruse. This is mainly down to our web controller for our Branch, **Dave Walker Jnr** (no relation to our Secretary). This can be found via the Royal Signals website. Hopefully, more people are using the website and indeed all the operating Branch websites to keep in contact. It's good to talk.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Bill Irving**
Secretary **Mrs Olive Irving**

At our recent meeting, three Branch members were congratulated on their courage and loyalty following the recent terrorist activities in London on 7 July 2005.

Our three Members attended the celebrations on Sunday 10 July in London, to commemorate the end of WW2. **Mrs Doreen Hill** and **Mr Lesley Winter** dined with **Her Majesty the Queen**, and in the afternoon **Miss Sally Reggler** paraded the Exmouth Branch Standard with all the other Standards on parade. The courage and patriotism shown by our members shows that the British spirit and bravery is still evident.

On 12 July, Branch Members were hosted at a Garden Party by our President, **Maj Gen IOJ Sprackling OBE** and his wife, **Annie**. A good time was had by all, the hospitality shown and the generosity of spirit was tremendous.

The next social function is an outing to the Edinburgh Tattoo in August. We have twenty-four members joining this trip we are all looking forward to a lively holiday.

New members are always welcome to attend our meetings; whether you were National Service or Regular you are welcome to join us. If you do not have a local Branch of your Regt you are welcome to join us. Wives/partners are also welcome.

Meetings are held every third Tuesday of the month, 19.30hrs for 20.00hrs at the GWRSA Club Victoria Road Exmouth. Dress is casual.

Any further information may be obtained from Honorary Secretary Mrs Olive Irving Tel: 01395 227308 or email floirv@tiscali.co.uk.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

Several members of the Branch attended the functions arranged by the RSA in Scotland and the Falkirk Town Council, in Falkirk town centre, on Saturday and Sunday 21-22 May 2005. There were several displays of WW2 exhibits in the town centre, including a collection of wireless sets used during the War. Two of these were backpack sets, types on which I was trained as an OWL in Catterick. According to our instructor, they were out of date before 1939, but were still in use at the outbreak of hostilities... The Corps Band was in full swing, but unfortunately as the rain became heavier, they had to go under cover towards the end of their display.

Safely returned from the Blandford Weekend, those who attended report that they enjoyed their stay, and the events on the square and the arena. **Bill MacNamara** paraded the Branch Standard in the Standard Bearers Contest, but was not among the winners this year.

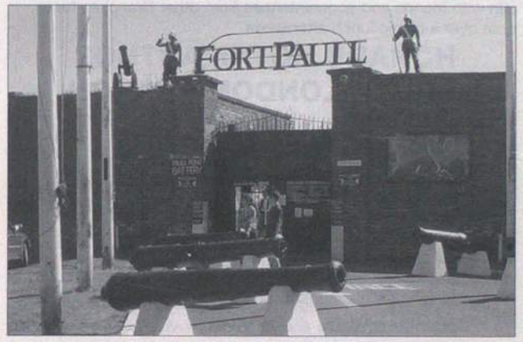
A party of Members attended a social evening at the Erskine Hospital, which caters for ex-Service personnel. Bearing gifts for the patients, they received a warm welcome from **Colin McPhail**, the Hospital's entertainments manager. Mixing with the patients, we discovered that whatever their ailments, they were all in good humour. As well as WW2 veterans, some in-patients are from the Korea and Falklands conflicts. We enjoy these visits as much as the patients, some of whom do not have relatives able to visit them.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Audrey Grainge**
Secretary **Dick Grainge**

On Sunday 26 June, 26 Members left Brambles Farm TAC to visit Fort Paull near Hull. The trip was organised by **Anne Jackson**, her first attempt at anything like this and she did extremely well. After a short stop in York for coffee and a comfort break, we arrived safe and sound at Fort Paull.

On de-bussing we had a picnic lunch, whilst **Anne** booked our party in. The Fort, which dates back to **Henry VIII's** times, is in excellent condition, considering its age and the fact that it was locked up and deserted after WW2. During this time it had become heavily overgrown with weeds, but thankfully it has been lovingly restored and is now home to the last Beverly transport aircraft. This was moved from the now closed Army Museum of Transport in Beverly, and has been fully restored to mint condition.



Fort Paull

The attractions for the weekend where a display of birds of prey at war, WW2 fire fighting, and a band playing war-time music, at which two of our party, **Tony Cartwright** and **Joan Rowe** showed off their dancing skills, to the tune of *Hang out your Washing on the Siegfried Line*.

The return journey was broken with a stop at Thirsk for a fish and chips supper that everyone seemed to enjoy, and all commented on the great time they had had. Everyone was sporting signs of too much sun, as the weather had been perfect, and all in all, a great day out was had by all. On Tuesday 30 August, **Dick** and **Audrey Grainge** on behalf of the Branch and **Sgt Bob Silk** on behalf of our host Unit, 34 (N) Sig Regt, held a walking treasure hunt around the Middlesbrough area. This was a great success, and helped increase ties between the Unit and the Branch, hopefully encouraging younger members of the Regt to join the RSA.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Secretary **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

The 2005 Blandford Reunion in June was another excellent weekend. For Northern Ireland members the cross-channel ferry and the long road journey to Blandford can be quite tiring, so this year Branch Blandford Organiser, **Carole Cameron**, arranged for a party of eight Members to travel by air from Belfast City Airport to Bristol Airport, where they were met by **Cpl Whitehead**, and transported to Blandford with the essential stop for refreshments on the way. The emphasis this year was on WW2, and meeting some of the Chelsea Pensioners the highlight, particularly the one who had completed the London Marathon (he said later that he had marched it). The White Helmets, a parachute drop, various static displays, the Corps Band, The Corps Pipes and Drums and of course, seeing our Branch Standard on parade, ably carried by Branch Chairman, **Jim Reilly**, all helped to make the week-end a success, as did the social on the Saturday evening in the Sgts' Mess. It was particularly good to meet socially the Master of Signals **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** (a Northern Ireland man, of course). After Church Service and lunch on Sunday, the party were driven back to Bristol Airport by **Cpl Whitehead**, who by this time was almost a member of the Branch, and who promised, if possible, to do the same next year. All agreed it was a most enjoyable weekend, thanks to **Peter Cuckow** and all involved in the organisation of it.

The Master of Signals with Members W Ogden, FJ Loveday and GE Cook

Unfortunately, only one of our WW2 Members managed to attend the dinner for WW2 veterans in Belfast City Hall, sponsored by Belfast City Council. **Ernie Mansell**, accompanied by his daughter enjoyed the festivities.

Plans for the 50thAnniversary of the formation of the Branch in March 2006 are now well under way, and the Committee has been appointed to decide what form it will take. The date and venue for a celebration dinner has been decided, and the finer details have still to be ironed out. The event will prove costly, so the Committee hope to instigate a raffle to raise the necessary finance. To all who may wish to attend our celebration dinner, you might wish to make a note now in your diary of Friday 3 March 2006. More details later

As always, we issue an invitation to all Serving and ex-Members of Royal Signals, Regular or TA to join us at Clonaver TAC, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month.

POOLE BRANCH

Chairman **Lt Col (Retd) Jess Weir**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Bob Peake BEM**

Since our last report, we have welcomed **Kieron Butler**, **Ray Cripps**, **David Gorse**, **Mike Hales**, **Terry Inman**, **Brian Lauder**, **Walter Redpath** and their respective partners onto our nominal roll. Sadly, we report the unexpected death of **Brian Gibbons'** wife, **Claudine**. They were a devoted couple and were present at all our meetings and functions, with **Claudine** always willing to help out with our Branch draws. It has been a very difficult few months for **Brian**, but we were pleased to be able to give him some much-needed support, and he is once again back amongst us.

During a recent Sunday lunch, hosted by the Bournemouth Branch, our President, **Brig Paddy Evans CBE** surprised **Eve Logan** by presenting her with her Canal Zone Medal awarded for

her service there some 50 years ago! Subsequently **Eve** married **Jimmy**, who was our Founder, and together, they were Secretary and Treasurer for many years. The photo below shows the happy event with **Jimmy** in the foreground.

Eve Logan receives her Canal Zone Medal from Brig Paddy Evans CBE

In June we went on our annual trip to Blenheim Palace, and **Peter** and **Elisabeth Thomas** donated a superb hamper for our 'on the coach' draw. We enjoyed a wonderful six hours in lovely sunshine exploring the Palace, Park, Gardens and seeing the Churchill exhibition. On leaving Woodstock, we went into the village of Bladon and viewed **Sir Winston's** grave, a very modest monument, together, with the tombs of other members of the Spencer-Churchill family.

Living so near to Blandford Camp meant a short trip for the Reunion, and many Members enjoyed a super friendly weekend, in ideal weather, topped off with several hrs in the Sgts' Mess! In addition to our popular, well-attended, monthly meetings, we look forward to our autumn Sunday lunch at the Elstead Hotel in Bournemouth.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

As we write these notes in mid-August, the Branch can look back on a very busy and successful couple of months. The end of June saw us sending a party to Kneller Hall for one of the regular band concerts. The weather was kind, and our Members were entertained to an excellent programme of music. A visit to one of these concerts is highly recommended, and a trip to Kneller Hall is a regular item on the Branch programme. Two days later, our concert-goers, and a goodly selection of Branch members attended an informal dinner at the *Bird in Hand*, Sonning Common (just north of Reading) where we had a very convivial evening. Our thanks must go to **Thelma Wakefield** for getting the evening organised. We couldn't stay too late, as it was early reveille the next day for the trip to Blandford for the Annual Reunion. This has been well reported elsewhere, but suffice to say, we all had a splendid day, even if Branch Standard Bearer, **John Mumford**, came only second in the competition.

On 3 July a number of Members supported the Commemoration Service in Reading for the 60th Anniversary of the end of WW2. It was good to see the veterans marching to and from the service at The Minster Church of St Mary the Virgin, encouraged by applause from the crowds lining the streets. The Guidon of 94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn and the Colours of 2 Bn RGBW Regt were marched in, together with Standards from all the local service organisations. In addition to the organ and choir, music was provided by the Lucknow Band of the Prince of Wales's Division, and fanfares by the bugles of the Light Division. During the march back to the Town Hall, the salute was taken by the Mayor, who then joined us, together with other local dignitaries, for tea and stickies, and more music from the Lucknow Band. This was our main contribution to the national commemoration, but on 9 July, two of our Members attended the unveiling, by the Queen, of the Memorial to Women in WW2, in Whitehall. Security was tight, but it was very moving occasion, followed by a splendid buffet in the Pillared Hall of the MOD building, where the Queen managed to speak to many of those attending. On the following day, our Standard, proudly carried by **John Mumford**, was among the many marching in the Mall to Buckingham Palace, although it was a job to spot him, by those of us following the day's events on TV.

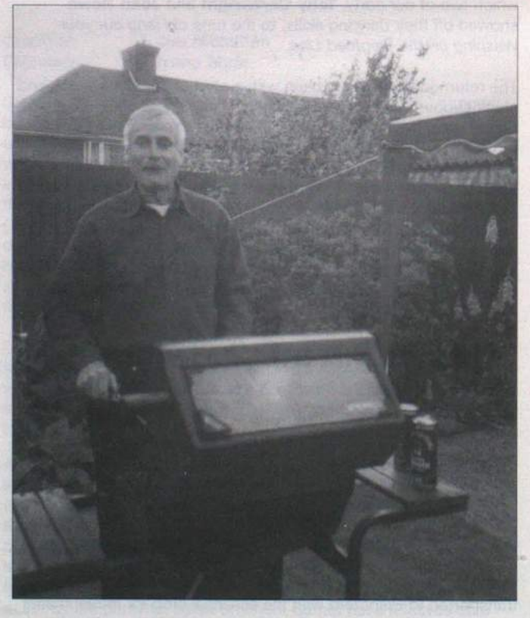
There was no anti-climax following all the big events, because we had a splendid barbeque at the end of July, at the home of our Secretary, **Hugh Nealon**. Our thanks go to him and **Lis** for entertaining us, and to all the others (you know who you are) involved in organising the event. Branch business was dealt with fairly quickly at the quarterly meeting on 6 August, followed by a pub lunch, and the season was rounded off by the attendance of half a dozen, or so, of us at the Commandant's Parade at RMA Sandhurst. Again security, quite understandably, was tight, but this did not affect our enjoyment of the day, and we were able to join with friends and acquaintances from other Branches for a chat over a picnic lunch afterwards.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Doug Anderson**
Secretary **Mr JY Templeton**

Robert and **Cynthia Fryer** were kind enough to throw their home open for a Branch Barbecue. It proved to be very successful and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and it was voted 'a good time had by all.' The photo is not an organ grinder looking for his monkey, but the Branch Treasurer taking his turn as chief cook

The Branch held a Victory Dance, by kind permission of the Croydon Bowling Club, dancing to the **Ken Mackintosh** Orchestra, who still provides excellent music. The evening was a tremendous success, and the appropriate tunes were played and



No, it's not a barrel organ; it's Steve Bland on barbeque

Robert Fryer singing Land of Hope and Glory

everyone entered into the spirit of the occasion. During the evening, **Robert Fryer** joined the community singing of *Land of Hope and Glory*, in which everyone present joined with gusto.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Sidney Smith**
Secretary **Tony Dear**

As there had been so much rain prior to the day of the Picnic, many people thought it would be a washout. However, Thursday, 28 July, dawned bright and clear, with sunshine in both Bournemouth and Southampton. **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** were the first to arrive at Whitefield Moor, closely followed by **Beryl** and **Ian Allinson**. When we went through to our usual spot, the ground was dry, and we set up our table and chairs. **Ruth** and **Tony Dear** soon arrived, as did friends of **Beryl Allinson's**, **Lynne** and **John**, with their daughter **Toni** and son-in-law, **Steve**, and three children, who were very well behaved, together with a friend of **Lynne's** from Thirsk, who was down on holiday.

Steve had brought a large bag containing a dozen or more kites and, as it was rather windy but very sunny, it was ideal kite-flying weather. **Vera** and **George Packer** arrived, but **George** put his car keys in his jacket pocket and then shut the jacket in the boot of his car. Luckily they had already taken their food out of the car so they were able to enjoy their picnic. Eventually, **Tony Dear** took **George** back to Bournemouth to pick up a spare set of keys. **Ruth** and **Vera** had to wait quite a long time for their return, as a tree had come down in the forest near to Rhinefield House, so they had to make quite a detour.

George and Vera Packer, Tony and Ruth Dear, Tony Hull

SWINDON BRANCH

Chairman **Rod Ashman**
Secretary **Peter Howells**

We are still alive and kicking. June has been busy for us. We visited Brize Norton, which lasted all day. They showed us all around the air field, and we went up the control tower just as an aircraft was waiting to take off, so we saw the procedure. They showed us a pack of field rations, which were quite tasty. The icing on the cake was, we were shown round a C17 Galaxy. We had a talk by the Loadmaster, and then, up in the cockpit, the co-pilot explained the workings.

27 June saw us going to Tidworth, where 215 Sig Sqn had invited us to help celebrate their Birthday. When we arrived, they gave us a VIP welcome. The celebration started with inter-Tp tug-of-war. When it was finished, we were invited to have a go, so forgetting angina, hip and knee replacements we took up the challenge. However, because our wives protested, we reluctantly declined to take part. The prize giving was next, then came the BBQ, which when done by the Services, cannot be beaten. We were then invited back to the Sgts' Mess for a few drinks and a few eats to round off a fantastic day. We thank Sqn OC, RSM, and also **WO2 Mark Morgan**, who took us under his wing and looked after us like a mother hen.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

Following our very successful visit to the Mennen Gate with 31 Sig Regt, a number of our Members attended the Annual Reunion at Blandford. Our Standard Bearer, **Harry Ruff**, acquitted himself well, and we appreciate the many occasions on which he represents the Branch.

In August, we visited HM Tower of London, our very informative tour being conducted by Yeoman Warder **John Kenny**. Following the Ceremony of the Keys, which never fails to impress, **John** and **Maureen Kenny** ran a Raffle, which was keenly supported and raised £95 for the Tower's local charities.

We believe that our Treasurer, **John Stevenson** may have made Corps history, when he and his wife **Trish** were on a recent visit to Moscow. **John** was invited into a KGB installation, and following his recognition of some of their Signals equipt, was made an Honorary Member of the KGB and given an appropriate badge. It was remarked that he did not sport his badge on our recent visit to the Tower of London!

We wish to express our sadness at the death of **Maj Hywel Thomas** of the Aldershot Branch, and our sympathy to his widow, **Carole**. As a Brother of the Certo Cito Lodge, he was a close friend of Members of our Branch and 31 Sig Regt. He will be sadly missed.

BEVERLEY EXBOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

Following a week of hot weather, Sunday, 17 July, dawned bright and clear, with the promise of another hot day - just right for the annual barbecue, given by **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** in their garden in Bournemouth. On the Saturday, a helping hand was given by **Peter Gray**, with the moving of all the garden furniture and the loan of another gazebo, making three in all, which were very much appreciated on such a hot day. Guests started arriving

soon after noon, and in all, twentyeight people attended. Some guests had travelled quite a distance, such as **Andy** and **Lil Jamieson** from Worcester, **Tony** and **Pat Hemstock** from Aylesbury, and **Dick** and **Adelaide Hurel** from Esher. It was a great pleasure to have **Peter** and **Sheila Cuckow** among the guests, and also **Jim** and **Eve Logan**. Although **Jim** is not an ExBoy, he has served with many of our Members over the years.

Alan and Joyce Smith, Pat and Tony Hemstock

As usual, **Tony** did a great job, with two barbecues on the go, assisted by **Tony Hemstock** and **Keith Andrews**. A few people were brave enough to try the hot tub, which they found very enjoyable. The drinks flowed freely all day, and a good time was had by all. We would like to welcome two new members: **Larry Perham** from Devon and **Tony Brighton** from Blandford.
We very much regret having to announce the death on 21 June, of **Tom Smith**, and extend our deepest sympathy to his widow, **Marian**. The funeral was held in Manchester, and the church was absolutely overflowing. The Standard Bearer from Manchester Branch attended, and the Beverley Ex-Boys banner flag was draped on the coffin. **Ken Webb**, a close friend of **Tom**, attended the funeral and represented the Beverley Ex-Boys Assn.

HEREFORDERS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Jim Sloan**
Secretary **Dave Smith**

21 May saw Scotland's biggest event, as Falkirk played Host to RSA Scotland to mark the 60th anniversary of VE and VJ Days. The clocks were turned back on Saturday as the Herforders, the biggest Branch, took centre stage in the organisation. **Jim Sloan** was the Chief MC, and did a wonderful job. However, many of us are still wondering about our conscription into crowd control. There weren't many hands showing! The Town Centre events were really good, with many people in WW2 uniforms and the Royal Signals Band and singer, **Jill Daniels**, providing the musical entertainment.

One of the orange coats

Jim gave us orange coats to look important in, but mine, as usual fitted where it touched. The weather was not too kind to us, and even the incantations of **Jim MacMillan** could not keep the clouds away. We slogged on through the rain, or at least the men did. The women disappeared into a pub for medicinal brandy, led by **Muriel Hearldon** and **Ann Kineally** of course! The bedraggled pair of **Terry** and **Len** eventually found them, and amazingly, it was our turn to pay.

The evening back at the *Claddhan Hotel* saw **Jim Sloan** present the proprietor with a statuette of Jimmy, followed by the RSA Dinner, with **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** as our Guest of Honour again. After Dinner entertainment was again **Jill Daniels**, singing the songs that only I am old enough to remember!

Jim Sloan presents a Jimmy to the hotel proprietor

Sunday morning was the Church Service, with the Royal Signals Band in concert. I didn't count the Standards present, but both sides of the hall were fully lined. Sunday afternoon, when we all wanted to die, we were met back at the Hotel by an excellent Pipe Band. As an Englishman, I must admit to the Scots that I enjoyed it - or did it replace my hangover with other pain? The Hotel provided vocal entertainment for the afternoon and evening with some guy who couldn't find his way to Amarillo. Very nice, nonetheless. Monday morning was goodbye to all, until we reassemble on 9 October for our trip to Germany. Watch out you Frauleins, the old men are coming!

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

THE LIBERTY OF SWANAGE

The twenty-one year association between the Royal Corps of Signals and the Swanage Railway and its wider community was celebrated in fine style, when soldiers 11 Sig Regt paraded in Swanage on Saturday 9 July.

Swanage Town Council had unanimously voted to offer the Regt the Liberty of the Town in recognition of the work undertaken by Royal Signals personnel on the Swanage Railway over the pervious twenty years. The honour was accepted last summer, and planning commenced shortly afterwards. The date for the Liberty Parade, Saturday 9 July, was chosen to fit in with Dorset's events to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE/VJ Day, many of which took place in Swanage. It was fitting that the occasion should commence with serving Regular soldiers on parade in the town. The three Sqns of the Regt were commanded by their respective officers, and led by the CO, **Lt Col Matt Fensom**, himself a long-standing member of the Railway. Having marched the length of the seafront, the Parade formed up, ready for the Mayor, **Cllr Tony Miller**, to commence the formalities. The Mayor praised the efforts 1,400+ soldiers who had worked on the Railway, and who had raised nearly £5,000 for local charities, and generally engaged in activities in Swanage. He then formally presented the Scroll giving the Regt the privilege to march through the Town 'with swords drawn, bayonets fixed and bands playing.' In reply, the CO accepted the Liberty of the Town, and looked to the future association between the Town and the Regt.

CO 11 Sig Regt, Lt Col Fensom greets the Mayor of Swanage, Cllr Tony Miller

Following the Mayor's inspection of the Parade and his giving his consent, the CO ordered the 110-strong contingent of soldiers to fix bayonets, whilst the officers drew their swords. Then, accompanied by the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals, the proud soldiers marched the bounds of the Town. Many of the shops in the town were displaying red, white and blue. Others displayed posters explaining why the soldiers were on parade. The result was a mass of smiling faces, and the streets were lined with many cheering people.

At the end of the formal Parade there was a Civic Reception above the seafront, kindly provided by the Town Council, and arranged by the hard-working members of the Royal British Legion. **Ex-WO2 Frank Roberts**, the instigator of the link with Swanage in 1984, then presented both the Mayor and the CO a framed Roll of Honour, listing the names of every single soldier who had worked on the Swanage Railway during EX TOPHAM HATT. It was very fitting that those who had earned the Liberty of Swanage through their sheer hard work and effort should be remembered in such a way.

Frank Roberts and the Mayor of Swanage, Cllr Tony Miller

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

SIGNALMAN AGE WARNER

Researcher, **Mr Anthony Evans** seeks veterans who were attached to 9 Medium Regt RA, to tell their stories. In particular, he is looking for information on 14353494 **Sig AGE Warner**, who was killed on 21 July 1944, and is buried in the Bayeux War Cemetery.

Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Anthony** by writing to him at 94 Trafalgar Rd, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 2QL, by phone on 01403 756285, or by email at: arevans@ukonline.co.uk.

KELLY THOMSON

Emma Verrall (aka **Ronnie**) wishes to contact **Kelly Thomson** (nicknamed **Reggie**), with whom she joined The Army Apprentice College Harrogate in January 1993, Intake 93A.

Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Emma** in Spain by phone on 0034 667425414, or by email at emma.verrall@virgin.net.

COMMEMORATIVE EVENT

60th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION IN FALKIRK

During the weekend of 21/22 May 2005, RSA in Scotland organised a Commemorative event in Selkirk to mark the 60th Anniversary of the end of WW2 in Europe. The centre of Falkirk saw various activities, including re-enactment groups with WW2 vehs and equipt, **Jill Daniels** singing her *Hits from the Blitz*, and the dance group, *Fly Right* demonstrating the dance moves from the Forties.

The Northern Band of the Royal Corps of Signals, accompanied by pipers from the Balaclava Pipe Band, also gave a polished performance at the Callendar Riggs in the centre of the town. Large crowds appreciated the spectacle and showed their appreciation with prolonged applause.

During the evening, a Dinner and Dance held in the *Cladhan Hotel*, was attended by the Master of Signals and President of the Royal Signals Association, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, and his wife, **Anne**; RSA Chairman, **Maj General Tony Boyle CB**, and his wife **Ann**; the SOinC(A), **Brig John Thomas MBE ADC**; the Corps Chaplain, **Rev Peter Clemett**, and his wife **Gael**; **Provost Jim Johnson**, **Deputy Provost Billy Buchan**, and **Cllr Pat Reid**, of Falkirk Council.

The evening was a great success, and the band was in fine form, enticing many couples onto the dance floor, where their footwork was a marvel to see.

Those who weren't on the floor accompanied the band by tapping their feet in time with the music. Many WW2 veterans attended the function, and there were members from a number of RSA Branches and Affiliated Branches from throughout the

country, some having travelled many miles to take part in the weekend.

On Sunday morning, a short Service was held at the War Memorial in Dollar Park, where wreaths were laid by the Master of Signals, the SOinC(A) and the Provost of Falkirk.

A piper played *The Flowers of the Forest*, a fitting tribute to those who never came home. A Drumhead Service had also been arranged in Callendar Park, but conditions put the wet weather programme into effect, and the Service was held at Graeme High School instead. The Corps Chaplain, **Rev Peter Clemett** gave a moving Service, and the Master of Signals read the lesson. At least two hundred veterans were in the congregation.

Following the Service, the Provost of Falkirk gave a civic reception in Callendar House, where he thanked the RSA for organising the weekend in conjunction with the Council. He presented the Corps with a silver tray to mark the occasion. In return, the Master of Signals thanked Falkirk Council, and presented the Provost with a silver Jimmy.

Everyone then retired to the *Cladhan Hotel* for a lunch for the veterans, where the Provost distributed lapel badges to them all. This was followed by a trip to the Falkirk Wheel for the veterans.

LAST POST

Baillie - Capt AS Baillie	*Served* 1955/67	*Died* 01/07/05
Banks - Capt S Banks	*Served* 1968/72	*Died* 01/07/05
Bertolucci - Sig JL Bertolucci	*Served* 1942/46	*Died* ??/06/05
Clarke - Maj VR Clarke	*Served* 1942/70	*Died* 25/06/05
Cullingford - Sgt JE Cullingford	*Served* 1937/46	*Died* 11/07/05
Duncan - Sgt D Duncan	*Served* 1957/83	*Died* 22/06/05
Emmerton - Sig J Emmerton	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 05/06/05
Gartside - Sig R Gartside	*Served* 1954/76	*Died* 23/07/05
Grant - Cpl WA Grant	*Served* 1939/59	*Died* 09/06/05
Halling - Sgt EW Halling	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/01/05
Hanton - Cpl K Hanton	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* 20/06/05
Lambert - Pte J Lambert	*Served* 1959/61	*Died* 27/07/05
Legate - Sgt RE Legate	*Served* 1946/48	*Died* 09/07/05
Moore - Cpl CS Moore	*Served* 1960/70	*Died* 30/06/05
Moore - Sgt CJ Moore	*Served* 1956/67	*Died* ??/??/04
Moyle - ? RW Moyle	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 10/04/05
Parkinson - Sig LW Parkinson	*Served* 1946/52	*Died* 16/11/04
Pocklington - Lt D Pocklington	*Served* 1959/64	*Died* 02/08/05
Rose - Lt Col JA Rose	*Served* 1949/89	*Died* 14/07/05
Sankey - Cpl TJ Sankey	*Served* 1953/56	*Died* 09/07/05
Shields - Lt J Shields	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 06/05/05
Smith - Cpl A Smith	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 04/06/05
Smith - WO2 TI Smith	*Served* 1953/77	*Died* 21/06/05
Thomas - Maj HGS Thomas	*Served* 1965/83	*Died* 30/07/05
Unwin - ? GE White	*Served* 1959/65	*Died* 28/07/05
Wagstaff - WO2 RW Wagstaff	*Served* 1949/72	*Died* 19/07/05
Wallace - ? JL Wallace	*Served* 1957/59	*Died* 20/06/05
Whipp - Cpl RJ Whipp	*Served* 1951/56	*Died* 11/06/05
White - Capt APR White	*Served* 1972/89	*Died* 05/08/05
White - Sig VS White	*Served* 1942/45	*Died* ??/03/01
Whittington - Sig E Whittington	*Served* 1942/47	*Died* ??/??/04
Williams - Maj R Williams	*Served* 1965/93	*Died* ??/05/05

OBITUARIES

CULLINGFORD – Sgt JE Cullingford (Jack) died on 11 July 2005.

Jack Cullingford enlisted in the TA in 1937 in No 2 Coy, 43 Wessex Div Sigs, in Southampton. On 1 January 1939, his Section became part of a new unit, No 2 Coy, 5 AA Div Sig Regt. In August 1939, he was called up for active service, remaining in AA Sigs until posted to India in May 1942, then to Ceylon and Burma until February 1946. He was demobbed in March 1946. He was also awarded the TA Long Service Medal 1937 – 1946.

Jack became a founder member of the reformed Southampton and District Branch RSA. He was a very active Committee Member right from the start, until a few years ago, when ill health became a problem. He attended meetings right up to going into hospital. In civilian life, **Jack** worked for the Pirelli Company from 1934 to 1981 (interrupted only by the war years).

He was involved in many activities – Principle Dresser for the Gaumont Theatre, involvement with disabled children, and the London Association, to name but a few. He was also a hockey umpire. In September of this year, **Jack** would have been 89. He leaves behind is daughter, **Jill**, granddaughters, **Nicola** and **Sheena**, and great grandson, **Callum**.

A moving committal service, which included a tribute to Jack by his friend, **Ernie Budd**, ended with the playing of a disc of the Last Post by the Royal Signal's Trumpeters.

The service, held at the Southampton Crematorium, was attended by 70 – 80 family, friends and comrades from several Associations. A Guard of Honour was provided by 11 members of our Branch, and the Standard was carried by our Chairman, **Sidney Smith**. The coffin was draped with the Union Flag.

SMITH – WO2 T Smith (Tommy) died suddenly on 21 June 2005.

Tommy Smith was a native of Lisbellaw, a small village near Enniskillen in Northern Ireland, but was brought up in Manchester, having moved there with his family as a child. He joined the Corps in 1953 as a Beverly Boy, and trained as a Lineman. His first posting was to 1 Div HQ and Sig Regt at Verden, where he gained his first stripe before moving on to 30 Sig Regt in 1958, when they were located at Colchester.

He remained with them as they moved to Middle Wallop, and then finally to Blandford. During this period he was promoted to 'full screw' and changed his trade to Clerk Tech, to – as his wife **Marion** insists – enjoy a relatively warm indoor job, instead of pulling 40 ft quad cables for miles through the snow and mud, which was always a Liney's lot!

While home on leave in Manchester in 1960, he had the good fortune to meet and marry **Marion**, and the further good fortune to be able to whisk her off to Cyprus with him on posting to 203 Sig Sqn, at Dhekelia in 1961. The Sqn OC was **Maj Robert Wise**, and shortly after arriving in Cyprus, **Tommy** was to accompany him and the Sqn as they mobilised to Kenya with 3 Bde as part of OP VANGUARD. They were to be on standby to help prevent an 'Oil Crisis' as Iraq threatened to invade Kuwait after it had gained its independence in the early sixties. **Tommy's** good luck, which was to remain with him throughout his service, held and the threat from Iraq dissipated. On his return to Cyprus, he became a member of 262 Sig Sqn, after 203 Sqn was disbanded in 1962.

Postings to The School of Infantry at Warminster, 18 Sig Regt in Singapore, 4 Div HQ and Sig Regt at Herford (where he gained his third stripe), and 21 Sig Regt (AF) at Wildenrath (where he was promoted SSgt) followed, before he finally joined 33 Sig Regt (V) in 1977 to spend the last six months of his service with the Corps at 42 Sig Sqn (V) at Manchester. On his retirement from the Army, **Tommy** lived at Heald Green near Cheadle, and was employed as a vehicle mechanic with Quickfit. However, he did join the TA, serving as a WO2 (RQMS) with Manchester UOTC at

University Bks near Moss Side. After 5 years with Quickfit, **Tommy** successfully applied for the post of NRPS SQMS with 42 Sqn, where he was to remain until his eventual retirement from Army uniform in 1997. He was to become a member of the Corps of Commissionaires, and then Securicor, before hanging his boots up for the last time. Altogether, **Tommy** had served over 40 years regular, TA and NRPS service.

During his service, **Tommy** was a top rally driver, representing the Army Rally Team on many occasions. In 1963 he won the Cyprus Rally outright, and in 1975, on the recommendation of **Brig Attack**, Chairman of Army Rallying, he was awarded his Army Colours, whilst serving with 21 Sig Regt (AS), by the CO, a certain **Lt Col AN De Bretton Gordon**. Also a keen sailor, **Tommy** represented the Corps at sailing, whilst serving in Singapore and with 4 Div in Germany. **Tommy** will be sadly missed by all those who knew him. He was an irrepressible character with an impish sense of humour, who could almost get away with murder, and who never seemed to be down in the dumps. He was a good friend, and he would go out of his way to help anyone. **Marion** would like to thank all the ex-Army pals, both Regular and TA, who attended his funeral at Manchester Crematorium on Friday 1 July 2005, where the chapel was packed; and especially the Manchester Branch RSA for the Standard Bearer and Guard of Honour. As well as his widow, **Marion**, **Tommy** leaves a son, **David**, a daughter, **Diana**, and five grandchildren.

TEARSE – WO2 S Tearse (Stanley) died on 07 August 2005.

Stanley Tearse was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1929. He had a happy childhood, although he was evacuated during the war - but even that was considered an adventure! At the age of 21 in 1950, he joined Royal Signals, and in 1956, he was posted to Crowborough, where he met his future wife, **Sylvia**. After marrying in 1957, they were blessed with their first child, **Peter**, after which, they were posted to Devon. Four years later saw the family relocated to Germany, and it was at this time their second child, **Julie**, was born. The family travelled extensively during **Stanley's** service, and they all fully enjoyed the Military life, with **Stanley** rising through the ranks to RQMS. In 1971, **Stanley** left the Service to fulfil a life long ambition taking a pub, *The Wheelwright's Arms*, in the beautiful village of Monkton Combe, near Bath. **Stan** and **Sylv** were genial hosts, and enjoyed their time there, but unfortunately, his ill health meant they could no longer continue.

After a full recovery, the family moved to Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh. There, new and lasting friendships were forged, and a new career as Macebearer to the Mayor of Eastleigh taken up-a job that perfectly matched **Stanley's** love of ceremony and passion for history. 1977 found the family moving to Ilford, with **Stanley** taking up the post of Town Hall Superintendent and Mayor's Officer. Here they set down their roots, and **Stanley** proudly watched his family expand, with **Julie** marrying **Allan**, and **Peter** marrying **Judith**. The arrival of his grandchildren, **Emma** and **David**, in 1996 was simply the icing on the cake, and he spent many happy hours with them.

Stanley retired in 1991, and during his time as Mayor's Officer, the history of the Macebearer never ceased to fascinate him, culminating in his giving talks to local groups on the origins of the Macebearer in particular, and the history of the Borough in general. As a result of this, the idea of the Redbridge Museum was formed, and is today a fitting tribute to a man who will always be remembered for his kindness, selflessness, compassion and steadfastness. He will be greatly missed.

DIDSBURY - Sig PW Didsbury ('Dids') died on active service on 29 June 2005.

Paul William Didsbury was born and brought up near Blackpool. His natural parents are divorced. His Father, **Mr Stuart Didsbury** and his stepmother of many years, **Mrs Julie Didsbury**, live in Spain. His mother lives in USA. After joining the Army in 2002, **Sig Didsbury** trained as a Rad Sys Op, before being posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS) in January 2004. He served in Hotel Tp, 220 Sig Sqn, and was, for many months, the youngest soldier in the Sqn. He celebrated his 18th Birthday in July 2004 whilst deployed on exercise on Salisbury Plain.

Sig Didsbury (known as **'Dids'**) rapidly became a well-known character both in his Sqn and across the Regt. An ebullient, ultra-positive character, he was ever willing to volunteer for almost everything got him noticed at all levels. He was an excellent Op, and deployed on all major field exercises, quickly achieving his Class 2 trade qualification. He was a regular member of the Regt Rugby XV, and took part in a diving exped, where he gained the BSAC Ocean Diver qualification. He also deployed on two sailing expeditions, and passed his Competent Crew Certificate. Not content with that, he also gained his Basic Ski Proficiency Certificate during the Regtl Ski camp. Most soldiers would be happy to complete all these activities in five years or more. **Sig Didsbury** managed to pack them into 16 months. Unsurprisingly, he was a volunteer for operations, and deployed to Iraq on 26 May 2005.

Sig Didsbury died in a tragic accident in Basrah on 29 June 2005 while serving on a roulement tour with the Joint Helicopter Force (Iraq) Comms Tp. His death is a huge blow to his Sqn and the Regt. He was a genuine 'good guy' who will be greatly missed by all.

CLARKE - Maj VR Clarke (Victor) died on 25 June 2005.

Victor Clarke was born 8 July 1919 and was mobilised in August 1939 into the 4th Lincolnshire Regt, serving in Norway and Iceland in 146 Inf Bde. He transferred to the Corps in April 1942, and trained in UK at the 3rd Intelligence School, London in September of that year.

January 1943 saw him posted to Algiers on special duties with the US Forces, until September 1944. He was then posted to HQ BAOR, until he was demobbed in April 1946. He then decided that he would make a career in the Army and rejoined in the rank of Sgt. In May, after a short refresher course, he was posted to Venice, where he was promoted to the rank of WO2, and posted to Trieste. He subsequently served in Cyprus, Egypt, and Fontainebleau, and was commissioned as a Capt in October 1955, and then in July was promoted to Maj (Tfc). He subsequently served in Cyrenaica, Malta, and with UN Cyprus Sig Sqn. He retired from the Corps in June 1970 in the rank of Maj.

In his retirement, he had many interests, especially ballroom dancing, an activity in which he excelled, much to the envy of his friends. He joined the Lincoln Branch of the RSA in 1979, and was Secretary from 19831991, where he performed his duties to his normal high standards. He took over as Entertainments Officer in 1992, and he steered the Committee to some first rate curry nights and dinner dances. He was awarded his 50 Year Badge and later Honorary Member, in recognition of his service to our Branch over so many years.

Whilst not forgetting his late wives, **Peggy** and **Ruth** who predeceased him, he leaves behind his partner, **Nancy**, sons **Victor**, and **James**, and daughters **Suzanne**, and **Dianne** and his beloved grandchildren. He will be missed by us all. We will remember him.

BOOTH – Sig L Booth (Les) died on the 16 July 2005.

Les Booth was born at Chesterfield during the last year of The Great War. He left school at the age of 14, and entered employment with a local manufacturing wholesale and retail firm. **Les** joined the Royal Signals TA in 1936, and was mobilised when

war was declared in 1939. He was evacuated from Dunkirk in May 1940, and was almost immediately posted to Egypt, to serve under **Gen Wavell**, where he was to take part in the first battle to take Libya. Later he was with was sent to Burma, where fought in the Battle of Kohima. He was eventually demobbed in 1946.

Les then continued with his old employer becoming the Manager in their large retail shopping department. He married **Betty** in 1949, and soon they had a son, **Andrew**. He became a Founder Member of the Chesterfield Branch RSA. His funeral took place in Chesterfield, where a large contingent from the Chesterfield Branch were in attendance, along with many friends from the Burma Star Association. The last post was sounded by **Lt Truswell**, and the Chesterfield Branch Standard was proudly carried by **George May**.

ADVERTISEMENTS

TO ALL FORMER MEMBERS OF 14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

We are forming a 14 Sig Regt (EW) Association. It is open to all ranks, all cap badges and all services who have served with the Regt since it formed in 1977.

Broadly, its aims are:

To renew contacts and stay in touch with old friends;

To establish links between retired and serving members of the Regt;

To build a network to support each other; and

To have a good party each year.

We now have a President, **Maj Gen (Retd) Bill Robins**, and a small group of former members of the Regt, including key Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps people working on it.

We need now to see who is interested in joining, and more importantly, who would be willing to put a little time into helping the Assn to get off the ground and running it as it gets going.

If you are eligible and wish to be part of it, email 14sr.assn@bigfoot.com, or phone **Capt MR Wallace** on 01437 725656, for more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE 2004

The Corps Carol service will be held at 18.00hrs on Monday 12 December 05 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.

ROYAL SIGNALS INSTITUTION LECTURE SECRET COMMUNICATIONS UNITS

BLANDFORD CAMP, 31 OCTOBER 2005

The lecturer, **Geoffrey Pidgeon**, was a member of the wartime Special Comms Units (SCU) organisation, handled by M16 Section VIII the comms division of SIS.

He is the author of a recently published book that tells of the Unit's formation, under the redoubtable **Brig Richard Gambier-Perry**, and includes diary entries by one of the founding fathers, recording the secret meetings that took place, and its assembly of varied, talented and eccentric staff. His book covers the work of agencies in embassies and occupied territories, the stories of Churchill's personal wireless operator, and the Enigma machine, as well as the curious story of Black Propaganda.

His talk will recount the story of Section VIII, composed almost entirely of Royal Signals personnel, (although not many were paid by Army funds!) and the early days of its existence. It will cover the prewar SIS wireless Station X in Barnes, the formation of SCUs in 1940, and the myriad roles the Unit played in comms of all kinds, including the dissemination of ULTRA to commanders in the field.

The lecture will take place in the Princess Mary Hall, Blandford Camp, the start time is 18.00hrs for 18.30hrs, and the £10 cost will cover coffee, tea and biscuits on arrival, and a glass or two of wine with canapés halfway through the evening.

The event is open to everyone. We expect a large attendance, and anyone planning to attend should contact the Secretary RSI using the following format as soon as possible.

ROYAL SIGNALS INSTITUTION LECTURE, SECRET COMMUNICATIONS UNITS - BLANDFORD CAMP, 31 OCTOBER 2005

To: The Secretary, RSI, Griffin House, Blandford Camp, Dorset, DT11 8RH

From:
Address:

Tel No:
Email:

Please send me ___ tickets for the RSI Blandford Lecture on Monday 31 October 2005 at a cost of £10 each. A cheque for the total of £ made payable to The Royal Signals Benevolent Fund is enclosed. My vehicle details are as follows:

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ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER

The Annual General Meeting and Dinner of the Royal Signals Yacht Club will take place at the Crown Hotel, Blandford, on Friday 28 October 2005, commencing at 18.30hrs.

All serving and retired members of the Royal Signals Yacht Club and their partners, are welcome to attend both the AGM and the Dinner.

All members of the Corps who contribute to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, and have sailed with the Corps at any time in the past are deemed to be Members of the Yacht Club.

The full cost of the dinner will be £31.50 per person, inclusive of wine, port and gratuities, though this amount will reduced by £11 per person for junior ranks and their partners.

Payment must be made at the time of booking.
Anyone wishing to attend should contact **Lt Col (Retd) Keith Powell** on 01258 454089 or by emailing powe11@val den.fsnet.co.uk without delay.

THE LIBERTY OF SWANAGE

In July 2005, 11th Signal Regiment, a Corporate Member of the Swanage Railway since 1994, received the **Liberty of the Town of Swanage** in recognition of over 20 years support for the Swanage Railway and its wider community.

11th Signal Regiment, on behalf of the Corps, regularly host HQ UK LAND authorised **EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT** supporting telecom and other general tasks at the award winning **Swanage Railway**

Participation in the exercise, on one of the UK's premier Heritage Railways, is open to any unit in the British Army. For further details please contact **Frank Roberts** (01929) 421858

The Mercury Group is a supporting group bringing together former participants. For general information and photographs of past exercises: **www.mercurygroup.org.uk**

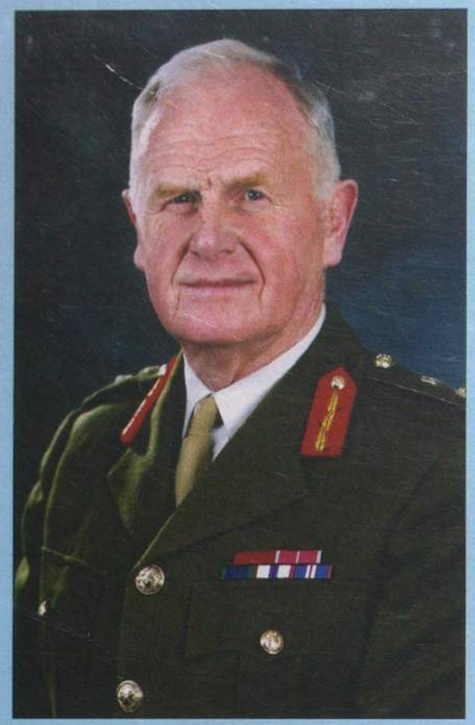
THE PURBECK

THE wire

December 2005

The Royal Corps of Signals

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER OF SIGNALS



GENERAL SIR SAM COWAN KCB CBE

From my own observation, and contacts with senior serving officers, it is obvious that the Corps continues to thrive, and its highly effective performance on operations is widely acknowledged and acclaimed. I know that this is a total Corps effort, with our Territorial Army component continuing to make a highly significant contribution. It also reflects the strong leadership that is being given at every level.

Everyone serving today would want me to acknowledge that our current high standing and strong performance is built on the sound foundations that have been laid by generations of those who have served before us. It is always a very great pleasure to meet members of the Royal Signals Association, to tell them of the excellent job being done by the Corps today, and to pay tribute to all their hard work that has made this possible.

As the Signal Officer in Chief points out, there are many challenges lying ahead in 2006 but, like him, I am very confident of your ability to meet everything that is demanded of you.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to say 'Well done' to you all, to exhort you to be on guard on every occasion to safeguard our hard-won high reputation and, of course, to wish you a very Happy Christmas and continuing success in 2006.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

BRIGADIER JOHN THOMAS MBE ADC

I have very much enjoyed my first year as Signal Officer in Chief (Army), and have been fortunate to be able to visit many of you. In doing so, I have been able to witness first hand the courage, determination and professionalism of the Corps, in delivering Command Support and EW to our Commanders. It is also pleasing to see that we find the time and achieve significant success on the sporting front, both team and individual. It is difficult to single out one sport, but to come first and second in the Army Major Unit Shooting at Bisley, and have 29 (Royal Signals and Queen's Gurkha Signals) out of the top 100 shots in the Army, was a very proud moment for me and for the Corps standing amongst the Combat Arms.

2006 looks set to be much busier operationally, with commitments to Afghanistan, Iraq and the Balkans, involving Regular and TA alike. BOWMAN roll-out, development and exploitation draws heavily on our skills, and we will bring the last elements of CORMORANT into service. Future programmes, such as SOOTHSAYER and FALCON, are at the forefront of our mind, but above all I judge that we are well set to meet the challenges that we face. Well done!

I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a fulfilling 2006.

December 2005 Vol. 59 No: 6

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Please refer to *Guidelines for Contributors*.

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Editor Maj (Retd) BL Redshaw
Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER

Royal Signals Right up Front

On OP TELIC Royal Signals soldiers often operate right up front. Here an Immediate Response Operator (IRO) from 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) supports the Bde Surveillance Coy in a night op near Basrah.

BACK COVER

A Merry Christmas from The White Helmets

Before they stood down for a well-earned holiday break, The White Helmets went un-shaven (even the girls) for a day to pose for a Christmas shot.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

THE FIRST DIGITISED BRIGADE ON OPERATION TELIC

12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn report that '...all things bright and BOWMAN have been working particularly well...' In their report on page 475, **WO2(FofS) Robinson** gives us a full report on how they went about deploying BOWMAN, and how well it has performed. The Sqn's report also gives us an accurate picture of the many roles Royal Signals people have undertaken on OP TELIC. There are some good photos, too.

TROUBLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

In spite of the 'Normalisation' process, this years' Marching Season in Northern Ireland proved very dangerous for our troops. In their report on page 435, 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn report 'Troops on the ground took over 150 rounds of incoming small arms fire, numerous blast bombs and uncountable petrol bombs, in scenes of violence more akin to Basrah than Belfast.'

EXERCISE LONG LOOK

Once again, we have a full report from an EX LONG LOOK participant. **Lt Alex Hodges** from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, went to New Zealand for 4 months, where he was hosted by 2 NZ Sig Sqn. It is obvious from his report on page 420, that he had a full and rewarding programme whilst there. If he played hard, he certainly worked hard.

The role he went into was very different from his role back at his UK Regt, so the learning curve was quite steep. But it worked both ways; 2 Sqn learned a lot from him, too. This is how LONG LOOK should work. Anyone contemplating applying for next year's LONG LOOK would do well to read **Lt Hodges'** report.

WHAT IS THE NRF?

Actually, it is the NATO Response Force, and 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt are currently working up to play a major role in it. If you want to know more, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt tells us all about it in their report on page 443.

PREPARING FOR OPERATION TELIC

Those who haven't been on ops recently may not be aware of the preparation and trg that goes into getting a unit ready to deploy. On page 470, 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) give us a brief but full account of their preparation to deploy to Iraq. Having just completed BOWMAN conversion, they not only had to man up and re-structure completely for their role in Basrah, but they also had to train intensively for the many new tasks and situations they will face in that theatre. As a result, the Sqn were fully and effectively functioning from the moment they arrived in theatre.

