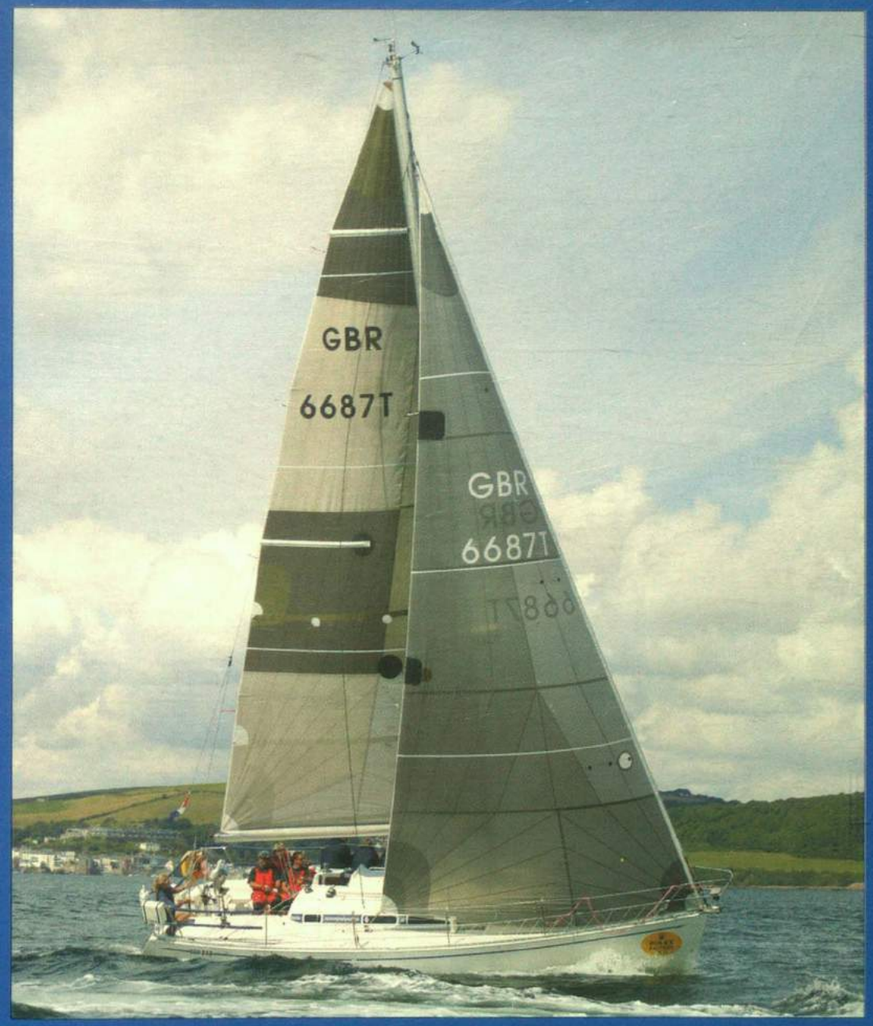
THE Wire

February 2006



The Royal Corps of Signals

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2005 - BLANDFORD

The main Service on Hawke Square

Representatives of all three Services lay their wreaths

Lt Col Buzz Powell looks on as his two daughters lay a wreath at the Roosevelt Memorial

Once more, Remembrance Sunday was commemorated in several places in Blandford. It began with a short service conducted at the Canadian Memorial by **Lt Col JC Boisvert** RCSignals, where **Mrs Pam Gitterman** laid a wreath.

The main Service followed on Hawke Square, with soldiers of 11 Sig Regt on parade with the Corps Band. Wreathes were laid by representatives all three Services stationed here.

Then, **Lt Col Buzz Powell** conducted a Service at the Roosevelt Memorial, where his two daughters laid a wreath.

Later in the day, another Service was held at the Collingwood Memorial just outside Camp, where Comd DCCIS, **Brig John Terrington** laid a wreath.

Brig John Terrington lays a wreath at the Collingwood Memorial

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The Wire

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Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER - *Skywave* in the Fastnet Race

In her first attempt in the famous Fastnet Race the Royal Signals yacht *Sywave* put in an incredible performance. 32nd in Class and 67th overall out of 283 boats, she was also to first Services boat to finish. Here she is on the homeward leg passing Plymouth. A report on the race appears on page 64.