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

At last, I'm delighted to realise one of my main ambitions in bringing you *The WIRE* in full colour. We were one of the last corps magazines left in black and white, and now we have made it. However, to stay within budget, I have to keep each issue down to 80 pages, so, as many Units whom I contacted now know, we need to keep contributions within the limits set out in the *Guidelines*.

We also need to quality photos, both in content and technically. For this issue, we were lucky in that most photos received were satisfactory, but there were a few that we had to leave out. So from now on, we want concise notes and striking high-resolution photos. You can see the difference it makes!

I have had many kind and encouraging comments about how I have improved the quality of *The WIRE* during my stewardship, but many of these improvements have come from the writers in the Corps. The writing quality has never been better, and the photos are now good, and really supporting the writing. There isn't space here to comment on every piece in this issue, but the following four paragraphs describe some good examples of what I mean. It will be articles like these that will keep *The WIRE* where it now is – one of the best Corps magazines today.

One of the aims of *The WIRE* is to promote internal communications in the Corps, and there have been many reports that have contributed well to this aim. Over the last three issues, 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) have kept us up to date with their experiences with BOWMAN. On page 475, they give us a good insight into the operational success of the HF component they deployed in Iraq. **WO2(FofS) Robinson** describes it all from a user's point of view, from the modifications made for a static comms set-up, to the vital contribution BOWMAN is now making to OP TELIC. There are also snippets on successful BOWMAN use throughout the Tp reports, which also give us a good insight on ops round Basrah from a soldier's point of view.

I am always interested to hear from soldiers who have been on EX LONG LOOK, especially to New Zealand. I myself was involved on the New Zealand end in the very first EX LONG LOOK, when most of 1 Loyals and their Band came over. But, from reports and discussions with the Royal Signals participants I have met so far, one thing is very clear. The more you put into it, the more you get out of it – and this includes both the guest participant and the host unit.

This is clearly demonstrated by **Lt Alex Hodges'** report on page 420 of this issue. You can see how willingly he got stuck into his work with 21 Tp, and how, despite coming from an entirely different role in UK, he quickly learned the new job. You can also see how well he and the Tp interacted, both in work, AT, sport, and socially. I happen to know quite well 2 NZ Sig Sqn, their OC, and their RSM, just as I also know **Lt Hodges**. I can see that he and the Sqn were an excellent match, and I can appreciate just how much he and the Sqn gave to each other. Like **Lt Hodges**, I also recommend EX LONG LOOK to anyone who is interested, but I would also emphasise what I have said before: *The more you put into it, the more you get out of it*.

In the last issue, I noted a piece of quality sports writing (the piece on the Round the Island yacht race on page 403). On page 471 of this issue, we have an excellent AT report from 19 Lt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) of their exped to Peru. With touches of subtle humour, and some excellent photos (averaging about 1.5 Mb each), the story not only describes how a good AT exped should be run, it is also an inspired piece of travel writing.

Some time ago I issued a challenge for units to produce a handover/takeover photo a bit more imaginative than a handshake and two cheesy smiles. We had a good one in the August 04 issue (page 330) from 97 Sig Sqn in the Balkans, and on page 446 in this current issue, we have another from 7 Sig Regt. What's noticeable in this photo, is the protective screen around the participants, reminding us of the ever-present dangers in Iraq, even on an occasion such as this. Often (but not often enough) we see media coverage of British troops doing good charity work in Iraq (there was a photo like this on the front cover of the August 04 *WIRE*), but what you don't see, is the force protection screen that is always present with these troops. Perhaps we should.

The white smoke issuing from the high chimney at RHQ, and the cry of 'Editoram habebitis!' from the waiting multitude tell us that we have a new Editor. **Lt Col (Retd) Allan Wallace** will take over from me in February 06. **Alan** retired from Service in 2002, and has been a Civil Servant for the last three years. He is looking forward to re-establishing his connection with the Corps, both serving and the retired. You will hear more of him soon. The February issue of *The WIRE* will be a joint effort as I take him through the ropes.

Finally, at this Festive time, my Deputy, **Dawn** and I wish you and your families a truly Happy Christmas, and all that's best for 2006.

DEPUTY EDITOR

A small note from the Deputy Editor to put a face to the name and to be a point of contact during this time of change.

I am sad to be losing **Bernard Redshaw** the Editor and wish him all the best for the future. He is returning to his roots in New Zealand in the not so distant future.

I will still be here and happy to help answer any queries, and I will remain your point of contact maintaining continuity in the production of The Wire.

OPERATIONAL AWARDS

Joint Commanders Commendations have been awarded to the following officers:

OPERATION TELIC

Lt A Adey, 33 Sig Regt

OPERATION OCULUS

Capt JR Knight, HQ SOinC(A)

THE FORCES PENSION SOCIETY

The Forces Pension Society exists for the benefit of all ranks and their dependants, whether serving or retired.

The aims of the Society are: *To secure equitable and justified conditions in the Armed Forces Pension Scheme for all ranks of all three Services, both serving and retired, and for their widows, widowers and dependants, which recognise the unique commitment which they make and have made to their Country, and which are in line with modern good practice; and to advise and assist members of the Society on pension problems and related issues.*

The Society promotes these aims, in co-operation with other Service and civilian organisations, and lobbies Government, Parliament, MoD and the Armed Forces leadership responsibly and by all reasonable means to secure improvements.

Members are kept informed of the Society's activities through its journal, the AGM and area meetings.

Their journal, *Pennant*, is published twice a year, and is full of interesting news and entertaining articles. The Society also provides a comprehensive advice service that helps over 400 members a month with their personal pensions, and more general retirement issues. In addition, there is an attractive range of member services covering discounts, special offers, book reviews and small ads.

The Society is funded by its members and is wholly independent. It is not a charity but it is a not-for-profit company. It has a small charitable arm in its Widows' Fund, from which agreed activities such as fighting widows' cases can be funded.

All members of the Corps, particularly those in receipt of a Service Pension, are strongly urged to join the Society and to give it their full support.

Contact details are: Membership Secretary
Forces Pension Society
68 South Lambeth Road
Vauxhall
London SW8 1RL
Tel: 020 7820 9988
Fax: 020 7820 7583
E-mail: memsec@forpen.co.uk

Subscriptions can be paid annually or monthly – the latter is less than a pint of beer!

ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE NUMBER 129

– by LCpl Ben McGinn

We'd all heard the rumours, but as the seven students of RSLC 129 paraded in the classroom at MLG on Day 1 of the course, we had no idea how true they would be. To kick off the first week, we were straight into a BPFA, after which the course was started by the Leadership DS.

With activities thrown at us constantly (often at all hours) to develop leadership and teamwork, we were being moulded into leaders. After some lessons in leadership and confidence building, we were put in many unique situations to test and develop our leadership abilities. I'm not going to give away what exactly these situations were, but I can say that they were all excellent. Morale remained high throughout the course.

After four weeks of development, we are more confident people, and we have achieved what the majority wouldn't even attempt. In summary, the Royal Signals Leadership Course was one of the most challenging courses we've done, and probably will ever do, and with out a doubt, the most rewarding.

We all recommend the course to any aspiring ranks who want an outstanding opportunity to improve themselves in many respects.

Part of a verbal communication comd task

At HMS Raleigh's Damage Repair Instruction Unit

TO ALL UNITS

The Royal Signals Leadership Course is currently run three times a year, and is a voluntary course for soldiers who have been identified by their units as potential Supervisors, Foremen, Yeomen, or Potential Officers. Each course lasts four weeks, and is mandated to 'develop and assess the leadership potential of selected soldiers.' Students are given excellent opportunities to practise leadership in a wide variety of situations, and to exercise with tri-Service and Civilian agencies.

The course is tailored to individuals' development requirements, and is invaluable preparation for those going forward to Selection Boards.

EXERCISE LONG LOOK 05

- By Lt Alex Hodges 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

When I was told by my old OC, **Maj Nick Range** that I was being given the chance to go on EX LONG LOOK 05, I really could not believe it. For one reason, I had been back at the Regt for only one month since completing my Tp Comds' Course at RSS. Even more surprising was that I had only just expressed my interest on the off chance that if a place came up, I would jump to it! As chance would have it, an email came around the units saying there were still places. After a few emails and phone calls, I found out I was off for just under four months to 2 (NZ) Sig Sqn in Palmerston North, a small city in the south of the North Island, New Zealand. Four weeks, later I was sat in South Cerney with a handful of paper work and a Rough Guide book ready to go, not sure exactly what the next few months would have in store for me.

In terms of scale, the Unit I was joining was at polar opposites from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, as 2 Sig Sqn is comprised of only two (very busy) tps, and is the larger of the two Kiwi Sig units. What seemed more important to me was the role; I was going from Aden Tp, a Ptarmigan Trunk Node to 21 Radio Tp, who provide radio comms down to bn level, and I was to be in charge of them! I need not have worried though. After the long journey from Bulford by plane, train and automobile, we were warmly welcomed to Linton Camp. As it turned out, we had arrived the same night as the first British and Irish Lions game, so it was only right to go to the pub and support our team. The timing was perfect, and I received a warm welcome to Palmerston North from the locals!

Being in New Zealand for the Lions tour had both its pros and cons; having the opportunity to watch games live and get involved in the media frenzy that had blown up was brilliant, but being new to the unit and British, I became an easy target for everyone on camp. As the Lions' performance worsened, the mick-taking increased, and so the British LONG LOOK personnel had to band together to try and save some face. I certainly chose the right game to go and watch live though, as the local team, Manawatu, based in Palmerston North, suffered a 109-6 loss, cheered on by an overwhelming majority of Lions fans. It was the biggest day in the city's history, with decorations everywhere, bands playing in the city centre, and culminating with a parade.

The Lions scoreboard

After the Lions tour had ended and the novelty of being the new British member of the unit was over, it was time to get stuck in to work with the Tp. Despite being a small unit, even within my Tp we had many different taskings, with most people having to double-hat in order to meet the requirements of the Unit. Each member of the Tp had to be familiar with and be able to operate rebros, secure email and radio dets, which obviously required lots of trg and practice. They also were expected to run the COMMCEN and help train other Unit's radio ops. I took part in a couple of weeks' lessons on some of the radios, and then we deployed on a trg ex to a lodge on the coast at Castle Point, east of Masterton. The hilly geography of the area made for challenging radio and rebro comms, and I had to think back to the Rad Sys Gp element of my Tp Comds' course, to remember my trailing wire from my droopy dipole. Luckily, the weather was perfect, and we had a good time sending secure voice and data via various antennas, whilst enjoying the winter sun. It was also the first time that the Tp had worked in that role in the field out of one of their new Pinzgauers; the old Landrovers were left back at camp. More importantly though, being on the coast, we made time for a spot of fishing and touch rugby in the evenings. Despite being winter, I even decided I had to take a dip in the sea, much to the shock of my soldiers, who thought I was a mad Englishman. But as I told them, it really was just like going in the Channel in summer!

On exercise at Castle Point

It was good to take part in normal Tp Comd tasks, such as trg, admin and discipline matters, as it gave me plenty of opportunities to get to know my Tp, and the way that the Kiwis do things. After a short time, I realised that apart from a few minor things, our Armies really are very similar, and the job of a

Tp Comd differs little, wherever you go. As well as everyday tasks, I also got involved in a lot of sport, representing the Corps against the Loggies in football, and leading the Unit team to an admirable fourth in an inter-camp adventure race. But most fun of all, was AT - learning to snowboard in the Southern Alps.

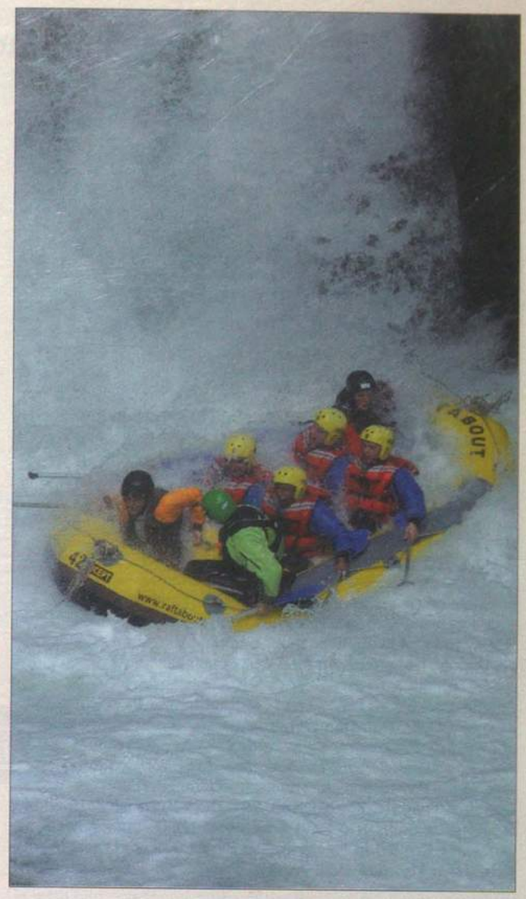
During my time in NZ, I was obviously keen to experience as much as possible, so I volunteered for anything that would get me out and about. As part of an Army/Police liaison initiative, I went on patrol with the local Police force, where you hit the streets and see what the Police have to deal with on a Friday night. Unfortunately, the crime spree I was hoping for didn't materialise, but I did get to help in a few arrests, and sort out a couple of domestic incidents.

In contrast, I got involved in the re-dedication of the War Memorial in the city centre on VJ Day, which took the form of a parade of Soldiers and Veterans. I also had the opportunity to meet the special guest, the Governor General, **Dame Silvia Cartwright PCNZM DBE**. Soldiers from 2 Sig Sqn represented the Army, and did a great job despite driving rain. After tea with the dignitaries, we ended up having a couple of beers with some of the Veterans back at the Returned Serviceman's Association, which made for a good ending to a special day.

VJ Day Parade with RSM Ralph Wallace

One of the most important things about this trip to NZ, was making the most of available time and opportunities. To that end, I tried to do something different each weekend, and get out and see the amazing scenery on offer - from snow-covered mountain ranges, to white sandy beaches and semi tropical forests, to fjords banked by mile-high slopes. I managed to ski on Mt Ruapehu (one of the scenes used in *The Lord of The Rings* films), snowboard in the Southern Alps, and white-water raft on the highest commercially rafted waterfall in the world.

I also kayaked and went horse trekking around Lake Taupo, swam in hot pools in Rotorua, and saw seals, penguins and albatross on the Otago Peninsular. It really is amazing how a country a little larger than the UK, can be so packed with such a variety of scenery and wildlife, and with a population of only a



Serious white-water rafting!

little under 4 million people, there is such a rich cultural mix of Maori and British heritage (I should work for the Tourist Board!).

Looking back over all of the activities and functions that I took part in, I know how lucky I was to be given the opportunity to come to the other side of the world on this exchange, but it's success really does depend upon the host unit. At 2 Sig Sqn, I was lucky to have **Maj Kent Collard** as an OC, who was as keen as I was for me to experience as much as possible.

The Sqn provided me with the opportunities and transport for whatever I wanted to get up to, and also gave me enough work to make my visit fulfilling on a professional level. But most importantly, I would like to thank 21 Tp, whose hierarchy welcomed me with open arms and supported me during my whole stay, and the soldiers who provided me with constant laughter and pointers on the best night spots to hit.

Obviously I would recommend LONG LOOK to anyone reading this article. It is open to everyone up to the rank of Capt, and is an amazing way to improve relations with some of our closest allies, as well providing unrivalled opportunities to see another country. I really do not believe there is a better way to get know people than to work with them in a Tp environment.

As a result of this, I have made friends and connections that I hope to maintain close links with for the rest of my career. LONG LOOK has proved to be the highlight of my short career to date. I look forward to meeting the many people I got to know again on ops or ex anywhere in the world.

KIWI TROPHY 2005

- by Bernard Redshaw, Editor

Most who have been on Salisbury Plain will remember the giant Kiwi carved in the chalk on Beacon Hill. It was carved at the end of WW1 by NZ soldiers who were then stationed at nearby Sling Camp, and measures 120m X 80m, covering half a hectare. When you are on the site, the bird looks tall and skinny, but once you are down on the plain below, the proportions are just right. This is not surprising, considering the work was supervised by **Sgt Maj PC Blencarne** NZAEC, who in civilian life, was an art teacher.

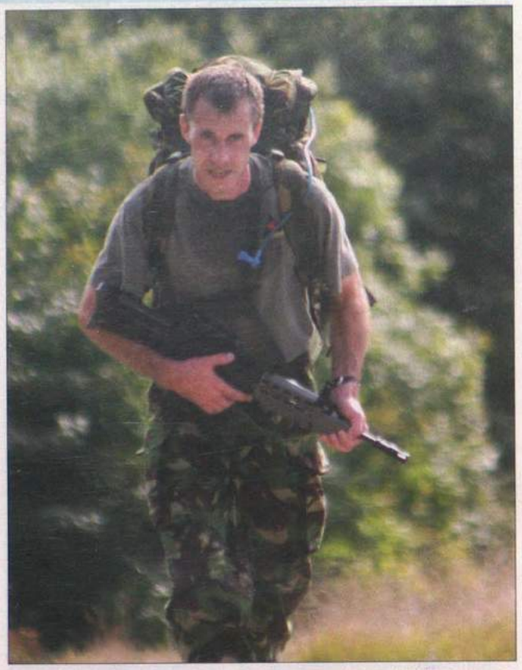
Over the years, several organisations have been involved in maintaining the site, with mixed results, until in 1980, 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)) put in a major effort to bring it back to its former glory. With the disbandment of 249 Sig Sqn in 2003, the responsibility for maintaining it passed to 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn for one year, and then to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

In 1980, 249 Sig Sqn had instituted an individual 22km Bergen run (including a range shoot) that finished at the Kiwi. Then in August 1981, the NZ General Staff presented a carved model of a kiwi, in recognition of the maintenance work the Sqn had done on the site. This became The Kiwi Trophy and put the Bergen run (a form of biathlon) on an official basis. The first Kiwi Trophy competition was held on 8 September 1981, and the then NZ High Commissioner, **HE The Hon Leslie Gander** presented the Trophy to **LCpl Ball**. Since then, the NZ High Commissioner, or his Deputy, has presented the Trophy each year.

Almost all of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt had been 'encouraged' by their CO, **Lt Col Alan Hill**, to enter this year's event, so to cope with the numbers, it was held over two days, with the prize giving on the final day, 5 October 05. I was privileged to be among the invited guests, who included the NZ High Commissioner, **HE The Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt ONZ**; Head of NZ Defence Staff, **Brig Paul Southwell**; NZ Defence Adviser (Army), **Lt Col Brian Hewson**; and Signal Officer in Chief (Army), **Brig John Thomas MBE ADC**.

The Act of Remembrance at Tidworth Cemetery. Maj AR Knott, Brig JE Thomas MBE ADC, Lt Col AG Hill, HE Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt ONZ, Brig P Southwell

After a briefing by **Lt Col Hill**, setting out the Regt's role, structure, past achievements and future commitments, the official party went to Tidworth Military Cemetery for an Act of Remembrance, conducted by **Col Rev David Coulter**, to commemorate the NZ soldiers buried there. Following a quick lunch in the Sgts' Mess, we all moved off, firstly to the range, where after 22 kms running, the soldiers were firing their requisite 12 shots, then 2 kms on to the finish at the Kiwi site. The last one-in-three slope up to the Kiwi was a real tester, but all who had started, made it over the line. The times ranged from 2 hrs 39 mins 28 secs to 4 hrs 58 mins.



RSM Pete Griffiths in full flight, sets the pace

Sig Price, relieved and overjoyed, approaches the finish line

Back at Camp, all troops, cleaned up and smartly turned out, paraded in Nuffield Hall for the prize presentations by the NZ High Commissioner. In his introductory address, the CO praised all competitors on their fitness and endurance. Having previously detailed the Unit's future commitments to the invited guests, he had now been able to demonstrate that his soldiers had the dedication and staying power to meet these commitments.

The NZ High Commissioner said how impressed he was with the soldiers' fitness, and issued them a challenge to come and do something similar in New Zealand – something we need to think seriously about.

And so to the presentations. The winner was **Cpl Wilks** of 222 Sig Sqn, with a time of 2 hrs 39 mins 28 secs. The runner-up was **Maj Paul Smith** OC 206 Sig Sqn, with a time of 2 hrs 44 mins 9 secs. Both were presented with their prizes by **HE Jonathan Hunt**. The award for the Sqn with the average fastest time (3 hrs 24 mins), was presented to 206 Sig Sqn by the SOinC(A), **Brig Thomas**.

After this, the soldiers didn't need much encouraging to adjourn to the Sportsmen's Bar to enjoy the large quantity of Kiwi beer, kindly provided by the NZ High Commission. It was amazing how quickly they had recovered from such a hard, gruelling day! Was it because this is the same beer that the All Blacks drink?

Brig Thomas presents the Fastest Sqn Trophy to LCpl Bayley of 206 Sig Sqn, whilst HE Jonathan Hunt and Brig Southwell look on

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt RA Moody**
Team Sgt **Sgt R Sizeland**

- by LCpl Chip Mooney and LCpl Julie Jones

Since our last instalment in *The WIRE*, the Team has been quite busy, doing shows all over the country, from the South Coast to North Wales, and North East England.

On 5/6/7 August, the Team performed at the Portsmouth and Southsea Show. The shows all went well, and the arena was one of the best we have ridden on all year. This was also the first show for out new Team Capt, **Capt Russ Moody**.

Straight after the Portsmouth and Southsea Show, the Team had the unusual pleasure of a week's leave during the show season, due to a cancellation (although we all believe that it was well earned after working nearly every weekend since May).

The day after we came back from leave, we travelled to the Denbigh and Flintshire Show, near Wrexham. This showground, unlike Portsmouth and Southsea, was probably the most challenging arena we have been on all year! The ground was so bumpy, it made hard work for all the riders and for those standing on and hanging off the bikes.

Then the Police caught up with us! The Team attended the Blue Light Day on Blandford Camp, displaying alongside demonstrations from the local emergency services. Staying with the theme of blue lights, we took a trip to Norfolk for the Norfolk Police Show.

Another fantastic arena meant a good show, and the Team chuckled about the irony of a motorcycle show following a display on the new police speed cameras! Next on the agenda was the Stanhope and Durham Show, in North East England. The weather was so bad, and the arena was so wet and slippery, that these shows proved very tricky. It made for really hard riding, and also made it impossible to do most of the faster rides.

In such bad conditions, some of the tricks came down, including the Chief Instructor, **Cpl Fozzie Forster**, who dropped the Double Ladder. Fortunately, he was unhurt, but because he was the last person to crash in a public display, he now gets to wear the black peak through the off-season period!

On 21 August we put on a display at Forum School in Blandford for special needs children. The children were thrilled with what they saw, and enjoyed sitting on the bikes even more. It was such a popular show, that the playground of the school opposite was packed with children trying to watch the show through two sets of school fences. The smiles on the children's faces were backed up by the homemade 'Thank You' cards that arrived shortly afterwards.

On 30 August we were at the new Welbeck College for the Opening Ceremony, attended by **Lt Gen Sir John Kizsley KCB MC**. On the morning of the show, the weather was really bad, and we were getting ready to do a 'trick show'. Fortunately about an hour before the show, the sun came out and dried the grass enough, so we could put on a full display. To celebrate their last show with the Team, **Sgt Bob Sizeland**, **Cpl Dicko Dickinson** and **Sig Daz Fothergill** went over the fire jump. Welbeck College was the last public display of a very successful season for us, but we will be involved with the up-coming Childres in need appeal.

We congratulate **LCpls Dave Kruczek**, **Gaz Stewart** and **Nick Pallis**, who have all been selected for promotion to Cpl, and **Sigs Sam Bowles**, **Justin Burrows**, **Jono Johnston** and **Gav Poole**, who have all been selected for promotion to LCpl. Wedding Bells have also been chiming this year, and we say congratulations to **LCpl Nick Pallis** and **Tamzin**, **LCpl Dave**

Kruczek and **Amy** and **Sig Jono Johnston** and **Leanne**, on their recent marriages. We hope you all are very happy together. Our final congratulations go to **Cpl Damo Laws** and wife, **Kamini** on the birth of their son, **Ryan**. We would like to say goodbye and good luck to **Capt Matt Mallett**, who is about to start a 3-year course at Newcastle University. And we are all going to take up your offer of an open house for parties, thanks Sir! The Team would like to say hello and welcome to **Capt Russ Moody**, our new Team Capt, who has joined us from 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200). We hope you enjoy your reign of the Team.

If you are interested in becoming a White Helmet, Induction Courses to select new riders are normally held in November. But you can apply at any time in the year, and your application will be kept on file. Interested parties should look up SOinC(A) PD 204, available from your Unit Registry.

Alternatively, you can contact the Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team - The White Helmets, direct on Mil: 94371 2365. There will be a further course held in the New Year, when we will be looking for up to 8 new riders. The dates are 15 – 27 January 06, and on selection, soldiers will be posted directly to the Team. If there are any queries, please contact the team on the number above.

LCpl Bladen with Pudsy Bear

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, OCTOBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col MJM Dyer	HQ AWS
Col GJT Rafferty	RSS
Col CJ Thackray	HQ SOinC(A)
Lt Col SI Andrews	DEF Attache Beirut
Lt Col Drain	QM RSS
Lt Col SG Hutchinson	31 (City of London) Sig Regt
Lt Col Mcintosh	JSSU (CYP)
Lt Col IG Standen	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt Col CH Turner	CI Comd Sp Div
Lt Col Walker	DCSA Northwood
Lt Col RC Young	SO1 Infrastructure
Maj CR Lawrence	HQ 49 (E) Bde
Maj LD Roddy	RSS
A/Maj MR Edwards	HQ 11 Sig Bde
A/Maj A Scott	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt AB Arthurton	15 Sig Regt
Capt TJ Cooper	30 Sig Regt
Capt MJ Cowie	10 Sig Regt
Capt LF McCafferty	RMAS
Capt CN Mackay	RSS
LT PM Carpenter	ATR Lichfield
Capt AJ Barry	RSS
Capt PD James	RSS
Capt EDL Maskell-Pedersen	OCE HQ Land
Capt LD Webber	HQ and Sig Regt 3 (UK) Div
Lt NL Berry	10 Sig Regt
Lt GD Brown	RSS
Lt IR Flannery	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ
Lt NJ Pryce-Jones	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ

OFFICERS, NOVEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col PH Eaton	DCBM(A) Kowledge Environment
Col PJ Moseley	BDILS(NA) BDS(W)
Lt Col MA Little	DCSA(G)
Maj IA Walton	International Mil Staff Brussels
A/Maj RL Francis	Concepts HQ SOinC(A)

RETIREMENTS

OCTOBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Dryburgh - Lt Col J Dryburgh	31 Oct 05
Gray - Maj IC Gray	25 Oct 05
Griffiths - Lt Col JS Griffiths	01 Oct 05
Hewitt - Lt Col RS Hewitt	04 Oct 05
Loxton - Capt FD Loxton	05 Oct 05
McCrindle - Maj GM McCrindle	17 Oct 05
Pritchett - Capt NPM Pritchett	08 Oct 05
Warhurst - Capt ES Warhurst	05 Oct 05

NOVEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Boxhall - Maj DJH Boxhall MBE	01 Nov 05
Stringer - Maj AJ Stringer	05 Nov 05
Webb - Maj RJ Webb	01 Nov 05

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

11th SIGNAL BRIGADE

Comd **Brig DP Meyer**
COS **Maj PJ Watt**

EXERCISE SINGAPORE BIRDSONG

On 15 February 1942 the island of Singapore, once heralded as the 'impregnable fortress,' fell into Japanese hands after only 70 days of battle. At 11.30 hours, 5 September 1945, British, Indian and Gurkha troops came ashore in Singapore amidst cheering crowds. **Gen Itagaki** and other Japanese Officers met them in preparation for the Japanese Surrender a week later.

EX SINGAPORE BIRDSONG, an 11 Sig Bde Battlefield Tour to Singapore took place from 1-8 September 2005. The Field Study phase was timed to coincide with the 60th Anniversary of the return of British Forces to the island. The Battlefield Tour was organised and led by **Capt Richard Byfield** of HQ 11 Sig Bde with 9 other members from 2, 14, 30 and 34 Sig Regts.

The group met initially in London before the long flight to Singapore. The 12-hr flight was made easier by the excellent service of Singapore Airlines and a large number of films to watch.

In Singapore we met our expert guide, **Mr Peter Stubbs** who had flown separately. **Peter** has a great interest in the history of Singapore, and his enthusiasm rubbed off throughout the tour. We spent the week visiting sites of interest and discussing everything from the extravagant lifestyle of the Colonial British in Singapore, to the hardships that POWs suffered over years. We visited Forts and Guns that were built in the 1800s, and for some reason, were blamed for the fall of Singapore in 1942. This popular misconception of blaming 'guns facing the wrong way' was the first to fall at the hands of experts and eyewitnesses.

The group standing on the only gun at Changi that never fired at the advancing Japanese

On 17 February 1942, just 2 days after the fall of Singapore, the entire European population was assembled made to march to their new homes in either Selarang Bks or Changi Prison. Little did they expect the unimaginable pain and suffering, trials and tribulations, as internees or POWs, that awaited them in the years that followed. We visited the Changi Museum, where coincidently, an Australian ex-POW was recording an interview at the time. The suffering he endured over 60 years ago could not be expressed in the museum, but an attempt was made. We also visited the Changi Murals, that are not open to the public, but the Singaporean Ministry of Tourism had accepted my advance request.

The group assembled outside The Battlebox with local guides. The Battlebox was where the defence of Singapore was commanded in the final days before surrender

On Sunday 4 September, we visited Kranji War Cemetery. Within the cemetery stands the Singapore Memorial, bearing the names of over 24,000 casualties of the Commonwealth Land and Air forces who have no known grave. **Cpl Chris Davies-Morris** laid a wreath at the grave of the youngest Royal Signals Soldier on behalf of the Master of Signals and all ranks, Serving and Retired. The cemetery was immaculately kept and a true spectacle.

Cpl Chris Davies-Morris lays a wreath on behalf of the Corps at Kranji Cemetery

It was not difficult to entertain ourselves during the evenings, and we often had excellent group meals at ridiculously cheap prices. The Indian meal to celebrate **Capt Sally Richardson's** birthday was a particular favourite. We didn't even order from a menu. We

just asked for a selection of everything, unlimited curry and Tiger beer for £10 is true value for money. Raffles Hotel and the Singapore Sling were experienced by most, though the Ice Bar was an acquired taste. A vodka bar made of ice at -15° C in a country as hot as Singapore, is a strange thing. EX SINGAPORE BIRDSONG was a resounding success. The atmosphere was enhanced by the opportunity to meet and discuss the Japanese Invasion with people who actually experienced it. **Mr Roy Muthiah**, the President of the Ex-Services Association of Singapore, personally showed us the gun and crew room that he manned on Fort Siloso. **Mr Dias** talked passionately about his experiences at the hands of the Japanese – they invaded when he was 7 yrs old. It was difficult to meet any local Singaporean who did not have a connection with the British Army. We were welcomed warmly and enthusiastically; and we certainly learned a great deal.

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

D Trg **Col GJT Rafferty**

COMMAND SUPPORT DIVISION

CI **Lt Col Charles Turner**
DivSM **WO2 Bob Lawrence**

Anyone serving in the Defence community should all be used to change, and we at RSS are no different, as we now explain.

On 16 September 05, Systems Div closed, and was reshaped into the new Comd Supt Division on 19 September 05, under the leadership of our new CI, **Lt Col Charles Turner**. The transition plan was largely developed by the previous CI Sys Div, **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh**, who has since departed for pastures new in New Zealand. **Jim** left us to join Royal New Zealand Signals, with many good wishes and many, many farewells. He has been a stalwart in Blandford and the training engine these last few years, holding down many CI appointments as DCCIS/RSS continues to change and re-balance for the future. He was keenly interested in the people, both civilian and military, who manned the training engine, and he worked hard for the recognition of their individual talents, always ensuring that those involved in trg were given the best possible ICS education to meet the operational needs of Defence. All in Blandford and in the Corps wish him and his family good health and happiness in their new life.

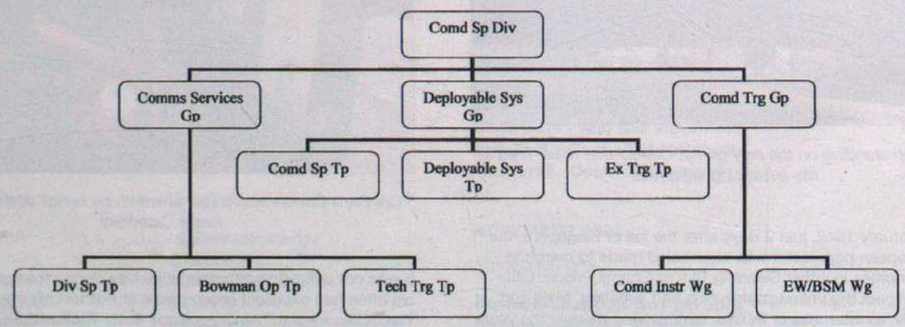
Many others have departed for pastures new, on posting, promotion and also to new careers in the civilian world. Some who departed to civvy street were, **SSgt Andy Smith**, **Sgt Andy Bremner**, **Sgt Pete Stidwell** and **Mr Pete Braithwaite**, who himself had over 29 years service in trg units. On posting or moving were **Maj John Lyons**, **Capt Nirmal QGS**, **Capt Simon Smith**, **WO1(FofS) Phil Holland**, **WO2(FofS) John Sutton**, **WO2(SSM) Surje QGS**, **WO2(YofS) Dave Martin-Woodgate**, **SSgt Debbie Hutchinson**, **SSgt Jinty Morgan**, **Sgt Andy Brown** and **Cpls McBride**, **Hopkinson**, **Wakeling**, **Moore**, **Milne**, **Woodrow** and **Brands**. There will be others that we have missed, but we wish them all and their families well for the future.

THE NEW DIVISION'S ORBAT

Three new Groups have been formed, with a total of about 220 staff, both civilian and military. The numbers and course types trained are too numerous to mention, but the prime focus is on trg leadership of all the RS Op, AS Op and Electrician courses, and all Comd courses in the Corps. The additional and key specialist courses are just as important: from SATCOM, fixed Comms, RM courses, TA, ACF/CCF, and the many courses we are now delivering on BOWMAN. We have the best-utilised PTARMIGAN and CLANSMAN assets in the Corps, and every week these platforms are deployed across trg areas in the South of England to allow trainees to confirm their trg and be assessed.

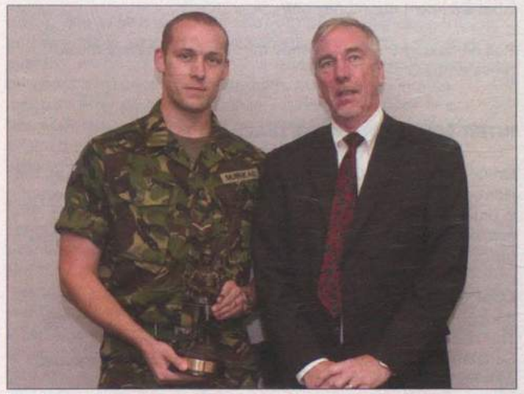
The new 70-strong Ex Trg Tp, under **Capt Lawry Hembury** RM, are very busy doing this task, and also supporting the ACF/CCF contingents. With some 80 platforms to keep moving and operational, the Tp mgt team, under **YofS Smith**, **SSgt Ian Green** and **Sgts Kamal**, **Samuel**, **Thisby** and **Raine**, are actively challenged at all times. They have a huge challenge ahead, as the whole Tp is trained and moves to BOWMAN with the newly-scaled 39 Landrover platforms arriving in 06, whilst still maintaining CLANSMAN trg outputs. BOWMAN Operating Tp has formed up under **Capt (Tfc) Phil Tonks**. His team are focussed on radio principles trg, but is already developing steady

COMMAND SUPPORT DIVISION



state BOWMAN trg. Major investments have been made in a large number of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) classrooms and the 41 BOWMAN Landrover Based Training Aid (LBTA) platforms, which will allow hands-on trg confirmation in the classroom. The complete transition to full BOWMAN trg will evolve over the next 12 months, with an expected plan to cease all CLANSMAN trg by First Qtr 07. The BOWMAN mgt team, under **Graham Reynolds**, have key instructional staff in **YofS Andy Smith**, **YofS Keith Lamb**, **AAWO Bruce Lee** and **Jerry D'Alquen**, and are all working hard to get themselves up to speed and deliver BOWMAN Sys Mgt, Crypto and the AA RSO courses, as well as trg all the Tp Comds, FofS and YofS courses. Already the Tp Comd course qualifies as ICS Mgrs, the Yeoman as BSM (F) and the FofS as BSM (U) and L2 Maintainers.

The current ops team, under **HIO Andy Jesson** and **SSgt Russ Ezard**, are busy trg the bulk of the RS Op community, using the current CLANSMAN capabilities, whilst working on the migration to BOWMAN. We have organised a Top Student prize for these RS Op courses, and it is now kindly fully sponsored by Harris Radio Limited (UK) and the efforts of an ex-Corps stalwart, **Mr Graham Complin**. We have also opened the Harris Room in the Division's facilities, and were lucky enough to have our Commandant, **Brig John Terrington** and the MD of Harris, **Mr Hal McDougall** do the grand opening and presentation in September 05.



Mr Hal McDougall, MD Harris Radio Systems Ltd presenting the Harris award to Course Top student, LCpl Muirhead, Warminster Sp Unit.

Tech Trg Troop, under **Capt Graham Brown**, are delivering trg to techs and electricians, as well as a myriad of specialist courses on a wide variety of systems. The other key mgt team members are **Mr Gary Smith**, **FofS Steve Brown** and **SSgts Owen** and **Guy Padfield**. The electrician trg dept has become the Defence trg centre for the new Light Weight Generator, and will start trg on the new CORMORANT generators soon. Both these new equipt fleets are supplied by Harrington's International in Derbyshire. We have developed a good relationship with them, and they now fully sponsor a Top Student award to all electrician basic and upgrader courses.

The SATCOM trg team will soon draw down and cease VSC 501 trg, but will do REACHER platforms, and possible the Harris 117 radio trg in the future. CLANSMAN maintainer trg draws down next year, and we are already developing a BOWMAN maintainer course under the more appropriate title of the BOWMAN Sys Engr.

Capt Jamie Balfour has a new key job commanding Comd Supt Tp. This key element trains all the Supvr courses in the Division across the whole gambit of ICS. **Jamie** and his team, **YofS Hutch Hutchinson**, **Ian Fowler** and **Dave Rogers**, **FofS Matt Duff** and **CSgt Jonnie Matthews** RM, are drawing

Mr Peter Harrington, MD, Harringtons Generators International, presenting the Harrington Award to Course Top Student, Cpl Redburn, 21 Sig Regt (AS)

together the radio and wide area trg capabilities, to move towards confirmatory exs that are closer to the way one would deploy in a Unit, and are a step towards the Defence NEC vision. This new ex, EX MERCURY CHALLENGE is a major Divisional commitment in manpower and resources, but is proving a clear hit with the trg audience.

The Deployable Sys Tp under **Capt Tek QGS**, supported by **John Braisher** and **SSgts Ang Ghale** and **Daz Cattle**, have a key role ensuring all are trained on PTARMIGAN and CORMORANT, and will in time, move towards FALCON trg, with the reduction and eventual drawdown in PTARMIGAN trg. These trg tps are often the unsung heroes, delivering key trg, day in and day out, to the many. The CORMORANT trg facilities were installed in the School under a plan developed by **FofS Matt Duff**, and were opened in September 05 by **Brig (Retd) Howard Ham**, Business Development Mgr of EADS-Cogent. The Tp trg team are now beginning to deliver a variety of courses on this ICS Capability in support of 11 Sig Bde personnel.

Brig John Terrington, Commandant DCCIS, and Brig (Retd) Howard Ham, Business Development Manager, EADS, opening the CORMORANT trg facility

The Div Supt Tp, under **WO1(FofS) Steve Moore**, are preparing to provide the project mgt, equipt and stores support and mgt right across the Division. He and his team are now appreciating the large size of the estate, spread across 7 locs in Blandford Garrison, as well as the many mobile platforms, and hosting the H and S, ECI, SHEF, RSIT, PRE and every other visiting team that descends on the Division. The stores supt team is led by **WO2 (DQMS) Paul Jordan** and they are currently ensuring that all items on charge are actually here in the Garrison.

Comd Trg Gp is the smallest manned, but is key to the Division's delivery of DCCIS outputs. Under its new boss, **Maj Lyn Roddy**, they are just migrating to Comd Sp Div, and will have more to say in the future. With EW Wing, under **Capt Nige Humphries**, and the Comd Courses, led by **Capts Mike Fayers**, **Lucy Brereton M artin** and **Dave Farragher**, all is in safe hands.

In summary, this major trg Division is re-shaping within DCCIS as the key ICS trg provider of choice in our Corps. Using BOWMAN as the key trg platform, structures are being formed across the Division to ensure that we are setting up now for the future challenges that await us all. You will hear more about the Division in the future, but be assured the staff who man the trg engine are working hard to support the Defence effort. As the Corps re-shapes its trade structures in the coming years to meet the emerging requirements, staff from this Division are engaged in this development to the full - and will deliver. We are always looking for Corps staff who are up for a challenge to train and educate others. Should you wish to be part of the team manning the 'Training Engine,' just give us a ring.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) T Henry**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj JC Boisvert**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K Overton**

DORSET STEAM FAIR – *by Sgt Manns*

From 30 August to 4 September, the Blandford Area was invaded by an interesting collection of beards, hats and strange machinery – yes, the annual Dorset Steam Fair was upon us once again.

In support of the 11 Sig Regt Recruiting Team, 1 Sqn deployed our trusty 'Black Thunder' towing the wobbliest trailer I have ever had the misfortune to attach to a vehicle. The team, comprising **Capt Oosterveen**, **Cpl McCrone** and myself, enjoyed the leisurely drive to the site. I say leisurely, because the traffic was horrendous; something that did not alter for the duration of the Fair. Each morning, it took us up to an hour to drive the 4 miles from Camp!

Once on site, we set up our stand alongside a det from Rad Sys Gp and a tent from Info Sys Gp. Our little road show soon proved to be a keen attraction for the 'beards' and ex-members of all three Forces. This carried on throughout the four-day Fair, with each story getting longer and longer, as each visitor to the stand tried to out-bore the last! In addition to being regaled with tales of derring-do, we did actually achieve our aim to gain the interest of many potential recruits. Who could blame them wanting to be like us?

LCpl McGinn with the RRT swaps a tall story with a visitor to the Dorset Steam Fair

Rad Sys Gp kindly volunteered their services to guard the stands at night, though I am sure their motive was to taste the vast array of Scrumpy for sale at the Fair! The first night they were kept busy trying to keep hold of our generator – an obvious shiny item that attracted more than just a passing interest! Still, at the end of the week, we left with everything we arrived with, and nothing extra; so things worked out fine.

After four days of busy recruiting and sampling the many varied sights and smells of the show, it was time to return to Camp, slightly browner from the excellent weather we had enjoyed, and slightly lighter in the wallet department – though none of us know what we spent our money on!

Roll on next year – I am already missing the excellent music provided by Steam Fair FM!

INTER SQUADRON BASKETBALL – *by LCpl Gopal*

On 06 September 2005 the inter-Sqn Basketball competition, the Harrogate Cup was held in the Blandford Camp gym. This event is organised annually as part of the CO's Cup for Phase Two soldiers who are currently undertaking their basic Class 3 trade-trg course.

LCpl Gopal and **LCpl Bhim** coached the 1 Sqn hopefuls through various skills, and finally selected the best 10 players. This allowed for 5 main players and 5 reserve players. Substitutions are allowed whenever the ball is out of play, and with approval of a referee.

The first league event began at 18.15hrs, with 1 Sqn playing 2 Sqn. It was very competitive at the beginning, and as the game progressed, we made a few substitutions. This resulted in a win by 13 points, a tremendous success. Our second league game was against 3 Sqn. We put in a very good effort, but unfortunately 3 Sqn pulled it out of the bag, with a surprising win.

On completion of the event, after a speech by the CO, **Cpl Finister** announced the final result: Third place 2 Sqn; Second place 1 Sqn; and First place 3 Sqn. All in all, it was a well-organised and challenging event that was thoroughly enjoyed by all players and spectators.

EXERCISE OUSTON WARRIOR – *by Sig Clayton*

On 16 September 2005, 1 Sqn deployed on EX OUSTON WARRIOR. I was unsure as what to expect, as I have not yet participated in an ex whilst in Blandford. Most of the Sqn are currently undergoing trade trg, but didn't mind giving up a weekend to play on the trg area. I was interested to see what the Sqn trg staff had in store for us.

On arrival the ex area (Bovington), we were given a full brief by **Cpl Yeomans**. This included the mandatory demo on pyro and how to throw the smoke grenades. I enjoyed this part, as I hadn't done it before.

We then tabbed to our harbour areas, where we set up our bashas and got a brew going. Unfortunately, we ended up a man

Maj Carter encouraging his Sqn with some well-chosen words!

down. **Sig Welsh** decided to go 'jellyfish' on the tab to the loc, and was taken away to become an enemy soldier. Later that evening, we heard that the enemy was in our AOR. We patrolled around the trg area looking for them, but soon ran into an ambush. After an exchange of fire, we extracted back to our harbour area, and received a rant from **LCpl Stopforth**, who seemed a little agitated that we hadn't measured up to the standard required.

Later that night, whilst I was on stag, we were bumped by an enemy vehicle-borne patrol, so we returned fire and they eventually sped away, obviously terrified of our aggressive reply. But they were a persistent bunch, and tried to take us out for the rest of the evening. On Saturday, after our morning routine, we went on to section fire and movement drills. We also carried out a PSPO lesson with **SSgt Gray** and **Cpl Chorlton**. We then deployed to an area where we knew the enemy would patrol through, and set up an ambush. The ambush was a success, and all enemy soldiers were killed.

Later that afternoon, information on the enemy came through, so we got our Bergens and the rest of our kit together, and tabbed off to join 2 Pl, and prepared for our final attack. We bravely headed towards the enemy position, high up on a hillside tank hide, with 1 Pl fearlessly moving straight towards them. 2 Pl provided the much-needed covering fire. We fought through and destroyed the enemy position, and re-orged on the other side.

Once we were all accounted for, and the ammo and casualty report was done, we headed back to our harbour area and got some well-deserved shut-eye. Then, during our morning routine, the enemy attacked us with great force, so we bugged out to the main ex admin area. Here we had a field Church service with the Padre, before returning to our peacetime loc.

All in all it, was an excellently put together ex, and all who participated, thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Carter**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Marlowe**

THE GORDON'S CUP - *by Capt J Landreth*

As the dawn broke upon a rain-soaked parade square, three hundred pairs of apprehensive eyes were intently looking upon **Capt Pointon** as she formally got the Autumn Gordon' s Cup underway. Once the members of the other two Sqns were marched away, 2 Sqn were left to receive final words of philosophy, encouragement and established wisdom from the Trg Staff. With a Churchill-like speech still firmly pealing in the ears of all, the Gordon's Cup was underway, starting with the drill competition. The drill team were marched on by tarmac tech **LCpl Jock Murry**. All was going swimmingly until a member of the squad decided to salute the inspecting Officers with his left arm, losing a number of valuable points. Still fate smiles but once a day. And she smiled on our drill squad, because victorious we were... But the less said about that, the better!

With the drill finished, as well as the BCDT and the NBC, we made our way to the assault course to urge our gladiators on. After a warm up and some strong words of encouragement from the OC, **Maj Carter**, the nine males and one female were ready to attack each obstacle with guile, belligerence and no care for their own personal safety. After seven minutes and twenty-eight seconds, a number of things were broken: **Sig Bradley's** finger nails, the assault course record (by two seconds), and the team's hearts, when they were told that due to an error, they had incurred a time penalty, and slipped to second place. Although the assault course was lost, the Phase 2 Trainees watching were privileged to an exceptional display of fitness, courage and above all, teamwork. Well done to the whole team.

After the gym test, it was onto the March and Shoot, which started with a kit check, quickly followed by a gruelling four-mile tab with fifteen pounds of weight firmly upon their backs. Then into the SATT Range for a shoot, while trying to breath normally and hit the target! One of the rules of the March and Shoot was that each team was to have a female, so after a short discussion it was decided that we would enter the smallest female that 2 Sqn has, **Sig Goulding**. One thing the nine male members of the team didn't know was that **Sig Goulding** cannot comprehend losing! So she set an incredible pace, and led the team to a well-deserved victory.

The penultimate event of the Gordon's Cup was the mother of all events, the log race! This is the event that all Sqns want to win. 2 Sqn being the current holders of the Log Race, we had it all to do. It is permissible for members of the Trg Staff to run along side the log to offer their team a certain amount of encouragement along the two-mile course. And so the normally very calm, much respected and intellectual Sqn OCs were seen to change into screaming, red-faced, snarling monsters, who under no circumstances would accept second place! With a blast from a klaxon, the race was underway. 1 Sqn picked up their log and sprinted off like greyhounds out of a trap. They held

the lead for a lap of the field, but were overtaken by 2 Sqn on the long and unforgiving hill towards Armstrong Building, with **Maj Carter** loudly expressing his displeasure should they loose the title. Again a female was needed to form part of the team, so once again, **Sig Goulding** stepped forward and announced that loosing was not an option. When 2 Sqn placed their log upon the ground, it was a full three minutes before 1 Sqn ran in with a well-deserved second place, closely followed by a valiant 3 Sqn. All three Sqns had run an incredibly hard race.

The final event was the CO's event, a re-enactment of the Gun Run. At this point, nobody knew which Sqn was leading, so it was all to play for. The QMSI blew the whistle for the start, the teams picked up logs, tyres, barrows and medicine balls. The idea was to sprint round the parade square whilst carrying all the items, reassemble the gun and fire three medicine balls.

When the adjudicator was happy, the team ran back around the square to the start, where the next members of the team were chomping at the bit. It was a close-run thing, but unfortunately, it was not to be 2 Sqn's event. But it did prove a lot of fun, and the crowed loved every moment of it.

So to the results. No one had any idea who had won, and as three hundred breaths were held and three hundred pairs of eyes bored into him, **SSgt Foster** announced that 1 Sqn had come third, 2 Sqn had come second and 3 Sqn were the winners.

Congratulations to 3 Sqn, but 2 Sqn are eager to be holding the cup at the next Gordon's Cup Competition.

The Gun Run

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Capt EA Pointon**
SSM **WO2(SSM) JM Swanston**

EXERCISE HARROGATE THRUST – *by Sig Saunders*

On 23 September 05 Lightning Tp embarked on the long ride to Sennybridge for EX HARROGATE THRUST. It was very cold when we arrived, and after travelling on tarmaced roads in a heated coach, it was great to be picked up by Bedfords and driven to our loc along pitch-black bumpy roads. After a good night's sleep, we awoke on Saturday morning, fresh and ready to hit the ranges to pass our APWTs, to enable us to participate in the live firing (ISBR) the next day. Also that day, each section was to practise Pairs Fire and Movement, again so that we could perform safely on the live firing range.

Sunday was to be a very long and tiring day, but one that everyone would enjoy and never forget. There were to be 3 activities, veh anti-ambush drills, a section attack, and the ISBR live firing range. The veh anti-ambush drills were a brilliant experience, and something which a lot of people agreed, will help us in the future on ops, especially Iraq. It gave us a very good insight into the situations that could occur whilst on ops.

Live firing was certainly an eye opener. Running 300 metres seemed to last forever, and though it doesn't sound far, it was incredibly tiring, especially when the range runs uphill and there are fences, bushes and gates to get through to reach the top. The whole weekend was a brilliant experience for everyone concerned, from the soldiers participating, to the organisers of EX HARROGATE THRUST 2005.

VETERANS' DAY - *by Sig Cardy*

On 13 September, a group of 40 elderly ex-service personnel attended a Veterans' Day visit to Blandford Camp. The visit was organised by **WO2(SSM) Swanston** to commemorate their service, and to introduce them to the modern Army in which we serve today. The group of veterans, from all three Services, started the day with a DVD showing the history of the Corps, a Drill session, and group photo. Activities where conducted by **LCpl Blake**, and although the drill was a little rusty, the memories flooded back, and great fun was had by all participants.

The day progressed with a lesson in the DCCT range, where the veterans had the opportunity to shoot in a FIBUA scenario, far advanced from the trg they received years ago. One of the veterans proved to be a crack shot, with a very impressive score. The day was rounded off with a Ghurkha display, demonstrating some of the traditional dances that are popular in Nepal. After tea and biscuits, a section attack was demonstrated by a group of Phase 2 soldiers from the Regt.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT (LICHFIELD)

CO **Lt Col Jonathan Welch MBE** RE
RSM **WO1(RSM) WJ Marshall** RE

ATR (Lichfield) trains all Phase 1 adult recruits entering Royal Engineers and Royal Signals. We follow a rigid 12-week Common Military Syllabus (Recruit) CMS(R), which is common throughout the Army for all Phase 1 trg. Our current CO and RSM are RE; the Adjt is Royal Signals (**Capt Jon Mayne**), as is OC 1 (Trg) Sqn (**Maj Mike Parke**)

The Regt consists of 4 Sqns: HQ Sqn, 28 (Trg) Sqn RE, C (Trg) Sqn and 1 (Trg) Sqn Royal Signals. 28 (Trg) Sqn RE and 1 (Trg) Sqn Royal Signals train predominately Engineers and Royal Signals recruits respectively, but it is quite common to have a mix of both. C Sqn generally always trains a mix of both.

As already mentioned, 1 (Trg) Sqn is commanded by **Maj Mike Parke**, the 2IC is **Capt Graeme Smith** and the SSM is **WO2 Olly Reed**, all Royal Signals. The Sqn consists of five Tps, each named after prominent members of the Corps: Cook Tp, Mather Tp, Smith Tp, Townsend Tp and Waters Tp.

The troops all have their own Trg Teams, consisting of a, Tp Comd, Tp Sgt and four Tp Cpls (Sect Comds). The Trg Teams are responsible for the meat of the instruction during the CMS(R), and as to be expected, the busiest soldiers in the Regt are the Tp Cpls.

During the 12 week CMS(R) the Tp Cpls have up to 12 recruits which they themselves predominately train (with the help of the rest of the Trg Team). A great amount of responsibility placed on these young men and women. But JNCOs who aspire to come here, should not be daunted by this. After they complete the Initial Training Group Instructor School course (ITGIS) (which everybody posted to ATR, including the CO, has to complete) they are in no doubt about how to go about their business.

It is a very rewarding and satisfying job; you certainly do see the fruits of your labour. At the end of the 12-week CMS(R), the instructors really do feel proud watching their soldiers pass off the Square.

And coming to the ATR as an instructor really can enhance your career prospects. Why? From the 24 Royal Signals JNCOs in the Regt this year, 5 were selected for promotion to Sgt. There were also a couple of PTIs who transferred to the PT Corps.

On leaving the ATR, the numerous Military and Adventure Trg Instructor qualifications you will have gained, would certainly place a keen, up-and-coming JNCO into the limelight of any Regt or independent Sig Sqn. It gives you a good opportunity to raise your profile among your peers and superiors at your unit. At ATR we are continually canvassing the Corps for potential instructors, and the earlier in his/her career that a soldier has a desire to instruct, the better.

This gives a JNCO time to get away on the required courses, and possibly the chance of putting these skills into practice before being posted to ATR. Although a soldier can still be posted to ATR without qualifications, it is better to have a couple – at least one – before arriving. And when they are at ATR all JNCOs are actively encouraged to get away on more courses (not forgetting career courses). We are always looking to the future. Being an instructor at ATR is very prestigious appointment. Our Infantry and RE colleagues here at ATR see this as a large feather in their cap. We in the Royal Signals component feel the same. For further information, get in touch with your RCMO, or contact **Capt Graeme Smith**, 2IC 1 (Trg) Sqn Royal Signals on 94422 4204.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Littlefield**

VISIT BY HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL
- by Capt D Wilson, Lt L Halstead, 2Lt EL Cameron and 2Lt Dunwoody

It was an early start in Lisburn on the morning of 31 May 05. Representatives from HQNI and 15 Sig Regt, 40 Sig Regt (V), JCU(NI), JSG and 8 and 39 Bde Sig Sqns were stood to for the visit of **HRH The Princess Royal**. It was the culmination of numerous days of preparation and rehearsals, and everyone was eager for it to go well. The weather couldn't have been better; we were greeted with glorious sunshine - a rare sight in Northern Ireland.

The day started with a walk around by the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, who cast his eye over the various stands, giving last minute advice, where needed. **The Princess Royal** arrived in the early afternoon, and was greeted by GOC Northern Ireland, **Lt Gen Sir Reddy Watt KCVO CBE**, the Master of Signals and the CO HQNI and 15 Sig Regt, **Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**. After the initial greetings, **The Princess Royal** was taken around the various units' stands. Her first stop was at 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218).

218 Sig Sqn put on a display focusing on the three underlying themes for the visit, work, rest and play. The first stand focused on work, and consisted of a demo from members of the Bde Area Repair Team (BART). On hand were **Sgt John Mercer**, **Cpl Andy Page**, **LCpls Caz Ely**, **Adam Skinner** and **Sig Carl Oldridge**, who were ready and eager to explain the various pieces of equipt on display. **The Princess Royal** was particularly impressed with the heights that riggers work at, especially the daunting 360ft mast at Stenegot.

Next was a display on a recent exped to Nepal – EX MANASLU FINN. **Lt Alex Reid, Lt James Landreth**, **LCpls Lane**, **Scott**, **Munro** and **Sig Alex Shields** described the arduous exped,

The Princess Royal is greeted by GOC NI and The Master of Signals

which involved a 21-day trek, circumnavigating Mt Manaslu. The Master of Signals took a keen interest in this. He was able to provide us with some interesting anecdotes about the Annapurna area. Before leaving the presentation, **The Princess Royal** shared her remedy for altitude sickness, which should prove very useful for future high altitude treks.

218 Sig Sqn's final stand involved the Sqn's Equestrian Team. Team members on the day were **Capt Eddie O'Keefe**, **Cpl Kaye Purvis**, **LCpl Bonnie Dacre**, and **Pte Taff Ellis**. They discussed their recent show jumping achievements, and **The Princess Royal** was particularly interested in their performance.

39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's display encapsulated four angles of their varied military lives in Northern Ireland: work, military competitions/exs, sport, and recreation. The display began with how the Sqn supports PSNI, the work of their FRTs, what the OXBOW crew get up to, and a description of comms trials currently being conducted. There was also a flavour of military competitions, such as Lanyard Trophy and The Mercury Cup. It was a chance to brief on the recent Battlecamp.

As the only TA Royal Signals unit in the Province, 40 Sig Regt (V) were particularly proud to play a part in the visit. **The Princess Royal** was welcomed to the Regt's stand by the CO, **Lt Col Stuart Hodges**, and then she met a group of soldiers recently returned from ops. Together, their deployments covered OP TELIC from the 2003 war to the present day. **Her Royal Highness** was particularly interested in the experiences of **SSgt Barker**, a woman called up for war, and **Cpl Lindsay**, who had enjoyed Iraq so much, that he had volunteered to return. She also took a keen interest in each soldier's employer's attitude to mobilisation - a key issue for the future viability of the TA.

Next on the programme was a visit to 233 Sig Sqn, and the Network Control Centre (NCC). **The Princess Royal** was met by OC 233 Sig Sqn, **Maj Mark Hanby** and **WO2(YofS) Del Goodenough**, before being taken in the NCC Ops room. She saw how the NCC runs the day-to-day management of faults and projects throughout the Province.

CO HQNI and 15 Sig Regt, Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts, escorts The Princess Royal on her tour

Romeo Tp was the next stop, and their brief gave **The Princess Royal** an in-depth understanding of the increasing number of theatres in which members of the Tp now operate, and the added pressure that this brings on both them and their families. The proposed future role of the Tp was also discussed.

Her Royal Highness then moved to 225 Sig Sqn, to be briefed on their operational role, their responsibilities in the Province, and the various equipt used.

The day's programme ended with **The Princess Royal** visiting the WOs' and Sgts' Mess to meet some of the wives and children of those serving in Province. That evening, she attended a dinner in her honour in the Sgts' Mess. The food was excellent and there was a fantastic performance by members of the Royal Signals Band.

During the day, **The Princess Royal's** considerate and thoughtful manner had ensured that the few minutes for each person she had spoken to, became a day to remember for all of those involved. She left us all feeling immensely proud of what we do.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt A Parkinson**
SSM	**WO2 J Saunders**

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON DISBANDMENT PARADE

With the final closure of 225 Sig Sqn set to take place in early 2006, the Sqn's history in support to counter terrorism ops in NI was marked formally with a Disbandment Parade, and an all-ranks formal Mess Dinner on Friday 7 October 05. **WO2 (SSM) Jay Saunders** and **SSgt (SQMS) Al Hyland** had spent a great deal of time and energy to ensure that the Parade was a success.

It was extremely poignant that several previous Sqn members were able to make the Parade and Dinner. These included **Maj (Retd) Jim Heck** and **Maj (Retd) John Carr**, **Lt Col Whimpenny**, **Lt Col Dolling**, **Maj Graham Inglis**, and **WO2s Paul Rowlands**, **Chris Ashworth** and **Andy Ball**.

The OC, **Capt Abby Parkinson** led the Parade to Advance in Review Order for inspection by the COS HQNI, **Brig JH Gordon MBE**. The turnout was excellent, the drill was precise, and the occasion was well marked. **SSgt (Supvr R) Slater** then gave an abridged reading of the Sqn history that had been researched and collated by **WO2 (Supvr R) Dave Marrs**.

Brig Gordon commented on the valuable contribution to NI that all personnel had made through the 36-year period. He

COS HQNI, Brig JH Gordon MBE inspects 225 Sig Sqn

applauded the dedication, professionalism and quality of all, and the recognition that the Unit had received.

WO2 (FofS) Karl Scaife then led a memorial reading to remember those whom we had lost. A 2-minute silence then followed. The Sqn pennant was then lowered and presented by **Brig Gordon** to the SSM who, along with the Sqn, and with heads held high, marched off.

After the parade, Sqn personnel took the opportunity to mix and socialise with personalities past and present. The common bond was immediately in place, and ensured that the weekend would be an occasion to remember.

There followed a superb all-ranks Dinner, with a range of historical and memorial readings conducted by selected Sqn junior ranks. The after dinner speeches captured the moment, with special emphasis placed on the SOinC(A)'s message, as passed on by the CO. To close the formalities, the Sqn Pennant, now framed, was presented to HQ JSSO to keep in perpetuity.

The whole weekend was a great success, and marked the end of an era. Each member of the Sqn, past and present can be rightfully proud of his or her own contribution to Sqn during the past 36 years.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AB Arthurton**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) TJ Bickerstaff**

REGIMENTAL BATTLECAMP

EX MERCURY STRIKE, the Regtl Battlecamp, took place over two weeks in October on the notoriously sunshine-strewn ranges of Magilligan Trg Area.

Monday morning started the week than with a bit of bayonet fighting. Getting the sections angry enough to stab hay filled dummies with a bayonet was a job for **SSgt Hyland**, who whipped us into shape shouting 'Kill, kill, kill, blood, blood, blood!' By the end of the morning, the lads were thankful they had chosen Royal Signals for a career, rather than Infantry. The remainder of the day was spent honing our individual skills on the IBSR and totting up the points for the section competition.

On Tuesday, sections left the harbour area under cover of darkness, and patrolled to a pre-determined position for a live section in defence shoot. Many live rounds and much pyro later, and we were all sat in the warmth of the cookhouse, drinking tomato soup and nursing our sore throats. Wednesday saw the live-firing attack phases begin. Magazines being thrown about the trg area with wild abandon, were almost as dangerous as the business end of the rifle. That evening, we had a night navex, where we had 2 hours to find 10 CPs.

On the final test day, we were given our chance to show off the skills we had learned during the week. Who said that Magilligan trg area was flat? There were certainly a few hills to get us running up and down. Once the tests were over, it was time to socialise, and argue over who was in the running for the winning section.

The final morning saw us run through a series of shoots, using the MP5, and a chance to shoot the loop with the pistol. Whilst on the loop we were all warned against diving over the bonnet of the car and trying to do a 'James Bond' style manoeuvre. They need not have worried. Most firers were too busy working out how to operate the clutch on the car to try out any flashy moves!

EXERCISE CIVIL FINN - *by Lt Northridge*

EX CIVIL FINN, the Regt's annual staff ride, was held in the Washington DC area from 06 – 14 October 05. It was split into two phases. The first involved the study of two famous battles from the American Civil War, Manassas and Gettysburg. The second, a cultural and education phase, involved tours of the US Capital, visiting such sites as the Arlington Cemetery, Capitol Hill, The Lincoln Memorial, and the Smithsonian Institute. The aims of the ex were to educate soldiers on the challenges of leadership and junior comd, and also to test their briefing and researching skills, as they would be required to conduct presentations on the exercise prior to deploying.

It was a smooth trip across the pond, and after successfully navigating the bureaucratic nightmare of US Customs, the group made their way to the hotel for the first night.

The activity for the first day was the study of the First Battle of Manassas, but a torrential downpour prevented us from walking the battlefield as much as originally planned. However, the Park Ranger, **Tim Nousal**, conducted an excellent brief on the battle from the comfort of the visitor centre, which really brought it all to life and served to highlight the problems affecting all ranks during the Battle.

Briefing on the First Battle of Manassas

As the group moved north to the Gettysburg area on the second day, the weather did not improve, but the itinerary for that day involved mainly indoor activities. The third day would involve touring the battlefield, and everyone was praying for a break in the weather. Luckily, on the third day it was dry, so we set off quickly for Gettysburg, where we would be walking the ground. Our guides for the day were very professional, and we visited the main areas of fighting on all three days of the battle. We could see acts of leadership and courage at all levels, and many examples of individuals seizing the initiative (not always with favourable results).

We all gained a great deal of knowledge from this tour, and it quickly became clear that the principles of war that we abide by today, are just as relevant and applicable as these actions were 150 years ago.

We then moved on to Washington DC. Arlington Cemetery was our first site, a very moving experience, especially the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This gave us a greater understanding of the strong national feeling felt by most Americans, and why they are so patriotic. The remainder of that day was spent visiting other main sites of the City, under the direction of the CO, **Lt Col Smyth-Roberts**, who had come out to visit us for a few days. Washington is an extremely impressive city, with its enormous public buildings and impressive monuments that line the mall, all dominated by Capitol Hill.

EX CIVIL FINN was an outstanding success, and the product of several months' hard work. It gave 16 soldiers from all trades and ranks in the Regt a rare chance to study some incredibly interesting sites and events that have helped shape the US into what it is today.

40 (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

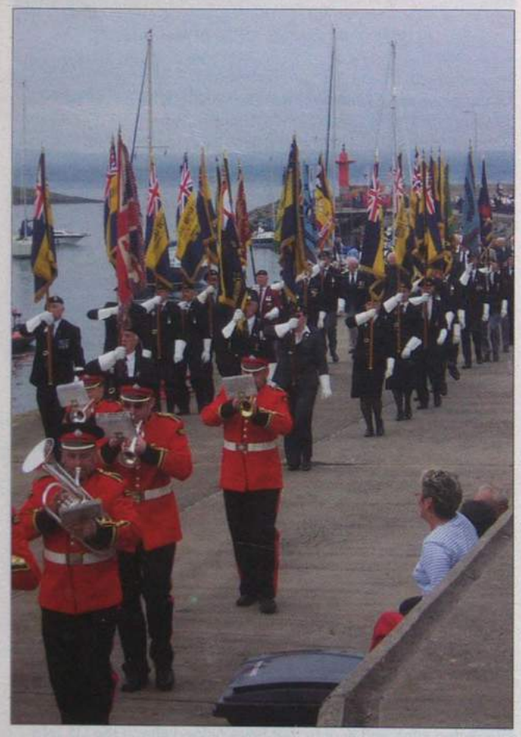
CO **Lt Col SD Hodges**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Abson**

VE AND VJ DAY CELEBRATIONS VETERANS' PARADE
- by Maj Craig

On Saturday, 9 September 05 the Bangor Branch of the RBL and North Down Borough Council held a parade and garden party to mark the combined 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ Days. 85 Sig Sqn was invited to provide an Honour Guard for the four hundred or so veterans who participated in the event.

In glorious sunshine, the Sqn paraded on the pier at the Marina in seaside town of Bangor, Co Down and awaited the arrival of the veterans and the guest of honour, **Mary Jean Eisenhower** (granddaughter of the wartime Supreme Allied Commander **Gen Dwight Eisenhower**) and the Mayor, **Cllr Roberta Dunlop**. On arrival, **Ms Eisenhower** was invited to inspect the Honour Guard and the Standard Bearers of the various Associations and Branches represented. She commented on the turnout, and expressed admiration for those who had seen recently mobilised service in Iraq. After the inspection, **Ms Eisenhower** renamed the pier, from where many US troops had embarked for Normandy during June 1944, in honour of her grandfather.

After the ceremonies the Sqn proudly joined the veteran's parade through the town centre, where a very large number of spectators had gathered to applaud those who had served their country. The Sqn was honoured to be invited to take part in such a prestigious event, and extends its thanks to the RBL and North Down Borough Council.



The Veterans' Colour Party

EXERCISE TROG DOLL FINN *- by WO2(SSM) Johnston*

On the evening of Friday 19 August 05, 85 Sig Sqn deployed to the Lakeland area of Fermanagh for EX TROG DOLL FINN. The Sqn split into two groups to undertake two very different forms of AT, water sports and caving. Early on Saturday morning Group 1, led by **Sgt David Waugh**, moved to the Northern Ireland Lakeland Activity Centre, where the instructors met them. Jet skiing and powerboat sports were the order of the day.

Cpl Scottie Robertson took **Sig Paul Mercer** on the back of his jet ski. Once back on land, a very green **Sig Mercer** questioned the sanity of the show-off **Cpl Robertson**, and all who had looked on, fully agreed that he was nuts.

The group returned to the lakes on Sunday, where **Sigs Charlie Sansom** and **Graham Smyth** found themselves holding on for dear life on a board, being trailed at a high rate of knots behind a powerboat. Whoosh! **Sig Smyth** went skywards, the board bounced violently from side to side, but the never-say-die **Sig Sansom** held on. But, unfortunately, he did end up with a broken finger for his valiant effort.

Group 2, all novice cavers and led by **WO2 (SSM) Johnston**, met up with their caving guide early on the Saturday morning. He kitted them out with coveralls, gloves, hard hats and of course, the miners' headlamps. The first cave visited was an early Victorian find, and was an easy step up to what was to follow later that day. It all got a bit hippy when the guide formed the group in a circle deep inside the cave. He told the group to turn off their lamps keep very quite and listen. You could hear your own heart beat, and it was so dark one could not see one's nose in front of them.

The second cave network was a challenge to say the least. The two females in the group, **Cpls Colleen McBride** and **Maggie McMillan** faired well, even when they had to crawl on their bellies. A certain **Sgt Colin Sanlon** (a stocky lad) did not fair so well, getting himself well and truly stuck. It was only sheer determination and with the laughter of the SSM ringing in his ears, that eventually forced **Sgt Sanlon** to free himself to get out of such a very sticky situation. The group all agreed that the experience was fantastic, and they can't wait to return to the caves. They finished the day off on the lake's water trampoline, and kayaking ensured that they would sleep well that night.

The cavers emerge out of the darkness

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj CM Vaudin**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Spiers**

WHITEROCK 2 – THE MOTHER OF ALL PARADES?

It was with no small degree of surprise that soldiers of the Sqn recently found themselves amidst the most aggressive and serious rioting to mar a Northern Ireland Marching season for over 10 years. Despite indications that the Whiterock 2 parade was going to be contentious, few people had anticipated that the events of 10-12 September would be as graphic and violent as they were.

OXBOW dets, comd elements, Fwd Repair Teams, and Fwd HQ activation parties were deployed in support of Public Order ops for a full week before the streets of Belfast regained some semblance of normality. Over 4 bns of Infantry were inserted into Belfast to control Loyalist rioting that broke out during the Parade. Rifle companies were deployed across most of the City, and in some cases into adjoining areas, as the rioting ran its course across the Bde AOR throughout the week. Tps on the ground took over 150 rounds of incoming small arms fire, numerous blast bombs and uncountable petrol bombs, in scenes of violence more akin to Basrah than Belfast.

It would seem that despite the rhetoric and political scene setting that dominates much of life in Northern Ireland, including the recent declaration of normalisation, the Army still has an important role to play in ensuring that the peace process can move ever forwards.

EXERCISE COUSTEAU FINN – DIVING IN THE RED SEA

For some reason, it was more than a little difficult to drag myself out of my nice warm bed at 04.00hrs on a Saturday to get the airport 4 hrs before our flight was due to leave. However, the thought of 7 days diving in the Red Sea proved to be a good enough motivation and I, like all my fellow adventurers, stumbled bleary-eyed to the awaiting minibus bound for Belfast City. After many hrs of flying and the loss of blood in our legs (the plane's seats having been designed to fit a 4 year old), we arrived in our destination, and we all unanimously agreed that we had made the right decision by getting out of bed that morning. Not only was the temperature a cool 25^{O}C, but the boat we where to call home for the next week, was more akin to a floating palace than a standard diving boat.

That's all very well, but the UVF want their flag back!

The initial excitement over and a good night's sleep behind us, we started the serious business of diving the various beautiful reefs and wrecks of the Red Sea. We were split into 3 groups, and began with an easy first day. **Cpl Kerry Smith**, an experienced diver of 5 years, immediately entered a place called she called 'Kerry World' when she went under water. This world consisted of many wonderful creatures that could be played with and made friends with. Unfortunately, most of these creatures could kill you, so a two man underwater guard was placed on it at all times to keep her from harm.

Sgt Rouchy became quickly engrossed in the local wildlife and artefacts as well, reclaiming a new treasure with every dive. He scoured the seabed for anything that wasn't tied down.

Aside from the fun element of diving, all the newly qualified divers managed to gain a lot of diving experience and gain their Sports Diver qualification. All in all, the trip was a huge success. Our thanks to **Lt Halstead** for organising such a good AT package.

HOMEWARD BOUND – A SECOND LIEUTENANT'S ATTACHMENT *- by 2 Lt Nelson Reynolds*

After commissioning in April, I was posted to 39 Bde for 6 months prior to attending my Tp Comds' Course. I arrived on an unusually sunny (Northern Ireland) Sunday morning and had the day to unpack and familiarise myself with my surroundings. After a relaxing 24hrs in my new home, I was feeling pretty happy with life when I turned up for work the following day. However, this feeling came to an abrupt end when the customary 'stitching up the new guy' began. This was all done in good humour, and once I had figured out who the RQMS and OpsO really were, a few hrs later, I once more started to feel at home, albeit with eyes on the back of my head.

My first task as an eager new subaltern, was to be part of the Lanyard Trophy team. I had thought that my tabbing days were over after finishing trg, so I hoped that the 2IC was winding me up as well. However this proved not to be the case, and with a heavier-than-wanted Bergen on my back, I headed off to the Mournes for some much-needed trg. The Competition was very challenging, and the whole way round, I wasn't sure if my feet were ever going to forgive me. By the end, I was elated that we had managed to finish with eight of the original ten, in a healthy time of 19hrs 49mins. It was a great experience, and despite the fact I promised myself I would never do it again, time has proved to be a great healer…

Just days after finishing Lanyard, I was attached to 2nd Royal Irish Regiment for the Marching Season. Prior to this, the only public order trg I had, was gained on EX BROADSWORD at Sandhurst - and I rather doubted that the NI crowd would be as civil. So in between patrolling Newcastle and Belfast, I was given a hasty public order course by my platoon. Despite getting my trousers burnt off whilst being petrol bombed, I hit the street confident in my abilities. It was a surreal experience being on the other side of the base line, and despite the fact the police took most of the glory during the rioting itself, it was a great experience.

After returning from 2 Royal Irish, complete with burns and war stories, I was almost immediately sent off to 1 Para Regt, where I spent the week patrolling in Crossmaglen. This is a heavily Republican area, and while the locals are not trying to kill us any more, they are still letting us know exactly what they think of us. I must confess that I was more than a little taken aback when a kid walked up to me and shouted "Why don't you just ***k off, you W***er!" I knew I hadn't done anything to him, and being a local boy from Londonderry, I didn't feel like I deserved it. I chalked this down to a Northern Ireland experience, and I should

relish it, as such experiences will be scarce when, in eighteen short months, we are all friends.

My time with 213 Sig Sqn has been thoroughly enjoyable, especially the week in Egypt diving, and I will miss many of the people I have met here. I have been assured the Corps is a small place, so I'll bump into some of them soon enough.

NORTHERN IRELAND AND ARMY INTER-UNIT NETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS – *by Cpls Ingram and Oxley*

On the morning of the 15 September the ladies of 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) were gearing up to play some hard-core netball. There were six teams entered from across the Province, two of which were from 39 Bde. Heading up the A Team was **WO1(RSM) Spiers**, with **SSgt Donna Scaife** leading the B Team.

The A Team played exceptionally in the competition, and never lost a game. A special mention must go to **Sig Donna Foley**, for her outstanding performance as goal attack. The last game to be played decided who took first place in the Competition. This was between 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) A Team and 15 Sig Regt. The game was exciting and tense, with a 5-5 result! The girls on both teams performed brilliantly, and to a very high standard. Unfortunately, in the end there could only be one winning team; it was 15 Sig Regt, who won on goal difference.

The B Team touched the hearts of the crowd with their skill and talent, for which they were awarded a well-deserved sixth place. Both teams went forward to the Corps Netball Championships held on the mainland in October.

The team from 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) went through to the Army Inter-Unit Competition held at Aldershot. The team consisted of: **WO1(RSM) Lindsey Spiers**, **SSgt Liz Allen**, **Sgt Sheena Ross**, **Cpl Jenny Ingram**, **Cpl Marie Oxley**, **Cpl Maz Woods**, **LCpl Yvonne Smith**, **LCpl Rachel Willis** and **Sig Donna Foley**.

The Netball Team in action

The morning after we arrived in Aldershot, we were off bright and early to the leisure centre, where we played three enjoyable games of netball. We won our first match (8-4) against 30 Sig Regt, and drew (5-5) against 2 Sig Regt. Finally, just missing out by one goal (5-4) against Worthy Down, we went through to the finals. Unfortunately for us, the winning team of the day was 30 Sig Regiment whom we'd previously beaten in the first round.

Thanks to the Sqn OC, **Maj Vaudin** and **WO1(RQMS) Sheard** for coming to support the girls, especially as it was the same day the Sqn football team was playing. It had nothing to do with the skirts, did it?

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Sheerin MBE**

It has been a busy time for the Sqn, with a number of personnel supporting 2 R Anglian on EX SAFFRON SANDS in Jordan until the end of October.

There have also been a number of AT expeds, including EX LARAPINTA FINN to Australia, EX PERUVIAN FINN to Peru, and EX BILTONG FINN to South Africa.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt AK Reid**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Vickers**

We welcome **SSgt Vickers**, **Sgt Berry**, **LCpl Gibson**, and **Sigs Lannon** and **Marshallsay**; and farewell **SSgt Love**, **Sigs Sutherland**, **Deveney** and **French**.

2Lt Gray spent 6 weeks at the Sqn, before going to Blandford for his Tp Comds' Course. Congratulations to **Sig Alex Reidy** on the birth of her first child, **Bailey**. Finally, we to say 'Get Well Soon' to **Cpl Nige Brennan**, who is recovering from a recent illness.

Lt Reid has been wearing a smile ever since Alpha Tp won the inter-Tp mil skills competition. The event consisted of a forced march, a pistol shoot, comd tasks, assault course (carrying a bucket of water), medical stand and drill stand.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt KM Dunwoody**
Tp SSgt **SSgt S Fitzgerald**

We welcome **LCpls Brown** and **Stephenson**, straight from Blandford; and **Sigs Larkins** and **Anderson**, from 16 Sig Regt. Congratulations to newly-promoted **Cpls Ben Jones**, **Andy Murray**, **Adam Skinner** and **Caz Ely**. **Sgt Baynes** is spending six weeks in Jordan on EX SAFFRON SANDS.

Lt Dunwoody, **Sgt Meredith**, **Cpl Ely**, **Cpl Skinner** and **Sig Reynolds** have just returned from a three-week trek in Australia. This co-incided nicely with the English triumph in the Ashes. Timing like this just cannot be taught!

Bravo Tp were also challenged to a game of football by Alpha Tp, refereed by **Cpl Daz Jones**. It was a close match, but with the inevitable outcome of a Bravo Tp 3-2 victory, much to the delight of SSM **SSgt Fitzgerald**. **LCpl Chris McGuire's** wife, **Sharon** gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, **Caitlyn**, on Friday, 25 September. All our best wishes go to the new family.

MT TROOP

Tp Comd **SSgt S Williams**

We farewell **Ptes Johnny Ball** and **Andy Harvey**, who were posted on promotion; **Cpl Pete Stone**, who goes to Cyprus; **Cpl Rick Steel**, who is off to Canada; and **Sgt Bob Wilson**, to Catterick. We wish them all the best for the future. The new faces are: **Cpl Symes**, **LCpl Standen**, **Ptes Dootson**, **Murphy**, **Ruskin**, and **Furzeland**. Congratulations to **Sig Cheryl Stevenson**, who has just picked up her first tape.

The MT has also put on some special-to-theatre trg this month, including some time in the skid car. This was a good chance for the younger, less-experienced members of the Tp to take lessons and share their knowledge with others. There was a good turnout from the Bde and Sig Sqn, with everyone who attended taking away something new.

EXERCISE LARAPINTA FINN - *by Cpl Neil Best AGC*

EX LARAPINTA FINN was an exped trekking the Larapinta Trail in Northern Territory, Australia. The main objective was to complete a nine-day trek on the Larapinta Trail, a total of 160km. The event was broken into three stages. The first was a two-day stop over in Darwin to acclimatise. The second was the nine-day trek, which ended in Alice Springs. Finally, the third stage was R and R in Sydney.

The exped began in Ballykelly, where **Lt Keith Dunwoody**, **WO2 (FofS) Danny Fielding**, **Sgt Paul Meredith**, **Cpl Neil Best**, **Cpl Gaz Jones**, **LCpl Caz Ely**, **LCpl Adam Skinner**, **Pte Kim Bassenger** and **Sig Jamie Reynolds** met for a final document check and weigh-in, before setting off via Belfast to London Heathrow. Once at LHR, we met up with the JSMEL(S), who was a Royal Signals Lt, making our group the full 10 people. We were all ready to go!

The first stage of the flight was around 12 hrs to Singapore, where we had a brief stopover, before boarding our second flight to Darwin, another 5 hrs. As you can imagine, we were all very tired by the time we landed. Once we arrived at out hostel, we all decided to push through the day, to help get over the jet lag. The next two days were spent acclimatising, and getting the odd bits of extra kit that we needed. The temperature in Darwin was 32° C, 12° C hotter than Ballykelly!

The flight down to Alice Springs was 3 hrs. We expected it to be cooler in Alice Springs, but it was actually 36° C, due to a freak heat wave. The first day on the trail was the hardest, as both the heat and terrain were unforgiving. Unfortunately, we had to casevac two of our party on the first day, which was very disappointing for them. However, they were later used as admin staff for any additional requirements or problems we encountered. After the first day's trek, the JSMEL decided to adjust the route of the trek to allow for more water stops, and to reduce the time spent in the heat of the day. At night, we would make camp at around 18.00 hrs, which was last light, and also the time when the flies left us alone after a long day of pestering us! The flies were a constant hassle for the whole nine days. Most people had brought an insect face net, which at least kept them off your head.

After the second day's trek, we got into our campsite feeling tired and a little sorry for ourselves, but this was short lived, as we were informed that there was a creek close by that we could swim in. We all rushed down and proceeded to swim in the ice cold water. This was an overwhelming feeling, and provided us with a chance to wash our clothes too! That evening we met some very kind Aussies, who invited us to their campfire, and shared their assorted cakes and wine with us - which were gratefully received. As a way of thanking them for their hospitality, we all signed our rugby ball, and presented it to them as a token of our appreciation.

One of the most memorable times on the trail was the 40-km night move. With the daytime temperatures still very high, we decided to move to the next campsite at night. We completed around 32km at night, marching for six hours along the main road. We did see the odd car that stopped to ask us if we were OK. It must have looked quite bizarre to see 10 Poms with Bergens, walking up the road in the dark, in the middle of nowhere! The next morning we completed the final 8km, all with sore feet, but we finally reached our destination with a great sense of achievement!

Along the trail, we saw some wild life, which included wallabies, a dingo, a kangaroo, budgies, spiders and lizards. We were all hoping to see scorpions and snakes, but hopefully, not in one of our boots. Some of the party were last seen running from the toilets after a harmless spider fell on them. They thought it was a black widow!

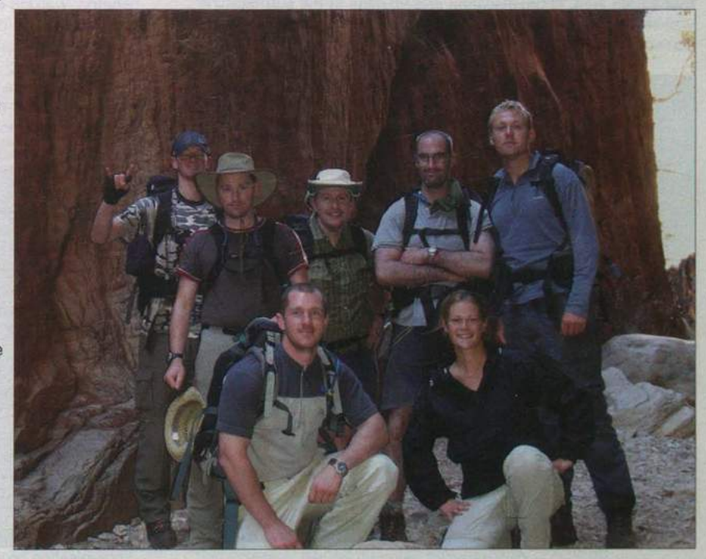
With the trek completed, we headed back to the hostel in Alice Springs, where we all had a long-awaited shower and shave. With our kit re-packed, we flew a further three hrs to Sydney for R and R. Once there, we took part in various tourist activities, including whale watching, climbing the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and visiting the Sydney Sky Tower and Zoo.

EX LARAPINTA FINN was a complete success, and thoroughly enjoyed by all who participated. Australia is a breathtaking country, with amazing terrain, unusual wild life, a tropical climate, and very friendly people. This was a once in a lifetime experience for all of us, and something I will never forget.

A MESSAGE TO ANY FORMER MEMBERS THE SQUADRON

If you, or anyone you know, has donated any pictures, trophies or memorabilia to 218 Sig Sqn or 8 Inf Bde, and wish to reclaim them please get in touch with:

Sgt Jeane
8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218)
Ballykelly
BFPO 802
Tel: 9491 36962



The wandering Poms in Oz

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D G Robson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) C Bruce BEM**

EXERCISE MERCURY ADVENTURER/ EXERCISE THREE PEAKS DIAMOND
- by 2Lt Williams

A bright, sunny September morning in Germany and where would you rather be, in green and in work, or in civvies and in the mountains? No contest really, and the first tranche of the Regt duly headed, in convoy, 7 hrs south to a US campsite at Garmisch Partenkirchen, for a 10 day mountain package.

Waking up the following morning to bright sunshine and a view of the Zugspitz Peak, it became clear that this was definitely the way to start my Army career. Group allocation and some basic admin out of the way, and everyone headed off to their respective activities – some suitably steep introductory hills for the walkers, and some elementary - mostly underwater - experiences for the kayakers.

The weather just about held out as the week continued, and the groups progressed towards either the Kayaking Foundation Certificate or the Summer Mountain Proficiency award. The aim of both these awards is to give the individual a basic grounding in that activity, from which they can develop their interest and move on to higher qualifications.

Following some spectacular sights, character building achievements (particularly if you are ridge walking and afraid of heights), the occasional nav embarrassment, and a 'short cut' that added 2km, 400m elevation and 90 mins to the trek, the walkers had all proved that they could navigate from A to B and achieved their SMP award.

Facing the challenges of white water

The kayakers fared similarly well, getting everyone through the KFC award, despite the occasional outbreak of 'river rage' directed at **WO1(QMSI) Wells**, **Sgt Roberson**, or just at the water at large.

It was not all hard work though, as a programmed midweek R and R day gave everyone the opportunity to swim, white-water raft, play golf or simply sunbathe, with the occasional quiet drink down town thrown in for good measure.

At the end of the week, campsite, cookhouse, and large amounts of PX shopping were packed away and returned to Herford, and the staff moved on to Wertach to await the arrival of the next group.

Rather than 'roughing it' style camping (showers, laundry facilities, Subway, the PX, cooked meals, and town 10 mins away - that kind of roughing it), we were accommodated in the ATG lodge Haus Magnus. The rest of the Regt now descended upon Bavaria for two 4-day packages. With the shorter timescale, the emphasis for these groups was on experience and team-building, rather than the passing of assessments, with the majority of the soldiers conducting at least two different activities, and some doing a different one each day.

In addition to the hill walking and kayaking, there was now the option to climb – instructed by the CO, **Lt Col Robson**, or go up onto the kletersteig routes (a combination of hill walking and climbing) with the Haus Magnus Chief Instructor, **Sgt Williams**.

Some fairly daunting challenges were faced by all of the groups, whether walking (or crawling) along sheer-drop ridges in the fog, clinging to the side of rock faces, balancing on ladders high in the peaks, or negotiating churning water for 6 hrs straight.

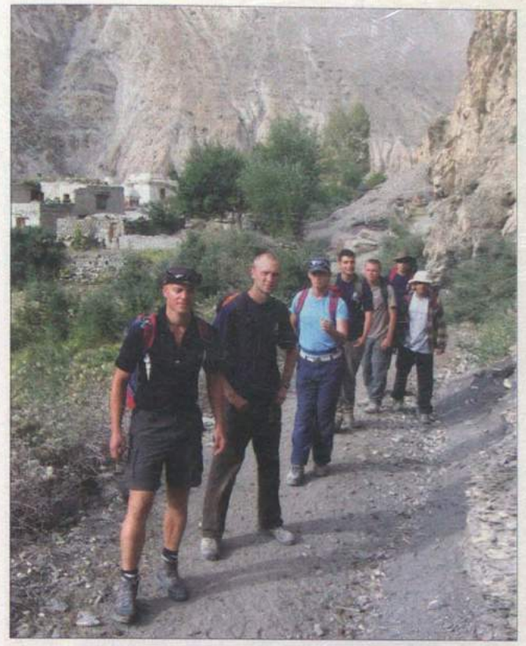
These feats were amply counterbalanced by some high quality relaxation in the evenings, courtesy of the Haus Magnus bar (notably the Beach Party and Oktoberfest evenings), and all finally left Bavaria, having had both valuable trg time in the mountains, and a well earned break from work.

Throughout the course of the ex, all non-deployed troops in the Regt had the chance to get some AT under their belts; no mean feet logistically. Thanks should go to **SSgt Buchan** and the admin team, whilst at Garmisch, the staff and instructors from both the Regt and ATG and **WO1(QMSI) Wells**, for his overall organisation of what was a highly valuable and enjoyable time in the mountains, and the perfect start to my Army career

EXERCISE LADAKH NOMAD – *by Cpl Bashir*

'A once in the lifetime opportunity' was the sales pitch employed by **Lt Macrae** to promote the exped, and all eight of us exped members would have to agree. Not that it required much selling; four weeks AT in India, trekking in the Himalayas...

It all started by getting all sorts of exotic jabs for the immunisation programmes, which kept on coming thick and fast - and then the dreaded malaria tablets. Finally, the morning of 7



Out on the Himalayan M25, with the 'Welcome Break' Service Area in the background

September arrived, with an early 02.00hrs reporting time to start the exped.

We said farewell to Herford in the dark, and woke up at Dusseldorf airport bleary eyed, and after our first leg to Heathrow, we were then on our way to India. The flight was very long and uneventful. We arrived at Delhi, and after reclaiming our luggage, we then changed our currency into Rupees. We all felt rich as we walked away carrying amounts from 10,000Rs to 150,000Rs.

What's the name of this mountain we've just conquered?

At last we arrived in Leh, and the views were enthralling and unforgettable. We had some local guides with us, two of whom we nicknamed Ant and Dec. During the trek, there were the usual cases of minor ailments, from diarrhoea, blisters, painful ankles, the odd headaches, to a little altitude sickness. This was not the usual type of trek; we were up at heights that jumbo jets fly at – 5,000 metres plus. We even got to see the odd golden eagle and a blue sheep, honest... Occasionally, for some like my self, we tried to ignore the view. It was often a sheer drop thousands of metres of empty space.

Once we left Leh, we camped out on all days of the exped. We saw very few people - only the odd trekking party or a few people in the remote villages we passed through. At all times, we were 4 days' walk from any main road.

We finished the trek on 24 September, arriving back in Leh at midday. With a quick afternoon of admin, we were all packed on our way to Delhi. Once checked into our hotels, we pitched up at a *TGI Friday*, where the atmosphere was so familiar, we could almost forget we were in India. Then we all went to explore more of Delhi. We spent a day visiting the Taj Mahal. It was amazing to be beside one of the 7 wonders of the world. An extreme amount of shopping occurred over the next few days, and then we were on our way back to the reality of Herford.

The exped was a highly enjoyable experience and I couldn't recommend it highly enough. From the group our thanks must go to **Lt Macrae** and **SSgt Smith**, for the organisation and to the Regt for making it all possible. Not many soldiers can claim they have climbed the Himalayas, and not many have been to India.

MANAGEMENT ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEKEND
- by 2Lt Evans

It's a curious fact that in this age of digital technology and intercontinental travel, it should be necessary to take off one's shoes and climb under a Bavarian waterfall before properly entering into close communication with one's colleagues. Whatever the heralds of modernity may claim, it is clear (at least to me) that there can be no substitution for the cold, wet, hungry, and occasionally blind experience that was the CO's AT weekend in Garmisch, to bring your Regtl hierarchy close together - if only to keep warm.

The weekend was masterminded by **Lt Col Robson** and **WO2(QMSI) Wells**. From each activity, whether it be kayaking, abseiling or comd tasks, it was possible to draw out valuable leadership points. For example, the natural reluctance to rescue **WO1(RSM) Bruce**, when you yourself are on the point of capsizing, or our tendency to blame the man at the other end, as **Capt Fisher**, who single-handedly ferried us between the various locations, discovered. For many, this Grade 3 water was their first kayaking experience. It was strange for **Maj Keilly** to be out of his depth in two foot of water, but the river is no respecter of ranks. From the point of view of a 2Lt, it is hard to improve on such a weekend.

BA(G) MAJOR UNIT CROSS-COUNTRY RELAYS

The Regt re-asserted its supremacy of the previous season, when they competed in the BA(G) Major Unit Cross-Country Relays, at Osnabruck on 5 October. Whereas last season, the females did so well, this time it was the male team that took first place.

The course finished with a bend in the wood that made it impossible to see how a team was placed until a few seconds before the hand-over. For all the combined efforts of **QMSI Stoddard**, **Cpl Low** and **2Lt Evans**, **Sig Walsh** still had 50m to make up over the three miles to come in first. The women also fielded a strong team: **Sgt O'Conner**, **LCpl Powell**, **LCpl Arkley** and **Sig Scribbins**, but came a close second to 2 LS Regt (who had probably gained an unfair advantage by practising beforehand). The season looks good for Herford.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

RHQ bidS a temporary farewell to **Maj (A/Lt Col) Ian Buchanan**, who is off on tour to Sarajevo, complete with his skiing kit. The Ops team welcome **Capt (TOT) Lance Marshall** and, at long last, **Capt (Tfc) John Wright** to relieve the Ops Offr. We hope you enjoy your tours.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE BATTLEFIELD TOUR

- by Lt Sarah Panting

Between 04 - 08 September, 25 offrs and soldiers of 2 Sig Regt undertook a battlefield tour of the Ardennes region of Belgium to study the WW2 Battle of the Bulge. The tour was organised by **Maj Dave Duggan**, ably assisted by **WO2(SSM) Neil Hunt**. The group included the CO, 2IC, RSM. After meeting our tour guide, **Paul**, we drove to Bletchley Park, home of the Enigma code breaking, where where we gained an insight into the working conditions and pace of life there during WW2. Monday was spent journeying to Liege in Belgium.

After a presentation on the Ardennes Offensive (or the Battle of the Bulge) on the first night by **Maj Duggan**, the tour began in earnest on Tuesday. We stopped at the huge American cemetery at Henri-Chapelle, before following the axes of the various German Panzer divs, via Malmedy and Monschau. After a lunch of Belgian *frites*, we followed the exact route that **Peiper's** div took from Monschau to Stavelot, where we could truly appreciate the complexities and uncertainties comds on both sides faced. That afternoon, we moved on to La Gleize for a museum stop, and a chance to discuss the role of armour in the Ardennes Offensive.

Regimental personnel enjoying the sunshine

The next day we continued the tour, this time from an Allied perspective, before we drove to the comparatively subdued German cemetery at Recogne. Our focus was to follow Easy Coy of *Band of Brothers* fame, so we moved on to Bastogne, where **Paul** could show us in detail how the campaign developed. In Bure, we persuaded the local priest to lend us the keys for the church where fierce fighting had taken place. Our last stop on the tour was appropriately the British and Commonwealth Cemetery at Hotton (the smallest but most moving of the cemeteries), where we held a minute's silence for the fallen, before the RSM gave a suitably poignant reading.