BACK COVER - Monte Cassino

Anyone who has read of the Battle of Monte Cassino and has visited the Memorial there cannot help being over-awed both by the Monastery and the enormity of the task to take it. MCM Div, shown here on a recent battlefield study tour, felt the same.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

BOWMAN Continues to Make Good Progress in Iraq

7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207), who have taken over in Iraq from 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, report continuing success with BOWMAN.

The kit even survived a veh fire. As Tigris Tp report on page 16, '...despite being a little charred, it still works!'

Royal Signals does well in the Fastnet Race

On the longest trip she has done so far, the Corps yacht, *Skywave* beat all other Services boats and many larger yachts in the famous Fastnet Race.

Finishing 30th in Class, 67th overall (out of 283 entries) and 1st Services yacht she achieved a top result. As the story on page 64 describes, it was all down to expert skippering and navigation, with maximum effort from the crew.

Another good test for BOWMAN HF on EX LOYAL LEDGER

19 Light Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (209) gave BOWMAN HF and a variety of other comms systems a good work out on their Bde CP Ex across UK.

The aim was to bring the Bde up to readiness for NRF in 2006. There are good reports from the grass roots on page 48.

And while some stayed dry in India, Egypt, Australia, Jordan and Cyprus, 37 Sig Regt (V) created havoc on *Havoc*!

37 Sig Regt (V) test their mettle in the cold waters of *HMS Havoc*.

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

Like so many in the Corps, I was shocked at the sudden and untimely passing of **Col Neil Donaldson**. I still can't believe that it has happened. I knew him for only four short years, as Regimental Colonel and as Regimental Secretary, but during that time, the help and support he gave me was enormous.

We soon became very close friends; **Neil** was frequently in *The WIRE* Office, and many were the days when we sat over a coffee (or something better), putting the world to rights, with me falling about laughing at his wry wit. I can still see that half smile of his. His presence is still felt here at RHQ; we won't forget him.

This issue has been a joint effort between me and my successor, **Lt Col (Retd) Alan Wallace**, as I take him through the process of putting *The WIRE* together. I am pleased that I shall be leaving the magazine in good hands, and I'm confident that **Alan** will build upon the foundation we now have, and take it forward.

These four years as Editor have been a great privilege for me. The co-operation, help and encouragement that I have received from Units and Branches have been invaluable. Together, I feel that we have brought *The WIRE* a long way forward.

I am delighted that such progress has been achieved on my watch. Further, the warmth and comradeship that I have received from the Corps family has been immeasurable, and continues to be so. I have lost count of the many kind messages and calls coming in over the last few weeks, thanking me for my contribution and wishing me well for the future. I thank you all for this.

But I will keep in touch. I shall be in close contact with RNZSigs people in NZ, so from time to time, expect something from the southern branch of the Corps family in the pages of *The WIRE*.

Bernard Redshaw

FIRST WORDS FROM THE NEW EDITOR

It is appropriate that my first words in *The WIRE* should be to thank **Bernard** for the excellent handover he has given me. I now realise how much work has to be done by you, the contributors, and by the editorial team to produce this fine publication, in which I think we can all take pride.

My challenge is to maintain the high standard that **Bernard** has set and, with your help, continue the movement.

I intend to take every opportunity to get out of the office and meet the Corps, at work and play, so that I can make contact with the both the readership and the potential contributors. For the same reason, I would like to establish my own links with the RSA branches.

I know that **Bernard** has been able to do both of these and I believe It Is one of the reasons that *The WIRE* has become the success It Is.

It will be a sad day for this office when **Bernard** finally leaves but I am sure I will be speaking for many, when I personally wish him happiness, good health and contentment on his return to New Zealand.

Alan Wallace

DEPUTY EDITOR

After a 4 year period as Editor, **Bernard Redshaw** has decided to return to his native country, New Zealand, where he will be closer to family, though it is understood he will miss the camaraderie and friendships he has made in Blandford and service wide, especially those amongst the Royal Signals fraternity.

Bernard has worked tirelessly on the development of *The Wire* and its articles, many of these having been scribed through personal visits, from as far away as the Falkland Islands.

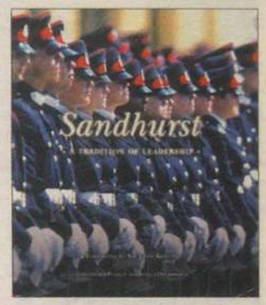
At times we have seen the end of the month pass by in a blur whilst *The Wire* has been readied for publication, ensuring that the input is of an acceptable nature. As a lasting tribute, he has turned *The Wire* into a full-colour magazine.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank **Bernard** for his kind assistance, direction during the years that we have compiled *The Wire* together. He will be greatly missed.