The tour gave an interesting insight into the hardship and complexities experienced by the Axis and Allied forces in Europe during WW2, with specific emphasis given to the principles of C2 applied by both sides. A thoroughly enjoyable tour was had by all.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Tivey**
SSM **WO2 D Leask**

We have farewelled **Maj Steve Clarke**, after 50 months as OC HQ Sqn. We also said goodbye to **Capt Matt Nuttall**, who will be sorely missed by the Welfare Dept. We warmly welcome the new OC, **Maj Mark Tivey** and family, and the new 2IC, **Capt Paul Downie** and family.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp OC **WO1 (FofS) C Heath**
Tp SSgt **SSgt D Mudway**

Another busy period for the Tp, with **Sgt Dave Graham** leading the first formal inspection of our new CORMORANT installations. **Sgt Man** is just about winning the battle to keep the CNR fleet on the road, and having to teach the younger members of the Tp how to solder (or is that soldier?) at the same time! We are preparing to deploy to Nordic Shield later in the year, fortunately not in snow holes, but heated accn.

We farewell **Sgt Michelle Local**, posted to the CDT team for six months; and **Sgt Chris Stansfield**, posted to 15 Sig Regt, on promotion to SSgt.

TRAINING WING

OC **Capt G Hume MBE**

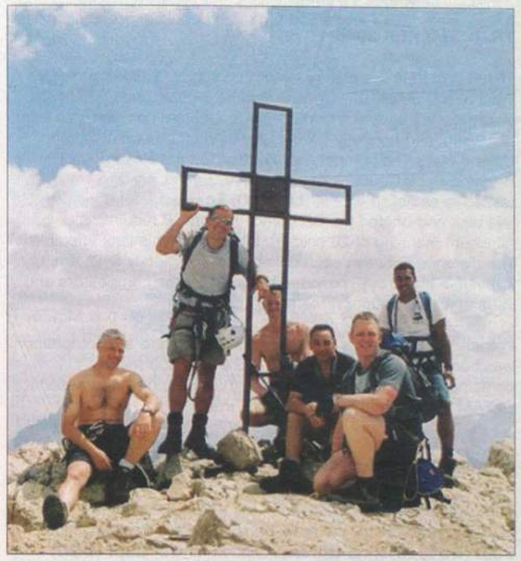
The Trg Wing is now fully established, and has had a very busy period conducting both mil skills and trade trg: preparing for the Regt'l NCO Cadre Course and the Regtl Battle Camp; handing over of the CORMORANT trg rig to RSS Blandford and establishing our own, albeit a lot smaller, trg rig.

We say hello to **WO2 (YofS) Mark Jones**, from 33 Sig Regt (V), **Sgt Vicki Moran**, from ATR Litchfield and **Cpl Chris Brown**, from 16 Sig Regt. We farewell **Cpl Dev**, who departs for 30 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE NORTHERN FERRATA *- by WO2 Kutzner*

EX NORTHERN FERRATA was a 14-day mountaineering exped to the Dolomite region of Northern Italy. It was planned and led by **Capt King** and **Capt Hume**, with the aim of introducing 2 x 6 man groups to high level trekking and Via Ferrata climbs in and around Cortina D'Ampezzo. **Sgt Brown**, **Cpl Lyons**, and **Sig Henstock** provided the additional rock climbing expertise needed on the Via Ferrata routes.

Day 3 of each package saw the trekkers and Via Ferrata groups combine to take in the war-torn Passo Falzarego and the remnants of the Italian and Austrian tunnel systems on the Kleiner Lagazuoi Pizo. A Via Ferrata route and history lesson combined, provided a different day on the hill, which was enjoyed by all. Head torches, helmets and a lot of ducking to avoid the low ceilings in the tunnel system, was the order of the day.
Day 4 saw the group progress onto more technical and steeper terrain, taking on the challenge provided by the direct route up Col Rosa on Via Ferrata Etorre Bovero, a Grade E route. This route provided a greater test of the groups skills and took some of the group well outside of their comfort zones.



The group catching some sun, after completing a challenging Via Ferrata route

The trekking group focused on completing challenging days, where a combination of distance and height was carefully balanced to ensure that everyone was tested physically and mentally. The first group completed 46km in total, and climbed 2,800m over the course of 4 days. During this initial phase, the group trekked in the La Villa Stern, Ostaria Peduru, Ra Vales and Falzarego regions, and sweated their way around some of the most stunning countryside in the Dolomiti.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

EXERCISE SAXON STRIKE

The month began with preparation for the impending Tp and Sqn level exs. Saxon Tp had two phases of trg, including a mil skills phase and a comms phase. The first phase was held at Catterick TA and, bizarrely, the weather was quite good! After an initial shake out into sections, and a number of lessons on the duties of Section Comds and 2ICs, **Lt Damien Corcoran** took the platoon into a harbour, and the platoon went fully tactical, occupying a harbour overlooking the enemy route CHOP. The trg for the rest of the phase involved preparing for ops against rogue border patrols, played by the Tp DS. The mornings were filled with patrolling and ambush lessons, and the afternoon was spent practising these new or revised skills.

The green phase culminated in an ambush on a particularly persistent enemy, before the platoon was pursued into the harbour area, and back out of the harbour area, before the remainder of the enemy was snared in a particularly cunning snap ambush. Then it started to rain. Morale was raised, as the OC, 2IC and SQMS deployed to the area to serve the platoon with a well-deserved, if somewhat soggy, cooked breakfast. Morale was raised even further, as the rain set in, and Saxon Tp became aware that Viking Tp, who had only deployed the previous night, had another 3 days of rain to face!

Phase 2 was a straight forward comms shake out to the local area. It provided a good opportunity to allow the less experienced CORMORANT devotees to get to grips with the system, under the watchful eyes of resident gurus, **Cpl Earp** and **LCpl Piercy**. It was a useful phase, which highlighted both strong and weak points in the Tps ability to deploy.

SQUADRON COMMANDER'S CUP CHALLENGE

The early morning forecast was for rain, but spirits were high. The Sqn paraded at Strensall trg area to compete in the OC Sqn's Cup Challenge. Each of the four sections had to navigate their way around the trg area and complete activities at six stands: mil knowledge, confidence, MT, assault course, section attack and BCDT. The sections were given 30 mins to navigate across country, and then had 45 mins to complete each activity.

Off the teams set, with some chanting, which quickly wore off when they found out their task was not only physically challenging, but mentally as well. The Sqn OC and SSM could often be seen prowling around the trg area on their mountain bikes. This provided amusement to the section members, as the cycling was clearly challenging their off-road ability.

The day brought smiles. **Cpl Col Simpson**, a BCDT casualty, was found on many occasions squirting home-made blood into the faces of innocent section members who were trying to aid him with his wounds. Once prize giving was completed, the Sqn had time to reflect on the challenging day, which provided an excellent military training and first-rate team building opportunity.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) N Hunt**

The Sqn continues to be busy throughout, dispersing personnel to Afghanistan, Iraq, Falklands, Qatar and Tampa. We have also been busy conducting mil skills and leadership trg, including a comd task day in Catterick. The Sqn main effort has been the pre-deployment trg of those deploying on OP HERRICK 2, which culminated in a Farewell Day for the soldiers and their families. We wish them all the best for their deployment and safe return.

OPERATION HERRICK - HEADQUARTERS BRITFOR, KABUL *- by LCpl Butler*

Based at Camp Souter in Kabul, HQ BRITFOR has the largest det of 2 Sig Regt personnel on OP HERRICK 1. We deployed in May 05. Our task is to provide the staff and Kabul Patrol Coy (formerly 2RGR, now 1 RGBW LI) with a variety of voice and ICS facilities, including JOCS, RLAN and secure messaging. It is busy work, with much of the info passed being high priority, and many of the staff being unfamiliar with the IT applications. The tour has also given many of us the opportunity to do things outside the world of comms. **LCpl Matt Judge** and other members of the UKNSE took part in a charity rowing event in the gym; they took shifts to complete a distance of 700 miles raising a total of £2,000. In addition, **LCpl Nikita Chisholm** and **Sig Andi Eddon** accompanied the local CIMIC cell to celebrate the birthday of a pair of twins CIMIC had been helping.

OPERATION HERRICK - PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, MAZAR-E-SHARIF *- by Sig Messenger*

Much like Kabul, those personnel serving at the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) at MeS, provide the usual ICS facilities. In addition, Royal Signals personnel provide secure

comms in the form of LWRN, TACSAT and NATO Friendly Force Tracker to the Mobile Observation Teams (MOTs) who work in our AO assisting the Afghan Army and Police. We get a lot of unusual questions from the staff, but none so unusual as that from our own Det Comd, **Sgt Jeffers Ford**, who asked: 'How did you print that off (a document) in black and white?' It was a black and white printer. We all managed to get out with the MOTs to see the beautiful landscapes that cover Afghanistan. Our job over the last month of the tour has been busy, with the preparation for the National Afghan Parliamentary Council Elections. Thankfully, the time passed relatively peacefully.

Sig Messenger teaching a MOT TACSAT to the Infantry

OPERATION HERRICK - FORWARD SUPPORT BASE, MAZAR-E-SHARIF

The FSB that the APOD provides, is the base from which, up until recently, 2 RGR operated. They provided support to ISAF forces on the ground. It can be a hectic job, as equipt sometimes fails, so the techs need to be on hand rapidly to repair faults. The operators' lives are no easier; they have the difficult job of teaching the QRF how to correctly operate the equipt. We would go out on patrol with them and show them the kit's capabilities, which allowed us to see life from their perspective. **Cpl Gilbert** and **LCpl Perry** were also lucky enough to observe a live firepower demo ran by 2RGR.

OPERATION HERRICK - PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, MAIMANA - *by Lt IJ Scaife*

PRT Maimana by comparison with MeS, is a bit like Sleepy Hollow. When the British Army came to Maimana after the end of the Taliban occupation, so cut off were the people of this small town, that they thought it was the Russian Army attempting to retake the country. Despite this early misunderstanding, the PRT has done similar work to that of PRT MeS.

Working alongside the Norwegians has been an eye-opener - their work and welfare package, which includes a compulsory Sauna is something perhaps to be envied. However, their contribution to international cuisine is reindeer meat, which did not meet with the delicate stomach of Det Comd, **A/Sgt Armitage**. That aside, the Det worked well, and as probably the least equipped Det, overcame many of the outage problems that were faced by the previous det. On 01 September 05, the Norwegians took control of the PRT from the UK, and in true British Army style, the multinational handing over ceremony was a well rehearsed and professional display of why our Army is envied. Royal Signals soldiers rightly took their place beside 2RGR soldiers at the centre of the Parade.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Pritinarayan Rai**

TRAIL WALKER 2005

TRAIL WALKER is a charity event that supports Gurkha Welfare Trust and OXFAM UK. Queens Gurkha Signals and OXFAM UK jointly run the event. It involves a 4-man team completing a total of 100km, and normally takes place along the popular South Downs Way. The competition starts at Petersfield and finishes at Brighton Race Course. This year, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn was tasked to establish 4 CPs. **Lt (QGO) Laxman Pun** coordinated this task and briefed the CP comds. Each CP required a minimum manning of 20 soldiers to carry out this task effectively. The distance between each CP was approximately 8-12 Km. CP 7, being a major one, provided hot food for the competitors and lodging for their support teams.

Preparation of the CPs started on 15 July 05 and the competition was from 16-17 July. There were more than 300 teams participating in the event, and more than £300,000 was raised for OXFAM UK and the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

FAREWELL TO CAPTAIN (QGO) KRISHNA GURUNG

A farewell party was organised in the Kohima Restaurant on the 16 September 05, for the most Senior Queen's Gurkha Officer, **Capt (QGO) Krishna Gurung**, and his family. **Capt (QGO) Krishna** will enjoy some leave in Nepal on 19 September 05 after a 2-year tenure as a 2IC 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn. He will take over the responsibility of Gurkha Major from **Maj (QGO) Hitman Gurung** on 7 November 05. Gurkha Major is the highest rank that a Gurkha can achieve in their military career.

EXERCISE NORTHERN YETI - *by LCpl Bhimsen Lama*

EX NORTHERN YETI was an AT exped organised by Kowloon Tp under comd of **Lt (QGO) Laxman Pun** in the vicinity of the Lake District National Park, Cumbria, over the period of 01- 05 August 05. 24 personnel were involved, including 4 MLT instructors from the Sqn. Most of the soldiers involved in the exped were hill boys, and our aim was to climb all eight 900 metre peaks of the Lake District area in 4 days, covering a distance of 60 km. Our secondary aim was to improve everybody's map reading skills, physical endurance, leadership and administration in adverse conditions.

We left York at 07.00 hrs and arrived at Wasdale Head at 11.30 hrs. After a quick meal. we were divided into 4 groups of 6, with a MLT instructor in each group. Everyone was carrying their sleeping systems and food for 4 days.

Kowloon Tp on top of the world

The adventure became really challenging and demanding, but we achieved our goal. Some of the highest peaks in the region worth highlighting are Scafell Pike (977m), Craig Peak (935m) and Helvellyn Peak (964m). Although a different experience compared with the peaks of Nepal, the scenic views en route were fascinating, and reminded us of our homeland.

There were many hill walkers who were admiring our determination with those heavy rucksacks on our backs. The well-planned camping sites around the lakes were a relaxing break after a tiring day on our feet. The final day ended in a campsite at Burns Farm, where the admin team had prepared a mouth-watering BBQ for us. This was a wonderful and demanding AT package, where we gained a variety of experiences and improved our confidence. Surely one day, we can aim to climb Mt Everest!

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AG Hill**
RSM	**WO1 PG Griffiths**

Up here in the Ivory Tower, we have had our share of good news. The RSM and Regtl Foreman, **WO1 Mark Paveley** have been selected for Commissioning, and will be joining the Offr ranks just as soon as they can find some leather patches to stick on the elbows of their tweed jackets. The Regt also enjoyed some 30 promotions from Sig to LCpl - enough to form our very own 'Promotions Tp'.

The decision by NATO to use the Div as an Operational Land Component HQ for the NATO Response Force (NRF) No 6 Standby is now our priority. We have just 3 months to get ourselves up to the standard required, with the hurdle of High Readiness Certification to jump over in the run-up to Christmas. Once done, we will sit at between 5 and 30 days NTM, for the first half of next year, ready to deploy anywhere in the world, primarily in support of the War Against Terror. With that in mind, if you want to sleep safely in your beds, read on!

LEADING NATO IN 2006 – 3rd DIVISION AS THE NATO REACTION FORCE – *by Maj Andy Knott*

What is it? Shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, **Donald Rumsfeld**, the then US Secretary of State, initiated the NATO Response Force concept. For those who are familiar with our own Spearhead Lead Element (SLE), it is similar in concept and design, except like most things to emerge from America, it is very much bigger. The NRF was conceived to be the leading NATO assigned Div Land Component Force, capable of reacting to some 14 mission types, mainly non-war fighting, world-wide and within 30 days of activation. Indeed, Hurricane Katrina called on some of those forces to help with the disaster relief. Historically, NATO forces assigned from all member states had been double- or sometimes triple-hatted for roles elsewhere, but in the **Rumsfeld** initiative, NATO was to generate a leading Div that was ring-fenced for this one task.

Who pays? Of course, MOD recognised the considerable increase in the tasks it was asking the Div to fulfil, and the purse strings were duly untied to assist us achieve our goals. Before the reader is lulled into a completely false sense of security by this statement, it is as well to remember that you are reading *The WIRE*, (a military publication), not a fairy tale. Of course, we weren't allocated any additional funding, unless you count the few quid extra to buy a couple of new brooms to clear away the Galloise cigarette buts of the foreign staff who will be augmenting the HQ! As usual, we were told to provide from within our own resources, and one year on, that is largely what we have done.

Who is taking part? The newly-formed 19 Lt Bde is the corner stone of the NRF's fighting capability, with some 5 Bns under comd. Three of these come from UK; the others are drawn from the Portuguese and Greek Armies. Apart from the odd Police section and a plethora of different combat jackets and pancake like berets in the staff cells, this is about the full extent of our foreign partners' contribution. However, UK is further enhanced by our own logistic support, this time provided by 101 Log Bde.

So what about the Communications? The risks of this venture were identified early on in the newly-painted offices of Whitehall. The HQ would surely be bandwidth thirsty, and would see a level of comms traffic far higher than that it was used to at a tactical level. Other challenges were how to achieve multinational inter-operability, and national reach-back comms. The theatre of operations was unspecified, the terrain, mission type and geographical loc could be just about anything and anywhere. Comms needed to fit this very general bill. In The War Against Terror, and the asymmetric warfare with which it is synonymous, it is best to plan for the unexpected. CORMORANT and BOWMAN will provide digital comms, supported by tactical satellite where long distances dictate. Air support comms and EW capability were also needed. As so often happens, all our specialisations will converge to deliver the desired effect, managed by the CO from the LAND Component Network Control Centre (NETCEN).

So have we made the grade? That remains to be seen, with 2 critical exercises taking place between the time it takes to submit this article and it actually makes it to into your Christmas stocking. Over this period, the Army will conduct the biggest Field Training Exercise to take place in UK for over 5 years, EX LOYAL LEDGER. 19 Lt and 101 Log Bdes will exercise in such disparate locs as Salisbury Plain, Thetford and Caerwent in Wales – a realistic representation both of how far our forces could be dispersed in any future deployment, and also of the challenges of communicating in this demanding scenario. The ex will also count the Secretary of State for Defence and the Commander in Chief amongst its VIP audience. Once finished, the real work starts. A few days later, NATO observers will certify the Div to High Readiness Force (HRF) standards on EX ALLIED WARRIOR. This time, the bulk of the ex will be played out in Portugal. At the end, one of two things will happen: either there will be one more NRF Div Land Component Command in the NATO armoury, or there will be a big rush on to find another in the 3 weeks remaining between the end of the ex and the New Year! No prizes for guessing which this might be.

Then What? Providing we can find all the keys to our armoured vehs by 1 January, the next 6 months spent on standby will be filled with trg, maint and more trg. Apart from the NRF, we will still have to assist in the preparation of our other Bdes for a busy period of exs and quite probably a couple ops in existing theatres.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj LJ Hawkes**
SSM	**WO2 A Watkins**

REGIMENTAL BATTLECAMP – OCTOBER 2005

The first two days of the ex were spent on an intensive package run at Bramley by the Regtl Trg Wing. The Sqn embarked on a

round robin of stands, ranging from anti-ambush drills and battlefield first aid, to the correct procedures for dealing with POWs and handling suicide bomb attacks. During the evenings, a noise and light demo was run by **2Lt Rich Gardner-Clarke**, who is spending six months at the Regt, before joining Tp Comds' Course 64.

An admin explosion of epic proportions by **Sig Mark Baker**, coupled with a very animated **Sig Naeen Chaudry** on his mobile phone and **Sig Kyle Stock** casually smoking his cherry tobacco pipe, showed the troops how far noise (and **Lt John Walton's** snores) travel at night.

Before we knew it, the initial trg phase was over, and we moved loc to an abandoned building/SF base, that inexplicably had a bar, behind which acting SSM **SSgt Darren Margle** and **Capt Simon Limbrey** ran the Ops cell.

The Sqn quickly settled into a routine of QRF, base guard and pro-active patrolling. Int gained through patrols, quickly proved that the Local Militia did not appreciate British forces in the area, and under **Gen Hasan**, they would make their displeasure known. The situation escalated rapidly, with roadside IEDs, patrols being ambushed, and an explosion at the chemical factory, resulting in ROMEO 4 being worn. It was during a visit by **SSM Alistair Watkins**, when the base exploded under another mortar attack, that people began to recognise the combat indicator: **SSM Watkins** is around, so bad things happen.

Few expected a quiet last night. **Capt Limbrey** and **SSgt Margle** paced up and down the bar, anticipating attacks of epic proportion, but the Militia, nearing the end of a hectic three weeks of agitating the different Sqns, were fast asleep in their Trg Wing Hangar. We were woken in the early morning by an angry riot at the base gates.

The QRF were quickly deployed under **Sgt Dave Briscoe,** with **Sig James Taylor** and **LCpl Marc Del Valle** experiencing various emotions that can be felt when faced by rioters, predominantly fear and anger. As the riot escalated out of control (fuelled by Trg Wing Staff killing off various comds), **2Lt Rich Gardner-Clarke** noticed the SSM lurking suspiciously, and with little surprise, SHQ promptly exploded. The Sqn put up a valiant defence, but could not withstand the superior firepower of the death defying Militia, and succumbed to the inevitable.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Smith**
SSM	**WO2 Chay Hook**

EXERCISE ROBUST RHINO
- by LCpl Pete Tideswell and LCpl Si Goundry

Have you ever felt like you were completely alone – stranded, with no way of calling for help? Well we, the JNCOs of 206 Sig Sqn know exactly what it feels like. As part of an NCO development course, the senior staff thought they would have a few giggles by stripping us of all our valuables (such as wallet, phone and cigarettes), then blindfolding us and dropping us in groups of three all over the southwest of England. As if that wasn't hard enough they gave us a list of 55 tasks to complete along the way, such as:

Obtain a mobile phone
Obtain a digital camera
Train with a professional rugby team
Get on national TV
Meet **Richard Branson**
Drive a Ferrari

We thought that this would be impossible - no one was going to give three scruffy looking squaddies a digital camera for free. But lo and behold, I was wrong! After at least an hour of blagging the manager of London Camera Exchange in Bristol, he was grudgingly kind enough to donate a camera with all the expensive kit that goes with it. The camera got the ball rolling, and from then on, we managed to blag just about anything. We managed to drive a Ferrari, which no other group was able to do. We were also lucky enough to get put up for the night in a four star hotel, which was a bonus - especially as other groups spent the night on a cold park bench. However, despite all our efforts, **Richard Branson** apologised for not meeting with us, as he was busy trying to fly round the world in a balloon again, or something.

Not sure what to do next. LCpl Gaffney suggests that they 'Risk it for a biscuit'

Before we embarked on this mission, we thought it was going to be a very hungry and depressing 36 hrs, but when the three of us embraced the whole concept, we were unstoppable. We could have sold sand to the Arabs, we were that good. We never once went hungry, we managed to complete many of the tasks, and above all, we made it back in one piece. Overall, it was a very memorable experience, and it has taught me a lot about how things work in the outside world; and that with a bit of initiative, courage and determination, anything can be accomplished. But it was not all to be fast planes and cars. Very soon we were back in the real world, working out how to cross imaginary rivers with a plank, during the follow-on leadership package. Short but intense, it covered all of the main areas of leadership development, but more importantly, it showed us that everyone has the potential; but it's what you do with it that counts.

222 SIGNAL SQUADON

OC	**Maj RJ Farrimond**
SSM	**WO2 A WARD**

EXERCISE RED TRICORN *- by Sig Wardlaw*

On 19 August, 222 Sig Sqn deployed on EX RED TRICORN 3. This was to be the first Trunk Node deployment for Aden Tp since Orbat 05, giving us a chance to try out for the new NRF 6 commitment.

Our first loc was at Sidbury Hill. After we had all set up and started to get comfortable, OSC decided to move us to the opposite side of the Plain.

We arrived in our new loc at around 02.00hrs and had to set up in the dark. Apparently, this was one of our NRF 6 requirements. We stayed in this loc for two days, and were quite happy with how well we had managed to set up.

Our next move was when the Regtl part of the ex started, and we were moved to Westdown Plantation. This is where we spent the rest of the ex, and managed to get in to a good routine, which included the occasional shower run. OSC joined our loc on the second day and shared our admin tent where we were well catered for by **Pte Thomson** and **Cpl Doran**. Finally, **Sig Harrison** was then presented with the new Squadron prize (a frying pan) for having the best Det on ex.

Cpl Graham and Sig Hall evacuate casualties

BATTLE CAMP *- by Sig Crossman*

Oh no, it's come round again! The ex we all dread. Yes, BATTLE CAMP! We were all lined up with all our kit, rifles signed out and bayonets firmly in our possession. A nice 3km tab into loc at the start of the ex phase increased our morale.

We arrived in our harbour area, and were told to basha up for a long night. By 21.00hrs we were seeing the best thunder and lightning we had ever known. The next two days consisted of trg for peacekeeping ops. The peacekeeping phase included constant mortaring, suicide bombing, anti-ambush patrols and general defending of locs.

Cpl 'Lara Croft' beats up Sig Butterfield. Did it feel good?

OUR SAILORS ARE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS
- by Lt Rachel Thompson

The 2005 J24 National Sailing Championships were held in Weymouth in September, with 41 entries. 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt sailors, **Capt Ewan Watson** and **Lt Rachel Thompson** were part of the strong team on yacht *Hitchhiker*.

The National Championships were always going to be a hard fought and tough event, with the World Championships following a week later. Competitors from America, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, the Netherlands, Japan, and Ireland travelled to Weymouth to join the British fleet for this vital event prior to the World Champs.

Team *Hitchhiker* had a successful event, and achieved a string of top 10 results after up to 8 hrs on the water each day in which the Royal Signals team's fitness shone through. On Sunday 04 September, they took the title and were crowned 2005 J24 National Champions.

The race is on

The victorious J24 Team

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

This month's Wire notes include updates from our Sqn in Iraq and our Sqn in the Balkans, as well as a flavour of the fast pace and varied life back in Germany. The Regt devotes every Friday in bks exclusively to trg, and the programme currently reflects next year's deployment to Afghanistan. The roles and tasks are not yet confirmed, but with intelligent soldiering and decisive leadership, everyone is looking forward to what opportunities 2006 will bring to the Regt.

OPERATIONS

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON - OPERATION OCULUS

OC **Maj D Hay** RA Sigs
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Balmforth**

Time continues to pass quickly for personnel on OP OCULUS. Now that we have had the recce from our replacements, we feel we can now start thinking about how to spend our POTL!

The CO and RSM came out to theatre for a three-day visit. After many changes to the flight schedule, they finally arrived in Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF) at about 01.00hrs on Tuesday 23 August. After their quick sleep, we demonstrated our capabilities and showed off our fantastic surroundings, allowing everyone to meet the Regt! hierarchy, which had changed since our deployment!

We have had lots going on lately, not least of which have been visits from **Michele Marsh**, **Lucy Pinder** (who was lucky enough to win a 'Blind Date' with **LCpl Baron**) and the former footballer **Neil Ruddock**.

AN HF EXPERIENCE – *by Sig Heather Jackson*

When asked to take part in a HF ex with the Dutch signallers, I did not know what to expect. The aim of the ex was for our Dutch colleagues to gain confidence in their equipt and its capabilities. **Kpl Poels** and I left the BLMF on 2 August, heading towards the Bihac Liaison Observation Team (LOT), ready for whatever the next three days had to offer. On arrival at the LOT house, we were greeted with a warm welcome from **Cpl Jessie Jessop**, Canadian Signals, with opening lines such as 'Hey maan, what's ours is yours!' From there, we were shown our accn and the grand tour of the house, before the real work began - and the usual 'I'm going outside to change the antenna' type stormy skies appeared!

By 14.00hrs, two 8m masts were set-up approximately 54m apart, ready for a variety of antennas to be demonstrated and tested. Over the following three days, we erected and demonstrated a number of antennas, testing their capabilities, using different frequencies, both during the daylight and at night. Every antenna used needed to be recorded with its predicted result and overall outcome. For the majority of the time, the radio equipt could only send and receive data (using the satellite laptop); we had little success with voice. This could be for many reasons, the signal can be affected by the bad weather, or there could be a fault with the radio, etc.

By the end of the ex, we could say that the three days had been a success. Another HF ex is planned for September, hopefully as part of EX SKYWAVE with a FofS course at Blandford.

KOSOVO – *by SSgt Nowosielski*

Saturday 30 July saw 50 people from Slim Lines line up on the start line for a half marathon. The perimeter of Jubilee Barracks (the barracks Slim Lines is situated in) is only just over a mile and a half. Therefore, apart from a one mile loop, all those taking part had eight laps of joy to look forward to! At 07.00hrs on a warm summer morning, COMBRITFOR (K) started the race. As time went by, and each lap was ticked off by the officials, the temperature made its way to 30°C. **SSgt Nowosielski**, **Sgt Melia** and **LCpls Barnaby** and **Pearson** all achieved respectable times completing the 13 miles in less than two hours. The rest of the day was spent recovering and repairing feet before a BBQ and entertainment in the British Bar.

The Med centre organised a day-long package of Blackhawk helicopter medivac trg. **Cpls Tillman** and **McGee** and **LCpls Barnaby** and **Evans** volunteered to help the American medical staff from Camp Bondsteel in practising their drills. The helicopter pilot assured everyone he had plenty of flight experience and time in the sky, and considering he'd flown in Vietnam, and we all felt reassured. The package started after breakfast with some basic stretcher work. A group of people would work together in strapping a keen volunteer onto a stretcher and placing them in the helicopter. The helicopter would then lift off and take both patient and stretcher party for a short flight around the local area.

After lunch, we sampled winch trg. This activity involved being attached to a small length of metal and then pulled roughly 50m up to the hovering helicopter. Each person experienced the thrill of spinning and swinging around in the air and then a broad grinning American confronting them with a camera telling them to smile. All those taking part thoroughly enjoyed a great break from the normal daily routine.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON – OPERATION TELIC

OC **Maj AJ Large**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Pritchard**

Early in 2005, 232 Sig Sqn was given the task of providing the majority of Royal Signals troops (less the Bde Sig Sqn) required in support of OP TELIC 6. To meet the Op Establishment Table

Maj Ingram hands over to Maj Large

(OET), tradesmen from 229, 231 and HQ Sqns, with specialist IS support from 16 Sig Regt were task organised around 232 Sig Sqn to ensure the best possible mix of personnel to meet the requirement.

March 05 saw the attachment of 13 soldiers to 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (228) for pre-deployment and OPTAG trg, prior to their 6-month deployment to Basrah. Early April saw the deployment of **Capt Tim Cooper** and 20 soldiers to Shaibah Log Base to form the Sig Tp in support of HQ National Support Element (NSE) and another 5 SNCOs to HQ MND(SE). In June, the remainder of the selected troops, (2+30) headed by the Sqn Comd Team, deployed to 4 separate locs in the East and West of the Baghdad AOR. For many, this is their first op tour in the Army, and for others their second tour in Iraq.

At this stage, the Sqn would like to wish all the best to the outgoing OC, **Maj Graham Ingram**, as he departs for Shrivenham, having handed over in theatre to **Maj Jim Large**. We promise to provide the cone on completion, providing he collects!

MY FIRST OPERATIONAL TOUR – *by Sig Hayley Bown*

The first thing I noticed as I stepped off the plane in Basrah was that the plane's engines were really hot. The heat hit me instantly! But it wasn't the plane's engines; it was the heat of Iraq.

Reality hit home on my second week here, when I realised where I was. It was 06.11hrs and my bed shook, followed by a bang! I had just experienced my first explosion, and from that day onwards I fully understood the saying, 'Always expect the unexpected.' We always kept helmets and body armour next to our beds. This made me realise that I was a long way from home.

I came out to TELIC 6 to work in a Comcen. This was something I hadn't done before, and I welcomed it with open arms. I soon had a routine to go by, and I'm now settled in comfortably. I have gained knowledge from the people I work with, both in and around the HQ, and although it isn't always the most exciting job in the world, I know that what I have learned will help me in the future.

It's not all work though. Working on shifts enables us to have the odd day off. There are many sights around to get some pictures. Again, a reality check! I was having pictures taken of me in places I had previously only seen on TV! Pictures that I know I will always have as a unique record of my first op tour.

MY FIRST TOUR WITH COALITION FORCES
– by LCpl Steve Edge

I definitely struck it lucky by deploying to Camp Victory in Southern Baghdad. We deployed late June 05, and I'm doing a short, four-month tour, of which I'm currently half way through. Camp Victory is a large Coalition Forces camp, predominantly American, making it a good place to be. The Americans help out with any kit we don't have, or even repairing our vehs, whilst the Australians supply the other nations and ourselves with an excellent swimming pool!

On the work side of life, there are quite a lot of different systems that we use. Originally coming from TM Tp, I haven't worked on a lot of these systems before, so I went on several courses before deploying. I have enjoyed the challenge of working outside my usual comfort zone, and feel that I have benefited greatly. The det holds two Promina Nodes, each made up of a red and a black, two meridians, and two V-Sat links. The maint schedule has to be more regular than back in bks, due to the rapid build-up of dust.

As the Sigs Det, we are located in Brit House, which is a focal point on camp for any British forces or civilian contractors to come and relax when not on duty. To help people relax, we have a huge plasma TV, DVD and stereo. We also have a dartboard and some fishing equipt, as Brit House backs onto the lake surrounding the Al Faw Palace. Brit House also hosts events such as quiz nights, which anybody can attend. We often get a lot of people turning up from all nations, and it's an excellent way to meet new people and get connections.

Overall, Baghdad has been an eye opener for me, on how different people live different lives. I am currently enjoying my tour, and once this has finished I will be looking forward to another tour in the future.

DUTIES OF A DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL'S SIGNALLER – *by LCpl Danny Parker*

The DCG, **Lt Gen R Brims**, arrives at the office at 07.00hrs, so I arrive at 06.30hrs, bright eyed and bushy-tailed, looking forward to another glorious sunny day. My main priority is to ensure that all the comms systems are in and working, which includes a test call to the Whitehall operator - which gives me great pleasure, as the UK are four hours behind us, so they are usually asleep. I then ensure the office is clean and polished, before logging onto the many computers. Next, a check of the not quite so reliable JOCS terminal, followed by an inspection of the Promina Det, to make certain that it is still looking like Blackpool in November. I then carry out some IMIs on the Promina Det. Once this is complete, I do my AGC clerk bit, and install the printers for the office staff, or change the cartridges. If there are any faults with the American provided systems, I report them to the American CIS team. There is then time to go to the gym or the pool, or in the evening play Bingo. When I was first informed that I was going to be the Lt Gen's Sig, I was quite nervous, especially as the post was in Baghdad, but after attending the various courses and a good handover/takeover, my confidence and knowledge has improved, along with my IT skills.

The DCG's Signallers

AT HOME - ELMPT STATION

ELMPT EAGLES RUGBY TEAM – VENLO TOURNAMENT

After rigorous trg sessions on 7 Sig Regt's rugby pitch, Sunday 28 August saw the formation of Elmpt Eagles Rugby Team.

Our first tournament was held in Holland, in the outskirts of Venlo. With all the necessary warm-ups, the team had an early start on Sunday morning, and then played four group matches with teams, such as Koln and Venlo's home team, who also hosted the event. The Elmpt Eagles were victorious throughout, scoring over 200 points, whilst only conceding 10 points! The final was due to

be played between Koln and Elmpt Eagles, unfortunately the Koln team conceded before play got underway, leaving the Elmpt Eagles to walk away with first place, and two lovely trophies.

Elmpt Eagles Rugby Team in action

We are now looking for more taxing fixtures, and despite its recent formation, the Team is already considered to be of the standard required to play teams of the calibre of the German National Squad in the near future.

ASCOT DAY

Ascot Day is an annual Anglo-German horse-racing event held at the Krefeld Rennbahn, at which 7 Sig Regt traditionally sponsor the first race, and also provide a number of peculiarly British attractions throughout the day. The event was first held in 1995 when 7 Sig Regt was based near the city of Krefeld. This is one of many connections between the Regt and the city, which include the granting of the Freedom of the City. The horse-racing meeting has continued to be a major social event in both the Regt's and the City's calendars, even after the Regt moved from Krefeld to Elmpt in 2002.

This year, the attractions included a Best Hat competition for the ladies, a Fish and Chip stand, a Pimms/Cocktail Bar, a strawberries and cream stand, and an Old English beer garden, as well as the all-important Military Band, kindly supplied this year by The Band of The Royal Engineers.

Over 5,000 people attended on the day, with over 200 individuals and guests from 7 Sig Regt, the guest of honour being **Maj Gen CC Brown CBE ADC** (COS ARRC).

Lt Col Blackwell present First Prize at Ascot Day

Herr G Beyerlein riding *Atlantic Dancer* won the 7 Sig Regt race, and was subsequently presented his Regtl trophy by the CO, **Lt Col Alan Blackwell**. In spite of the typically British weather, a party atmosphere suffused the whole event throughout the day, with German and British race-goers alike throwing themselves wholeheartedly into the Ascot theme. In spite of some extravagant effort on the part of certain members of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, the Best Hat competition was eventually won by a lady.

NIJMEGEN MARCHES 2005

231 Sig Sqn sent a team to the annual Nijmegen 4 Day Marches. These marches take place in the City of Nijmegen and its surrounding area, and it is the biggest calendar event of the City, with teams from all over the world entering. A huge military contingent includes contingents from as far afield as Canada, Austrailia and US.

We arrived on the Saturday morning, and after booking into our accn, we headed off to the centre of Nijmegen for a social drink. When we arrived in the city, it was amazing to see the amount of organisation that had gone into the event.

There was everything from rollercoaster rides to enormous stages erected all over the city, with live music and entertainment everywhere you looked. The 4 days before the marches turn out to be a long 4 days, with bars all over the city open until 03.00hrs every morning, and a lot of Dutch culture to sample.

LCpl Walker loses his headdress on the Nijmegen Marches

However, the social aspects had to end at some point, and did so with a jolt on Tuesday morning at 04.00hrs, when the first march began. Each march took a different route over the 4 days, with the only constants being the distance covered and the immense amount of support from the spectators and the other marchers. Our team started well in the event, with 12 team members, even carrying other nationalities left behind by their own teams during the first 2 days.

By Day 3, the marches started to take their toll, with some very big blisters and even one very bad case of trench foot! By Day 4, we were in tatters. But even with a 03.30hrs start, the lads were ready, feet bandaged, to complete the last 40-km stretch. The route was busier that ever, with every street, rooftop and balcony covered with supporters and partying revellers.

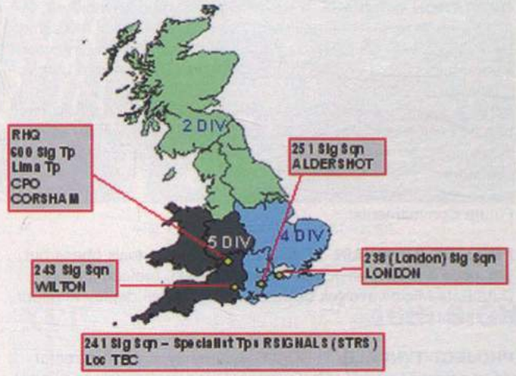
At last we had finished...or so we thought. After we had received our medals and had a group photo, we were back on the road in an impressive British Forces Contingent parade, to complete what felt like another 40km though the streets of Nijmegen.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col PW Glibbery**
Tech Adjt	**Capt (TOT) MR Flather**
Adjt	**Capt G Irwin**

With effect from 1 October 05, the Regt has reformed to provide high readiness ICS and specialist teams to support National or Land contingencies in UK, and expeditionary ops. This has been a busy period, with the Regt in a constant state of flux.

The civilian and military elements of the Regt supporting LCSS(R), ISIS and the COMMCENS/ADAs have all transferred to DCSA, which has resulted in 241 Sig Sqn and 242 Sig Sqn being completely re-rôled. 241 Sig Sqn will take on infrastructure installation activities, and manning will be drawn from Lima Tp and other Regts under FAS. Its new loc has yet to be decided. 242 Sig Sqn will reform in due course, with its new loc yet to be decided, depending upon the direction and outcome of the normalisation of N Ireland. The new UK geographic Regimental ORBAT is reflected below:



241 and 242 Sig Sqn's histories are outlined in this month's magazine, along with their involvement in this year's Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Congratulations to **WO2 (Supvr IS) Collins** for being awarded a CinC's Meritorious Service Certificate for his work on the LCSS(R) and ISIS Delamination project.

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING OFFICE

OC	**Maj (TOT) AG Jenkins**
Ops WO	**WO2 P Batley**

The CPO was established as an integral part of 10 Sig Regt following the closure of ACIS Eng Gp at Blandford. This in turn had followed the closure of the Airfield Comms Planning Office (ACPO) that historically resided in RAF Bruggen, and employed Inst Techs in the maint of Germany-based RAF Airfields. With the closure of the majority of these airfields, the role and manpower was rationalised and distributed between ACIS Eng Gp, 30 Sig Regt and the retention of capability within 16 Sig Regt to support HQ ARRC.

CPO is a small, but finely tuned team. In addition to the OC and Ops WO, we have 3 Inst Tech SSgt Project Planners, 1 NRPS SSgt SQMS and an E2 Admin Assistant. The team is responsible for the installation of cable infrastructure projects in support of expeditionary ops, PJOBS, HQ Land overseas sites, and support to exs and any other tasks.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj James Vosper**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jim McEwan**

Another busy period for the Sqn, with Tps deployed on Incident Response taskings to the G8 Summit, recruiting on OP LONDON SOLDIER, assisting 251 Sig Sqn on OP BASILISK and trg for EX GRAND PRIX. The horrific events of 7 July resulted in the IRT being stood up, and the London Ops Room being frantically prepared for occupation.

However, despite our eagerness to help, the civilian authorities decided not to use our shiny comms equipt and highly-trained comms specialists. **Cpl Reid** and the ECM motorbike were required to escort the PM from Chelsea Bks to Downing Street. Apparently this was a hairy experience, as he sped through the roads of London to keep up with the Police outriders and PM's car.

Throughout this very busy period the Sqn has also managed to squeeze in some leave, lots of testing PT, sports afternoons on Wednesdays, and a few social events in the City, including a number of visits to The Church.

THE G8 SUMMIT IN GLENN EAGLES - *by Cpl Clarke*

The incident Response Team (IRT) was selected to supply a comms det to the HQ at the Glenn Eagles Hotel and Golf course on OP ORETTA. The team consisted of **Sgt Phillips**, **Cpl Clarke**, **Cpl Tasker** and **Sig Dunkin**.

The team deployed on Monday 27 June, and after 7 hrs driving, finally arrived at 32 Sig Regt, where we stored our equipt until it was required. On Tuesday morning we all carried out a recce on the HQ, which turned out to be no more than a tent in the middle of the golf course. All the kit was tested, and it all worked first time.

All was going quite smoothly, the police canteen was quite good, and the job was running without any problems. That is until the first day of the summit, when **Cpl Tasker** and **Sgt Phillips** encountered protesters on the dual carriageway. One protester jumped onto their car bonnet and **Cpl Tasker** was forced to tell him politely to get off. Coming off nights that morning was a nightmare, all of the roads to Glasgow were closed, so I had to travel 150 miles to do a 40 mile journey, and as you can imagine, this was not a good day - until I heard the good news of the Olympic bid result for London!

The following day was July 7, and seeing the news was one of the most saddening days we have all had. The entire det has friends and family in the Capital, and it was obviously a worrying time. Eventually, everyone managed to confirm that their loved ones were OK, so we cracked on with getting the PM back to London and then back to Glen Eagles.

The final day of the Summit was a little less busy, but it all went well. After tearing down the equipt and giving back all the borrowed kit, we headed back to the hotel for some well-deserved sleep. Overall, it was hard work, but very successful and rewarding.

241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

241 Sig Sqn, in common with other fixed Sig Sqns, have as their roots, the 'between the wars' Comd Sig Coys, and was formed

on 2 July 1920 at Chester Castle. Our role has not changed significantly from that day to this. Of course there have been inevitable changes in locs, boundaries, establishments, commitments and personnel, according to the requirements of the day, but our task has always been to provide and maintain static comms for Comd Div.

1920 – 39	Western Comd Sig Coy.
1939 - 56	Changed title to Western Comd Sigs, a Regt with 2 Coys. At its height the Regt had strength of 600.
1956 - 59	Regt disbanded to form Western Comd Sig Sqn, based at Blacon Camp Chester and Comd Signal Works Services (SWS) in Copthorne Bks Shrewsbury.
1959	Western Comd Sig Sqn was re-named 241 Sig Sqn (Western Comd), and the unit moved to Parsons Bks Donnington.
1967	SWS became an integral part of the Sqn.
1976	Sig Eqpt Tp from COD Donnington joined the Sqn.
1987	Sig Eqpt Tp becomes BOD Sig Tp and leaves the Sqn.
1987 - 98	Apart from a steady decline in dets and their size the Sqn has remained largely unchanged.
January 1998	Formation of Army CIS Group (ACISG).
1 April 1999	42 (NW) Bde dets transfer to 242 Sig Sqn.
1 June 2000	43 (WX) Bde dets and elements of 243 Sig Sqn come under comd.
1 January 2001	HQ 5 Div and Regional Bde IT Staff come under comd.
1 June 2001	LWTC Warminster IT Staff come under comd.
4 July 2002	Sqn becomes part of the re-formed 10 Sig Regt.

242 SIGNAL SQUADRON - THE END OF AN ERA

On 15 September 2005, 242 Sig Sqn, with personnel in Grampian Tp Edinburgh, Pennine Tp York, Catterick and Preston, disbanded in all but name to reform again in the near future in a new and exciting role. Our civilian personnel are changing cap badge to DCSA, and all remaining military will be posted. Of note, the OC **Maj Tudor Hill** will be moving to DCSA DII in Corsham, OC Grampian Tp, **Maj (TOT) Lee Brown** will be retiring after 36 years' colour service and OC Pennine Tp, **Maj (Tfc) Terry Crosby** will be finishing out his service with the Sqn.

242 Sig Sqn has been in existence since 1922, when it was known as Scottish Comd Signal Company. Over the past 83 years the Sqn has undergone various name changes, and has seen its AOR expand from Scottish units and ranges to Scotland and the North of England, encompassing 15 Bde, 42 Bde, 51 Bde and 52 Bde areas. In recent times, it became ACISG, and finally part of 10 Sig Regt.

Maj Lee Brown with elements of the Sqn at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2005.

Alongside the normal day-to-day military comms and IT commitments, the Sqn has provided PA for the Edinburgh and Berwick Military Tattoos since 1951. Some of the civilian personnel have worked on over 20 of the shows! **Mr Ian Ingham** worked the Tattoo as a Sgt with the Sqn, and when he was discharged in 1992, found himself remaining with the Sqn and continuing with the Tattoo, albeit in civilian uniform.

More recently the Sqn has been at the forefront of delamination with 10 Sig Regt. ISM teams have been working throughout Scotland, the north of England and Brunei to complete the delamination process.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj N Beecher**
SSM	**SSgt S Wedge**

The Sqn has reorganised and now has the following commitments:

OPERATION BASILISK The Sqn assumed the commitment for OP BASILISK from 30 Sig Regt on 02 September 05. This provides C2 ICS for deployed Military elements assisting Blue Light Crisis Ops at Very High Readiness.

OPERATION COMPASS The Sqn also assumed an Incident Response Team (IRT) commitment from 30 Sig Regt at the same time. To provide C2 ICS to regional HQ to support Military force elements deployed on MACA and Defence ICS resilience tasks.

EDWIN EDWIN is a deployable LAN, providing up to a hundred HQ staff with Restricted and limited Secret IS and Voice/Fax systems, under an OP COMPASS or Business Continuity scenario.

Future Commitments:

PROJECT KEYCHAIN KEYCHAIN is still in its trials phase but will, once it enters service at the end of 2005, provide a High Data Rate Microwave link between two key sites deployed under Blue Light Crisis Ops.

PROJECT TYNDALE TYNDALE is currently at the contractor down selection phase of procurement, and is intended to provide a single, updated, ICS capability for much of the separate equipts currently utilised for UK Ops.

TRANSFERRING – IS IT REALLY A NIGHTMARE?
- by Maj James Vosper

The football transfer window may have closed for another year, but the Royal Signals transfer market appears to be booming. I am one of a growing number of other arms officers who have been welcomed into the Corps. The transfer process proved extremely easy: two letters, an interview, passing a board and swapping my caubeen for a beret and Jimmy.

The most painful part of the experience was digging deep to buy my new uniforms; but the upside is they all fit very comfortably, and my wife prefers them to my old ones. Yes, it did feel a little odd putting them on the first time, but you soon get used to it and you never have to throw your memories away or lose old friends.

Is it a good thing? I certainly think so. The infantry could no longer employ me gainfully, but Royal Signals assessed they could still put my leadership and tech skills to good use. It may surprise some Signallers, but there are also some pretty competent 'hybrid' individuals outside the Corps. When I transferred into the Corps, whilst on the Design of IS Masters Degree Course, the Infantry had as many students on the course as the Royal Signals. Together we made up almost two thirds of the course.

Maj Vosper on HMCS Athabascan

I also strongly believe transfer is healthy for the Corps. Helping address DE under-manning at Capt and Maj level alone has to be a good idea. I don't think it's just a bums on seats exercise either, my impression is that the Corps have been fairly selective in whom they choose. I also strongly feel that a few other experience-based perspectives can be very valuable to such a large and widely employed Corps. You have only to look outside the Army to see how often successful people jump from one completely different industry to another. I don't think the corps and arms within the Army are as different as we are often like to think.

So has it worked for me? I transferred over 18 months ago now, but having just spent a year away at the Canadian Comd and Staff College, I feel like I have only really just joined the Corps. My year spent in Canada bluffing at being a proper Signals officer and amazing people with my in depth knowledge of Div Armd tactics (which I obviously insisted all British Signals officers have) was both challenging and interesting. Looking back into Europe from a North American NATO perspective was highly insightful. Even after only three weeks as OC 238 (London) Sig Sqn, Canada seems a very long way away. Most importantly, in my short time in the Sqn, I have been delighted to discover what I had always suspected, that the Army is the Army and soldiers are soldiers. It's just that Royal Signals soldiers tend to be more intelligent! The Sqn is small, but very busy delivering high readiness capability for UK ops and support to some of the highest profile military events the Army conducts; as well as providing close support to London District. It is certainly a worthy challenge. I have twice as many WOs and NCOs to manage as I would have had in an infantry coy, and we have to deliver the goods day in day out, not just at key times of the year.