BOOK REVIEWS

SANDHURST: A TRADITION OF LEADERSHIP – *edited by Christopher Pugsley and Angela Holdsworth*

Sandhurst: A Tradition of Leadership is a well illustrated book exploring and explaining what makes Sandhurst unique among the world's institutions for training and educating military officers. Edited by **Christopher Pugsley** and **Angela Holdsworth**, there are contributions from a large number of graduates and staff (past and present) and other researchers. After tracking the evolution of the British Army Officer from before the establishment of The New Model Army in 1645 through to the present day, the book goes on to follow the training and education of officers through The Royal Military Academy Woolwich (from 1741), The Royal Military College Sandhurst (from 1779) and The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (from 1947).



Part One outlines the development of the institution in response to the evolving needs of the British Army, describing the planning and construction of the buildings, and changes in the approach to officer training.

Part Two, 'A Day in the Life', the greater part of the book, covers the activities at Sandhurst (past and current) from enrolment, to drill, to PT, to skill-at-arms, to field training exercises. As with the other parts of the book, this part is enlivened by an interesting range of anecdotes and observations from students such as **Gentleman Cadet Winston Churchill** (1893), **Officer Cadet Bernard Montgomery** (1907) and **Gentleman Cadet Bernard Fergusson** (1930) to **Officer Cadet Caroline Woodbridge** (1995), **Officer Cadet Punyawat Takernkeat** (2004) and **Officer Cadet Slagle** (2005). All have interesting things to say that reflect the experiences and thinking of their time.

Part Three is about Sandhurst's staff (past and present) from Commandants, Adjutants and RSMs, to Training Cadre and lecturers, to caterers and ground staff. Part Four describes the traditions that have evolved that make Sandhurst unique in its field. All through, the book is enhanced by a vast and varied range of photographs, pictures and maps, well laid out to give added impact. This book is well structured and well written, and gives any reader, military or not, an excellent insight into this well known institution that has produced some of the finest military leaders in the world. *Sandhurst: A Tradition of Leadership*, at £45.00, is published by Third Millennium Publishing, London; ISBN 1 903942 39 x.

INFORMATION

HONOURS, AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

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

Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (CB)

Maj Gen AJ Raper CBE DLTT, Bath

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

Lt Col PN Willmott TD 36 Sig Regt

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

Maj AR Knott 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt S MacLaren 16 Sig Regt
Capt NL Siggs HQ 143 (WM) Bde
Capt MA Solomons RSS
Lt Col SL Streete TD 31 Sig Regt
LCpl NJ Perkins 11 EOD Regt

We also congratulate the following who received Commendations:

Adjutant General's Commendation

WO1 SM Littie HQ SOinC(A)

MEMBERSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS (IEE)

Many members of the Corps are eligible to be considered for membership of the institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE). For those interested in the terms of membership, comprehensive details, including all the relevant forms, are available on the IEE Internet site at: www.iee.org. In addition, guidance concerning Corps procedures may be found in SOinC (A) PD 25.

Officers of the Corps already registered at members of the IEE are asked to keep the membership advisor up to date with any changes to grade of membership and contact details. Assistance is also available from the Corps membership advisor for the IEE, **Lt Col Steve Turnbull** who will act as Supporter for MIEE applications.

Corps Membership Advisor Contact Details:
Lt Col SJ Turnbull MSc FCMI MIEE
CI, Engineering Div
DCCIS
Blandford camp
Dorset
Dt1 8RH
Tel: Mil 94371 ext 3027
Civ 01258 481027
Fax: Mil 94371 ext 2668
Civ 01258 482668
EMS: DCCIS-RSS-Eng Div Chief Instructor
IGS: ci.eng.div@hq.rss.army.mod.uk

ROYAL SIGNALS INSTITUTION AWARDS

At their dinner in London on 24 November 2005, the Royal Signals Institution made awards to **Maj Gen John Badcock CB MBE DL**, **Col Phil Davies**, **SSgt Steve Roberts** and **Mr Ray Halliwell BSc MSc CEng FIEE MBCS**.

Maj Gen Badcock receives his award from the Master of Signals

Maj Gen John Badcock CB MBE DL was awarded the Princess Mary Medal for his lifetime of devotion to the interests of the Corps.