So I would say to those Sys Eng Techs who are worrying about transferring to new homes in the Army, don't worry unduly. You, like all Royal Signals soldiers, have skills and strengths in abundance; and with the right motivation and an open mind, I am sure you will quickly succeed in any part of the Army you choose. Perhaps, transferring really isn't that much of a big deal after all.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Jason Renshaw**

VISIT OF SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

As part of his visit to 1 Sig Bde, SOinC(A), **Brig JE Thomas MBE ADC** spent a day at Elmpt Station, where he was hosted by 16 Sig Regt in the morning, and 7 Sig Regt in the afternoon. **Lt Oli Lees** from 16 Sig Regt was his ADC.

Brig Thomas MBE with SSgt Pollock and his family, after receiving his LS and GC Medal

After receiving a brief from CO 16 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**, and signing the visitors' book, the Brigadier met soldiers and their families at the Regtl Bar, *The Wall and Willow*. Before lunch, he hit Hill 60 and the skidpan in a Landrover, under instruction from **Sgt Leader**. This was followed by a mil skills demo by 230 Sig Sqn, and included NBC and First Aid in the field. Lunch was taken in the Sgts' Mess, where **SSgt Pollock**, **SSgt Wilkinson** and **Sgt Zelnis** were presented with their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals.

LATE ENTRY COMMISSIONING BOARD

Congratulations go to **WO1 (RSM) Jason Renshaw** and **WO1 (YofS) Al Campbell**, who were both successful on the recent LECB.

EXERCISE DOLOMITE BACKSTOP – *by Sig Kirkbride*

EX DOLOMITE BACKSTOP took members of 230 Sqn on AT to the Italian Dolomites. We started at a little camp outside Cortina. After Elmpt Station, which is flat, we now understood the true meaning of a mountain. We were surrounded by breathtaking views, and everyone felt like they were in a scene from *The Sound of Music*. On the second day, after climbing two peaks, there was no shortage of disco legs. On the third day, we were, at times, climbing up on all fours. But everyone agreed it was well worth it, once you reached the top.

The trekking phase was broken up by R and R in Venice, and at the ice rink. Afterwards we returned to the mountains for a section map reading competition. It was over 16km, and at each CP, there were comd tasks testing the skills we had learned over the two weeks.

EX DOLOMITE BACKSTOP was really hard at times, but it was an excellent experience, and everyone had a laugh.

High on a mountain on EX DOLOMITE BACKSTOP

THE NIJMEGEN MARCHES

The four-day Nijmegen Marches is mainly a civilian event. Each year thousands of people turn up to walk distances of up to 120 miles. This year, 12 of the elite 16 Sig Regt decided to enter, and walk 100 miles. After a short bus journey, we ended up at Camp Heumensoord, where we were introduced to our cosy accn.

At 03.00hrs on Day 1, after just managing to get in a reasonably good place in the start queue, we found we had forgotten our start card. Eventually, at 05.30hrs, we started, with the Dutch contingent. By the end of the first day, we all knew what bits of kit we had to adjust, according to the blisters on our feet. Sleep was the only thing on everyone's mind.

On Day 2, we had a successful early morning start. We passed through many small towns, with very appreciative cheering people - young and old. By the end of the day, after eating cheese and ham sandwiches for breakfast and dinner, more substantial food was required. So a trip to Pizza Hut in Nijmegen railway station sounded more appealing than the cookhouse. After the meal, we explored some of the bars in the town centre. With live bands everywhere, it was hard not to enjoy ourselves.

On Day 3, a pattern was beginning to emerge - get up early, then walk 25 miles. By now, we had walked 50 miles, and our feet were letting us know. By the end of the day, we had walked 75 miles.

Day 4, the final day, was great in terms of support. We got lots of cheers from bystanders, and everybody sang enthusiastically. **Cpl Jay Bates** recreated a scene from the film, *Full Metal Jacket* with a fellow American marcher, and we all treated ourselves to a beer in a small town called Beers. As we approached the final rest stop, our team was forced into single file and were funnelled across a temporary bridge. By the time we had finished, everyone felt a huge sense of achievement, not just individually, but as a team. Twelve had started, and twelve had finished.

Sig Lisa Balshaw gives the thumbs up

BA(G) INTER-UNIT TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

On 7 September, 16 Sig Regt hosted the 10km road race at Javelin Bks. It was organised by **WO1(QMSI) McColl** and the PTIs of 16 Sig Regt. 150 BA(G) runners set off at midday, in temperatures over 27° C.

The winner was **Sgt Steve Baker**, who finished in 34 mins 54 secs. The female winner was **SSgt Michelle McBride**. Both 16 Sig Regt's male and female teams finished in third place. Prizes were awarded by Chairman of Army Athletics, **Col Fairclough**.

16 Sig Regt's Male BA(G) Road Race Team

THE 4th INTERNATIONAL MILITARY PATROL
– by Lt Jim McMillan

After competing in the Lanyard Trophy and Nijmegen Marches, the Regt was looking for its next challenge. The 4th International Military Patrol at Bischofszell was the target. Our team of three competed against other nations, to compare fitness and general knowledge, as well as experiencing some of the Swiss Military's equipt.

The nations participating included Germans, Italians, Latvians, Polish and Swiss. Among the events, were grenade throwing, a pistol range, and an anti-tank weapon range. Using this new equipt was exciting, but challenging, and this was reflected in our mid-way standing of fourteenth place.

Sig Rea, Sig Howland and Lt McMillan – 4th place

The afternoon session gave **Sigs Howland** and **Rea** the opportunity display their fitness, as they dragged team leader, **Lt McMillan** around the 15km nav course. The final standing showed that we, the sole representatives of the British Army had finished in fourth place.

The event was a success for all, and proved to be an excellent opportunity to socialise with our neighbouring Armed Forces. Special thanks go to **SSgt Brown** who put so much effort into the organisation.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Horton BEM**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Anthea Burdus**

Following the arrival of new Sqn OC, **Maj Paul Horton BEM**, our SSM, **WO2(SSM) Anthea Burdus**, departs promotion to become RSM at ATR Bassingbourn; and our SQMS, **SSgt SQMS) Andy Hayes** will also be moving on promotion to become RQMS of 101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on promotion to WO2.

Our congratulations to **WO1(YofS) Rick Carley**, **WO1(FofS) Martin Flather** and **WO2(SSM) Anthea Burdus** on their passing a recent LECB.

The Sqn has recently been focussed on EX RED BEAUFIGHTER 3, the third of this year's Regtl exs. Following on from the summer posting season, this ex gave the new members of the Sqn the opportunity to take part in a full deployment of A1 and A2 Echs. Locs ranged from Colerne to Keevil Airfields. The Sqn OC and the OC of A2 Echelon, QM (T) **Capt Chris Kidd** used the opportunity of their first ex together to evaluate all Ech procedures, with a view to improving the already excellent service provided to the Regt. We are now looking forward to November's EX RED BEAUFIGHTER 4, which will see us deployed to the wet and windy wilds of Sennybridge.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

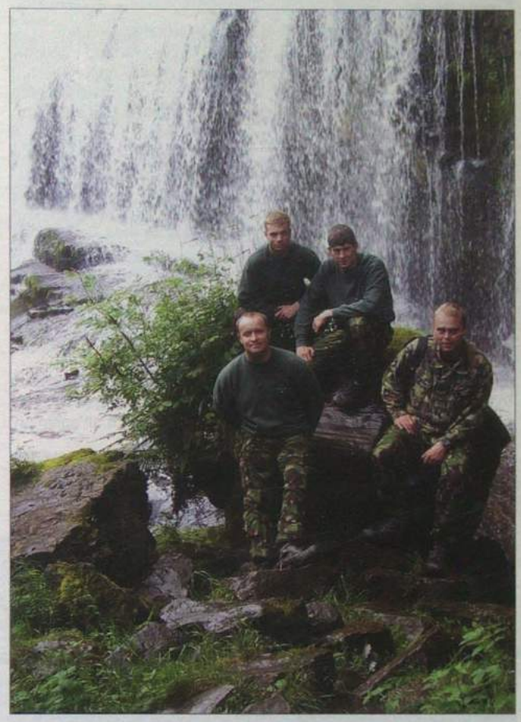
OC	**Maj G Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 W Dunbar**

We have said farewell to **Maj Bob Lovett**, **YofS Clint Barker** and **FofS Mark Ebdon**, and in their place, we welcome **Maj Gareth Lamb**, **YofS Andy Mount** and **FofS Paul Landregan**.

More recently, the Sqn has just come back from EX RED BEAUFIGHTER 3, which gave newcomers a chance to get to grips with Regtl deployments. 220 Sqn were almost hitched on the ex, we had something old – the 2IC and SSM, something new – OC, YofS and FofS, something borrowed – the lighting kit from 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt. All we were missing was something blue… but we're sure the RAF will come on an ex one day soon.

LCpl Ian Tranter and **Sig Tom Purvin** have deployed on EX JEBEL SAHARA in Morocco, where they will be supporting the RAF providing ground to air comms. **LCpl Prince** and **Sig Hardy** deployed to London to take part in OP LONDON SOLDIER, a recruiting event in the capital, where they assure us that the local ladies have more than a passing interest in the Corps.

Golf Tp managed to get away on EX GOLF RANGER, a Tp-level ex in the Brecon Beacons, carrying out conservation work and AT. Members of the Tp took part in horse riding and rock climbing as well as being involved in repairing pathways, digging drainage ditches and even wrecking redundant staircases! With so many sharp objects, it was surprising that the Tp were let loose, but luckily there were no casualties.



In the wilds of the Brecon Beacons

July saw a number of India Tp slumming it in various hotels in Scotland, whilst providing ground to air comms at the G8 Summit.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Lloyd Golley**
SSM	**WO2 Mick Brown**

EXERCISE LION SUN 10/05

244 Sig Sqn and some augmentees from the rest of 21 Sig Regt deployed to Cyprus on EX LION SUN 10/05 eager to learn what the Ops team had in store for them. As the advance party, the Ops team, led by **Maj Lloyd Golley**, had 7 days head start on the rest of the Sqn. They reportedly spent the entire time

checking bookings and putting the finishing touches to the package, though we heard that the beach was very nice too.

Prior to deployment, the Sqn was spilt into three platoons, and had 2 weeks to bond as a team with a period of beat up exs and range packages. Even though the weather in the UK was nothing like Cyprus, the Sqn worked hard in prep for the 4 weeks ex to come.

The lucky ones had the comfort of a VC10, while the rest were to fly hours later on a C130. It was just the luck of the draw, but all the DS managed to be on the first flight; what a coincidence! As they got off the aircraft, the first thing to hit the troops was the heat, and then the voice of the SSM, making sure all the '*doughnuts*' and baggage were quickly on the transport to Radio Sonde, their home for the next four weeks.

After some time acclimatising, with inter-platoon sports, an orienteering competition, and mandatory lessons, the fun began. The first three weeks had the platoons taking part in different activities, the three stands being range packages in Dhekelia, a mil skills stand just north of Radio Sonde, and an AT package on Tunnel Beach.

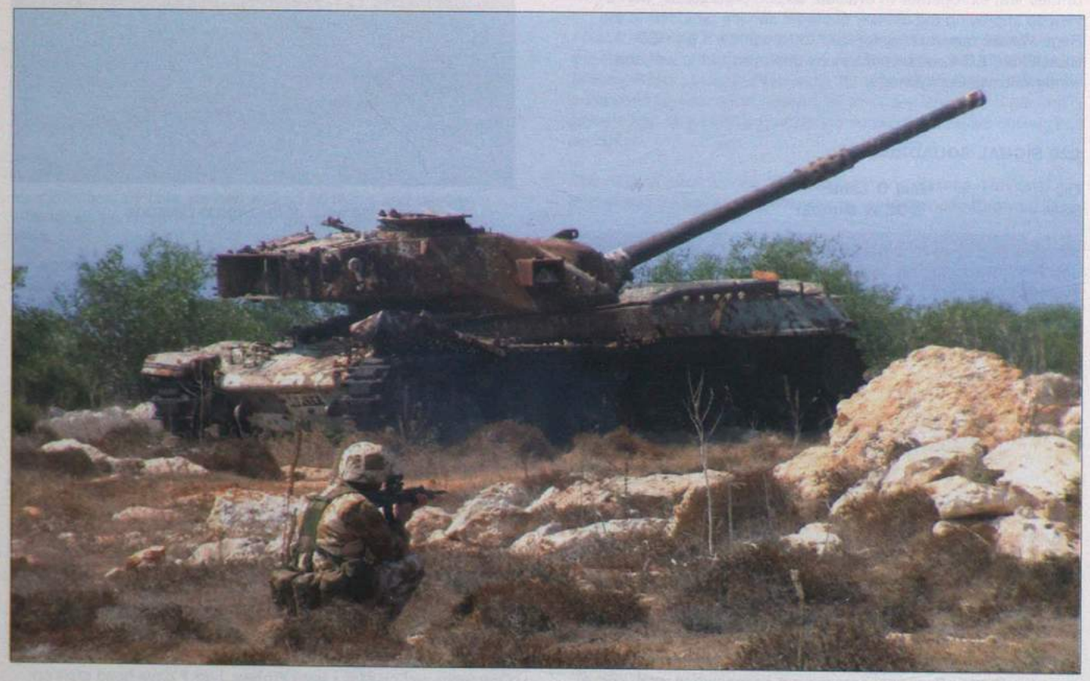
The range package, run by **SSM Mick Brown** and **SSgt Mo Pay**, was aimed at fire team and pairs level fire and movement. The troops were using all the skills they had gone through during the previous few weeks, but this time, because of the heat, things were a lot more difficult. The constant stops due to boats sailing into the danger area also caused some delays. However all the lead hornets went down the range, and the battle with the Fig 11 targets was won.

The mil skills package, led by **SSgt Gav Smiley** was an eye opener. With the heat, the normally easy task of patrolling 2 km to recce an old ruin, was very difficult. But they managed to complete the task, being aware that they had to do it all again on the final phase of the ex.

The AT at Tunnel Beach was run by **SSgt Billy Morris**, and the mood was very different. With water skiing, snorkelling, sailing, kayaking and the mandatory sun worship sessions, the platoon wore nothing but smiles. **Cpl Howe** led the sailing in Pico boats, and although there was not a lot of wind, the lads and lasses managed to get their boats out into open water, with one or two people dropping in a few times. Some troops were heard to sat 'It was more like a holiday rather than an ex.' But reality was soon to bite back, when they moved to the next stand, where shorts were exchanged for CEFO. Tps were seen getting onto the back of a hot Bedford with a rifle and no smile!

It was then time for prep for the final ex. Defence stores issued, orders given, and last minute checks made of kit. Rumours were running wild as to what we were going to be doing. And with the completion of Heli drills and an introduction to the rigid raider in the first few weeks, they knew there was fun ahead. **Lt Nick Pryce-Jones** led the dawn assault onto Melander Beach with 1 Platoon. It went without a hitch; a frontal assault, followed by a right-flanking movement onto the enemy loc, took very little time. After the rest of the Sqn hit the beach on the LSLs from 417 Maritime Support Tp, they tabbed to the pick-up points for the helicopter and the Bedford.

On arrival to Paramali Village, the platoons soon had the place fortified and made it their home for the next few days. Tasks were given to the patrols, such as long-range recce, standing patrols, recovery of refugees and arms, etc. Most of the tasks were carried out with no problem, but a few of the patrols got navigationally embarrassed and returned to Paramali empty handed. This meant the Ops Team had to think fast, with little sleep. The pace of the ex increased day by day, until the morning of the final attack. The PFF (the enemy), led by **SSgt Billy Morris**, probed the village defences and generally aggravated the platoons. Then at 07.30hrs the village woke to the screams of 'Stand Too!' as **Sgt Wells** and his PFF Section stormed the North VCP for the final push. The firefight that followed would have made a good scene in a movie. The smoke added to the confusion, as they pushed the troops back from their positions, and ended up taking a key building. Inevitably, the battle of good and evil ended up with the PFF being beaten back into the hills, and the village was secured again. With the battle won and the PFF beaten, ENDEX was called; and after all



Attacking with 'armoured support'

The defenders

the brass had been picked, up the tired but victorious troops returned to Radio Sonde Camp, to start their turn around of kit and war stories.

The R and R package consisted of a day out on a Pirate fun boat from Paphos for the first day, and a day out in Paphos Water Park for the second. Although the day on the Pirate Boat started slow and the troops were wondering if it was a good idea, they soon proved to themselves that a pirate boat + a few beers = a good day's sailing.

The boat dropped anchor in a bay so every one could indulge in the food laid on and go for a swim off the side. The Water Park was a fun, but somewhat subdued affair. It was a fun but hot end to the two-day package, but the lads could already smell UK and home calling.

EX LION SUN 10/05 was well received and enjoyed by all the troops. A lot was learned, and they did things they may never do again. The Sqn now looks forward to the return to normal Regtl life, and the many BOWFIGHTER exs it throws at them.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JA Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Surendra**

CONCENTRATION CAMP 05

Over the period 16 - 29 July 05 members of 21 Sig Regt (AS) participated on a 2 week Concentration Camp, in and around Okehampton Camp and Dartmoor Trg Area. The aim of the trg was to develop teamwork and to enable the Sqns to bond.

The first week consisted of map reading and night navex to prepare for the deployment phase in the second week, and also included some ITD trg and an indoor SAT range. The week ended with the Really Tough Guy challenge, with the CO's team, led by **Lt Col Halstead**, taking on the whole Regt. 20 teams took part, and the CO ended up buying a can of beer to every member of the 16 teams that finished above him.

With a few minor adjustments and nav lessons under the belt, the second week commenced on Monday 25 July. The week was mainly spent hill walking in the Dartmoor Trg Area, with a few comd tasks and a 12-mile forced march thrown in.

The JNCOs and Sigs demonstrated their leadership abilities during a variety of activities. They were tested physically and mentally, while the DS looked on in amazement and in some cases, humour. It was an eventful 2 weeks, and gave the junior members of the Regt a good insight into leadership.

One of the many comd tasks

Cpl Dev on a recce mission

On the final day all the weary competitors gathered on the Parade Square, and after the prize giving by the CO, there was some serious fluid replacement and an excellent BBQ organised by the chefs in HQ Sqn.

EXERCISE KHUKURI CHOP

EX KHUKURI CHOP was 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn's first field trg ex, and took place in Sennybridge trg area from 31 August to 8 September 05. Just recently formed, the Sqn has proven its capability during numerous Bde and Regtl exs. However, this was the first time the Sqn had deployed its full assets and personnel to test its trunk capabilities, and enhance comms skills.

All three Trunk Nodes, four Switching Centrals and a SAN group from 220 Sig Sqn were deployed with OSC 132. Initially, once all the assets were in their locs, each TN began a 12-hr rotational

cycle: prep, move and routine; thus allowing all three TNs to move into a new loc and re-establish the link, before next TN moves. As the ex progressed, this cycle was gradually reduced to 8-hr and 4-hr rotational cycles. All four switching centrals and the SAN group followed the similar pattern of move, under the control of OSC 132, to provide mobile comms to the TN on the move. Without doubt, this ex not only gave opportunities to enhance comms skills, it also proved PTARMIGAN could be rapidly deployable.

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

ARMY

CO **Lt Col SL Streete TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) McGrail**

31 Sig Regt has seen changes in a number of personalities over the past few months. First to arrive was **Maj Ros Brown**, who replaced **Maj Steve Smoothy** as Trg Maj. **Capt Harry Kemp** then took over as QM from **Capt Blod Godwin**, and this was quickly followed by **Maj Ian Roger** handing over the Adjt's post to **Capt Hannah Owen**.

Lt Col Simon Hutchinson MBE then relinquished comd of the Regt and handed over to **Lt Col Sarah Streete TD** just in time for Annual Camp. Within hours of the CO being dined in, the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) JJ Johnston**, was being dined out and handing over to the latest new arrival, **WO1 (RSM) McGrail**.

With all these postings going on, the Regt still managed to run an excellent annual Camp and prepare the Honour Guard for this year's Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj AT Lamb**
SSM **WO2 J Paine**

The Sqn has been very busy over the summer, holding two exs to test its readiness to support the Civil Contingency Reaction Force (CCRF). These exs yielded promising results, despite being largely reliant on a small core of experienced ops, and provided the opportunity for some of the new hands to learn the role of the Sqn on the job.

EX MARTELLO TOWER was held at Eastbourne TAC in the immediate wake of the London bombings, giving the task a grim sense of realism.

The Sqn then deployed to the environs of Longmoor for EX CAPITAL EAGLE, where it provided the robust comms required, and defended its loc against a determined enemy attack. **Capt Ukpai's** single-handed commitment to the war on terror deserves some note as, with the assistance of a fanatically imbued **Sig Walker**, he fought a running battle with the local Al-Qaeda cell through the woods around Aldershot, successfully driving them back in a relentless pursuit.

The Sqn has also enjoyed considerable publicity, firstly with the visit to the TAC of 109 year-old First World War veteran and Eastbourne resident, **Henry Allingham**, and secondly with the annual Airborne Festival, which serves as the Sqn's main recruiting event.

The Airborne Stand was ably organised by **SSgt Hall**, and, combined with the Sqn's deployment to Michelham Priory under **Sig Mead**, has led to a great increase in local awareness of the Sqn, and of the TA in general. Under the direction of **2Lt Lower**, recruiting continues to surge. He seems intent on enlisting every able-bodied person in the vicinity of Eastbourne.

On the AT front, eleven members of the Sqn spent seven days in the mountains of Bavaria, where amongst other things, they participated in mountain walking, climbing, abseiling, and kayaking.

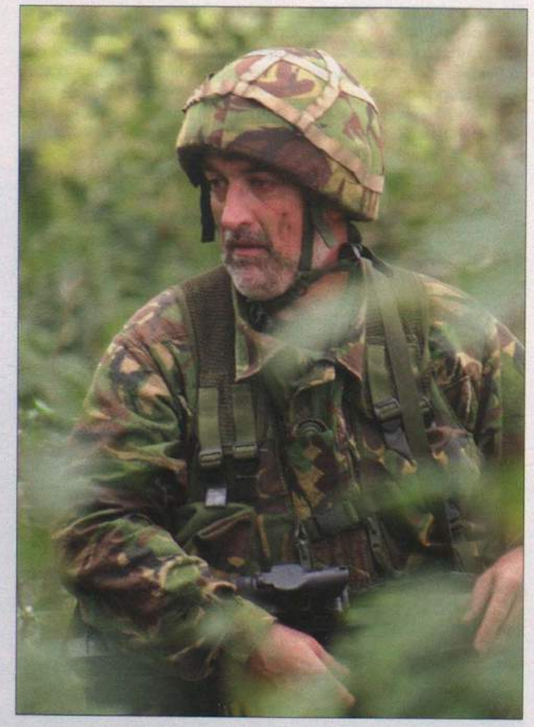
83 (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Andy Knight**
SSM **W02 (YofS) Dave Alleyne**

ANNUAL CAMP – *by Capt Lee McEvoy*

The first main activity for the Sqn on Annual Camp was Duchess of Gloucester Cup competition, and the honour of leading the team fell to the newly promoted, **Lt Sam Osei-Agyemang**. Feedback from the team was that the stretcher race was particularly challenging, but made more bearable due to the moral/physical support from the press-ganged **Capt Carolyn Murison**.

During the Competition day, the Sqn was honoured to host a number of visitors from the 56 Div Sigs Assn, and was also pleased to see **Sgt Stuart Farqharson-Roberts**, who transferred from the Sqn to the Regular Army, and is currently serving with the Int Corps at Bulford.



An unshaven Capt Dutch Holland, HQ Sqn on the Duchess of Gloucester Cup

Following the Duchess of Gloucester Cup, the Sqn moved to the Willsworthy trg area to take part in the Regtl military/comms trg phase of Camp. Mil trg included bayonet fighting, ably supported by **Cpl Joe Abbott**, whose changed personality behind a bayonet impressed all, and **Sgt Jay Eastwood-Bell**, whose considerable enthusiasm delivering NBC trg was met with equally inspired solutions by some syndicates (it turns out that 9x9 tents can be used as collective protection, and you can fit more people in if you don't bother with the poles). The live firing package was very much enjoyed by all in the Sqn, from the newest soldier to the OC – in fact, **Maj Andy Knight** hasn't stopped smiling since being reunited with his old friend the GPMG.

The 3-day AT phase of Camp was well received by all Sqn members, enabling all to push themselves especially those who hadn't previously had the opportunity to leap from rocks into the sea in late September – **LCpl Louise Wilkins'** close encounter with a local in the sea proved to be the highlight of her camp. The White Helmets audition on mountain bikes also went well, with **Sig Nick Peare**, **SSgt Mick Lynn** and **Cpl Liz Lafferty** all demonstrating balancing abilities required to join the display team.

Mils skills trg included First Aid

The Sqn now faces a period of considerable upheaval with both role and loc changes as part of the proposals within the FAS TA re-balancing. But as ever, these challenges will be faced head on with a positive attitude and un-daunted professionalism.

THE FIGHTING PATROL

It was a sunny summer morning in Belgium, and we were by the side of a farmer's field. The birds were singing and the crops were gently swaying in the breeze. We concentrated on the speaker standing in front of our group: 'At 10.45 pm, the attacking party left our trenches and lay down in the open. Five minutes later the British guns opened an intense fire, and the raiders dashed forward....'

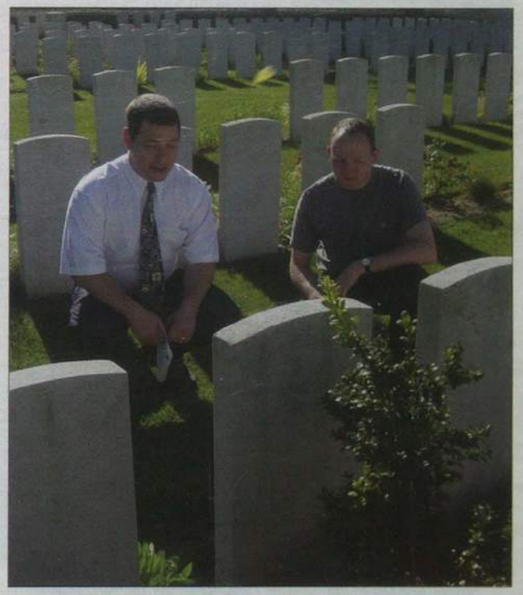
Looking around the field today it was surprisingly easy to imagine the fighting patrol entering the German trenches here in 1917. The farmers' drainage ditches were used to provide the outline of

Maj John Kendal and Capt Vince Connelly in Sanctuary Woods trenches

the original trench system in 1914, when the Germans first arrived in the area, and those ditches were still there. The gentle slope of the Messines Ridge, behind the position, still loomed menacingly over the whole area. We all remember the problems of patrolling in the dark and the uncertainty of who you might bump into!

We had come over to Belgium the night before to study the 1917 Battle of Messines. After experiencing the excellent re-created German trenches at Croonart Wood, we had seen the large mine craters left over from the battle, and were now studying the preparation, orders and execution of a fighting patrol – a patrol where two members of the Berkshire Yeomanry had won MMs for their courage under fire, and for capturing 20 German soldiers. Copies of the original handwritten orders were distributed, and with a few changes to the sub-headings, they would have been workable on any op today. Walking through the patrol, brought the ghosts of the Western Front alive, by making it all believable and relevant to us.

Less believable, but no less true, were the details of the massive preparation for the Messines Offensive in 1917. The numbers of troops involved were mind-boggling. The underground mining task was Herculean, and the firepower used to suppress the



Cpl Peter Billcliffe and Cpl Ian at one of the graveyards visited

German defenders was astonishing. We sat in an ordinary-looking wood and heard how it had been turned into hell on earth by OP BURNING OIL. The British forces had thrown 1,200 burning oil drums into the German position in the trees one night. As you would expect, the woods burst into flame and burned intensely for 20 minutes. In order to catch any wounded Germans escaping, the oil drums were followed by 173 rounds of phosgene gas and 120 thermite bombs! This was over and above the millions of shells pumped into the ridge by the ordinary British artillery.

We continued the study of the British victory at Messines over a weekend punctuated by an excellent dinner in Ypres on the Saturday evening, and had our own small Remembrance Ceremony in the Messines Ridge cemetery on Sunday morning. All in all, it was a fun, educational but emotive weekend, with lessons for today as well as yesterday. We remembered the forgotten events of 1917 and the vital role our Regtl predecessors played in ending the 'War to end all Wars.' We also learned that our forbears did not just endure or survive the Great War. They won it.

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

CO **Lt Col W Adsett**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Shean Dewar**

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj AJ Quinn**
SSM **WO2(SSM) I Coburn**

Maj Andy Quinn took comd of the Sqn in June on the departure of **Maj Dave Titheridge** on posting to LIAG in Corsham. **Maj Quinn** has come on promotion from 80 Sqn at Runcorn, where he was 2IC, and has settled in extremely well.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

Always good for retention and morale, AT has played a large part in the Regt and Sqn trg programme this tear. Members of the Sqn have taken part in adventurous pursuits in Spain, Poland, Wales and across England on a Coast-to-Coast walk. In June, a joint Regular and TA party took part in EX NORTHERN CANTABRIAN ROSE, was an arduous trekking exped in the Pico de Europa Mountains near Santander in North West Spain. **Lt Glenn Martin**, Trg Offr of 42 Sqn, was the AJSMEL, ML qualified exped leader.

In July, **OCdt Hazel Ashton**, **Sgt Roman Marczak**, **LCpl Adie Starauscheck** and **Sig Sophia Fenwick** participated in EX NORTHERN TATRA, a level 3 AT ex in the High Tatra Mountains of Poland and Slovakia. During the ex, they were taught personal basic outdoor and mountaineering self-sufficiency skills as a foundation for the Mountain Leader Training (Summer) MLT(S) Course.

During the weekend 19-21 August, 15 members of 42 Sig Sqn decamped to Snowdonia National Park on EX NORTHERN MANCUNIAN DRUID, led by **Lt Glenn Martin**. This proved to be a fun packed weekend, with walking, mountain biking, and rock climbing being the activities on offer. And as if that was not enough, the PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**, organised ten 42 Sqn members to walk across England coast-to-coast to raise money for the ABF.

EX NORTHERN MANCUNIAN DRUID. Sgt Al Moor, Sig Michelle Smith, Sgt Paul Duffin, SSgt Dave Kerr, Sig Mathew Bond, LCpl Richard Lewis, LCpl Walsh and Sig Mark Sowden

COAST-TO-COAST WALK

In August this year, ten members of 42 Sig Sqn walked 200 miles across England to raise money for the ABF. This is the third time that the Sqn has carried out the walk, and overall they will have raised £6,000.00 for charity.

The team led, by **Capt Gerry Whelan** and **Lt Glenn Martin**, followed the route from St Bee's in Cumberland to Robin Hood's Bay in North Yorkshire, pioneered by **Alfred Wainwright**, the celebrated author and walker. The route traverses England, and two thirds of it crosses the areas of the Lake District, Pennine and North Yorkshire Moors National Parks.

After setting off from St Bee's Head, the party passed through the heart of Lakeland, before crossing the Westmoreland Plateau, the Eden Valley and the Pennine Watershed, to enter Swaledale in Yorkshire. Following the River Swale to the Vale of Mowbry at the northern end of the Vale of York, they traversed the escarpment of the Cleveland Hills, to emerge on to the North Yorkshire Moors, and end their journey on the sea cliffs of Robin Hood's Bay. The walk took ten days to complete, and was carried out in brilliant sunshine for most of the time, with just one downpour at Shap to dampen spirits.

42 Sqn Coast-to-Coast walkers. Back, Lt Glenn Martin, Capt Gerry Whelan, Sig Allan Lowe, Capt Sophie Curtis, Sig Frost and Cpl Martyn Porter. Front: LCpl Walsh, Sgt Pete Marchant, Sig Sophie Fenwick and Sig Wicks

The traditions of the coast-to-coast walk were duly observed, with stones picked up on the shore of the Irish Sea were carefully placed on the North Sea beach of Robin Hood's Bay, and boots dipped in the Irish Sea were also dipped in the North Sea. After that, a tired but happy and elated group decamped to the nearest pub for a well-deserved pint on the PSAO, before climbing gratefully on board the mini-bus for the journey back to the TAC in Manchester.

WELBECK COLLEGE

Welbeck College has recently moved from its old loc near Worksop, where it has been since 1952, to Woodhouse near Loughborough. 42 Sig Sqn's SPSI, SSgt **Dave Kirk**, has recently spent a great deal of time travelling back and forward to

SSgt Dave Kirk pictured with Adml Sir Jonathan Band, C in C Fleet, his daughter Kathryn and the College Principle, Mr Tony Halliwell

Woodhouse to visit the newly relocated College. His daughter, **Kathryn**, enrolled there as a first term student at the beginning of September, and is amongst a group of students who will be the first to train at the new loc.

Welbeck College offers an A-Level education to students joining the three Services or the MOD as a civilian, who have passed RCB. After 2 years at Welbeck, students go on to University, before attending their respective officer trg establishments.

The new College was officially opened by **HRH, The Duchess of Gloucester** on 30 September 05, but the start of the new term was marked by a ribbon cutting ceremony performed by **Adml Sir Jonathan Band**, C in C Fleet on 07 September.

OFFICER TRAINING – *by OCdt Hazel Ashton*

As an OCdt who is a product of the Direct Entry Potential Officers Scheme (DEPO) pioneered by HQ 42 (NW) Bde, I was asked to express my thoughts regarding the scheme.

Historically, the British Army has a reputation for having a black and white approach to duty, discipline and indeed any task set before it. Whilst this may underpin many of its successes, the changes in society have shaped today's modern Army. As an Army Officer, you must add the colour.

OCdts are put through the new regionally based modular system conforming to the RMAS syllabus of intensive infantry-based tactics. This course prepares them for the 3-week commissioning course at RMAS.

The weekend and week-long trg events demand that the Potential Officers are both physically fit and have the aptitude to learn in a classroom. Its normal practice to wake at 06.00hrs with battle PT, digest a morning of lessons in the classroom then, in the afternoon, have enough energy to complete several consecutive section attacks.

The real 'colour' comes when you add your personality to leading others. The Army can teach you the mechanics of what an officer should be able to do, but it is very much up to the individual to apply their own judgement as appropriate. To excel as an Officer, you must know exactly when, and in what measure to inject aggression, humour, charisma, confidence or whatever else is needed to complete a task.

FAREWELL VISIT OF HONORARY COLONEL

During Tuesday drill night on 10 October 2005, 42 Sig Sqn had the pleasure of a visit from **Prof Peter Toyne**, in his capacity as our Regtl Hon Colonel. A former High Sheriff of Liverpool and Vice Chancellor of St John Moors University, **Prof Toyne** has been our Hon Colonel for the past six years.

He has proved to be an extremely popular and effective Hon Colonel, and has been instrumental in raising the profile of the Regt throughout the North West of England.

On this, his farewell visit, he spent the evening talking to as many of our soldiers as possible, and then joined the Sqn in Bar 42 for a curry supper. The occasion was marked by a presentation of a Sqn tie and cummerbund to **Prof Toyne** by the Sqn OC, who, expressing the sentiments of all present, told him that he would be sadly missed, and then wished him every good fortune for the

Maj Andy Quinn presenting Prof Toyne with a Sqn tie and cummerbund on his farewell visit to the Sqn

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj CL Jones**
SSM **WO2 J Harkin**

ALL RANKS BEATING RETREAT/COCKTAIL PARTY
- by LCpl Allison Bibby

This year's Regtl Cocktail Party was to be shaken up slightly with the invitation to attend extended to all ranks of the Regt. The venue, *HMS Trincomalee* is the oldest ship afloat in the UK and the sole surviving example of a commissioned frigate of the Nelson era. She is currently moored in the Royal Quayside, Hartlepool.

The VIPs were piped aboard by the Sea Cadets of *HMS Trincomalee*, and once on deck, there was the opportunity to indulge in a selection of wines, and tour the grand vessel.

WO2 Neil Berry (RCWO) and his team excelled themselves as usual, providing a mouth-watering array of finger nibbles and canapés, with the Regt's newest recruits playing the important role of ensuring that the wine flowed freely throughout the course of the evening.

The Royal Signals Northern Band conducted the second phase of the evening, with the ceremony of Beating the Retreat, followed by a selection of musical numbers, beautifully accompanied by the evening's glorious sunshine.

The evening provided an opportunity to dress up, which was welcomed with open arms by **LCpls Julie Wilkinson**, **Donna Smith** and **Allison Bibby**.

Their choice of clothing proved to be a little tricky later in the evening, when trying to play pool at Hartlepool's TA centre, where a curry supper was laid on, along with a disco.

The whole evening proved to be a great success, with much credit going to the Regimental 2IC, **Maj Graham Jennings**.

'Cheers' on board HMS Trincomalee

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Keith Williams**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mark Carrick**

We congratulate **LCpl Gowen** on the successful completion of his detties course, and **OCdt Irving** for his success at RCB. We farewell **SSgt (NRPS-SQMS) Gordon Hardaker**, who is leaving the Army after more than 40 yrs' exceptional service, both Regular and NRPS. We will miss you **Gordon**; take care and make sure that you do not become a stranger.

THE VE/VJ DAY COMMEMORATIVE PARADE

On Sunday 17 July, 49 Sig Sqn was honoured to take part in the VE/VJ Day Commemorative Parade in Leeds. The Sqn OC, **Maj Keith Williams**, was the Parade Comd, and, after gaining permission from the Lord Mayor, led the parade of serving soldiers, sailors, airmen and cadets through the city of Leeds. The Parade then followed the Ex-Servicemen's and Women's contingent, as they marched to the Cenotaph to lay wreaths of remembrance. **SSgt (A/FofS) Dean Leach** was heavily involved in the coordination of the Parade and was instrumental in the success of the day.

WHAT, NO ENGINE?

WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick organised a trial glider flight for those willing to climb into an aircraft whose only means of staying airborne were a skilful pilot and some rather long and fragile looking wings. The take off was winch-assisted, and felt like a very fast roller-coaster ride, stomach churning, but the views over Pocklington were fantastic. **Sig David Bean** is now an expert. Well he did go up twice and he is a very fast learner.

Sig Bean looking really pleased with himself

EXERCISE NORTHERN STARBOARD

Keen sailor **LCpl Sally Davies** took herself and eight members of the Sqn on a sailing adventure during July. Using the provisions of JSASTC, the Nicholson 55 Yacht, *Dasher* was to be home for a week.

JSASTC's own **Vaughan Marsh** skippered the boat and a mate, namely **Maj John Moss**, was borrowed from Leeds University OTC. Despite there being a number of novices on board, the crew managed to make the long haul to the Channel Islands, even though the constant rain made them look as if they had actually swum there! Seasickness was prevalent, caused either by the motion of the ocean or the effects of the ship's vodka.

Once she had determined which end was the bow of the yacht, **LCpl Donna Smith** did a fantastic job of watch leader. The last day was beautiful, and the crew was finally able to look the part, cool shades and shorts being the order of the day. Most learned a great many things on board, and discovered how important teamwork and tolerance can be in a confined space.

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Smith**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) CA Phillips**

Since the last *Wire*, we have said congratulations and goodbye to **Capt Paul Denning**, transferring across to 90 Sig Sqn as the new OC. Congratulations also to **LCpls Nick Graham** and **Rob Prothero** on their recent promotions.

The CO promoting Sig Prothero

We've also had a number of changes on the Regular staff front. Goodbye to **Sgt Craig Straughan**, leaving for Blandford; and also to **SSgt Mick Hodds**, leaving the Army after 22 years, but making a quick return as the NRPS SSgt at 49 Sig Sqn. And welcome to their replacements, **SSgt Rob Love**, joining us from 21 Sig Regt; and **Cpl Middlemiss**, coming back to UK from 7 Sig Regt.

August is always a quiet month in the Sqn, as everyone takes a well-earned rest and holiday ahead of Annual Camp.

This year was no exception, and the only memorable event was the Officers and SNCOs restaurant night held in Darlington, ably organised as ever by the SSM, **WO2 Carole-Ann Phillips**. A good time was had by all, some notably more than others; and many are now on their best behaviour for the next function...

Finally, well done to the 50 Sqn golf team, who recently won the inter-Sqn championship. The team (and trainees) of **SSgts Ross Blair**, **Rob Love**, **Jeff Martin**, and **FofS Sandy Sanderson, Sgts Micky Jemmett** and **Craig Straughan**, and **LCpl Nick Graham** beat off RHQ and the other Sqns to win the prize. This was only fair, since **SSgt Jeff Martin** had organised the whole event again, and rumours that *'every day is golf day at 50'* are completely untrue...

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RB Lenton**
SSM **WO2(SSM) LD Stimson**

August is always a very quiet month, with many taking a well-earned rest with their families. One event of note however, is the quad biking incident involving **Capt Jenny Bowes**, who managed to break her wrist when she was unable to avoid the tree that jumped out at her.

Congratulations go to **LCpl Paul Tate** on recently passing his PTI's course. Brambles Farm now has someone to beast the troops around! Congratulations also go to **LCpl Millie Millington**, on successful completion of his det comd's course.

We will be saying goodbye, after Annual Camp, to 90 Sqn's OC of long standing, **Maj Richard Lenton**. He is moving on down to Sheffield as 2IC of the OTC, where no doubt, he will make the most of every opportunity. 90 Sqn is very grateful for his leadership and all we have achieved with him (we still hold the Birtwistle Trophy, no small achievement!) We would like to welcome our new Sqn SPSI at Hartlepool, **SSgt Mark Yuill** and also, as from November, **Maj Paul Denning** as our new OC.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) RJ Coupland**

CHOICES

Deciding your preferences for Annual Camp and the options available was almost like filling out a multiple-choice questionnaire before settling on your favoured short list of three. Not surprisingly, the unique opportunity of carrying out military trg in Gibraltar on EX MARBLE TOR, or AT in Bavaria took the top two places, with EX LOG FOCUS and an attachment to 12 Sig Group somewhere in Thetford, not surprisingly, being the last choice.

The early scramble for initial places for the front-runners outnumbered the vacancies by almost two to one, but this stabilised well before the deployment on both activities. The OC of 95 Sig Sqn, **Maj Chris Lewis** and his planning staff, **SSgts Dave Pope** and **Marty Barringer**, adjusted the ex scenario to suit the ever changing orbat, and looked forward to a well planned and executed ex that coincided with the alternative AT in Bavaria. By all accounts, both exs were an enormous success, which you can judge by the following reports.

OVER, ROUND AND THROUGH – *by SSgt Marty Barringer*

Following JEBEL TARIQ 2, a shakeout weekend on Nescliffe Trg Area, the Regt were off to Devils Tower camp in Gibraltar for EX MARBLE TOR. The ex was run in two phases; the first part was Military trg, which included a five-day mil skills, FIBUA, tunnel fighting package, and a two-day confirmation ex. The second half put a big smile on everybody's face; it was the water sports and tunnel tours phase, which included a day trip to Spain. The initial deployment though was touch and go, as the RAF treated us to constant changes to the flight itinerary, with the threat of last minute cancellations hanging over our heads. It was therefore with some relief that we eventually deployed albeit, in separate chalks, on Tuesday 7 August and Wednesday 8 August through RAF Brize Norton.

Walking the Plank or imitating a cuckoo clock!

We began how we meant to go on, starting with an admin day so the troops could acclimatise and get used to the local drivers. Our first impression of Buffadero trg area was 'it's not very big,' but the 32 miles of tunnels within the rock made up for it, with some very vigorous and realistic trg. The trg area was split into two areas, a large grass snake-infested area, and a brand new FIBUA village, which, much to the delight of **Sgt Roberts** and **LCpl Trow**, contained the much talked about battle run. After the Mil trg was over, a final confirmatory ex took place, to bring together all the new skills the exercising troops had acquired. Each Platoon took it in turns to carry out the FTX, which began with an exhilarating RIB ride across the bay to a beach landing, before the long trip around Europa Point and into the tunnels. This is where the real fun began, when **SSgt Potts** led his troops into the total darkness of the tunnels, after disposing of the local militia, headed up by **WO2 Kinsey**. After sustaining many bruises (including some to their egos), sore knees and cuts, they emerged the other end of the rock for a well-earned rest, exhausted but also invigorated. Well watered, fed and raring to go, the troops had a long tab in front of them, over the top of rock and into Spur Battery, for an overnight OP.

At his stage, we all experienced an energy drain; heads were down, and spirits were beginning to reach a low point, until they came across the tourists. Then, like magic, the troops suddenly sprang in to life with grins from ear to ear stopping now and again to pose for the odd photo. The next morning, the troops had moved down and were in position to attack the village, where the local militia branch, under **Capt Paul Rodenhurst**, was waiting for them.

The RIB gets a thumbs up

After all the early excitement, stage two of the ex came as a welcome relief, when the water sports kicked off, with a trip to the Mijas aqua park in Spain, where many a race was won and lost on the death slides. Once back in Gibraltar, the fun continued at the Four Dock AT Centre, where various members of the Regt could be seen skidding across the waves on water skis and ringos. In the end, the troops had been over, round and through the rock of Gibraltar, swam the bay, eaten in all the restaurants, and quite simply had a whale of a time. The reality of exercising in Germany will never be the same again!

Follow that, you may say, but while this group were enjoying life on the Rock of Gibraltar, the other Regtl group were enjoying some bigger rocks in Bavaria, an account of which follows.

GRÜSS GOTT AUS OBERSTDORF

Many will remember those fond days of the SNOW QUEEN exs, and the base at Sonthofen. From here after trg, many an excursion was taken down the road to the picturesque Allgau village of Oberstdorf, with its close knit timber houses and its rich alpine meadows, surrounded by the spectacular Bavarian and Austrian Alps.

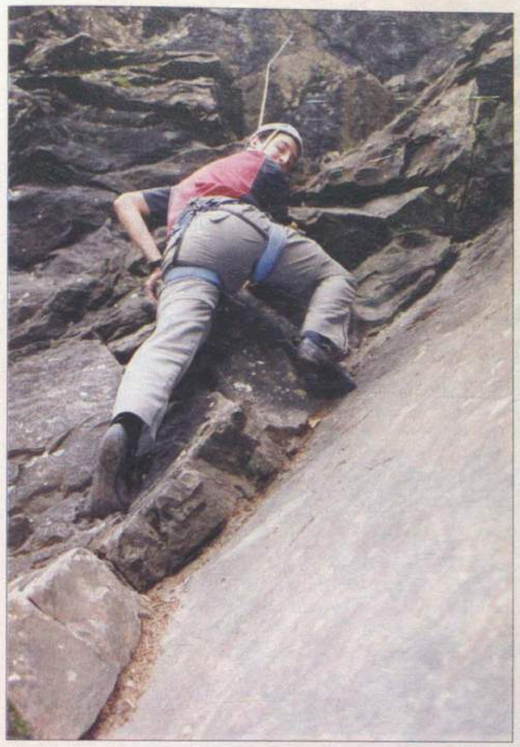
Oberstdorf now hosts many units, who are engaging in either AT or skiing expeds in the popular Hubertushaus Multi Activity Lodge, near the village centre.

A view to die for while Klettersteiging

Capt Alec Rodgers and **Maj John Middler** had carefully planned a whole range of activities that included mountain biking (for real), trekking and hiking through secluded hiking trails, over some very tough but beautiful terrain, rock-climbing and to top it all, a touch of fearsome Klettersteiging thrown in for good measure.

After a lengthy but uneventful trip via the channel ports, the trg was full on from the day of arrival, when we were split into three groups with interchanging or corresponding activities. We all started with a spot of rock-climbing in the popular area of Tiefenbach, close to the Breitachklamm Gorge, a unique striking natural monument high in the Alps.

It was here that **Sig Duncan Sleigh** of 95 Sqn had his first experience of both AT and rock-climbing. He could hardly believe his luck as he recently joined the Regt as a young recruit, and here he was having the time of his life, and his trg had only just begun. Over the next few days, all groups were involved in a short trekking expedition over the Nebelhorn (where apparently, on a clear day, you can view as many as 400 summits) Rubihorn and Fellhorn (via a thrilling cable car trip) that also took in some professional-style mountain biking.



Sig Duncan Sleigh on his way to the top

At one stage we were delighted to be joined by the Hon Col, **Col Brian Foxon**, who clearly enjoyed what perhaps would be his last visit to an element of the Regt's annual trg before he hands over his stewardship in the New Year. Later in the exped, most of us experienced the dubious delights of Klettersteiging at Langerfeld, Gran and Ehrveld.

We had now entered the final phase of our AT exped. As dawn broke on Saturday 13 August, we set off once again and boarded the cable car for our final trip up to the Nebelhorn. From here, we made our way across to the Prinz-Luitpold-Haus on the Hock Vogel, for an overnight stay, before we moved onto Geibel Haus. This would see us transit through to Kaseralp, then onto Grundels and the Engeratsgund See, before returning to the Nebelhorn for the journey back to Oberstdorf. As we paved our way across and through this awesome alpine circuit, everything was fine until around dusk, when the weather finally turned, and we found ourselves in an unexpected snowstorm that persisted into the early hours. Our trek back to the Nebelhorn was negotiated through some tricky snow-covered landscape that was more suited to skis or sleighs. We returned to Oberstdorf exuberant, safe and sound, but sad that it was now time to pack our bags and begin the long journey home.

STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

All units rely on their overall strength in order to become a force to be reckoned with, and these strengths come in many shapes and forms, ranging from strength in numbers to quality and achievement. On the recruiting front, we are beginning to see major improvements, both in the numbers arriving and being processed, and also in the quality of recruits. On Saturday 3 September, even the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, was bowled over to see over fifty recruits on parade to mark the pass off of those recruits who had completed the final phase of their trg. Following the badge presentation parade, the CO extended his traditional welcome to the new recruits, while paying tribute to their families for their continued support.

He also presented the award of Best Recruit to **Sig Simon Harrison**. **OCdt** (now 2Lt) **Warren Cain** had a pleasant surprise when, on Saturday 17 September, he was awarded the Cane of Honour on his graduation parade at RMAS by **Lt Gen CJ McColl CBE DSO**. This was quite a remarkable achievement for **Warren**, who joined the Regt in July last year as a Sig. It also demonstrates the quality of individuals coming through our doors and their determination to succeed.

The CO presenting the award of Best Recruit to Sig Simon Harrison

Further honours were also achieved by our team at the Corps Orienteering Championships that took place over the same weekend at Lichfield. They won the overall TA Trophy. As a result of his excellent performance, **Maj Tom Jeffries** received the award of Corps Champion, while **Lt Rachel Stanley** secured the Ladies' under 25 Champion Award. Not to be outdone, our AGC Team headed by **Maj John Middler** and consisting of **Mr Colin Richards** and **LCpl Jim Turner**, narrowly beat 2 PWRR to win the Minor Units AGC Championship Trophy for the first time. A fine achievement all round and a clear indication that the regiment is going from strength to strength!

ALL CHANGE

A number of staff changes have taken place during the past couple of months, and we have bid a sad farewell to **WO2 Ollie Lambert**, **SSgt Shelton Smith** and **SSgt Baz Ward**. We have also said farewell on posting to **SSgt Spats Brodie** (who leaves on promotion), **SSgt Brian Clarke** and **SSgt Trev Croxon**. But we have also welcomed **WO2 (RQMS) Ashley Ingham**, **SSgt (FofS) Mark Ebdon**, **SSgt Colin Brotherstone**, **SSgt Brian Wilson**, **SSgt Terry Stiff** and **LCpl Stewart Marshall**. We extend a warm welcome to all new arrivals, and wish them a happy and rewarding tour.

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KD Gratrick**

44 (CINQ PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Rowson**
SSM **WO2 J Davis**

EXERCISE ESTUARY FREUNDSCHAFT - *by SSgt Berry*

After being superbly hosted by the German Reservists during our Annual Camp, it was our job to return the favour on EX ESTUARY FREUNDSCHAFT. We collected our German counterparts from Stanstead airport at 07.00hrs on 15 September, and took them to our TAC at Grays in Essex.

Over the next three days, we had a busy programme planned for them. They began with an overview of the Sqn's role within the Regt and the various comms equipt we possessed. After lunch, **Sgt Witts**, with the aid of an interpreter, gave them an introduction to the SA80 Rifle. For the remainder of the day, they went shopping with **SSgt Howson** to Bluewater Shopping Centre, and in the evening we had a function with all the Sqn personnel.

A multi-national shooting team

Day 2 consisted of water crossings and DCCT trg on the indoor SAT at Stanta trg area with **Sgt Wright** and **Sgt Blairs**. The most memorable incident of the day was when the Germans stripped down for the river crossing. On their return to the TAC, they were given a hot meal to warm themselves up.

For their final day, they were taken on a sightseeing tour of London, with **SVWO WO1 Davis**. They visited *HMS Belfast*, the London Eye, various landmarks, as well as a few drinking establishments. We managed to get everyone back to the TAC safe and sound, apart from a couple of stragglers who joined us later in the evening. Prior to our guests departing for home, the Sqn held yet another function in their honour. This was an outstanding event, which everyone enjoyed to the full.

We are now looking forward to visiting the German Reservists in 2006.

Raft building

54 (EAST ANGLIA) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DA Prince**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Beech**

Just after Annual Camp the Sqn lost one of its longest serving member, **SSgt (NRPS) Raymond (Ray) Whall**, who retired on 8 July 05 after serving 21 yrs with the Regt, and prior to that, 22 yrs with the Colours. **Ray** would have liked to have served for a further year, but due to the ill health of his wife, **Rachel**, he had to leave. Both will be sadly missed, and we all wish them the very best in these trying times.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Shelly**
SSM **WO2 Carrol**

EXERCISE HERMES CROSSING - by *Sgt W Wright*

Once again, another ex to practise our new role in 2 Sig Bde, one planned and conducted by the Offrs and SNCOs of 36 Sig Regt.

It all started on the evening of Friday 9 September, when all Sqn Comds received their brief on the trg over that weekend and the scenario the ex was based on. Following SOPs, HQ Sqn then jumped into action, making sure that all the arriving troops were fed, and issued ammo and a sense of humour. After all recces had been carried out and the Sqn OCs had briefed their troops, they flooded the Essex countryside with military precision.

All comms were established in record time, and many lessons were learned on their move out to their locs and on set-up procedures. ENDEX was eventuall called on a very successful first of many exs planned to practise the Regt in the new role in 2 Sig Bde.

EXERCISE GOOD SHOT - by *Sig Cox*

The Sqn held an ITD weekend working in tandem with 45 Sig Sqn. The weekend was a great success and maximum trg was achieved . The high level of shooting shown from by members of each Sqn will make it easy to select teams for future shooting competitions. With the continuing support from the Sqn and Regt, we should be able to improve on the result from the Corps SAAM.

The best shooters of the weekend were **WO2 Norma Miller Kight** (who proved she wasn't just a chef), and **Cfn Manning**, **Smith** and **Sigs Collins** and **Wade**.

OPERATION FRESCO - by *Sgt Cullumbine*

Members of 36 Sig Regt, led by **Lts Adye** and **Chapman**, deployed to cover the strike by Suffolk Fire Brigade Union. It was a pleasant and rewarding time for the TA personnel to be teaching members of the Regular Army, Royal Navy, and RAF. All the volunteers gained valuable experience, furthering their knowledge in air wave comms and setting up incident rooms throughout the Suffolk area. Thankfully, the strike has been resolved (for now) and the members of the Regt can return to normal working. Our thanks to the Regt Ops Team for their support, and to all who were involved during OP FRESCO.

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

OPEN CANOE FOUNDATION COURSE 03-08 JULY 05
– by SSgt Pete Savage

After full English breakfast, followed by a briefing on course content, etc, it was off to the stores to draw kit. We eventually got to the quarry at 11.00hrs to launch the canoes, and start our instruction on the various paddle strokes and techniques required to paddle safely. During the afternoon, we learned self-rescue from a capsized canoe, and all became very wet.

The following day, we were introduced to the loch to experience wind and tidal conditions, which took a while to get used to. Then it was time to work in pairs in the canoes for the rest of the day.

The third day was exped day. We picked up our exped stores and then drove up into the Highlands. We reached our launching point at midday, and after packing our kit into our canoes, we set off down the loch toward the sea. After paddling for a couple of hours, we changed to a southerly direction, and our civilian instructor **Mr Paul Mills** decided that the wind was in the right direction for us to lash our canoes together and hoist sail. We reached our final destination, a bothy by the sea at 19.00hrs. The kettle went on, while the rest of the paddlers set up camp, and cracked open the wine.

We soon made the bothy like home!

It was an early start next day, as we still had a fair bit of paddling to do to reach our pick up point. Once back at base we showered, had a brew and told the other courses how many hundreds of miles we had paddled and the wildlife encountered.

The last day of the course, and it was off to the loch to carry out our 2 star test, which consisted of linking paddle strokes together, paddling in straight lines, turning and back paddling. Then it was time for self-rescues and rescuing another canoeist in the water. After this good dunking, it was time to hand back kit and pack our bags for the last time before bidding fond farewells to some good friends.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj K Metcalf TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Francis MM**

With RSIT and ECI inspections coming up in the following month, the first weekend in June was EX PEAR BLOSSOM, which is a Sqn maintenance and BBQ weekend. As well as getting lots of maint done on the kit, the SQMS arranged the troop stores to be dug out and re-arranged. As the day went on, it became more apparent that this obviously needed doing. A sign written, 'SQMS inspection, leave stores tidy' dated November 99, and a newspaper from 1988 were just a few of the things we found that had been hoarded for quite a while. The BBQ and drinks were definitely well earned after a full days graft in 30° C heat.

On 9-10 July the Sqn deployed on a mil trg weekend. This was an ideal opportunity to practise the various skills needed for Annual Camp. Everyone got a lot out of the weekend, with a good combination of lessons, and a mini-ex. All personnel on the weekend had an excellent time.

Me in my 'can't see me' suit

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt S Jenner**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A Bennett**

EXERCISE BRIGHT DAWN - *by Sig Corrine Mohammed*

It was one of the usual Friday nights as 96 Sig Sqn set off for their weekend ex. Everyone was full of enthusiasm and expectations, having been briefed that this was to be a pre-Camp

prep weekend. Friday night in the field was a dream – wonderful summer weather, non-tactical, all the Sqn basha'ed up for the night, with brew kits on. Saturday morning we were up bright and early, and after completing the morning drills, we were split into two groups. This was where the hard work began, with the two sections doing a round robin of lessons, whilst tabbing with full kit between stands.

Firstly, there was a stand on model making and report writing, taught by **Capt Jenner**. Next there was a stand on minefield breaches with **WO2 Neale**. It was around mid morning that it started to rain. And rain. And rain! We then realised where the expression came from 'if it ain't raining, it ain't training!' However, despite the bad weather, 96 Sig Sqn remained undeterred, and proceeded onto the remaining tasks, including Anti Ambush drills with **WO2 (SSM) Bennett**, sentries and harbour areas with **SSgt Bromley**, and section battle drills with **Cpl Wingfield**.

Later on, it was still raining and we were set a task of completing a night recce. By this time we had sentries in place and were into harbour drills. As the night recce returned, we had a contact, and everybody responded as expected. For the rest of the night, we sat on sentry on a shift rota, in the rain. By the morning, morale needed a good boost!

On Sunday morning we were tasked to rescue two pilots who had been captured and were being held hostage. When we got to the loc and asked for artillery support, we were all amazed at the fantastic display of firepower that took place. We then moved in and completed the mission. Instead of attacking the building with real ammunition, we were issued with paintball guns. Inside was the terrorist waiting with another paintball gun. Needless to say, there were a few bruises. This brought home the harsh reality of how hard it can be to attack a building, which is being carefully defended. Overall, the weekend was tough, but rewarding to know we had completed it, still smiling at the end!

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col AD Smith MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Simcock**

US NATIONAL GUARD EXCHANGE 05 - *By Lt Scott Bumby*

After a long day's travelling, I arrived at Indianapolis Airport to be met by **Lt Ben Cummins** from 138 Sig Bn of the Indiana National Guard, who would host me and **Capt Pete Mouland** from 35 Sig Regt. The visit started very well, by going straight to a local restaurant for steaks and a drink. Over the next few days, I put my new Platypus to good use, with humidity adjusted temperatures hitting 110°F. We spent a couple of days trg on the M-16 and qualified easily, which meant we were able to take part in the main trg taking place, a convoy live fire ex. The safety controls are certainly a bit different from ours, with a convoy of five vehs driving around at 60 mph, firing live rounds at any targets that appear.

Lt Bumby tackles live firing American style

We also got to try out MILES, a battlefield laser simulator (similar to TESEX kit), and their equivalent to our SAT/DCCT range. On the first Friday, we went to the opening of a brand new trg facility, The Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. This is a small self-sustaining town with 70 buildings over 1,000 acres, including a power plant and 180-acre reservoir. It will provide a full-immersion contemporary urban trg environment. We had to admit it was rather more impressive than Copehill Down! On one of the last days at Camp Atterbury, we had a go on a Mk-19 automatic grenade launcher, which was a good crack, especially when they gave me two boxes of live grenades to fire at a disused tank.

Of course, we did manage to get out of green kit for a little while, and plunge into American culture by visiting a bar or two. We also went to a baseball game, and visited the world-famous Indianapolis Motor Speedway, aka 'The Brickyard'.

We were delighted to see **Lt Cummins** join us in UK for Annual Camp.

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Whalen**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Worrall**

ANNUAL CAMP

This year saw a break from tradition, with trg taking place in a different camp (Altcar) and a very much reduced comms phase. Camp was split into two distinct weeks; the first week saw the Sqn on AT, firing on the ranges and carrying out a Coy-level attack (with only a platoon!) The second week saw Sqn members gaining driving qualifications, becoming HAZMAT qualified, and doing some ICS trg.

The first week began with ranges and fieldcraft. This three-day phase culminated in a night in a platoon harbour loc, from which all three sections carried out CTRs. Platoon comd, **Capt Dan Milnor**, carefully hatched out a plan to carry out a silent dawn attack on the enemy village, using two attack sections and a whole section of GPMGs in support.

As always, no plan survives contact with the enemy, and before we had hit our FUP, our silent approach turned into an advance to contact! Section comd, **Lt Steve Stacey** was first in, and before you knew it, he had taken all four buildings with his section. **Lt Hamish Fell's** section played a great supporting role from the flank, whilst **2Lt Emma Kelly's** manoeuvre support section hammered the enemy from a great position with their GPMGs. The enemy put up fierce resistance, but it wasn't enough. With 'virtual' bayonets fixed, the platoon over ran their positions one by one, to reach a final glorious victory. Well deserved tea, medals and oxygen all round.

This year's Tara Cup competition was going to be tight and, as holders of the Cup, it was clear that the other Sqns were gunning

Capt Dan Milnor concocts his cunning plan

for 64 Sqn. However, we emerged victorious to retain the Cup for a second year, but the road to success wasn't pretty. **WO2 (SSM) Vic Worrall** who has been in post just 2 months, steered the Sqn to a very commendable second place in the drill competition. With the officers and SNCOs removed, **Cpl Zoe Schofield** superbly controlled the team in the comd task, giving the team another second place. Another second place was gained on the first aid stand - an RTA in a minefield. We would have come first if **Capt Dan Milnor** hadn't put his size 14s off the track during the extraction. Nice one, Sir!

A minefield casualty is grateful for some expert attention during the Tara Cup

Thanks to some top shooting from **Sigs Simon Arnott** and **Keith Monaghan**, we won the clay pigeon shoot. Unfortunately, we came last on the falling plate. But we came first in the assault course, and second in the kit inspection stand. So it was down to our consistent performance of first and second places (we're ignoring the falling plate!) that won the day!!

The rest of the final week saw the Sqn split between ICS trg, driver trg, and HAZMAT trg. The highlight of the week, however, was a trip in a Chinook helicopter between Altcar and the Isle of Man. Those who were brave enough, were harnessed up and allowed to stand on the ramp, to get unique views of the Lake District as their reward.

EXERCISE TIN TRAIL 05 - *by Lt Fell*

EX TIN TRAIL has now become a regular feature on the Regt's trg plot. It provides the opportunity for a det to travel to Fort Gordon, Georgia in the US, to establish HF voice and data links with the Regt in UK. This year, the det spent the second week of Annual Camp in US, with 4 days spent on the ex phase. Comms proved to be a constant struggle, and the heat and humidity only added to the fun. Aside from the ex, the det were afforded the opportunity to take some time out to enjoy some 'good old Southern hospitality' and steak, lots of steak.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

The AT phase of this year's Annual Camp for those not lucky enough to get a stint on the Corps yacht, consisted of Mountain biking in the Lake district and walking the Yorkshire 3 Peaks.

The mountain biking was lead by **SSgt Bishop**, and seemed to consists of the longest up-hill stretch he could have possibly have found, followed by some extremely steep down-hill sections. But those taking part, generally enjoyed the challenge of something different.

The 3 Peaks looked like it was going to be another one of those great Yorkshire days (very wet with low cloud), and as everyone knows, there is nothing more fun than walking up a hill that you can't see the top of. But the weather decided to give us a break, and by the time most of the groups were coming down off their first hill, the cloud was lifting, providing for spectacular views of the Yorkshire Dales. Many thanks to **Capt Walker**, **SSM Beadle** and **SSgt Forset** for ensuring that none of the Sqn suffered too much.

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Powell**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Hallam**

For the first phase of Annual Camp, the Sqn initially deployed to Halton Trg Camp where they completed a three-day AT package and military swim test. Mountain biking was first on the agenda, and the team set off for fun and sore bottoms in Grisedale Forest. **SSgt Bishop** (46 Sig Sqn) led the team through fitting of bikes and helmets, and then acted as tour guide through the forest. Out of the centre, turn right and up a massive hill, didn't bode well for a day of easy riding, especially in that heat. Following some encouragement and trg on the use of gears, we were soon all breathing hard on our first climb.

The fitter members and Sqn PTIs were soon at the top, exploring the downhill tracks, and it was initially quite disconcerting to see someone who you thought was ahead of you coming past you again. The group soon settled into the routine, and generally stuck together.

After lunch, the majority of the riders were a little saddle sore, and the thought of rough terrain was not inviting at all. The OC, **Maj Powell** led the way, and it wasn't long before we were cycling along a sheep track. It was all going swimmingly, and we'd even bumped into a couple of other bikers from Nottingham. Not one to loose an opportunity, **Capt Kinvig** quickly sought recruiting material from within the team. Rather surprisingly, two business cards were produced, and **Sig Morley** was quick to give up his 87 Sig Sqn key ring. The prospective recruits were a little surprised, but all confessed to being in the OTC! The most tricky and unforgiving ground was kept for the end of the trip, and indeed, this is when most of the falls took place. Most were grateful for their helmets, and everyone enjoyed flying down the last hill back into the centre. The day rounded off with a quick 3-mile walk across the hills into Ambleside and a tour of the pubs and outdoor shops.

The second day was hill walking, and it was an early start for the Yorkshire Three Peaks. With four MELs, the teams were graded

into ability, and each team set off. **Lt Clay** decided that she'd be best placed leading the two US National Guard Officers, **Lts Miller** and **Cummins**, claiming that they would want plenty of rest stops to admire the scenery, and that they would probably want to go to the pub. **Lt Cummins** certainly had that on his mind, but after the first hill, **Lt Miller** had slipped into the faster group, and was leading the way.

The Sqn then completed a three-day mil skills package, with range work up to Stage 4, night shoots, and a 24-hr ex. **Lt Miller** discovered poetic justice, when he remarked to the visiting Dep Bde Comd, **Col Beacom**, that it was extremely unlikely that he'd be called for service in Iraq. Twenty minutes later, he received a call from his unit in the US, mobilising him to Iraq.

Lt Clay managed to dodge the sleeping out phase by driving her exchange guest to London Heathrow. **Lt Cummins** rose to the challenge of leading the UK Tp on patrol harbours and aggressive fighting patrols, before finally giving his orders for the dawn attack. His final rally to generate enthusiasm was 'Platoon Hoo Ha!' When **Sig Bennet** questioned its meaning, she was told 'It means whatever you want it to mean.'

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Andy McCole**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Singers**

During July, we said farewell to **Maj Steve Roden** and his wife **Bettina**. He has been posted to Catterick, to take up the post of SO2 BOWMAN Trg Advisory Gp (North). He was presented with a very fine bronze figurine of the dispatch rider at the Sqn Family Day. We welcome to the Sqn **Maj Andy McCole** and his wife, **Sharon**. Congratulations on their promotions to **Sgt Forbes**, to SSgt; **LCpls Carr** and **Townsley**, to Cpl; and **Sig McKenzie**, to LCpl.

Maj Steve Roden is presented with the City of Dundee tartan from the junior ranks

EXERCISE CELTIC CRUSADE - *by Lt Vic Cavin.*

EXERCISE CELTIC CRUSADE took place over the period 27 August to 10 September 05. The Sqn formed up on the Friday night eager to start the MOBEX. This was followed by full deployment of the LFFB Aerostat, incorporating the CHIRP, necessary to carry out ionospheric sounding and ground wave link testing, and HF CNR equipts.

I travelled in Packet 1 to Parsons Bks, Donnington, in the cab pulling the transmitter for the LFFB. The move from Donnington to Keevil airfield was straightforward, with a route clearly marked by **WO2 (RQMS) Bert Wright** and **SSgt Dave Honeyman**.

Priority was the deployment of the LFFB, a task relished by **Capt Bob Davidson** and **SSgt George Cowan**, in their red helmets. Once all the vehs and the attached assets were positioned, the aerostat came out of its wrapper. The whole process was carried out in a slick and professional manner, with the rest of the Sqn personnel involved in the setting up the accn module and the Ech suppt site on the other side of the airfield.

Monday night saw perfect weather conditions and it was all hands on deck to roll out and inflate the aerostat under the watchful eye of **Capt Bob Davidson**. We were amazingly slick at getting air and helium into the beast, and inflation was achieved in no time. The next step of transferring the aerostat to the GHE for anchoring went exactly to plan, with the whole preparation for launch taking much less time than planned.

The plan for the next day was to launch and radiate at full height of around 1,350m, but it was found that the NOTAM had not been actioned, and local airports had not been informed of our activities. So we made the best of the situation, and seeing that the weather conditions were optimal, the Flight Control Officer and his advisors decided we would benefit more from practising the essential and risky tasks of launching and recovery.

A subsidiary task for the CNR Dets was also carried out, with one det sent to Fremington in Devon, led by **Sgt Kev McLean**, and the other to Hullavington in Wiltshire, led by **Sgt Joe Wiggins**, to prove a ground-wave link between the two locs.

A wild electrical storm passed over, but thankfully, with no damage to the equipt. The days went by, and it was time to bring the aerostat down and deflate it. The ceremonial ripping of the seal to allow the helium to escape, was carried out by **Cpl Eck Brown**. Those who could find a pair of specially designed slippers, were tasked with flattening the carcass and stamping out air pockets with their bodies.

Visitors from HQ 2 Sig Bde and DCSA were suitably impressed by the set-up we had running. Reports back from the main players were of a highly positive nature, and as long as we keep doing what we have been, the future is bright for us.

PART 2 *by LCpl Fiona Scott*

After the comms phase, the Sqn moved on to Chickerall Camp, Weymouth, our base for the AT phase, which was to include mountain biking, costal walking and climbing. It was glorious sunshine the whole time, but could have been a bit cooler when cycling, as the off road route involved climbing some steep hills. But at least this meant that the cold beer at the end tasted all the better.

It was even hotter next day for the coastal walk, but we took it a bit more leisurely. Once again, the beer at the end of the day

went down well, and the view was very picture card like. For the climbing, we went to Blandford Camp to use their climbing wall, with our resident mountain rescuer **Sgt Joe Wiggins** as instructor. Some of us had never climbed before but we all found it quite enjoyable, with some saying they might take it up when we got back home. A visit was also arranged to Bovington Tank Museum. Having viewed the tanks of the past, we then had a chance to get bang up-to-date with the tour of the Challenger 2.

Everyone passed the army swim test, which had been arranged at the local swimming pool. Camp over for another year, it was back to reality, and when we saw the 'Welcome to Dundee' sign, true to form, it started to rain.

EXERCISE NORTHERN DUNDEE

It was a happy day when 14 personnel departed Dundee, to catch a plane for an AT ex in Bavaria. This was the first overseas ex the Unit had arranged for some time. All personnel were accommodated at Hubertushaud Lodge.

The ex had been planned by **SSgt Dave Honeyman**, and included a number of pre-deployment trg weekends, practising well-needed skills to make us ready for almost anything.

The trekking routes proved to be very challenging, but enjoyable. The added incentives of snow in June made everyone feel as if we never left Scotland, but the bonus of applying sun cream, rather than anti-midge cream, was a joy. The rock climbing proved to be a barrier for a few, but most finally managed to conquer their fear of heights.

Anglo German relationships were no problem, as we had our own plastic German, **Cpl Bruce Tarbet**, who managed to cement a few relationships with passers-by, but also received a few blank expressions when he spoke to them.

The ex proved to be highly successful, and with the added pursuits of white-water rafting, water-skiing and Kleterstigeing, all are sold. The Unit looks forward to conducting a similar ex in 06.

Cpl Carmichael and Sgt Bayne

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

OC **Maj John Townsend**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Chris Lloyd**

Since our return from summer leave, life at 204 Sig Sqn is as busy and frantic as ever. In the last six weeks we have managed to fit in a 2-week Sqn ex, a Bde CAST ex and various preparations for Poland. The Sqn has seen a large turnover of personalities as well. In particular we welcome **Maj John Townsend** as the new OC.

EXERCISE MERCURY RAT 1

After about a year of OP TELIC 5 prep and deployment, it was finally time for the Sqn to shake out the cobwebs and deploy onto Achmer trg area to practise the set up and movement of 4 Armd Bde HQ. The first week took the form of a series of lessons and stands to teach the basic skills and drills required of the soldiers. The ex culminated in a week of moving the HQ around the trg area in prep for the Bde CAST.

With the huge turnover that the Sqn has seen at all levels, the ex proved a huge learning experience for all. Not least for **Sig Pople** who, on arriving from Blandford and on his first day of work at 204 Sqn, found himself out on Achmer and getting fully stuck into the ex.

CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM

Alongside the various exs and Sqn routine that has been going on, **RSM Lloyd's** main focus has been on winning the Minor Units Cross-Country Championships this year. Having generated huge enthusiasm amongst the troops, the RSM has brought together a squad of about 14 runners, who regularly train and compete in the various BA(G) cross-country events. The Team have proved extremely successful so far, winning the Minor Unit 10km Championship in Elmpt, and also the first and second league races of the season. Competition is rife within the squad, with all the lads having to beat the RSM in each race. **WO2(FofS) Leyland** and **SSgt(YofS) Smith** are more concerned about being dropped from the squad due to the younger athletes being posted in.

All in all, it has been a busy few months for the Sqn as we build up to EX RHINO CHARGE in Poland in November. Finally, congratulations to **Sigs Baker**, **Button**, **Buxton**, **Hayley**, **Jackson**, **Rodway**, **Ronanyne** and **Stroud**, who have been selected for promotion to LCpl. Also **Sigs Marsh** and **Lockton**, who have now been posted to units, who were also selected.

SSAFA BIG BREW

On Friday 7 October 05, members of 204 Sig Sqn joined together in the Sqn bar for a Big Brew Up to raise money for the charity, SSAFA. The event was well organised, and the Sqn tucked into bacon sarnies, muffins, doughnuts, and obviously, lots of brews. Many Bde staff came down later on, and contributed to the fundraising efforts. A sum of £550 was raised for SSAFA, and all involved agreed it was an excellent event.

Tucking into The SSAFA Big Brew

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj AE Percival**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) DJ Smith**

THE DESERT RATS PREPARE FOR THE DESERT!
– by Lt A D Rea

7 Armd Bde was the driving force behind the British effort during OP TELIC 1 and the liberation of Basrah. Now, almost three years later, the Desert Rats are weeks away from returning to Iraq on OP TELIC 7. The Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's role has changed significantly, from conventional HQ moves across the desert, to static and mobile comms based in Basrah.

Over the last few months, the Sqn's trg has been geared towards this change of role and the prep for the off. Post summer leave, with everyone feeling refreshed and revived after the busy times of BOWMAN conversion and a condensed trg year, it was time to focus on the deployment. The Sqn has almost doubled in size, and is now 100% manned for deployment, thanks to the efforts of 2IC, **Capt Jane Squires** – resulting in the Tp Comds beginning to worry about the time that is going to be spent writing reports!

Our pre-deployment trg started with the troops being reformed (on paper anyway) into Static and Mobile. Elements from Alpha, Bravo and SHQ Tps were amalgamated to ensure that all deployable roles were filled with the right people.

Immediately after summer leave, Static Tp deployed to Sennelager to conduct a week's live firing, whilst Mobile Tp began preparing kit and equipt for packing. At the same time, more and more people were arriving from other units, and the desert clothing and equipt was being issued, complete with the new Red Rat – on the left arm instead of the right. (It is supposed to be there and does face the correct way!)

Next followed the All Ranks Briefings (ARB), which gave us a good insight into some of the cultural aspects of Iraq, along with tactical briefings on the area and int reports on the various political parties. The ARB culminated with NCOs from the Sqn being taught how to train the rest of us in various patrolling and

Anti-ambush drills

The RSM points out the targets to the seniors

basic tactical skills. The process is known as Train the Trainer, or T3. A few people later confessed that they thought T3 was the latest Terminator movie, and spent the whole week wondering when it was to be shown!

It was then the turn of Mobile Tp to hit the ranges in Sennelager, where we covered everything from an APWT to top cover and Sangar shoots.

The Tp was split into sections with the SNCOs forming 'Rolling Stone' section – with a combined age of 260! Many live rounds were rapidly turned into empty cases and a good week was had by all – all except the Range Staff, that is, who had been running the same shoots every day for six weeks! We, on the other hand, even had time for a game of inter-troop football one evening!

Meanwhile, lurking in the shadows, the Bde Comd's second rover group (or SAS Tp as they became known) was carrying out further trg involving anti-ambush and reaction to contact drills. This elite band of brothers (and one sister) will be responsible for escorting the Bde Staff around the AOR. The highlight of the trg was proving that 12 people can't fit in the back of a GS Rover - even under fire from smoke and blank ammo!

The Sqn's pre-deployment trg culminated in EX DESERT DRAGON, a CAST for the HQ. The Rover Gp were on standby to escort the Bde Staff, and were well prepared for the job and were accommodated with the Highlander's BG. Didn't we look cool when we turned up in desert combats, to find the entire Battle Group in greens!

After the ex, the Sqn held a belated summer party, organised and managed by the Artificer, **SSgt Gav McBeath**. It was a fancy dress function, and gave everyone a chance to relax after a busy few months. After a little pre tour leave, 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig

The vehs are loaded ready for the off

Sqn (207) is now fully trained and ready to deploy, thanks to the efforts of **Capt Ed Swift**. The vehs and equipt have been loaded, and we are now looking forward to the deployment and the challenges that OP TELIC 7 will bring. Finally, I would just like to welcome all augmentees and new postings into the Sqn. Enjoy your time with the Desert Rats, and remember that we are the premier Armd Bde! A fond farewell goes to all those recently posted out - we hope you cherish your memories of your time with this Sqn, and that your new postings are equally as challenging.

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj MS Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Forrester**

EXERCISE PANTHER'S VOID *- by Lt Paul Whillis*

Not content with our past achievements, the Unit mounted a Level 3 AT exped during summer leave to acclimatise members of the Sqn to high altitude conditions. Trekking was to be the activity, and India, Morocco and Chile were all considered as destinations. The Cordillera Huayhuash in Peru, billed by innumerable websites as 'one of the world's greatest treks', was the final choice. It fulfilled the criteria of being arduous and exotic, as well as being far enough from Catterick Garrison to entertain some hope of sunshine.

The exped took place from 3-25 August. The plan was for a period of acclimatisation to precede the trek, and for the group to travel and experience more of Peru afterwards. The acclimatisation would take place in the town of Huaraz, situated at 3,000m in the Cordillera Blanca, the country's most popular climbing and trekking range. Thereafter, the 10-day trek would circumnavigate the Huayhuash Range, 100km to the south. Passing through river valleys, over high plateaux and finally up to passes and peaks, the route was largely non-technical but lofty. Following the well-worn 'climb high, sleep low' maxim, nightly campsites were planned between 3,300m and 4,400m. The maximum altitude attained each day was between 4,600m and 5,060m.

The group at 4,800m on Siula Punta

The final exped team comprised 8 members: Leader and JSMEL(S) **Lt Paul Whillis**, 2IC **2Lt Marie Hunston**, and **Cpls Greg Cairns** and **Jim Gallagher MLT(S)**, **LCpls Al Davis** and **Mike Middleton** and **Sigs Kev Neilson** and **Rob McGuire**. We flew from Gatwick to Lima via Houston, arriving into Lima at 04.40hrs local time. Lima Airport was not the hell-hole predicted

by the faint souls at *Lonely Planet*, but a rather provincial, quiet mall, admittedly replete with numerous unsavoury characters lining the walls. Posting a sentry to guard the valuables, we settled in a corner of the Airport and awaited a more sociable hour to seek transport.

We boarded transport for Huaraz, and endured the first of several interminable bus journeys. Huaraz was wonderful, offering delicious steak meals for acclimatising mountaineers, as well as nightly power cuts. It was in Huaraz that we found **Jésus**. Living comfortably in crisply pressed shirts with his wife **Jansy**, **Jésus** now works as a travel adviser. Informed that we planned to climb in the Huayhuash carrying all our kit, **Jésus** smiled and informed us that he'd never experienced anything but misery when carrying heavy burdens up steep hills. Predictably, he suggested donkeys as a reliable mode of transport. We took his advice, and the exped doubled in size, when we welcomed 5 mules and a couple of miniature horses to our team.

Having saved our soles, **Jésus** then volunteered his services as our personal shopper. Buying 10 days' worth of food for 8 surprisingly fussy soldiers was a task **Lt Whillis** had been dreading, so he was more than happy to do it by proxy. Fresh meat was culled, disembowelled and hacked to pieces in Huaraz's sprawling market. Cereals, pastas and tinned Bolognese sauce were bought for the latter days of the trek. They vied with the omnipresent egg, four dozen of which **Jésus** assured us, would survive if carried correctly. He urged us to have faith, which seemed as good a planning tool as any.

Eager for the off, the group completed another acclimatisation day, and at 04.30 hrs on 6 August, we sprang enthusiastically onto a miniscule bus for the journey into the wilderness.

The first day of the trek progressed smoothly. We climbed from 3,100m to the target of 3,500m in 90 minutes. This seemed a ridiculously short amount of time to walk for a day's AT, and as no one felt anything but a sense of wonder at the increasingly lofty and jagged peaks around, so we decided to continue. Lunch (salami, cheese, tomato, ham and bread, with squashed fruit), taken outside an incongruous Japanese zinc mine.

Jolver, the donkey handler who would become a close friend over the following days, came close to ending his career by his actions in the afternoon. Having agreed to continue to a nearby farm called Matacancha, **Jol** charged off with his donkeys to set up camp. When the group caught up with him, 300m higher and 5km further on, we were distinctly unamused, not to mention suffering noticeably from the effects of altitude. **Jol**, grinning and waving atop a distant bluff, was treated, to an outburst from an irate **Lt Whillis**. When the Peruvian failed to stop grinning, the heroic subaltern attempted to charge up the hill to give him a proper bollocking, hopefully in Spanish. Alas! Due to the lack of oxygen, the gallant officer came heaving to an embarrassed halt at barely half the distance, and covered the remaining ground at a less-than-menacing stagger. The telling-off, more sound and fury than substance, was scarcely comprehensible. **Jolver**, to his credit, understood sufficiently to have at least the politeness to stop grinning and look concerned. The exped leader then set off down the hill to a lower campsite, which in the meantime had been invaded by a group of French sexagenarians and a large marquee. So ended the first day.

Donkey jam at 4,500m on Cacanampunta

The familiar diurnal pattern of the exped was established the next day. Awaking in ice-rimed tents to a chilly dawn, coffee, and **Cpl Cairns's** rice pudding, the group contemplated the first serious climb of the trek, the 650m ascent to the pass of Cacanampunta. While this would not have presented a problem at sea level, altitude rendered such a hill a considerable challenge. Haste was precluded, however, by a noisy throng of donkeys belonging to another group congregated at 4,500m. One animal had thrown its load, and the handlers were frantically retrieving bags and boxes of food from the mountainside, while their beasts bit and kicked each other. Scrambling past this obstacle, and taking several breathers, the group attained the 4,650m summit of the pass after 2 hrs climbing. Cacanampunta is notable for being the watershed between Peru's Amazonian and Pacific river systems, and the weather was worse on the far side. Fine days inevitably turned into cold, rainy nights. After a brief congratulatory break, the party continued down the slope to Janca, with most people indulging in a little horse riding, well satisfied that they were equal to the challenges that the circuit would bring.

The Huayhuash Range and Laguna Siula from Punta Siula

The most impressive trekking day came in the middle of the exped, on ground north of Siula Grande. This mountain was made infamous by **Joe Simpson's** fall and subsequent high dramas in *Touching the Void*. Climbing past meltwater lakes restrained by glacial moraines, we were treated to stunning vistas of cloud swirling around 6,300m peaks a mile to our west. The pass, at 4,809m, was reached after a severe climb that **LCpl Middleton** professed to be 'harder than the Lanyard Trophy'. Compensation was provided in the form of some of the world's most awe awe-inspiring scenery.

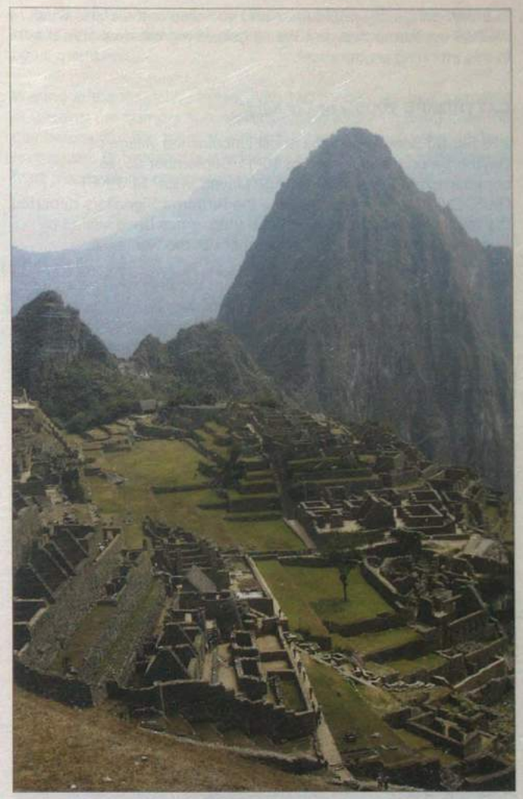
Even in the wilderness of the Huayhuash, the group was able to be comfortable. Women in isolated farmsteads could occasionally be persuaded to sell trout and soft drinks at bargain prices. And Day 5 found the group at some hot springs, which eased some aches and pains prior to a severe climb. We reached the trek's highest point, Punta Cuyoc (5,059m), the following day. Ascending above 5,000m was an important psychological achievement for us, made difficult by the proximity of the snowline and the technical inexperience of the trekkers. The area was a strange, blasted moonscape of steep sandy rock and slate scree, not lending itself to photography, but utterly memorable nonetheless.

3 further arduous days of trekking followed Cuyoc, through hugely varied terrain. In particular, a day of 1,000m descent followed by at least as much ascent over 25km tested the entire group. Lake Jahuacocha provided the final vista on the trail. The final day's trek was spent in the company of an impeccably-bred Australian woman, who opined that we were a long way from Iraq, and should be employing ourselves more gainfully. The sheila's impression of our group was doubtless tinted by her having surprised **2Lt Hunston** in her ablutions, which had been a regular feature of the trip for the young subbie. It is only to be hoped that RSS Blandford can add lessons in camouflage and concealment to the Tp Comds' Course.

No visit to Peru would have been complete without a visit to Cusco and Machu Picchu, so we decided to spend the cultural element of the trip in Peru's tourist mecca. Those inclined towards historical studies, amused themselves among the ruins of the old Inca capital, and were entranced by the overwhelming majesty of Picchu on its mountain fastness. The others dedicated themselves to supporting the ailing Andean brewing industry. In this they acquitted themselves admirably.

The journey home was unremarkable, except for **LCpl Al Davis** attracting the attention of Interpol at the Peruvian customs desk. Sadly, it was a case of mistaken identity, although **Al's** panicky expression did little to allay the suspicions of the lugubrious policeman. 'It's not about that fountain in Cusco, is it?' asked the nervous Mancunian. Indeed it was not, and what happened to the fountain in Cusco will remain forever a mystery. 16 hrs later, we landed at Gatwick. We RV'd with the coach to Catterick Garrison in the grimy underground bus station, and were asleep in minutes. Waking only to refuel nutritionally at Leicester Forest East Services, we snoozed in synchrony until Gaza Bks, dreaming of the Bde exs and High Readiness year prep that was suddenly once more our lot.

The exped was a memorable and challenging experience, and proved to be a highlight of the year for all involved. As an ex in organisation and leadership, it was stimulating and demanding. Self-reliance, determination, endurance and good humour were required, and provided by all participants. The Cordillera Huayhuash proved to be an ideal introduction to high altitude work, and undoubtedly deserves its reputation as one of the world's finest treks.



Macchu Pichu

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj J Gunning**
RSM **WO1(RSM) C Coates**

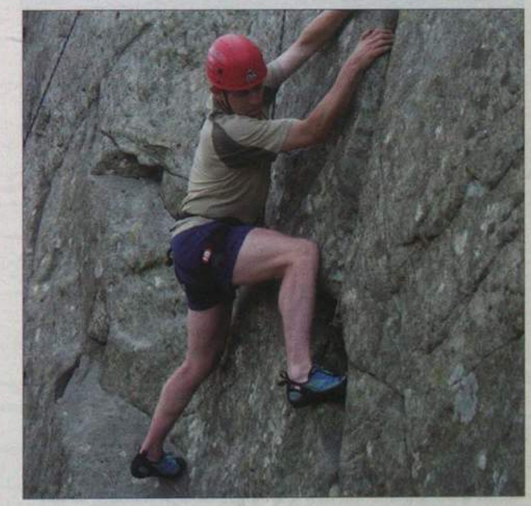
EXERCISE PUIN TIGER 2005 - *by Sig Thomas*

Over two fine weeks in July, members of 216 Sig Sqn deployed on their annual AT ex, EX PUIN TIGER, held in Capel Curig, North Wales.

The aim of the ex was to encourage team-building between depts, and for participants to acquire new skills in the wide range of events on offer. These included mountain biking, rock climbing, skiing, hill walking, kayaking and orienteering.

There was a relaxed atmosphere on this ex, and there was good choice of activity offered on each given day. Needless to say, there were always volunteers sought for **Lt Macklin**'s hill walking sessions and **Capt Craig's** orienteering.

All of the activities on offer were enjoyable, and many participants had great stories to tell, especially those who had been on the gruelling mountain bike trail. Participants confronted their fears in the rock climbing, after finding out that **Cpl Wootton** would be running this event. Skiing was conducted on a dry slope in Llandudno, where members of the Sqn could learn some of the basic skills – or improve if they had skied before.



SSgt Bedward masters the rock face

In the evenings, we could relax and socialise and discuss what we had overcome that day. We all gained a great deal from the AT in this stunning environment.

CAYTHORPE 2005 – *by Cpl King*

216 Sig Sq deployed to the small Lincolnshire village of Caythorpe on the weekend of 10-11 September 05, to commemorate the part the village played in OP MARKET GARDEN. Caythorpe was where the Airborne Signallers departed the UK for Arnhem, and ever since then, it has been visited by veterans, and serving and ex-members of the Sqn alike.

After negotiating the muddy entrance to the field where the Sqn was accommodated, it was a short walk over the village green to the nearest of the Public Houses, and once inside, all you could see in front of you was a mass of maroon. The place was very busy with serving and ex-members of the Sqn, as well as some of the veterans whom we all owe so much to. As the evening wore on, the pub got busier still. Everyone was having a good time, especially those who managed to listen to some of the excellent war stories being told by those veterans.

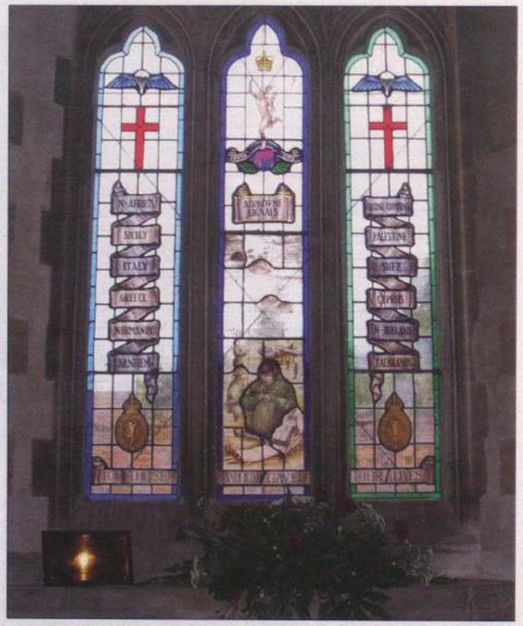
A local lad enjoys the Para-swing

In the morning everyone was up bright and early, even though some were suffering with sore heads. We manned the stands ready for the Village Fête. This fête is a chance for the Sqn to give something back to the village, each Tp ran a different activity. Particularly popular were the Air Rifle Range, with its sound effects and the smoke machine, yhe Assault Course, and the Para-swing. The Rifle Range soon had a long line of eager customers ready to try out their marksmanship skills under the watchful eyes of the newly qualified RMQ **Cpl Wootton**. For a mere 50p, the young (and old) guns were given ten shots to fire at the targets. Some had obviously shot before and were rewarded with a certificate, but all who took part went away happy with a free cylume. There was also a golf stand and flight swings. Money raised went towards the new Caythorpe Church window, which includes the recent 216 Sqn Battle Honours.
In the afternoon members of the Sqn participated in the friendly football match against the village team. At half time the score was 3-1 to the home side. Towards the end of the match, the fitness of the 216 Sqn side started to tell, and we were eventual winners (5 – 4) in a gripping second half.

Due to the poor weather, the planned tug-of-war competition was cancelled, which was a pity. The fête closed at 17.00hrs. That evening there was a seated dinner in the village hall for the veterans of the Squadron. **Maj Gen Tony Deane-Drummond CB DSO MC*** was the guest of honour.

The next morning everyone was up early to get some breakfast prior to the Sqn photograph, which was taken on the village green. The Sqn then formed up on the village high street, and to exercise the freedom of the village, we all marched down to the church. Once at the church the Sqn lined the pathway, whilst the veterans made their way inside. After the Service, the Sqn again lined the pathway to the church, for the veterans before falling in, and marching back up to the village hall for the refreshments that were kindly prepared by the village residents.

The annual visit to Caythorpe is a great tradition, and was particularly well done this year. Over the weekend many long-standing friendships were reunited, and 216 Sig Sqn showed themselves off very well. We were delighted to donate the money raised to the Caythorpe Window Fund.



The Caythorpe Church Memorial Window

ORIENTEERING 216 - *by Sig Steadman*

Missing the turning on the A14 was not a great confidence booster on our way to the Royal Signals Orienteering Competition. Departing Friday 30 September, we stayed as guests of 30 Sig Regt, venturing into Nuneaton during the evening to wind down from our extended journey to the midlands. On Saturday morning, we set off to ATR Lichfield, where the event was held, and it was as cold was as many remembered it. It was the first time I had been back there since basic trg last year.

The two-day event is broken down in to two races. Saturday was an individual event, scored on how many controls you can get within 60 mins (with time penalties for going over the allotted time). This was the first time I have competed in Orienteering, and I came third in the league for Under 25s. Unfortunately the 216 Sqn team sustained a few injuries, which affected the next day's Team events.

Sunday morning started bright an early, and morale was high. I was drafted into the A Team to stand in for an injured member. Luckily, the lemonade I drank the night before must have helped in some way. I managed to finish first out of our three-man Team.

In the Team Event a three-man team must between them visit every CP, except for seven particular CPs, which must be visited by all members.

Waiting at the finish line tense. With two men in, we had a chance of winning the competition. Unfortunately, injuries gained from the day before, put our team at a disadvantage, and we were beaten on the day. But given the injuries, we still managed a satisfactory third place, which completed a very enjoyable weekend.

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj Rich Spencer**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Phil Hay**

The Sqn continues to support the Bde on ops, and with only a few weeks to go before handover to 7 Bde, the work is taking a step up, to ensure a smooth Relief in Place, as well as providing support to the Iraqi National Referendum. The prep has been sound for the deployment of the Fwd HQ to the centre of Basrah for the Referendum, and the troops have been working hard in the Main HQ in the many outdets and rearlink dets across the MND(SE) AOR. All are looking forward to the return back to the winter chills of UK, and it will soon be time to say our farewells to the numerous TA and Regular Augmentees, who have provided valuable support to 228 Sig Sqn during the deployment. We wish them well, and thank them for their valuable contribution. The Sqn looks ahead to some well-earned POTL and the excitement and challenges that the 2006 trg year will bring. Oh and of course, a Merry Christmas to 7 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn!

A dismounted BOWMAN ops room, complete with happy dismounted operator

THE FIRST DIGITISED BRIGADE ON OPERATION TELIC
- by WO2(FofS) Robinson

The prep for deployment began as early as May 04 to identify what would be needed in theatre to allow BOWMAN to work effectively. And following the success of Operational Field Trial 2 in November/December 04, the decision was taken bring BOWMAN to Iraq. The results of the trial confirmed our belief that we could confidently deploy secure voice and limited data in the form of situational awareness.