Born in Nazareth, Palestine in 1922, he was educated at Sherborne before joining Royal Signals in 1941, and being commissioned in 1942. He spent the remainder of the war with 35 Tank Bde and 79 Armd Div Signals in France and Germany. He subsequently occupied a range of posts in instructional appointments and staff positions in intelligence and military operations, significant among them being his time as a Coy Comd at RMA Sandhurst. He went on to command 4 Div HQ and Sig Regt, and, on promotion to Brigadier, 2 Inf Bde. He was for a time Deputy Constable of Dover Castle, before taking up post as Director of Manning, prior to his final appointment as Head of British Defence Liaison Staff and Defence Adviser in Canberra, Australia - the first time the post had been filled by a Royal Signals officer. This coincided with the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals, which involved additional duties, and he was able to travel overland a distance of some 7,800 km from Canberra, via Alice Springs, to Perth and back. He was appointed CB in 1976 for his services in this post. He retired from the Army in 1977, and served as Chairman of the Royal Signals Association from 1979 to 1982, before being appointed as Master of Signals in 1982, a post he held until 1990. He became successively Chief Appeals Officer of the Cancer Research Campaign, the Chairman of Southeast TAVRA, and Chairman of a large fruit growing company. He has latterly been much involved with the East Kent Branch of the RSA, and continues to support and influence their activities.

Throughout his service, **Maj Gen Badcock** was devoted to the interests of the Corps, and his sure touch and judgement, combined with wisdom and a self-effacing sense of humour, saw him discharge with distinction a series of senior high profile appointments, and bring great credit to the Corps. In retirement, his energies were unabated, and as RSA Chairman and Master of Signals, he continued to lead by example. He brought about a strengthening of the bonds within the RSA, and established firm links with the office of the Colonel in Chief - legacies that persist to this day. Not content with leading the Corps through the final days of the Cold War, even on his second retirement he continued to devote himself to the activities of the East Kent Branch of the RSA. His responsible for generating this from scratch, taking on many working level duties in the process.

Col Davies receives his award from the Master of Signals

Col Phil Davies was awarded the RSI Silver Medal in recognition for his contribution to the development of BOWMAN capability.

From October 2003, he directed the Comd Support Development Centre. During this time, he directly supported and advised DEC CCII, the BOWMAN IPT Leader and Director Comd and Battlespace Management Land throughout a particularly difficult period. Everywhere one looks, it is possible to detect his influence and innovation. His selfless commitment, drive and energy across all of the lines of development has been quite remarkable. His approach to issues has been balanced, and pragmatic, and based on hard observation, to ensure their resolution.

The full impact of his performance is demonstrated in the BOWMAN and related field trials, where as the Trials Director, **Col Davies** far exceeded all expectations. These trials were a searching and demanding examination of the capabilities of the BOWMAN system. He established the ground rules to confirm the performance of what was offered, gave advice and counsel to the Formation Comd, and oversaw meticulous preparation for the operational field trial in November 2004, despite frequent delays and setbacks.

His unwavering resilience and professional ability has drawn praise from all who have dealt with him in the Dept and in Industry alike. **Col Davies** has undoubtedly been a key influence in facilitating the acceptance of this ambitious project into service. He has been an inspirational and much-respected leader to his disparate All Arms Team.

Col Davies' personal contribution to the exceptionally difficult and challenging task of introducing BOWMAN, and to the development of other critical Defence capabilities is an exemplary demonstration of the highest standards of professionalism in the Corps. **SSgt Roberts** was awarded the RSI Medal for Adventurous Endeavour in recognition for his contribution to the development of the Castlemartin Adventure Training Centre in Wales.

SSgt Roberts receives his award from the Master of Signals

14 Sig Regt (EW) is located in the furthest corner of Southwest Wales. It is a very busy unit that has supported virtually every op in which the British Army has been involved in the last ten years. However, despite the isolated loc and operational tempo, the rate of those terminating their service whilst serving in the Regt is well below the Army average. One of the main reasons for this is the availability of the excellent AT Centre at nearby Castlemartin, which was created, and has been run since its inception by **SSgt Roberts**.

From a clean sheet of paper and with no previous specialist knowledge, he created the largest unit AT facility anywhere in the Armed Forces today.