Pre-tour recces reinforced the opinion that HF would be the likely band of choice, owing largely to the size of the AOR and integration with other comms systems. An Urgent Operational Requirement was raised to provide the Bde with additional manpack radios (predominately HF but also a number of VHF), so that it could work more effectively in the peace support role.

The reliance on Landrover SNATCH vehs also identified a further requirement for mobile HF comms. The SNATCH/HF capability has proved so effective, that the remaining SNATCH vehs in theatre should also be converted in due course.

BOWMAN was primarily designed as a war-fighting comms system and does not provide a true dismounted capability. So an additional UOR was raised to provide this capability in unit Ops Rooms. The solution provided utilised 19-inch racking, with 1 HCDR, 3 HF and 4 VHF radios. The big gain over CLANSMAN is the fact that the radios do not sit on the desk, but can be positioned out of the way and distributed using the Vehicle Internal Distribution System. This enables the user to access all radios in the rack from a User Control Device.

In conjunction with the Dismounted Ops Room (DOR) racks, has been the supply of Broadband HF antennas from Marlborough Communications Ltd. These allow the user to retune the HF radio without the need to cut specific length antennas. The ability of the HF radio to send and receive Link Quality Assessments (LQA) allows Radcon to assess the quality of each link. If the net appears to be failing, a new frequency can be selected from the FCS, and implemented with minimum disruption. A secure, all-informed Bde HF Comd net went live for the first time on OP TELIC on 6 June 05, thus releasing TacSat radios for other tasks. This net has been used on several occasions for the control of incidents throughout the Div AOR.

Unfortunately, the Bde deployed without its BOWMANised Challenger 2 and Warrior fleet. Smart Technical Solutions have been found to integrate a PRC 325 HF radio into the harness of the Warrior platform. This allows the veh comd to monitor the HF secure Comd or insecure UK Force Safety Nets.

Finally, Situation Awareness (SA) has proved a real bonus in theatre. Again HF was decided as the band of choice for passing Own Situation Position Report (OSPR) data packets. The HF data net is provided to all Bde, BG and major unit locs, as well as the Log Support convoys. This capability allows all static locs to monitor the progress of any of the convoys. The power of this capability has been enormous. It has allowed G3 staff to de-conflict the movement of log convoys with tribal fighting, and to bring assets to bear on a break down, RTA or contact. Overall, it provides the watch-keepers with immediate access to the position of the convoy, by interrogating the symbol on the ComBAT application.

In summary, 12 Mech Bde have had an outstanding tour, pushing the limits of the BOWMAN capability delivered to theatre. We all wish 7 Armd Bde a safe and successful tour, and hopefully, they can build on the solid foundations left and exploit the SA picture with their BOWMANised A-fleet and soon-to-be released SNATCH 2A.

EUPHRATES TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Dale Taft**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Stu Foster**

TASK FORCE RIVIERA *- by Cpl Ritchie Cranswick*

Well the time has come to wrap things up over here at the Shaat Al Arab Hotel (aka Task Force Riviera). The Coldstream Gds BG has been tirelessly working recently for their handover to the Highlanders. And I have been preparing my own handover, which I was expected to conduct in early November, but this has now been brought forward 4 weeks as I'm due in Blandford for a BOWMAN Sys Mgrs Course in mid-October. So I'll be swapping my ration coffee in mosquito-ridden gazebos for top notch brews in *The Rendezvous*...happy days!

In my absence, **Sig Morris** will be holding the fort for 3 weeks so that the lucky incoming winter tourers are not completely lost by the BOWMAN set up here in Basrah. I hope he will resist the constant propositions he will receive to transfer to the Coldstream Gds, although reports have reached the outer reaches of Iraq, that he has a breaking strain of a Kit Kat - allegedly...

Work-wise, all things bright and BOWMAN have been working particularly well, with no major issues at all. Another achievement was the successful use of Secure Interoperability VHF Comms in an op environment. That will be another tick in the box, then. I was also 'luckily' recruited as a veh comd for a run to Shaibah Log Base and the APOD, which eventually took longer than the Paris-Dakar Rally one-legged unicycle team.

And as I write this, I've got 6 more days in theatre, so on that note, I'm off for some panic tanning!!

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OPERATORS (IROS)
- by LCpl Dave Allan

At the beginning of the tour, the Immediate Response Operator (IRO) was a Tigris Tp barman duty. It was a stock check/comms check routine. But once **WO2(YofS) Davis** got hold of the idea, it became a Euphrates Tp RADCON asset, and it quickly evolved into its op role.

The idea of the IRO is that they can be called to deploy anywhere in the AOR at 30 mins NTM to provide comms support to BG ops for up to a 48hr period. With the increasing number of ops, the post evolved, with a requirement for multi-IROs, IRO 1 at 30 mins NTM, and IRO 2 at 6hrs NTM.

The main purpose of the IRO is to provide secure comms back to Bde HQ, using the Harris 117F in the Satcom mode, to give the operator a reliable link to RADCON. **YofS Davis** saw the potential to expand the role, pioneering secure voice to the Navy Sea King helicopters, allowing the IRO and the Unit he was attached to, a secure means of comms to the aircraft

An Immediate Response Operator – posing!

Trials soon developed to integrate the secure air platforms into the BOWMAN network. This was achieved with the use of the KY99, a device allowing other NATO comsec users access into BOWMAN via a RRB. The IROs, headed by **Sgt Prydie** and **Cpl Chapman**, have had a very busy tour, working with the Bde Surveillance Coy and Bde Reserve BG. In conjunction with a ground CS, we were once again able to provide the BGs with a secure link to the aircraft and the Bde HQ.

However, it's not all been plain sailing. There have been a few uncomfortable times out on the ground (**Sig Bodle** narrowly missing 'gifts' left by the locals on 2 separate occasions) but we're all still cracking on, and all the boys are looking forward to the busy weeks ahead with enthusiasm. Roll on the Referendum, and the return flights!

TECH WORKSHOP

Moving into the final third of the tour, we may have been forgiven for believing the busiest time was already behind us. Nothing could have been further from the truth.

After finally finishing the last of 25 installations of BOWMAN racks, everyone was happy to immediately start ripping out 2 racks to facilitate unit moves. **Sgt Tony Thirlwell**, **Cpl Stu Cornish**, **Cpl Emma Jones** and **Cpl Vinny Vinson** were all involved in installation and de-installation of Dismounted Ops Rooms (DOR) around the AOR, with the help of our friends the installation technicians.

Cpl Cornish now sleeps with body armour and helmet on all the time after sleeping through a mortar attack at the SAAH, whilst everyone else scrambled to don the afore mentioned equipment. A lesson **LCpl Murphy** has learned, as she too slept through a mortar attack on Basrah Air Station.

LCpl Murphy sleeps through the rocket attack

Cpl Tommo Tomlins is holding the fort up at the Div Tech Wksp, and is leading from the front, managing to install a satellite system in a record time of 3 days! All that time on the roof, with temperature reaching 40° C. **Cpl Flash Gordon** is enjoying his last few months in the Army in sunny Basrah, running the R and I for the Wksp. Joining them at the hotel, is **LCpl Smurf Murphy** - when she's not away playing rugby in Qatar or supplying the Iraqi 10 Div Ex with PABX capability.

On 30 September BAS was the setting for a 10km road race, organised by **Sgt Thirlwell**, to raise money for Birmingham Children's Hospital. Several members of the Wksp took part: **Cpl Vinny Vinson** was most perturbed at being beaten by **2Lt Taft**, but posted a very respectable time none-the-less. **LCpl**

Cpl Sara Petherbridge, third place in the Basrah Fun Run

Simmo Simpson, **LCpl Smurf Murphy**, **Sig Ryan Chittick** and **Sig Stu Marks** also paid $5 for the privilege of joining the fun, but a special congratulation goes to **Cpl Sara Petherbridge** for finishing third in the ladies' competition.

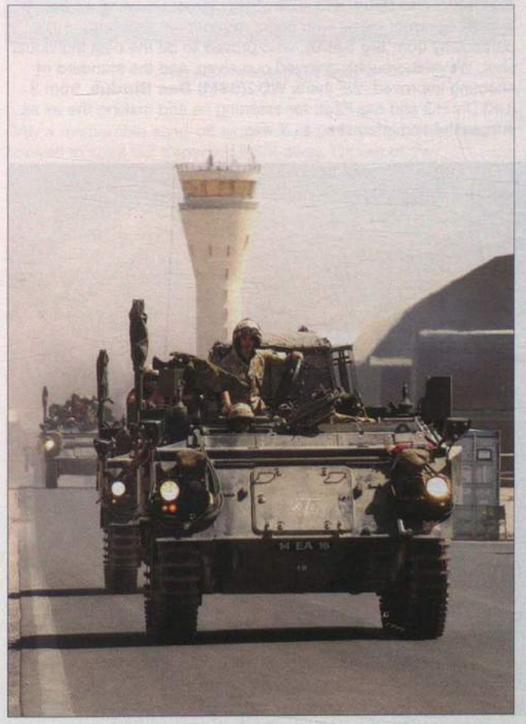
TIGRIS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Ed Cuthbertson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Warren Jones**

-by Cpl Cunnington

We are stretched across the south of Iraq. We have dets at Um Qasr, Al Faw, Safwan Hill Radio Rebro, and Al Muthana.

Recently we deployed out to provide the Lt Fwd HQ on a Tp-level ex at Basrah Air Station. This proved to be worthwhile trg time to not only get the Lt Fwd out and plugged up, but for the Tp to realise how nice life is without showers, aircon, and lots of creepy crawlies to keep us company. This ex was in prep of the Lt Fwd HQ deploying in direct support of the Iraqi National Referendum.



Lt Fwd HQ deploying at Basrah APOD

As the Sig Sqn Multiple, we also escorted the Bde Yeoman **WO2 Lee Davis** and QM **Maj Jackson** on the recce of The Warren. The Warren is the loc for 12 Mech Bde Fwd HQ in support of the Iraqi National Referendum. It is situated in the centre of Basrah, and is normally the home of the Iraqi Police special weapons and tactics team. During our recce, **Cpl Stephen Thomas** erected the necessary antennas and established the relevant nets to prove the effectiveness of The Warren as a HQ.

With PT four times a week, the Tp are looking and feeling extremely trim. We have also had a few range days to improve our skills with live ammo in a trg environment. The package included the firing of GPMG from the 432s, and zeroing of support weapons. The pinnacle of the range, was live firing the Tp Warrior FV511, incorporating use of the 30mm Rarden Cannon.

Tigris Tp zero their support weapons

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRAH

OC	**Maj Steve Jackson**
RQMS	**WO2 Kleppang**

MT MULTIPLES

Operating as force protection convoy escorts has been made slightly easier, now that the temperatures are decreasing. Multiple Comds **Sgt Charnley** and **Sgt O'Connor** have been constantly tested by the usual suspects, and six months of trg and development has resulted in slick drills and confident mil skills.

LCpl Verger on Top Cover

Our chariots (the SNATCHes), have clocked up thousands of miles, and continue to break down just minutes away from their destinations, to make it an even longer day. We have been keeping the LAD lads gainfully employed (and off the volleyball court and sun bathing) getting them back on road.

Sig Traynor and **Pte Nicklin** have been pulled from the comfort of the Stores and Servicing Bay, kicking and screaming to assist in Top Cover, to the delight of the regular Multiple lads, and we've even seen the MTWO, **WO2 Andy Paling**, dust his body armour off to get out on the road, with hilarious consequences.

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj DC Worden**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) AB Lothian**

The Sqn has maintained its busy but challenging pace of life since the last edition of *The WIRE* and has undergone some major management changes. We say goodbye to the OC, **Maj Tim Allen**, off to instruct at Staff College; and we welcome his replacement, **Maj Dave Worden**. The 2IC, **Capt Sofia Hargreaves**, leaves us to become Adjt 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt. We wish her the best of luck, and welcome her replacement, **Capt Stuart Gunson**, as well as our new QM, **Capt Sean Keilty**.

During these changes, we have been continually prepping for EX LOYAL LEDGER, the Bde's first major ex as the fourth bde within 3 (UK) Div. The Sqn is also in the process of ramping up our prep for deployment on ops in the early part of 2006, and this has included the normal inbarracks trg and a field firing ex in Castlemartin, where we were able to get to grips with a variety of different weapon systems and partake in some challenging and fun trg. We have also been prepping a team for Cambrian Patrol 05, and this has included some five weeks of arduous trg on Dartmoor and Sennybridge trg areas.

EXERCISE VIPER STING

EX VIPER STING was a transition to field firing week conducted on the Castlemartin range complex in South Wales. We undertook a progressive and challenging shooting programme, which included individual battle shooting ranges, live night ambushes,

The GPMG gunners provide supporting fire during the Defence shoot

and a platoon in defence shoot. We also had the chance to fire the GMPG and pistol, and a bit of clay target shooting as well. It was an excellent week, with some exceptional shooting, particularly from **Sig Smith**, who proved to be the best individual shot. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, and the standard of shooting improved. We thank **WO2(SSM) Dan Burdus**, from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, for assisting us and making the ex as successful and interesting as it was.

The Sqn Cambrian Squad during trg in Sennybridge

CAMBRIAN PATROL

As well as preparing for EX LOYAL LEDGER and other commitments, the Sqn is entering a team into the Cambrian Patrol 05. To that end a squad of 12 deployed to Dartmoor and Sennybridge, under the comd of **Lt Pete Wright** and **Cpl Andy Bashford**, to begin trg prior to the Patrol. After three hard weeks of trg a section was chosen, and they then started final prep for the Patrol in early November. This has been a challenging time for all those involved, and many lessons have been learned. After three years in the Army, **Sig Homes** now knows how to use his compass, and no longer takes his patrol five miles out of their way. **Sig Kani** has discovered that he cannot stop every veh on the roads, despite his hardest efforts to do so.

The trg however continues, and all members of the team are enjoying it, and looking forward to, with some anticipation, the Patrol in November.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj JP Hazlewood**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Storey**

RSM'S LEAVING *by LCpl Russell*

On Friday 23 September 2005, the Sqn (262) said farewell to its founding RSM, **WO1(RSM) Dougie Douglas**. Though the senior ranks were still recovering from the previous night's festivities in the SNCOs' Mess, a game of softball (RSM's XI vs Sqn XI) had been organised without the RSM's knowledge, and much to his chagrin. His dry amusement at contesting in the game was later compounded when awarded his winners trophy in the Sqn bar.

The RSM escapes in style

Only a memorable send-off would do, so a fire engine had been booked to spirit our departing RSM away. Off out of the compound aloft the red chariot he went, waving with one hand and knocking back a tin of Fosters in the other, with *Blues n' Twos* blaring out all over PRB.

So here ends one era, and here's to the next. We welcome **WO1(RSM) Storey** to the fray – whether he has the catch-phrases to match **Dougie** remains to be seen, but we're sure he'll be keeping us on our toes…

EXERCISE HALBERD CHALLENGE 05 - *by LCpl Morgan*

EX HALBERD CHALLENGE 05, 102 Log Bde's military skills competition is based on the Cambrian Patrol format. The competition comprised of 21 teams of section strength partaking in a three day event over Otterburn Trg Area, consisting of an 18 km insertion, a 30 km round robin of mil skills stands, and a 12 km extraction, with a march and shoot to round it off. The teams were split into three groups of seven, starting within a day of each other.

Our section was the last team of the second group, and on arrival at our drop off point, we took a bearing to the first RV and realised that this was going to be no easy task. We then set off tactically, patrolling from RV to RV while collecting Batco Bigrams to complete the map reading test on completion. Blessed with the map reading abilities of **Sig Price**, we finished with the fastest time of the day - a mere 4 hrs and 53 mins! From there, we moved on to the first stand, the boat race: three teams, three Mk5 assault boats and a lot of splashing around, and we were en route to the harbour area for hot food and a well-deserved sleep - or so we thought!

Sig Blair firing on EX HALBERD CHALLENGE

The second day started at the very sociable hour of 02.00hrs with a night driving stand, and then a short Bedford ride to the drop off point, for the start of the round robin.

The second stand we arrived at set us in good spirits as we extracted a simulated casualty across what can only be described as a lake with babies' heads, after which there was not a dry soldier in sight. This was followed by an orienteering stand and the classic observation stand, where eagle-eyed **Sigs Wilmore** and **Davies** performed admirably. Last but not least was **Cpl Farrell's**, recovery stand, and then it was back on the Bedford, and off to the harbour area with high spirits, knowing there was only one day to go.

Once in the harbour area, we carried out our personal admin, and bedded down for the night – or part thereof. Once again we awoke at 02.00hrs, and set off on our final task of the competition, a CTR. Led by **Cpl Flannagan**, we arrived at the FRV, where after leaving the rest of the section in the hands of **LCpl Morgan**, he took his recce party on to the target. With that task complete, we extracted back to our bashas.

On the morning of the last day, we were transported to the assault course, and to our dismay found out that we had to complete a circuit before the 12 km extraction tab. Once that was completed, and after 2 hours of sweat, tears and profanities, we finished with seven seconds to spare. The shooting phase followed, with five whole rounds of ammo. And with the killer instinct running through our veins, we set upon the range. After a vicious firefight, the competition was over.

The end result was second place in our group and third over all, first place in the mil skills phase and a silver award for the team with an overall score of 75%. With that, the team hobbled off into the sunset, with thoughts of next year's first place.

SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF'S VISIT - *by Cpl Potts*

The Gazelle landed and out stepped the SOinC(A). Waiting to receive him was the Sqn OC, **Maj Hazlewood** and **WO2 (RQMS) Pollitt**. After numerous briefings the Brigadier was ready to meet the men and women that the make the Corps great. First on the list was the Trg Wing, where he received a brief from **Sgt Smith** on the recent Battle Camp. He then walked to the Welfare Centre to be greeted by **Cpl Forsythe** who in turn explained the facilities available.

At Alpha Tp lines, the SOinC(A) was welcomed by **2Lt Maben** and **SSgt Dunbar**. He then received short briefs from **LCpl Barrett** on the Sqn's commitment to EX JOINT VENTURE 04, and **Cpl** (now Sgt) **Harvey** did on the Lanyard Trophy Competition. Next stop was the Tech and ISM workshop.

After speaking to the Techs and IS Engrs, the group walked around to the LAD, where **WO2 (AQMS) Lee** showed the SOinC their relatively new workshops. Here we was briefed by the MT SSgt, **SSgt Lodge** and **Sgt Sibbald**, and then met the remainder of the MT section

Lunch and a buffet had been laid on for the SOinC(A) and the junior ranks in the Sqn Bar. This gave him the opportunity to speak to those that he had so far missed. After lunch the

The SOinC(A) chats to LCpl Barrett

SOinC(A) was chauffeured up to the airfield, where the Sqn had set up Main HQ. Here, he received a brief from the Ops Officer, **Capt Stoy**. After meeting the Bde Comd, the SOinC(A) performed the opening ceremony for the new single living in accn.

Later that evening, in the Sgts Mess, the Brigadier presented **SSgt Dunbar** and **Sgt Pearsall** their LS and GCMs.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL WING (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt Rigby**

1 SQUADRON

OC **Major Lomax** Int Corps
SSM **WO2(Supvr R) C Ashworth**

HMS SOUTHAMPTON – *by SSgt(Supvr R) Wade*

Having just finished my Supvr Rad course, I wasn't surprised in the slightest when on my first day at work I was pinged for a Joint Comms exercise on board *HMS Southampton*. I headed off to Plymouth to meet the ship, and as soon as I was on board, it was up anchors and away at full speed straight into heavy seas. This resulted in me not only wearing green, but also looking very green.

This was my third time on board ship, so it was easy for me to fit into the ship's daily routine. It was also pleasant being in the Chiefs Mess, which had a well stocked bar. (I am still awaiting the dreaded Mess bill).

I also had the opportunity to represent the Chiefs Mess in the bucket ball competition, in which we managed to finish runners-up, gaining valuable points for the Mess, despite throwing several balls over the side.

The first run ashore was in Freetown, Sierra Leone. I volunteered as a helper for the ship's charity project at Gloucester Baptist School. This was a real changing rooms situation, in which the school was wired up to give it lighting, several coats of paint applied to the walls, and vanish applied to hundreds of desks. It was pleasing to see that just a little help was very much appreciated by the local population.

The ship then set sail from Freetown and headed to Brazil, it was on this part of the trip that I had a visit from the bears! Crossing the line is still a big tradition in the Navy, and this was one experience that I was never going to be able to miss. Initiation ceremonies no longer exist in the forces, but King Neptune doesn't use our rule book.

Therefore I had my moment on the flight deck getting a visit from the doctor and barber, before being given a disgusting pill to eat, that you would not even give to a dog. This then resulted in a good dunking with the bears on hand to offer even more support. My Certificate for crossing the line is now laminated, saving me much anxiety, should I cross the line again in the future.

Another week passed and I arrived in Natal, Brazil. I had a brief opportunity to stroll around this picturesque town and its beaches, before flying back to UK. I thoroughly enjoyed my time whilst on board *HMS Southampton*, and would recommend it to anyone who gets the chance to serve on board.

2 SQUADRON

OC **Flt Lt C Bruce**
2IC **Capt Brett**

EXERCISE WIDE-EYES – *by LCpl Wayne Cundall*

Taking a break from JSSW Digby, a group of 14 went to Cyprus from 5-13 September 2005 for a short exped. Even with an average temperature of 40° C at mid-day, we decided to make it a climbing exped. **WO2 Oakes** led the team of **WO Fowler** (as 2IC), **Capt Brett**, **Sgt Clayton**, **Sgt Catterall**, **Sgt Lawrie**, **Cpl Piper**, **LCpl Devlin**, **JT Davies**, **JT Lepic**, **JT Dixon**, **SACs Swift** and **Gilbert** and myself, **LCpl Cundall**.

Staying at Episkopi Bks, the first day we were introduced to climbing on their wall. We then went to Dourishia Heights, where we achieved a fifty-metre abseil.

This was followed by Jameson's Rock, which had climbing holds pre-bolted, and, to our relief, was in the shade. Finally, we returned to Cape Grecko, where we bottom roped and climbed the 45m climb back up.

Every evening, we enjoyed different foods, from a traditional Greek meze, to Pizza, and finally, a fantastic Japanese meal. After all this hard work, a day of R and R was needed at Fassouri Water Park. Unfortunately, it was then time to return to normality.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Dennis Weir MBE**
PSAWO **WO1 John Farrell**

Following 9 yrs at Chicksands, 5 Comms Coy (V) have been renamed as JSSU (V) and relocated to RAF Digby, in Lincolnshire. After a successful Annual Camp in Canada taking part in EX COURAGEOUS BAT the Volunteers have settled into their new loc and resumed normal trg.

The OC, Maj Dennis Weir deliberates over PXR points from this year's Camp

MEDAL PRESENTATION

Lt Col Dave Whimpenny, CO at JSSW (D) visited JSSU (V) during August's Trg Weekend to present VRSMs to five of the Unit's stalwarts, Royal Signals **WO1s (Supvr R) Paddy Payne** and **Jock Robertson**, **WO2(Supvr R) Andy Marshall** and Intelligence Corps **Capt Ian Farquharson** and **WO2 Bryce Campbell**.

INTER-TROOP CRICKET COMPETITION

Having chosen a wet weekend for our Annual Inter-Troop Cricket Competition, we resorted to Plan B, an indoor competition in the gym. Four teams had entered: The Staff Pool, Radio Tp, The Analysts and The Linguists.

The opening game between the Staff Pool and the Linguists set the standard for the remainder to aspire to. The OC, **Maj Dennis Weir**, showed the way with his impressive stroke play, but was dismissed with a dodgy full toss, by **WO1(Supvr R) Jock Robertson**. In the end, the standard of Cricket was at best, average, and the Staff Pool, ably captained by **Maj Jez Bailey**, and who adapted to the conditions and tactics quicker than the rest, were the winners.

GREEK NIGHT

The Annual Unit Barbecue was also hit by the weather, but Radio Tp came up trumps, with the evening's entertainment. Authentic Greek music, Brandy Sours, Ouzo and Olives, were abundant, and a fine cultural evening was had by all. A shame about the dodgy karaoke singing. Don't give up the day jobs.

Sunday morning saw the Trg Offr, **Capt Chris Lowish**, taking the Unit on CFT trg around the Camp, pointing out Digby's major attractions along the way. A tour of the Digby Sector Ops Museum completed the weekend's events.

WORLD WAR 1 BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO YPRES

Following on from the success of last year's Platoon Comd's disposal, it was suggested that the Unit should deviate from the norm, and embark en masse on a Battlefield Tour this year. Ypres was the chosen destination. We picked up our guide, **Maj Martyn Ashley-Taylor**, RGJ, and headed Dover and an afternoon sailing to Calais.

Our accn for the weekend was in the town of Roubaix in France, a town so small that our presence doubled the amount of people out on Friday night. On Saturday morning, we set off for Belgium and our first stand at New Irish Farm Cemetery. Our guide, **Martyn**, set the scene for the weekend, with an informative introduction on the events that led up to the War.

We moved on to Essex Farm Cemetery, and visited the dugouts that were used as a dressing station between 1915 and 1917. Essex Farm is famous for a number of reasons; the first being that Canadian, **Lt Col John McCrae**, wrote there probably the War's best known poem, *In Flanders Field*. It was also the place where **Pte Joe Strudwick**, 15 yrs old, one of the youngest casualties of the War, was buried, and also the site of our first VC grave of the weekend, **Pte Tom Barrett**. A nearby archaeological dig on the day of our visit, had just unearthed 3 bodies from the war. Amazingly, 80-100 bodies are recovered each year from the battlefields - a fact that focussed the thoughts of all participants.

Moving off, we passed down the Menin Road, over Hell Fire Corner, to Hill 62 for a view of Ypres from the German's perspective. Lunch at the Hooge Crater Café, with a quick look at some British trenches in the Hooge Garden followed, and we moved on to Zonnebekke and the Dugout Experience at the Memorial Museum, Passchendaele. We finished the afternoon's stands with a visit to the Tyne Cot Cemetery, where over 20,000

JSSU (V) in Sanctuary Wood

graves and 6 VCs are buried. We followed Tyne Cot with a visit to a German Cemetery at Langemark - a definite contrast in styles from the Commonwealth war graves visited. A quick trip back to the hotel to freshen up, and then we were back to Ypres for the Menin Gate, Last Post Ceremony. A crowd of a couple of thousand people, including young visitors from the ATRs, watched a moving ceremony. Our Unit, ably represented by the OC, **Maj Dennis Weir MBE**, **WO1s John Farrell** and **Steve Rofe**, laid a wreath during the proceedings - a fitting end to an emotionally charged day.

On Sunday, we visited the Menin Road South Cemetery, then on to Hill 62 and the British trenches in Sanctuary Wood, where we experienced the darkness of the tunnels. We then moved on to visit Hill 60, and witnessed the devastation and aftermath of tunnelling, in the Caterpillar Crater.

The tour ended aptly, with a stand at the Brandhoek New Military Cemetery, and a visit to the grave of **Capt Noel Chavasse** RAMC VC and Bar MC, which is unique in that his grave has two VCs carved on it. This brought the tour to an end, and the start of our journey home.

It was an excellent weekend, which reminded us of great pride in our heritage, the horrors of war, and the seriousness of the role we have all signed up to.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO	**Lt Col CJ McIntosh**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) S K Cook**

HANDOVER OF COMMANDING OFFICER

Lt Col Ian Standen finally ended his tenure and handed over the reigns to **Lt Col CJ McIntosh**. Off to HQ SOinC(A) on promotion, we wish him, **Anna** and family all the best for the future. In July we bid farewell to the old Adjt **Capt Jenkins** and hello to **Capt RC Quinsey** and family. Welcome!

Lt Col Standen handing over the reigns to Lt Col McIntosh

NIKSTOCK 2005 – *by LCpl Merv Wride*

On a cool night on 1 October, Ayios Nikolaos was home to the event of the year, the annual NIKSTOCK extravaganza.

A collection of musical talent from all over the island, from both civilian and military bands, played to a crowd of around 500. The band everyone wanted to see was Ay Nik's homegrown band, *Bare Feat*. This was their first official gig, with the band comprising, amongst others, three Royal Signals personnel, **WO2 (FofS) Martin Frangleton** (Lead Guitar), **Sgt JP Thomas** (Bass Guitar), and **LCpl Merv Wride** (Drums). This soft rock band is managed by **SSgt (FofS) Dave Cook**.

WO2 (FofS) Martin Frangleton playing to the crowds with band Bare Feat

The music played by the bands varied from soft rock to jazz, and they all went down well with the home crowd. The music lasted until the early hours of Sunday; a good night was had by all.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Terry Crane**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Gaz Middleton**

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

We bade farewell to **Maj Parkinson** in May to go to RHQ AFCENT, and welcomed his replacement, **Maj Hymas** from 7 Sig Regt. **SSgt Chris Hood** left in July, bound for SQMS, 222 Sig Sqn, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. His place was taken by **Sgt Rob Agnew** from 18 Sig Regt. Finally, in October **WO2 (RQMS(T)) Jase Goldsworthy**, **Tina** and family left us on promotion to RSM 16 Sig Regt. **WO2 Lee Linton** arrived in October from 14 Sig Regt (EW) to replace him.

1 SQUADRON

OC	**Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mac MacDonald**

We farewell **Sgt Dave Salter**, who has moved on to 821 EOD; **LCpl Paul Warburton**, who has gone to JSSW (Digby); and **SSgt Roy Venables**, who has gone to 14 Sig Regt (EW).

We welcome **Cpl Francis Wisky**, from his Class 1 Course at RSS; **LCpl Leroy Bodin** from 14 Sig Regt (EW); and **LCpls Weston**, **Ben Willcox** and **Carl Williams**, also from 14 Sig Regt (EW).

Congratulations to **WO1 Darren Winfield**, who has been selected for commissioning; to **Sgt Neil Howarth**, on his promotion to Sgt; to **LCpl Jamie Hudson**, on promotion to Cpl prior to posting to 14 Sig Regt (EW) in December; and to **LCpl Mark Jones** who got married this summer.

COOMBER CUP COMPETITION

The Coomber Cup is the quarterly Unit sports competition, with the September part consisting of Swimming/Water Polo, Tennis and Cricket. With a strong Cricket team, we knew we were in with a chance. **Cpl Craig Hatton** managed the team superbly and **LCpl Gollings** played especially well in the second game, contributing to a 1 Sqn victory at the end of a long afternoon. Swimming was also a success, with **Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner**, **Capt Rich Angove**, **Cpl Linsey Hughes** and **Flt Lt Rich Judson** all winning their individual races, to help us beat 2 Sqn. nfortunately, 2 Sqn decided to redeem themselves at the Water Polo, but 1 Sqn still managed to win the overall Swimming Cup on points. The Tennis was also an exciting competition, with 1 Sqn yet again dominating the day. **Sgt Steve Morris** and **Mr Mo Morrison** both won the A and B strands respectively, with **Sgt John Duke** getting through to the A strand semi-final, and **CPO Dave Somerville** losing to **Mr Morrison** in a 1 Sqn final in the B Strand. This was a fantastic all round result for 1 Sqn, and has brought us into the lead in the overall competition. With just Rugby, Golf and Tug-of-War to go, 1 Sqn are now in a strong position to win the whole Competition!

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Lt Cdr Neil Bassett**
A/SSM	**SSgt Ian Dickinson**

After 3 years' LOA, we bid farewell to **WO1(FofS) Al Holyoak**, **Vicki** and family who go to JSSW(Digby). **SSgt (FofS) Dave Eyes** has left us on promotion to 15 Sig Regt, and **Sgt Matt Williams** will by now be 3 months into his FofS course. **Cpl Phil Brown** is now the new Line Sgt in Chelsea Bks, and **Cpl Martin Tancock**, has also left.

WO1 (FofS) Colin Raynor joins us from 11 Sig Regt with wife **Tracey** and family, while **SSgt (FofS) Dave Cook** with wife **Linda** and family, joins us 34 Sig Regt. **SSgt Dicky Dickinson** and **Sgt Glen Ruscoe**, join us from RAF Henlow and 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn respectively. **Sgts Mac McCallum** and **JP Thomas**, along with families, join straight from their Class 1 courses. **Cpl Jim Ross** joins us from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. **Cpl Chris James** arrives on promotion from 14 Sig Regt (EW). **Sigs Mitton**, **Carl Oldridge** and **Clare Pugsley** also join us, **Sig Mitton** direct from the factory, **Sigs Carl Oldridge** and **Clare Pugsley** from 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and HQNI 15 Sig Regt respectively.

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD

SO2 CIS	**Maj Owen Finnie**
YofS	**WO2 (YofS) Craig Scott**
BSM	**SSgt Pete Watson**
Ops SNCO	**Sgt Andy Conley**

Notes by Sgt Conley

Just to remind us all of what BATUS is and does, our primary role is to provide trg for Battlegroups. In recent years, the BGs that trained here have subsequently deployed on ops to Iraq. A BG comd recently returning from Iraq stated, 'If Waterloo was won on the fields of Eton, then success in Iraq has been achieved on the prairies at BATUS'.

The Royal Signals permanent Staff at BATUS is small. A Maj works in the HQ; and a YofS, SSgt BSM and Sgt work from the BATUS ops room as Prairie Staff. They directly support all BG trg events. During the ex season, which typically runs from April to October, the ops room is augmented by up to 20 Royal Signals temporary staff. BATUS is a 'work hard, play hard' posting;

The Signals Permanent Staff at BATUS. SSgt Watson, Maj Finnie, WO2(YofS) Scott and Sgt Conley

WO2(YofS) Craig Scott, awarded a Commendation by Commander BATUS

Canada has much to offer, but the workload is at operational tempo during the whole ex season.

The BATUS logo is the medicine man of Medicine Hat, the nearest large town to BATUS trg area.

As the Medicine Man ex season is finally drawing to a close and the temporary staff have now returned to their parent units, it is the first opportunity since March for the Ops Team to breathe a sigh of relief and get back to some kind of normality - just in time to start preparing for next year's trg. This season the team have provided CIS to enable two Medicine Man exs, the Sandhurst final ex for CC043, and a specialist ex by the Joint CBRN Regt. It has been a particularly intensive and eventful 6-month period that has seen a great deal of early starts and late finishes. The bulk of the workload has been to ensure that the BGs roll out the gates with adequate trg and the infrastructure to support a BOWMAN deployment – an achievement that has been particularly successful. The importance of the success achieved by the Ops Team this season did not go unrecognised. Comd BATUS, **Col Simon Levey** singled out **YofS Craig Scott** for special credit, and awarded him a Comd's Commendation for his leadership and extraordinary efforts over the ex period.

It has also been a period of intense learning for all involved, both permanent and temporary staff alike. Now that we have reached a period of relative normality, we have decided to enjoy a number of extra curricular activities. **SSgt Watson** has decided to hone his live fire qualifications by assisting the Range Safety Control Group on running a number of ranges for them. He describes his experience:

'After all the temporary staff had left, we could knuckle down to the improvement and development of the BOWMAN System in BATUS. That is, after the next ex that BATUS were running, the Joint Chemical Nuclear Biological and Radiological Regt (JCNBR). But all the temporary staff had already flown home. So a trawl was sent around BATUS for qualified soldiers. I had broadcast earlier that I was qualified to plan and run ranges, so before I knew it, I was getting picked up at 04.30hrs on a clear day on the Albertan Prairies.

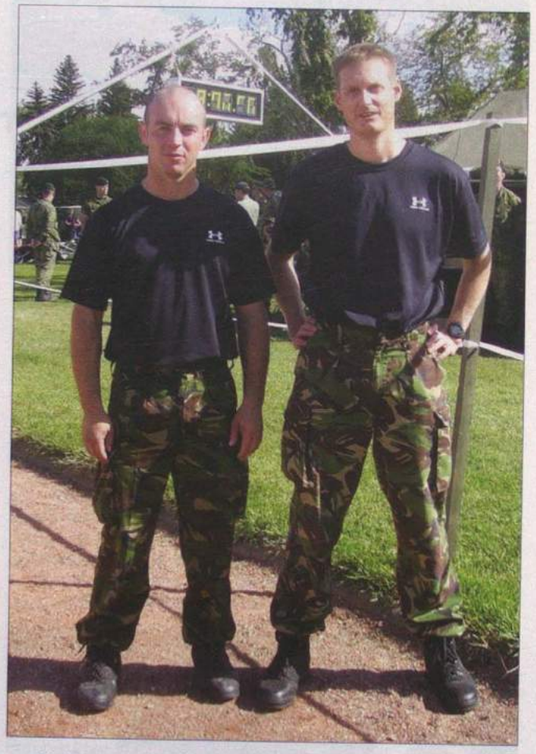
'The ranges covered a wide range of live firing, starting with pairs fire and manoeuvre, then building up to fire team, then section attacks with anti-armour engagements. All of this was hard work in the heat of the Prairies. Later in the week, there was a company in defence night shoot. This was an impressive range, with overhead fire and flanking fire, guns along with mortars, and more plastic explosive used than in *Saving Private Ryan*. The final day was a moving veh shoot.

'he scenario was that the convoy of six vehs was ambushed, and the soldiers had to drive through, and engage targets. This was a very useful range, and was excellent trg for where these soldiers where about to deploy. The vehs used were FUCHS, and were very awkward to supervise safety, because of the locations of the hatches. But as usual, we got round it, and made it happen. The soldiers taking part, enjoyed the range, and learned a lot about shooting out of vehs - a very useful skill for any Corps soldier. This was repeated for 3 weeks, and by the third week, it was getting a little repetitive, but with a little enthusiasm, the trg was finished. With the JCNBR Regt packed off home, it was back to the office for more number crunching and re-writes of the main plan, and to look at all the exs coming up in a busy 2006 for the Signal staff here in BATUS.'

SSgt Watson acts as safety supervisor at the front of this AFV during four weeks of live fire trg

Maj Owen Finnie and **Sgt Andy Conley's** extra-curricular activity of choice was to compete in EX MOUNTAIN MAN 2005. This is a Canadian military competition, regarded as their most arduous and physically demanding. It offered an excellent opportunity for BATUS to promote the British Army to a wider Canadian military audience, and through the media coverage, to the Canadian public. The event was conducted on 30 August 05 in the Edmonton River Valley, and is the formal trg event for 1 Canadian Manoeuvre Brigade Group (1 CMBG).

The event consisted of a 31.6km Bergen run (15kg); 3.2km sandbag carry (additional 32kg) to simulate a canoe portage, 10km canoe down North Saskatchewan River, finishing off with another Bergen run of 5.6km (15kg). Competitors had to carry the 1982 Canadian Bergen. Complete with sleeping bags and liners, it didn't leave much room for additional items or weight. Of the 426 starters, the BATUS team of 8 were the only competitors wearing combats and boots, the Canadians opting for trainers and shorts. After 6 to 8 hrs, all the BATUS team were through, winning the Visiting Team category. All the trg and hard effort paid off, and reflecting on a very challenging but rewarding competition, I am sure there will be a Signals representation in the 2006 event.



Maj Finnie and Sgt Conley relieved to have completed the Canadian Mountain Man event and won the Visiting Team award

Lastly but by no means least, we would all like to say a big farewell from us all to **Maj Pete Cubbin** and family, who have moved to 7 Sig Regt. We wish you all the best in your new post. A big welcome to his successor, **Maj Owen Finnie** and wife **Cathy**. We hope you enjoy your time here in Canada.

SPORT

BRITISH ARMY (GERMANY) HOCKEY TOUR 2005

– by Sgt Murcott

The BA(G) Hockey tour to India started in New Delhi on Saturday 3 September, with the usual delay of luggage for many of the players. Despite this minor hiccup, the first full day was spent sightseeing around New Delhi, taking in such sights as the India Gate, Indian Houses of Parliament, and the remains of the first ever built mosque. We finished the day enjoying the hospitality of the British High Commission.

That night saw the start of our travels, as we experienced our first sleeper train. The following few days took us north, to see the Golden Temple and the Changing of the Guard at the Pakistan Wagah border, where the patriotic rivalry of the two countries was an amazing sight to behold.

Our first match was in Chandigarh, where we met a team containing 4 Olympians and 4 International hockey players. Despite the strong opposition, we put in a good performance, particularly by **Sig Jason Coward**, losing 6-1. The next day we played our second match at the National Stadium in New Delhi, yet again facing strong opposition, though thankfully, the number of Internationals was only 6! The final result, 5-0 to New Delhi, was reassuring to the Team, which, due to the heat, had relied on many substitutions.

Tragedy struck that night for **Lt Paul Carpenter** who broke his leg in a Rickshaw accident. Naturally, he was fined for this misdemeanour! On the journey southwards to Mumbai, we visited the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Mehrangarh Fort and Umaid Bhavan Palace, the loc used in the James Bond film *Octopussy*. The pace of the tour eased for a few days, as we remained in Mumbai for 3 days, visiting the Gateway to India and the Mumbai cricket stadium.

The third match of the tour ended in a creditable goal-less draw against the Indian Navy Team, before we set off to Hyderabad. At Hyderabad, we settled into our peaceful lodgings at St Thomas' Seminary for 5 days, from where we did a little sightseeing, but most importantly, we travelled to St Arnolds Orphanage at Motakundar, where we spent time helping out around the school, and organising a fun day for the children. With the hockey sticks and balls the Team had brought for the children, **Cpl Derek Farr** took a hockey lesson; **Sigs Daniel Wall** and **Tom Bell** took up the national game of cricket; **Sgt Marcus Murcott** took a football session; and **WO1 Colin Cooper** wore the kids down with some good old PT.

Team members showing off their Tour shirts at the Taj Mahal

For our fourth match against Hyderabad, the weather had cooled, with even some rain, which possibly helped us keep the score down to a 4-0 loss. Before we knew it, it was time to move again, and we continued south to Bangalore, where we enjoyed a touch of R and R. The final match of the tour against Bangalore, saw the Indian Captain and some short corner specialist playing. Thankfully, the opposition were limited to only a few short corners, but they still scored through open play, with **Sig Bell** narrowly missing, before **Cpl Farr** scored 2 goals, thus ending the tour as the leading scorer, as we lost 5-2.

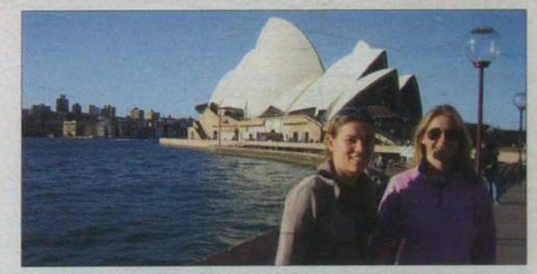
The tour was finished off with the train to Madras, where we spent our final day on the beach and a Team meal at a Chinese restaurant - purposely avoiding curry!

EXERCISE BALTI AUSTRALIA – ARMY LADIES HOCKEY TOUR TO AUSTRALIA

- by Lt Nic Berry, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt

A once in a lifetime opportunity, the Army Ladies Hockey Team jumped at the chance to test our skills against our Defence Force colleagues from the other side of the world. The tour team consisted of 20 members of the Army Ladies Hockey Team and included 2 players from Royal Signals, **Capt Caroline Woodbridge** (RMAS) and **Lt Nic Berry** (3DSR).

After an emotional flight anaesthetised by a steady flow of refreshments, we arrived in Sydney heavily jet-lagged. We were accommodated by the Royal Australian Navy in Randwick Bks, 20 mins from the centre of the city. The tour organiser and 'Chief Possum', **Caroline Woodbridge** had anticipated that we would be suffering, and timetabled for some days of cultural



Caroline Woodbridge and Nic Berry at the Sydney Opera House

enlightenment to allow the team to recover before taking on the Aussies.

Like typical tourists, we did the Sydney Harbour cruise, posed for photos outside the Opera House and chilled out on Bondi Beach. Our first trg session and match was played on the Olympic Pitch built for the games in 2000. Used to our humble roots at Aldershot, we felt like international stars stepping onto the pitch. Our first game was against RAN. It was a bit one-sided and ended 8-0 to us Brits, including a goal from **Nic Berry** from her first touch. Our second game was against New South Wales Defence Force, a team gathered from the Australian Army, Navy and Air Force based in NSW. The flow of play mirrored the previous match, and although the opposition were slightly stronger, the Brit side were now in full flow, and hammered home 10 goals for no reply - 5 from **Amanda Potgeiter** (REME) and 2 from **Nic Berry**. Throughout our time in Sydney, we were hosted expertly by the Royal Australian Navy, but I'm not sure they, or the poor citizens of Sydney were prepared for the first outing of the Dame Edna wigs and glasses!

Our next stop was Brisbane, where we were looked after by the Australian Army in Enoggera Bks. In the north, the weather was much warmer, so we planned a trip to Moreton Island for our recovery day. Typically, the clouds appeared from nowhere and ridiculed our attempts to play volleyball on the beach. Some chose to relax, whilst others traipsed up a huge sand dune with a piece of chipboard in hand to try Sand Tobogganing. The majority of the next day was free, so we took a trip down to Surfers Paradise, to try our hand at surfing. On arrival, the surf conditions were poor, as the high winds had generated a strong swell. Some wimped out and opted instead to admire the skill of the experts, whilst others bravely attempted some body boarding. They emerged half an hour later, battered and exhausted from being thrown about by the sea.

Our first hockey session in Brisbane was an evening game against Toowoomba, a civilian team from just outside Brisbane. After travelling for almost 3 hrs, we arrived at the pitch, realising that the Australians' idea of nearby is slightly different from ours. We were faced with a much tougher opposition, who play on a weekly basis. The first half was tight, and the home side scored the first goal, but the Brits fought back to a 5-2 victory. There were no sandwiches or fondant fancies for the after match teas, but instead a traditional Aussie BBQ.

Another day, another game, this time against the Queensland Defence Force, with a few ringers-in from their men's team. This didn't deter the Army Ladies, who pulled out all the stops to win 4-2, which included a dramatic diving goal from **Caroline Woodbridge**. After the game, we were treated to yet another 'Barbie', and a night out on the town in Brisbane. Following our run of victories we sat drinking XXXX watching the England Cricket Team slogging **Shane Warne** for 6. Things couldn't get any better!

We left Brisbane to travel to Cairns for the R and R phase, expecting tropical temperatures in which to top up our tans

Chief Possum, Caroline Woodbridge in action

before returning home. No such luck! We were greeted with unseasonably poor weather, with rain and wind every day. Not willing to allow the weather to spoil our fun, we boarded a cruiser bound for the Barrier Reef. The sea was so choppy that 20 mins later, around 40% of the passengers were testing out the sick bags. Once we had cleared the coast, the weather improved, and the sun appeared. The snorkelling was amazing, and we could view the larger sea life from a glass-bottomed boat. The Great Barrier Reef acted as a fantastic climax to a wonderful tour.

After some last minute didgeridoo purchasing, a seafood banquet and a final showing of the Dame Edna outfits, we started our epic 32-hr journey back to Aldershot. Maximum credit should go to **Capt Caroline Woodbridge**, who organised the tour, and to **Capt Tracy Prowse**, (ex Royal Signals) for assisting with the admin. The tour proved to be perfect preparation for the start of the new season, and we hope to reproduce our success from last year.

ROYAL SIGNALS LADIES HOCKEY

The Royal Signals Ladies Hockey Team is looking to recruit new members. Trials will be held in January 06 ready for the Inter-Corps Championships in March. We are also planning to tour to the Channel Islands early next year. Any females interested in playing regardless of experience should contact the Corps Secretary, **Capt Howe** on 07989972115 or **Lt Berry** on 07730609040.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB (OFFSHORE SECTION)

SAIL TRAINING

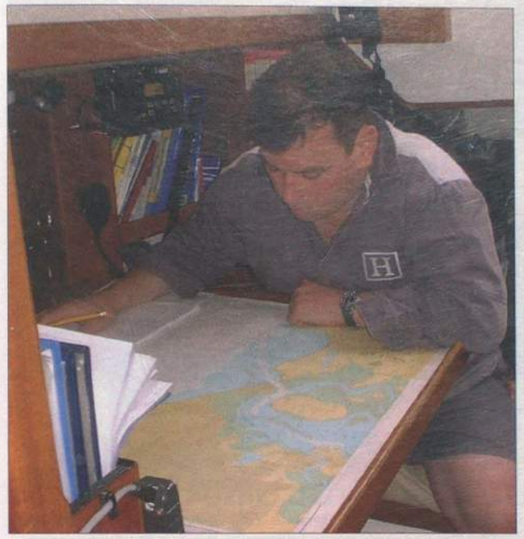
The seventh Sail Trg Week took place in the Solent during 3 – 9 October 05. This proved to be as popular as ever, with soldiers coming from units both here and in Germany.

There was a good mix of all ranks, both Regular and TA, from signaller to field officer.

No fewer than seven yachts were used for the week, with 14 students gaining their Comp Crew qualification, Sgt MJ **Holt** and **Cpl Amanda Gilthrow** qualified as Day Skippers, whilst **Maj Paul Buck**, **Capt Elisabeth McLellan**, **Capt Matt Hele**, and

Capt Matt Hele explains the basic of sailing to Sgt Windy Gale

Sgt Bernie Steadman all braved a 17-hr assessment to qualify as Coastal Skippers.



Maj Paul Buck hard at work passage planning on board Amoria

Congratulations also go to **WO2 Terry McIntyre** and the crew of yacht *Placuna* (**SSgt Sharp**, **Cpl Mountford**, **Sig Saunders** and **Sig Lawton**) for winning the Endeavour Trophy, a regular feature of the Autumn Sail Trg Week. As well as enjoying sociable evenings visiting ports such as Cowes, Yarmouth (IOW), Poole, Lymington and Southampton, the week culminated with a social event at the Hornet Yacht Club, where certificates were awarded by the Commodore, **Col Ewbank**.

The next Sail Training Week will take place 3 – 7 Apr 06. POC for this is **Maj Helen Bosley** on Mil Tel: 95381 7196, Mil Email: HLW-BOWTAT8-SO2TL, Civ Email: helen.bosley@tiscali.co.uk . Details of winter continuation trg will be published in due course.

EXPEDITIONS

EX MED DRAGON 2005/2006 is a Joint Service adventurous sail trg ex, taking place from 23 October 05 – 02 April 06, and for which the RSYC (O) is taking an active lead. The aim of the ex is to develop the personal qualities essential to members of HM Forces, Reserve Forces, and the UOTC, through adventurous sail trg in a service environment.

The Joint Service Adventurous Sail Training Centre (JSASTC) will deploy *Lord Portal*, a 16 metre Sail Trg Craft. It will make passage from Gosport and transit, via the Bay of Biscay, to Barcelona, where it will be based for 9 legs, each of two weeks, before taking part in EX MED SAIL.

Details of the legs and provisional costs can be found at: www.mercurychallenge.mod.uk/MedDragon.htm. Details for EX MERCURY CHALLENGE, the Royal Signals round-the-world expedition 2006/2007, can be found at: www.mercurychallenge.mod.uk. Crew selection has already commenced, and whilst there is availability on some of the legs, interested personnel are urged to register their interest immediately.

POC for EX MERCURY CHALLENGE and EX MED DRAGON is **Maj Charles Roberts**, on Mil Tel: 94371 3172, Civ Tel: 01258 481172, Email: DCCIS-HQ-Trg Pol SO2 or rss.trs.so2trgpol@rss.army.mod.uk.

AWARDS 2005

Offshore Section Awards for 2005 were as follows:

The Admiral's Pennant 21 Sig Regt (AS).

The Bolitho Prize (awarded to the member making the greatest contribution during the year to further object of the Club) **Sgt Stu Taylor**

The Meiktila Cup (awarded to the member with the best racing record for the year, offshore, day boat, dinghy racing or windsurfing) **Lt Rachel Thompson**

The Admiral's Bowl (awarded to the serving member under the age of 25 who is assessed as the most promising young offshore dayboat or dinghy racing helmsman or windsurfer) **OCdt Rachel Clayton**

The Dick Good Trophy (awarded to the member who has engendered in the Corps sailing community, attributes epitomised by the late **Dick Good**, which include a sense of adventure, a premium on enjoyment, and involvement and mix of all ranks, to encourage new sailors and promote the welfare and spirit of the Club) **Maj Bob Appleton**

The Ship's Bell (awarded to the member making the most significant contribution to admin of offshore sailing in the club) **Capt Elisabeth McLellan**

The Mermaid Cup (awarded annually to the winning yacht's crew of the longest leg of the Baltic Offshore Regatta *Petrel* – Crew, 3 Div Sig Regt Skipper, **SSgt Miller**

The Dickinson Telescope (awarded annually to the winning skipper of the Baltic Offshore Regatta *Petrel* – Crew, 3 Div Sig Regt Skipper, **SSgt Miller**

The Cannon Citc (awarded annually to the second yacht's crew overall of the Baltic Offshore Regatta *Curlew* – Crew, 21 Sig Regt; Skipper, **Maj Gray**

The Homeward Bound Trophy *Pochard*– Crew, 36 Sig Regt Skipper, **Cpl Amos**

The Don Shaw Trophy (Spirit of the Event Award) *Skua* – Crew, 204 Sig Sqn Skipper, **Maj Adley**

The Endeavour Trophy (awarded annually to the winning yacht's crew of the pursuit race staged on the last day of the Autumn Sail Trg Week, UK) *Palcuna* – Crew, **SSgt Sharp**, **Cpl Mountford**, **Sigs Saunders and Sig Lawton** Skipper, **WO2 Terry McIntyre**

The following were also awarded at the Keil Regatta:

Novice Skipper	*Skua* - **Lt Rachel Nicklin**
Round the Cans	*Gannett* - 14 Sig Regt (EW)
Committee prize	**SSgt Stu Renolds** 1 Armd Div Sig Regt

YACHT CHARTER

Petasus and *Skywave* will both be out of the water during the winter for routine winterisation. Anyone wishing to charter the yachts in 2006 can check availability and make bookings now, using the new on-line booking system, which can be found at www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/sailing/rsyc.

If you are interested in becoming involved in offshore sailing, either speak to your unit rep, or contact **Capt Elisabeth McLellan** on 94331 3731/01722 433731, or email LAND-CBM-G6-OpsCts-SO3 or elisabeth.mclellan163@land.mod.uk. Anyone particularly interested in joining the very successful race team, should contact either **Maj Jason Kennedy** on 93508 4019 or **WO2 Terry McIntyre**, email terry.mcintyre@btinternet.com. All ranks and all abilities will be given a very warm welcome.

ORIENTEERING

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY'S SUCCESS

Three members from DCSA took part in the Royal Signals Orienteering Championships held in October.

Day 1 was the individual championships held in Hopwas Hays Wood near ATR Lichfield, where there were 68 runners from Royal Signals units in Germany and UK. Although the wood was not that large, it was quite technical and provided a good venue for the score event, with lots of discussion afterwards on the best route choice. JSU Corsham was represented by **Maj Nick Bateson**, who came sixth overall and first in the M45 class; and **Maj Phil Cooper**, who came twenty-eighth overall and fourth in the M45 Class.

Day 2 was the Harris Relay Team Championships, held in Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield. **Majs Bateson** and **Cooper** were joined by **Brig David Hargreaves**, who became the third member of the team, entered in the team competition. They came first in the Minor Units competition, and fourth out of all of the competing Royal Signals teams, a good result for the oldest team in the competition, with a combined age of 139 yrs! Again, this was a fairly technical area, where after a while, all the gorse bushes looked alike, making for interesting debates in post-competition discussions.

Triumphant!, Maj Nick Bateson, Brig David Hargreaves and Maj Phil Cooper achieved an impressive result in the Orienteering Championships

ROYAL SIGNALS CLAY TARGET SHOOTING

– by Maj Mike Burke

With shooting grounds at Blandford, Colerne and Brawdy, and in Germany at Gütersloh and Elmpt, the ability for members of the Corps to shoot clay pigeons has never been better. Although it is not the same as shooting the SA80, Service personnel, with their ability to handle weapons confidently, quickly adapt to the different techniques. These techniques can then be applied to shooting a moving target with an SA80, giving direct benefit to Military marksmanship.

As a result of the growth of the number of grounds in UK, Corps Clay Target shooting is becoming established in Army circles. With 2 enjoyable Corps Championships having been held at 21 Sig Regt (AS), and a third planned for 2006, shooters of all abilities have the opportunity to give it a go. Quite literally, people who have never fired a shotgun before have performed very well at the Corps Championships, and there are prizes for all standards of shooter, from complete novice to expert.

Three years ago, there were no Royal Signals competitors at the Army Clay Shooting Championships in Bisley. This year, there were 14 Corps shooters in the field of 87.

The 5-man Corps team came third in the Inter-Corps Championship, compared with seventh in 2004, with **Sgt Andy Hill** of 15 Sig Regt matching the scores of our 3 Army shooters in just his first year of shooting, and coming 26th in the Army across all 3 disciplines. Thanks to the drive and enthusiasm of **Cpl Charlie Lister**, 209 Sig Sqn were the top Minor Unit in the Land Comd Inter-Unit competition.

Some outstanding individual results were also achieved. **SSgt Karl Hannah**, 21 Sig Regt (AS), Corps Top Gun for 2 years on the trot, surprised himself by coming third in Olympic Skeet (not his speciality) and was seventh overall in the Army across all 3 disciplines.

Although he is a novice shooter, **Sig** (now LCpl) **Billy Beaumont** of 209 Sig Sqn came an astonishing fifteenth in Olympic Skeet with a score of 61 out of 100, and **Sgt Addi Addison** of 15 Sig Regt, a novice, came twentieth in Olympic Trap. Our 2 other current Army team shooters, **Sgt Jamie Holmes** of DISC Chicksands and **WO2 (FofS) Glen Thompson**, HQ SOinC(A), came thirteenth and twenty-second respectively in the overall scores.

WO2(FofS) Glen Thompson poised to shoot

The fifth member of the Corps team, **Maj Mike Burke** of HQ UKSC(G), came thirty-first overall. Compared with last year's Championships, the number of Corps shooters in the top 40 in the Army has increased from 2 to 8.

After just 2 years of co-ordinated effort, these results show that the Royal Signals are poised to become one of the major forces in Army Clay Target shooting. There is potential for the likes of

SSgt Karl Hannah takes down another clay

SSgt Karl Hannah to become nationally recognised shooters, and possibly to represent England in the future.

The Corps Games Club is supporting this ambition by allocating funds for the Corps squad to receive professional coaching in 2006.

As **Sgt Andy Hill** has perfectly demonstrated, new talent is emerging in the Royal Signals every year. Often people try the sport not realising that they have a natural ability for it.

You could be one of those people. So, with guns and cartridges available on site, why not give it a go at the next Corps Championships? If you want to try Clay Target shooting or just want more information, please contact **SSgt Karl Hannah** on 94385 5220 or **Maj Mike Burke** on 94872 2789.

ROYAL SIGNALS FREEFALL PARACHUTE DISPLAY TEAM

The team was bolstered this year, as **Capt Si Bristow** (HQ SOinC(A)), **SSgt Jim Gray** (11 Sig Regt) and **Sig Auz Sambrook** (63 Sig Sqn) all qualified as display jumpers. On top of this, the jumpers were very ably supported by **2Lt Kelly** (2 Sig Regt) and **LCpl Wilkinson** (14 Sig Regt (EW)). Although they're not yet qualified to jump at the parachute displays, they've done invaluable tasks such as dropzone control, ground support crew and commentary.

We jumped into 8 shows this year, including 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's Corps birthday celebration, and the opening of the new Blandford School. Unfortunately, some displays were cancelled due to bad weather, but we expect once again to take 25 bookings for 2006.

The Team at the opening of the new Blandford School

The main event of the year was the Armed Forces Skydiving Championships, and we spent a number of weekends training in preparation for it. The highlight of the training included coaching from the Formation Skydiving Team, Deland Majik, who are currently the US National Team and World Champions! After a number of hrs in the classroom, and with every skydive debriefed, each member of the team had improved considerably.

This set us in good stead for the Championships, which took place in August. We were able to enter two 4-way Formation Skydiving Teams, who were up against the highest standard of competition ever seen! Royal Signals Blue came a very credible 4th place in their class, and Royal Signals White achieved a top half result, even though they were one of the least experienced teams in the competition!

But we were not without silverware! **2Lt Kelly** started the competition whilst still a student skydiver, and graduated during the competition on her way to winning the novice accuracy event.

Royal Signals Blue at the Armed Forces Skydiving Championships

September saw the opening of the UK's first indoor vertical wind tunnel, which is in Bedford. Bodyflight, which has agreed to sponsor the Team from next season, allows both skydivers and non-skydivers to simulate freefall in a safer, warmer and cheaper environment than in the sky. We were invited to the opening launch, and Team members spent up to half an hour in the tunnel for free, receiving individual coaching from former British Champions.

A number of training camps are currently being planned for the 2006 season. As well as wind tunnel trg to hone both individual and team skills, an exped is being planned for May 06, (destination tbc, but somewhere hot!). This won't just include experienced members – we will also be taking beginners and teaching them to skydive! We will also be running progression weekends for anybody who has completed a static line parachuting course or accelerated freefall exped in the past few years. The next will be 25-26 February, but look out for more dates – we'll send them to all unit trg wings.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARACHUTE?

Do you want to challenge yourself?
Do you want to have as much fun as you possibly can with your clothes on?
Do you want to plan a challenging and fun at exped, or a Tp/Sqn/Regt bonding day?

If the answer to any of these is 'yes', get in touch - it really is a lot simpler than you think! We can organise 1-jump static line courses in the UK or Germany, or indoor skydiving in the Bodyflight wind tunnel. If you want to go all they way and learn to skydive, you could go on the Corps exped in May. If all the places have already gone, we can give you all the info you need to plan your own, (or for your fearless Tp Comd to plan it for you – just apply a little pressure).

If you are already a student or qualified skydiver, and want to get more involved with the Team to get the most of our benefits, including expert coaching, don't delay, get in touch!

Royal Signals Sports Parachute Association
Spooner Building
Blandford Camp
Dorset DT11 8RH
Tel: Mil 94371 5435
Civ 01258 485435

If you want to book the display team for a unit event, contact us at the same address.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Maj Gen AH 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
e-mail: welfare@royalsignals.mod.uk

Membership Secretary
Tel (mil) (9)4371 2090
Tel (civ) 01258 482090
e-mail: rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk

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

BRANCH NEWS

Lesley Banyard, Secretary of the Loughborough Branch, has moved to: 341 Park Rd, Loughborough LE11 2HG. Tel: 01509-557 685.

REUNION DVD

A DVD showing the highlights of the 2005 Reunion at Blandford is available from Assn HQ at £6.00 (incl p and p. Allow extra for overseas. Cheques payable to 'Royal Signals Benevolent Fund' should be sent to: 'Reunion DVD, RSA, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH.' A limited number in VHS format are available at £8.00 each.

RECOMMENDED READING

Life Member **Joan Nicholls** has written a fascinating book about her time as a Special Wireless operator in War Office Y Group during WW2. It is called: *England Needs You, The Story of Beaumanor Station WW2*. It is full of photos, stories and facts. If you are interested, please contact **Joan** on: 01372-458919 or e-mail: joan.nicholls@tecres.net.

NEW MEMBERS

Those members, who have been enrolled since the last issue of *The WIRE*, are shown below. With more and more serving members joining the Association, it is considered useful to show their current unit. All recruits are now enrolled as Life Members within their first week or so at Blandford. The Association is grateful to **Sgt Rog Manns** of 1 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt for giving the recruits a briefing on the RSA and ensuring that their enrolment cards are completed and forwarded to this office for registration.

All units should now have the RSA poster on display in the Sqn/Tp lines. This poster shows that all serving soldiers, who are in the One Day's Pay Scheme, are eligible to become Life Members of the RSA. If your Sqn/Tp does not have such a poster and you would like one, please get in touch with this office. Enrolment cards can be sent to your unit, or applicants may use the 'E' form on the RSA website:
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa

Name/Rank	*Service*	*Branch/Unit*
Cpl Dennis Jeffries	1948-50	AFSR Assn
SSgt Charlie Rigg	1980-05	
Sig Darryl Hargreaves	1997-00	

Cpl Eddie Leek	1976-00	
Cpl Marc Cinnamond	1996-date	59 Sig Sqn(V)
SSgt Scott Day	1987-date	59 Sig Sqn(V)
WO2 Gary Pearson	1984-date	59 Sig Sqn(V)
WO1 Dave Jones	1981-05	
SSgt David Hughes	1979-05	
Sgt Stephen Johnson	1978-05	
LCpl Lee Randles	1988-00	
Sgt John Kerr	1970-82	
LCpl Philip Pearce	1962-82	
Sig Bunny Hare	1939-46	
Cpl Ron (Taff) Sennett	1960-69	
Sig Pat Campbell	1979-87	
Sig Doug Pike	1940-46	
LCpl Pamela Richardson	2002-date	Chester
Capt Mike Jones	1982-92	Chester
Lt Suzanne Jones	1984-90	Chester
Dvr Jim Conboy	1952-54	Chester
LCpl Martin Oliver	1954-56	
Lt Roy Longworth	1943-46	Australia
Sig Matthew Wild	1989-00	
WO2 Robert Eden	1983-05	
Sgt Mark Young	1992-date	215 Sig Sqn
Robert Waldren	1973-82	
Sgt Bill Furneaux	1942-47	
Cpl Carl Jewitt	1951-54	
SSgt Andrew Dawson	1976-00	
Sig Edgar Moore	1942-46	
LCpl Virgil Fernandez	1983-89	
Sgt Craig Straughan	1983-date	11 Sig Regt
Sgt Jonathan Jones	1991-00	
Sgt Don Gaunt	1960-62	Cotswolds
Cpl Charles Vines	1967-79	
Sig Tony Penny	1987-97	
Sgt Thomas Heafey	1940-47	
Cpl Roger Gates	1953-62	BEB
LCpl Martyn Harper	1996-03	
Sgt Colin Svenson	1984-87	Liverpool
SSgt Lee Clark	1991-date	
Sig Chris Yarnall	1994-02	
Sig John Gibbins	1977-86	
LCpl Anthony Charlesworth	1987-94	Leeds
Sig Darren King	1990-00	
Capt Simon Gladwin	1997-05	
Sgt Colin Whitelock	1958-82	
Sgt Ken Eaton	1984-98	
Sig Tom Kane	1960-62	
Capt Simon Lord	1999-05	
Dvr Brian Webster	1953-55	AFSR Assn
Cpl Jon Reardon	1991-04	
Sig Maurice Gray	1948-49	
LCpl Neil Patmore	1991-00	
Sig Gary Epps	1981-87	
Cpl Patricia Cox	1986-00	
LCpl Sean Oliver	1989-99	
LCpl Harry Webber	1970-79	
Cpl Adrian Lowe	1987-00	
LCpl Carys Jones	2001-date	Eastbourne
LCpl Ben Mead	2004-date	Eastbourne
Sig Sarah Monk	2004-date	Eastbourne
LCpl Mark Coker	1990-93	
Sgt Joe Gilmartin	1978-01	
Sgt Andrew (Charlie) Farley	1979-01	
SSgt Martin Punchard	1990-05	
SSgt Tony Worley	1976-98	
Pte Janey Barber	1942-46	Birmingham
Sig Clive Dupree	1949-51	Birmingham
Cpl Tony Annetts	1988-date	11 Sig Regt
Sig David Benson	1999-04	

DONATIONS

In memory of **Lt Col (Retd) John A Rose**	£61.50
Mr DJ and **Mrs PA Henning**, in memory of **Lt David Pocklington**	£25.00
Mrs Susan Pocklington, in memory of **Lt David Pocklington**	£50.00
In memory of **Douglas Arthur Slater**, cheques	£105.00
HQ NI and 15 Sig Regt, in memory of **Maj 'Butch' Maycock MBE**	£100.00
21 Sig Regt Wives Club, in memory of **Maj 'Butch' Maycock MBE**	£147.80
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Maj (Retd) David Chappell	£50.00
Mrs PJ Williams, in memory of husband **Maj (Retd) Roy Williams**	£20.00
Kenneth AW Wills	£50.00
Vic Ashmore	£30.00
Tim Loughton MP, in memory of **Col Tony Lewis**	25.00
Douglas Christie, in memory **Col Anthony Lewis**	£100.00
Jamie Bixby, in memory of his father, **Ronald Bixby**	£50
Robert Waldron	£10

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig Noel Moss**
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

In mid September we arrived at Kew Gardens by coach to enjoy a fine, warm day in good company. We formed two groups, each with our own guide to conduct our tour of discovery, education and enjoyment of our surroundings. An exhibition of glass sculpture, artistically arranged throughout the gardens, greatly enhanced our day. A visit to Kew is to be recommended.

In October we held our annual Autumn Lunch at the Services Golf Club, which, as usual, proved to be a popular event, with 55 sitting down to a splendid curry meal. We were delighted to see not only many of our regular supporters, but also some new faces. Additionally, it was good to see **Jim Blake** and **Grace** again. As a serving Lt Col in the Garrison some years ago, **Jim** was a great supporter of the Association before departing for a SHAPE appointment. Now that he is well established in his second career, we shall hope to see more of him.

Drinking in the atmosphere of the Autumn Lunch - in more senses than one

Our guest at lunch was the Regtl Secretary, **Col Neil Donaldson OBE**, who kindly gave the assembled company a brief resumé of Corps affairs. This gave rise to much discussion, especially about the likely future of the present home of the Corps at Blandford.

CORNWALL BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Geoff Mills**
Secretary **Mr T W Davies**

Having seen most of the holiday session pass by, a few members (those more agile) made the short journey to Fowey during their annual Regatta week to take the liberty boat across the River Fowey from the Town Quay to the landing raft alongside *RFA Sir Galahad*. Weighing in at 8,750 tones and almost identical to her predecessor which many members remember seeing bombed and on fire on TV during the Falklands conflict, and sank as a war grave. Our private tour was by kind permission of **Capt Nigel Jones**, and tour guide was Branch Member **Mike Lukes**, who now works aboard *Sir Galahad*. Our group photo also includes a few grandchildren of Members, and shows **Mike Lukes** on far right in naval rig.

Our many thanks also the small 'Band of Brothers' who attended our annual Benevolence Fund collection on two days in August at Trago Mills, Liskeard, where we raised £500.00 which will be handed over to HQ at our annual Christmas Dinner in November.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

Over the summer, our Members and Standard have participated in the various activities and parades marking the 60th Anniversary of the end of WW2. With summer now over, we are looking for indoor events over the next few months, and our Social Committee is currently finalising the arrangements for our Supper Dance to be held on 22 October, which we will report in the next edition of *The WIRE*.

The Social Committee is already planning for our Formal Dinner Dance, which will be held on 11 March 2006. More details of this also in later issues. Our Welfare officers, **John Parfitt** and **Brian Streetly** have both been busy of late, as we seem to have had a number of Members who have recently been diagnosed with long-term illnesses. While nobody is in need of financial assistance at present, the families and Members themselves were pleased for the personal contact, and to know that we were there, if needed.

On 9 October, a large contingent went to *Queens Theatre* in Hornchurch for a SSAFA concert featuring the Royal Artillery Band with a *Last Night of the Proms* theme. There was much flag-waving, and everybody had a very enjoyable time, with the local SSAFA benefiting from the proceeds of the concert.

To see the latest news on all our future events, please visit our web pages at www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon We always welcome more members, and encourage any potential members living in East London, South and East Essex area to join us. We aim 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, Ilford at 20.00hrs on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

EDINBURGH BRANCH

Chairman **Brian Murray**
Secretary **Jacqueline Smith**

RECOVERY OF LOST BRANCH STANDARD – *by Brian Murray*

Around the late 1960s, as a young SNCO in the local 61 (City of Edinburgh) Sig Sqn (TA), I recall responding to a cry for new members to the then Edinburgh and District Branch of the Association, which was based in Torphichen Street, Edinburgh. I have but a few memories of visiting their club premises on one or two occasions, and as is the way, my interest dwindled somewhat. I have an inkling that the Branch eventually folded around the early 1970s.

When, after some 37 years, I eventually retired from the TA in August 2000, I had the intention of resurrecting the Edinburgh Branch of the Association as a means of keeping contact with old friends. With the unselfish help of the local Sqn PSI (**SSgt Bob Harvey**), who put in a great deal of personal effort, we eventually held an inaugural meeting to resurrect the Branch in November 2002. I am pleased to say we have managed to muster some 40 members since then. An early ambition was to raise enough funds to purchase a new Branch Standard, and so we set about the task with various ploys, the most successful being just a straight call for donations from Members. Efforts were made by way of local advertisements and local radio, to try to find out more of the former Branch, and what had happened to its Standard - but to no avail.

It was at the turn of the year that I received an email alerting me that someone had seen a Royal Signals Association Standard up for auction on E-bay. With immediate haste, I logged onto the site, and was able to determine right away that it was indeed the missing standard of the former Edinburgh and District Branch. What's more, it was on sale in a local Edinburgh second-hand shop with a reserve price of only £50.00. I contacted the Branch Webmaster who, as an E-bay anorak, lodged a bid on the Branch's behalf, after warning other Members not to go into a bidding war against each other. The upshot was that, within the week, I was able to call at the shop and purchase the Standard for the minimum bid of £50.00. He had apparently come by the Standard by way of a general house clearance. It is only to be assumed that it had found its way into the home of an ex-member of the old Edinburgh and District Branch.

It was in very sound state, if a little grubby, and was intact with tassels and half the lance. Ferrules etc were a bit damaged, but all in all, a very serendipitous find! After taking some professional advice as to its laundering, it is now the pride and joy of the Branch. It was paraded at the Annual Re-union Parade in Blandford this summer for the first time in over 30 years - if not longer. The Branch has arranged for a formal rededication of the Standard at the forthcoming Remembrance Parade with 61 (City of Edinburgh) Sig Sqn.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

WW2 Veteran Members of Glasgow Branch were personally invited to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day, in a ceremony held in George Square, Glasgow, on Sunday 14 August. Other Branch members and Associations were invited to take part in the ceremony, with a march through Glasgow to George Square, and afterwards the Commemoration Ceremony and March Past in front of the City Chambers.

It was a fine sunny day, and the WW2 Veterans were escorted to seats in George Square. There was a wreath laying ceremony, and a bugler played the Last Post, before a One Minute Silence. A senior Pipe Major then played *The Flowers of the Forest*, then after *Reveille*, Bunyan's lines were read by **Rev R Campbell**. After a short speech by the Lord Provost, the Veterans were then shown to seats in front of the City Chambers. It was their honour then to take the salute beside The Lord Provost, The First Minister, the Senior Officers of the three Armed Forces in Scotland, and various Provosts. There were nineteen marching contingents, each preceded by a band. **Bill McNamara** paraded the Branch Standard in the marching contingent, having previously paraded it at the London, Millport and Dunoon Commemoration ceremonies.

After visiting the Transport Museum, the WW2 Veterans were escorted to the main hall for an excellent dinner. The City of Glasgow Councillors were very generous with the wine and beer. Then, in the arena, there followed the Beating the Retreat, and musical arrangements from the various Pipe Bands. The Lord Provost spoke again, and then proceeded to each table in turn to speak to the Veterans. The evening was rounded off with a dance troupe, and the singing of the songs of VW1 and WW2.

On Saturday 3 September, we had a Grand Ceilidh Night, with the band *Rusty Nail* playing, the leader giving instructions on the different dance moves, as they do in western style dancing. Supper was a selection of Scotch pies, bridies, beans or peas, prepared by chefs, **Cpl Carruthers** and **LCpl McCormack**. A raffle was held, the proceeds to be distributed as decided by the Committee. We thank the members of the Edinburgh Branch who attended on the night, especially for their generosity in the number of raffle tickets they purchased.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Secretary **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

Our Branch 50th Anniversary dinner will be on Friday 3 March 06 at Clonaver TAC, Belfast by kind permission of CO 40 Sig Regt. VIP guests have been given the date, and everything, including the music, has been arranged, so it seems we are well ahead of matters. By the time you read this, invitations will have been sent out to guests and tickets will be on sale. Hopefully our raffle will be selling well, as we are very much depending on it to meet the cost of the celebrations.

The Branch decided to have a recruiting drive, so armed with a list of Life Members in Northern Ireland who are not yet Branch Members, we sent letters out inviting them to our next meeting on 19 October. We arranged a speaker, **Mr David Russell**, a wartime POW of the Japanese. We hope to get a good response to our letters, and perhaps a few new Branch Members.

As always, we issue an invitation to all Serving and ex-Members of Royal Signals, regular or TAVR to join us at Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast on the third Wednesday of each month.

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

The 35th Annual Reunion Dinner of the Reading Branch was held on Saturday 1 October 2005. 95 people sat down to dinner at the Sonning Golf Club, including our two official guests, SOinC(A), **Brig JE Thomas MBE ADC** and the Editor of *The WIRE*, **Maj (Retd) Bernard Redshaw**. We were also pleased to welcome representatives from many of our neighbouring Branches, who brought along their Branch Standards to display in the dining room. As usual, the Dinner was presided over by our Branch President, **Maj Gen Bill Macfarlane**, and our Chairman, **Mrs Pauline Tennant**, oversaw the proceedings.

The meal was excellent, and the service by the Golf Club staff was efficient and friendly. Following the Loyal Toasts, the gathering was addressed by the SOinC, who told us of current developments within the Corps, including the many sporting achievements. Following the formal welcome to Guests and Visitors, by **Maj (Retd) Ben Bolt**, **Maj Redshaw** gave a brief insight into his work as Editor of *The WIRE*, including his visits to our soldiers in the Balkans and Iraq. He was more than impressed by the spirit and initiative shown by the troops, both Regular and TA. **Bernard** is a member of Reading Branch, and the Committee felt that this Annual Dinner was a suitable occasion on which to pay tribute to him for his contributions, to the Corps and the Branch, through his skilful and very professional editorship of *The WIRE*.

During the course of the evening the SOinC was pleased to present **Maj (Retd) John Bradbury-Williams** with his 50-Year Badge. Although **John** and **Flossie** moved to the West Country some years ago, they still attend Branch functions on a regular basis. Our congratulations go to **John** on his well-deserved award. The choice of Sonning Golf Club as the venue for our last two Dinners has proved popular, so our Dinner Secretary has booked it again for the next two years: 30 September 2006, and 29 September 2007!

SHROPSHIRE BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) HJB Wall MBE TD JP**
Secretary **David Warner JP**

Shropshire Branch although lower in active Members than they would like, continue to be proactive in their promotion of the Corps and the Association, losing no opportunity to bring to the attention of serving and ex signallers the benefits to themselves, and their comrades, of membership.

May brought the first of our Luncheon Meetings at a country pub in deepest Shropshire. A very pleasant event with good food, and even better comradeship. In June we attended a Recruiting Day held in the Quarry Park Shrewsbury, assisting 95 Sig Sqn to bring to the attention of the public, the work of the Royal Corps of Signals. The day went well, and we must commend the efforts of the Sqn for their hard work and commitment.

The WW2 Veterans parade.
Maurice Tym, Reg Clark, Maj Gen Anderson, Arnold Price, Tom Parton, and Branch Chairman Maj John Wall

Our Secretary visited his old Unit, 2 Sig Regt in York, by kind permission CO, **Lt Col John Botterill**. He was well looked after, and found a smart and efficient Unit that had not forgotten the

contributions made in the past by its ex-Signallers. The Branch was also represented at the Annual Reunion which, as always, was an extremely enjoyable weekend, particularly as it included a tribute to those Members who served in WW2.

On the theme of WW2, the Branch honoured its own Veterans in October by holding a special evening at Copthorne Bks, Shrewsbury. Members, families and friends gathered to honour their comrades, and to present a Royal Signals Shield to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess at Copthorne, in recognition of their kind co-operation over the years. Royal Signals WW2 Veterans Badges were presented by **Maj General AA Anderson CB**, a past SOinC(A) and Association Chairman, to four of our members, **Mr Reg Clark JP**, **Mr Tom Parton**, Mr **Arnold Price**, and **Mr Maurice Tym**. The General also presented the Shield to the Mess President, GSM **WO1 SF Hopgood MBE** RGJ.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) RL Miller TD**
Secretary **Mr E Murphy**

In September we enjoyed a most interesting and informative talk dedicated to all train buffs. It was delivered by **Maj Paul Whittle TD**, who is of our Corps, having served with 31 Sig Regt. He took us from railways in the remote highlands and islands of Scotland, south through to the West Country.

He took us nostalgically back to places we have visited with neighbouring Branches - railways like the Watercress Line, on which we have enjoyed convivial Christmas Dinners in the past, and to the Swanage Railway, which our own Corps linemen have helped restore.

YORK BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Spray**
Secretary **Hazel Spray**

Our monthly meetings have continued during this year with good attendance figures. However, due to the op requirements of 2 Sig Regt, we were unable to continue with the informative presentations given by personnel of the Regt. Our members enjoyed these presentations, and when circumstances allow it is hoped that they will once again be a feature of our meetings.

When we took possession of the new Branch Standard, the question arose, 'What do we do with the old one?' Eventually it was arranged for it to be laid up in the College Chaplaincy centre at AFC Harrogate on the Sunday 2 October 05.

There was a good turnout of members and partners, together with our invited guests, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** (RSA Chairman) and **Maj M Tivey**, representing CO 2 Sig Regt. The service, conducted by the **Padre Daniel Merceron**, proved interesting and different, and was warmly appreciated by all in attendance. On conclusion of the Services, our party made its way to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, where a finger buffet awaited us. Whilst we energetically tucked in, the RSA Chairman managed to circulate and speak with members and partners.

Our old Branch Standard now rests in the Chaplaincy centre, together with other Colours, Standards and Army memorabilia on display, to be seen by up and coming soldiers of the future.

We would like to record our appreciation to **Lt Col LAP Drakely**, CO AFC Harrogate, for his kind permission to use the College facilities, to **Padre Daniel Merceron**, and to **WO1(RSM) AM Mack** REME, for their cooperation and assistance.

19th SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward**

The thirteenth reunion of 19 Sig Regt Assn was held at the Hilton Hotel, Warwick, over the weekend of 3-4 September. It was one of the most successful reunions for some years, with fiftynine members, their wives and invited guests attending.

As in 2004, early birds arrived on the Friday afternoon and evening, and enjoyed an informal meal together in the Britisserie Restaurant. We welcomed two newly joined members, **David Muir** and **Joe Walton.** After a leisurely Saturday breakfast, a 45-min coach journey took us to the Black Country Living Museum, where Members took in a flavour of mining in the mid 1800s. Those in need of serious retail therapy, later walked to the nearby Royal Brierley Crystal Glass factory.

Too soon it was time to return to the hotel, meet the main party, and change for dinner. Two other new members, **William** and **Thelma Lloyd** had arrived by this time. At the dinner, President, **Col Colin Gilbert**, called for silence and welcomed all present, particularly our guests, the **Rev Jim McManus** and **Mrs Mavis McManus**. Chairman, **Lt Col Pat Soward**, read the names of those Members whose deaths had been reported since the last reunion: **Peter Rosse**, **Pete Stott**, **Jean Hicks**, **Edward Swinyard**, **Stan Middleton**, **Lt Col Alan Johnson**, **Maj Max Frost**, **MBE**, **Anita Fisk**, and **Derek Lucas**.

Sunday, 4 September, was a particularly significant day. Sixty years previously, on Sunday, 2 September 1945, the Instrument of Surrender, the document that finally ended WW2, was signed. Members of the Assn were joined at the National Memorial Arboretum by members of Birmingham and South Staffordshire Branches, Air Formation Sig Regts Assn, 254 Old Boys Assn, RAF Changi Assn and 21 Sig Regt, to commemorate the historic event.

During the service, **Rev Jim McManus**, Chaplain to Air Formation Sig Regts Assn, spoke of Angels being messengers, and drew the conclusion that Dispatch Riders and other comms ops play a role similar to that of the Angels!

Standards of the Birmingham and South Staffordshire Branches were paraded by **Tony Holmes** and **Arthur Thomas**, whilst the *Last Post* and *Reveille* were sounded by **Dave Crowther** of the Royal Signals Northern Band. Following the service, wreaths were laid at the Air Formation Sigs Crescent by WW2 Veterans, **George Brew** and **Jim Shutt.** Members then repaired to the Visitor Centre for a buffet lunch. The weekend of 9-10September has been pencilled as the date of the next Reunion - again at the Warwick Hilton Hotel.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

Our 7th Annual Reunion was held at the Ramada Hotel, Watford, over the weekend of the 7-8 October. Members started arriving from lunchtime onwards on the Friday so that they could meet up with old friends and make new ones. **Roger Gates** could not attend Dinner on Saturday, but he made a surprise visit on the Friday just so that he could see our Chairman, **Mick Teague**, whom he had not seen for over 40 years. The Hotel had a carvery on Friday, which was enjoyed by approximately forty Members, who then met up in the bar afterwards to reminisce. Saturday dawned bright and clear, and some took themselves off to Kew

Gardens for the day. Others took taxis into Watford to look at the shopping centre there.

There were 90 people attending the Reunion Dinner on Saturday evening, which was held in the Ballroom. **Peter Cuckow** and his wife, **Sheila**, were our Guests of Honour, and Peter made a speech outlining his duties as Admin Offr for the RSA, and about those of the Welfare Officer. We thank **Mary Wardle** and **Gillian Broadbent** for selling the raffle tickets, and our MC, **Wally Cutler**, for calling out the numbers. The raffle made £258, which will be a useful contribution to our funds.

MALTA LIBYA COMMAND ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Roy Andrews**
Secretary **Pat Andrews**

We held our l2th reunion at the Ramada hotel, Loughborough on 2-3 September 2005. The first arrivals came on Friday evening with their photographs, and nostalgia was in the air. Some members had not met for 50 years. **Jim Bourne**, our oldest member of 99 yrs, recalled when he was taken prisoner in Libya in the 40's. By chance, **Pat** and **Roy Andrews** had spotted **Jim** on a cruise last November, and immediately signed him up as a Member.

Jim Bourne with Roy and Pat Andrews

After breakfast on Saturday, there was plenty of time to visit the local market and other attractions in the area, especially Loughborough War Memorial and Carillon Tower. At the end of the day's activities it was time for our AGM.

After a very lively meeting, 75 sat down for our Gala Dinner - a record number. After dinner, the raffle was organised by **Dennis** and **Rita Croot**, ably assisted by **Val** and **Betty Keaton**, **George** and **Sheila May**.

At 21.00hrs, Ken Godfrey's Jazz Band struck up, and the dance floor was crowded until midnight. **Val Longstaff**, who played in a group called *The New Ackers* in Benghazi in 1964, never goes any where without his guitar, and entertained us well into the early hours. He is trying to contact anyone who was in the group. For his contact number please phone Secretary, **Pat Andrews** on 01227 264551.

Our next Reunion is in Daventry, on 1-2 September 2006. If you would like to join us for an informal get together with partners or friends, contact the Chairman, **Roy Andrews** for further information on 01227 264551.

Further information is also available on our website: http://maltalibya.tripod.com.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

GABBY SUTTON

Ex DR **Edgar Moore** is seeking any information on a **Gabby Sutton**, who rescued him when they crossed Pegasus Bridge with 6 Airborne Bde in July 1944. **Gabby** picked up the injured **Edgar** and took him to a dressing station.

Anyone with information on **Mr Sutton** is asked to contact **Edgar** through his granddaughter, **Mrs Gadsby** on 01530-263904 or e-mail, cd.gadsby@btinternet.com.

RAYMOND MARKS and NORMAN BIRKS

Did any reader know **Sig Raymond C Marks**, a National Serviceman who served in Hamburg Sig Sqn, and who died in a RTA on 3 June 1949, at the age of 19? **Ronald MacArthur Hirst**, the historical officer for the American Berlin Airlift Association, read an inscription 'SOLD RC MARKS' on the Berlin Airlift Memorial at Templehof, and has going to great trouble to find out more about him. He regards **Raymond Mark's** death as attributable to the Airlift, a view not shared by the British Berlin Airlift Association, and therefore no tree has been dedicated to him at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Norman Birks served in the Corps at RAF Changi in 1948-50. He was known as **Knotty**, he boxed, perhaps representing his Unit, and was a Dispatch Rider. He died in 1988, and his daughter would like to hear from anyone who knew him.

Any responses can be directed to **Pat Soward** on 01258 860647, email: pat.soward@rdplus.net.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTICES

SUEZ VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Anyone who served in the Suez Canal Zone of Egypt at any time are welcome to become members of The Suez Veterans Association.

Details can be found on their website: www.suezveteransassociabon.co.uk, or by writing to: The Suez Veterans Association, 30 Mendip Avenue, Hillcroft Park, Stafford, ST17 0PG, Tel: 01785 660900

Their Members List can be found at: www.suezveteransassociation.supanet.net

OBITUARIES

SHARP - WO2 Robert Sharp (Bob) died on 16 August 2005.

Bob joined the Corps in 1970, and following basic trg at Catterick, was posted to 229 Sig Sqn in Berlin. He was then posted to Masirah for 9 months, before returning to 8 Sig Regt at Catterick for upgrading. He then enjoyed a tour at Island Tp in Hong Kong, where he gained his first stripe. He returned to Europe, and served as a Cpl in the caves with 641 Sig Tp at

AFCENT. **Bob** left on promotion to Sgt to go to 227 Sig Sqn in nearby Maastricht. In 1980 he was posted to 6 Field Force Sig Sqn (216) for 18 months.

35 Sig Regt (V) in Birmingham was **Bob's** next posting, and during his time there, he was promoted to SSgt. He then moved to Paderborn, Germany, until leaving in 1989 to serve as RQMS in Berlin HQ and Sig Sqn. **Bobs'** final tour was at 16 Sig Regt, where he served firstly as SSM HQ Sqn, and then RQMS (T). He took his last 6 months service with 35 Sig Regt (V).

Sadly, after a battle with cancer, **Bob** passed away on 16 August 2005, leaving wife **Susan**, children **Janet** and **Neil**, son in law **Jim Anderson** (also of the Corps), and grandchildren **Helen** and **Paul**.

WILSON - Sig TD Wilson (Toby) died on 20 September 2005 aged 29, following a tragic sporting accident.

Toby Wilson enlisted on 14 August 2002. On completion of basic trg and trade trg, he joined 16 Sig Regt on 11 August 2003 and was posted to TN 014.

Toby was a real character in the Regt, and had a promising career ahead of him. He was an excellent tradesman, and had recently been selected for promotion. He represented the Regt and Corps at shooting, and made the Army 100 - a magnificent achievement for a young soldier. He also represented the Corps at basketball and the Regt at rugby.

Toby was never one to shy away from responsibility. His relaxed manner and approachable personality made him a popular member of his Tp. He proved himself an excellent soldier while deployed on OP TELIC from December 2003 to May 2004.

Our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy go out to his family and friends. He will be sorely missed by the Regt.

MAYCOCK – Maj CA Maycock (Butch) 2IC 21 Sig Regt (AS), died on 5 September 2005, in a tragic RTA.

Carl Anthony Maycock was born on 2 January 1955 in Stockport. He demonstrated early academic promise, and was accepted into Mile End Grammar School, where he flourished.

He enlisted into the Royal Corps of Signals on 10 February 1972, aged 17. He did basic trg at 11 Sig Regt Catterick, where he was immediately given the nickname **'Butch'** due to his slight and sylph-like build. He then moved to 8 Sig Regt, where he qualified as a Lineman and Tele Mech. It was whilst serving with this Regt that he survived the M62 coach bombing by the IRA.

Maj Maycock was very successful in his career, finishing top of both his Det Comds' and SSgts' Courses. Among his proudest military achievements were his entry into the WOs' and Sgts' Mess at just 24 years of age, and his appointment as RSM 16 Sig Regt.

During a career that spanned 33 years, he served around the world, including tours in Germany, Cyprus and Bosnia. On two of his op tours he received the Comd UNFICYP and Joint Comds Commendations.

Butch Maycock was a larger than life character, well known and exceptionally popular throughout the Corps. He was utterly dependable, totally professional, and always had a smile on his face. A keen sportsman, he played a role in many sports, including the UEFA football Coaching Award. He was a man who took an active part in, and enjoyed all aspects of service life. A widower, he was happily married to **Anita** for over 20 years, and had very recently become engaged to **Julie Heywood**. He is survived by his daughters **Samantha** and **Lucy**. He will be sorely missed.

STODDARD - WO2 Brian John Stoddard died on 7 October 2005.

Born in Cambridge in 1931, **Brian's** first taste of life in the forces was his National Service. Following a short time as an apprentice draftsman, he enlisted in the Regular Army in 1954 starting his career in the Royal Corps of Signals. Completing his trg at Catterick, **Brian** served in Germany, and Gratz in Austria. It was during this tour that he met and married his wife, **Ingrid**. **Brian** returned to Loughborough, before moving back to Germany again. Apart from a few years in Cyprus, the remainder of his service life was spent in Germany, ending at 13 Sig Regt in Bergelin, until his retirement from Service in 1976.

Brian then returned to his hometown of Cambridge, where he started a new career with British Telecom, until retirement in 1986. During retirement, **Brian** devoted his time to his various artistic hobbies, and to his dogs. He was a regular visitor to the Bergelin Veterans site on the Internet, where he could keep up with the activities of his various Spec Ops colleagues around the world. He is survived by his wife **Ingrid**, a son and a daughter.

LAST POST

Bax - Lt Col FWA Bax	*Served* 1938/63	*Died*	2005
Beckett - Maj DH Beckett	*Served* 1972/??	*Died*	2005
Bennett - Cpl H Bennett	*Served* 1939/51	*Died*	??/08/05
Booth - Sig L Booth	*Served* 1939/46	*Died*	16/07/05
Bucklow- Lt Col IK Bucklow	*Served* 1979/05	*Died*	14/09/05
Burton - Cpl DT Burton	*Served* 1961/95	*Died*	05/08/05
Clarke - WO2 JWA Clarke	*Served* 1950/72	*Died*	??/05/09
Collier - Sig FM Collier	*Served* 1947/50	*Died*	14/08/05
Cross - ?? EW Cross	*Served* 1941/46	*Died*	03/07/05
Gillespie - Cpl F Gillespie	*Served* 1960/66	*Died*	24/07/05
Halling – Sgt EW Halling	*Served* 1940/46	*Died*	28/05/04
Hawkins - Cpl ET Hawkins	*Served* 1939/46	*Died*	28/08/05
Hutchinson - Sgt E Hutchinson	*Served* 1939/47	*Died*	26/08/05
Jennings - Cpl GT Jennings	*Served* 1943/46	*Died*	22/08/05
Lamb - Sgt JGA Lamb	*Served* 1932/48	*Died*	08/09/05
Lewis - Col AD Lewis	*Served* 1949/85	*Died*	26/09/05
Mahoney - Cpl EC Mahoney	*Served* 1953/70	*Died*	??/09/05
May - SSgt JM May	*Served* 1940/67	*Died*	2005
Maycock - Maj CA Maycock	*Served* 1972/05	*Died*	05/09/05
McLoughlin - WO2 GP McLoughlin	*Served* 1930/56	*Died*	2005
Moger - LCpl DJ Moger	*Served* 1951/53	*Died*	08/08/05
Morrison - Sgt DR Morrison	*Served* 1941/46	*Died*	??/05/09
O'Leary - LCpl D O'Leary	*Served* 1956/58	*Died*	2005
Parker - Cpl DC Parker	*Served* 1942/46	*Died*	29/07/05
Plumb - Cpl JW Plumb	*Served* 1958/79	*Died*	2005
Pocklington - Lt DA Pocklington	*Served* 1959/64	*Died*	02/08/05
Potter - Sgt RE Potter	*Served* 1966/88	*Died*	??/09/05
Pringle - Brig DA Pringle	*Served* 1932/65	*Died*	18/04/05
Sharman - Sig AA Sharman	*Served* 1942/47	*Died*	2004
Sharp - WO2 R Sharp	*Served* 1970/92	*Died*	16/08/05
Sheepshanks - Lt Col J Sheepshanks	*Served* 1937/59	*Died*	2005
Sstockton - Sig J Stockton	*Served* 1943/47	*Died*	20/09/05
Stoddard - WO2 BJ Stoddard	Served 1954/76	Died	07/10/05
Tearse - WO2 S Tearse	*Served* 1950/71	*Died*	07/08/05
Toft - Maj RF Toft	*Served 1954/86*	*Died*	09/08/05
Tranter - WO2 B Tranter	*Served* 1963/85	*Died*	25/07/05
Webster - Sgt E Webster	*Served* 1952/53	*Died*	2005
Wilson - Sig TD Wilson	Served 2002/05	Died	20/09/05

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TO ALL FORMER MEMBERS OF 14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (EW)

We are forming a 14 Sig Regt (EW) Association. It is open to all ranks, all cap badges and all services who have served with the Regt since it formed in 1977.

Broadly, its aims are:

To renew contacts and stay in touch with old friends;

To establish links between retired and serving members of the Regt;

To build a network to support each other; and To have a good party each year.

We now have a President, **Maj Gen (Retd) Bill Robins**, and a small group of former members of the Regt, including key Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps people working on it. We need now to see who is interested in joining, and more importantly, who would be willing to put a little time into helping the Assn to get off the ground and running it as it gets going. If you are eligible and wish to be part of it, email 14sr.assn@bigfoot.com, or phone **Capt MR Wallace** on 01437 725656, for more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE 2004

The Corps Carol service
will be held at 18.00hrs on
Monday 12 December 05 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.

THE LIBERTY OF SWANAGE

In July 2005, 11th Signal Regiment, a Corporate Member of the Swanage Railway since 1994, received the **Liberty of the Town of Swanage** in recognition of over 20 years support for the Swanage Railway and its wider community.

11th Signal Regiment, on behalf of the Corps, regularly host HQ UK LAND authorised **EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT** supporting telecom and other general tasks at the award winning **Swanage Railway**

Participation in the exercise, on one of the UK's premier Heritage Railways, is open to any unit in the British Army. For further details please contact **Frank Roberts** (01929) 421858

The Mercury Group is a supporting group bringing together former participants. For general information and photographs of past exercises: **www.mercurygroup.org.uk**

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