When, in late 1995, the Regt moved back to UK from Germany, it was immediately apparent that the Pembrokeshire coastline was ideally suited to the conduct of AT. **SSgt Roberts** was given the task of establishing an AT facility. Despite having almost no experience in this field, he set about the task with enthusiasm, determination and flair, spending the next five years creating a first class AT facility on an almost non-existent budget. A further five years on, the Centre is a resounding success. His job is complicated, time consuming and frequently frustrating; but he is a highly professional and hugely competent man, who works long hours as both a manager and deliverer of AT activities. Shouldering responsibilities that would normally be associated with several ranks beyond his own, he has worked tirelessly and with great success to create an organisation of which he can be truly proud.

Over the past ten years, **SSgt Roberts** has established a network of contacts in the local area, and is a master at gaining services and equipt at huge discounts - undoubtedly saving the MOD hundreds, if not thousands of pounds. His dogged determination and resourcefulness so inspired the AT Gp (Army), that several years ago they formally adopted the Centre as a Level 2 trg facility, and have since provided over £260K worth of equipt. The facility now holds a warehouse full of equipt, comprising boats, dinghies and canoes of all types, as well as land yachts, mountain bikes and climbing gear.

The Centre now runs over 60 courses a year, and has provided outstanding AT for over 8,000 personnel from all three Services as well as MOD Civil Servants since the Centre's formation. During this time, he has also personally led over 30 world-wide expeds, leading and instructing students of all ranks, from Signaller to the Second Sea Lord.

SSgt Roberts' total commitment, good humour and dignity are renowned. Irrespective of the time, weather or surroundings, his positive approach and no-nonsense manner have been an inspiration to students and instructors alike, and draws frequent praise. His CO receives a steady stream of thank you letters from Service units and Depts of the MOD who have benefited from the Regt's AT facility.

SSgt Roberts continues to run the Centre with eagerness, enthusiasm and vigour. His unparalleled contribution to Royal Signals AT contributed enormously to the morale of his Regt, the serving Corps and the wider Service and MOD community. He has introduced large numbers of young soldiers to the exciting demands of AT.

Mr Halliwell receives his award from the Master of Signals

Mr Ray Halliwell BSc MSc CEng FIEE MBCS, Head of Engineering Div RSS, was awarded the Master of Signals Award in recognition for his contribution to the education, training and professional accreditation of military comms engineers.

Mr Halliwell has given thirtyfour years of outstanding service to teaching military comms engineering to Defence students, the last twenty of which has been at RSS. During this time, he has been an avid champion and promoter of academic accreditation for Royal Signals trg. In the process, he has become known throughout the Corps for delivering vital underpinning academic knowledge and skills, which has had a significant effect in encouraging the professional development of a large number of Royal Signals Engineers. His work has particularly inspired and encouraged all, from budding FofS, to General, which in turn has contributed significantly to the support of CIS ops world-wide.

Retiring in 2005, he has far exceeded his brief to deliver effective engineering knowledge and education to the Corps. As an achievement in itself, this would be a notable contribution to the delivery of operational capability. But **Mr Halliwell** has achieved other major contributions in the development of individuals, which are important for the public face of Royal Signals. The image of the Corps as a credible engineering organisation has been greatly enhanced as a result of his selfless and dedicated work. **Mr Halliwell** personally led the way in forging vital and significant links between RSS and important civilian academic accrediting and engineering bodies, such as Cranfield and Bournemouth Universities, the IEE, IIE, BCS and AFCEA. It is due to his success in designing the academic components of key courses, and his personal and exhaustive negotiation and liaison with universities, that accreditation at HNC, HND, BSc(Hons) and MSc levels has been achieved. It is a mark of his dedication that even as he retires, he is still actively investigating the possibilities of achieving Foundation-level degree accreditation for the YofS and Supvr (IS) courses.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, DECEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col TW Canham	OCE HQ Land
Col PJ Davies	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Lt Col Scott-Morton	HQ Osnabruck Garrison
Maj HA Aston	RSS
Maj RM Jones	RSS
Maj PJ Watt	G6 HQ Land
Capt N Fisher	20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200)
Capt RA Owens	14 Sig Regt
Capt DL Palmer	14 Sig Regt
Capt AC Slack	2 Sig Regt
Lt BG Scott	RSS

OFFICERS, JANUARY 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig DP Meyer	DEF AC RCDS
Col GA James	International MIL Staff Brussels
Col JE Richardson MBE	DEF AC RCDS
Col TJP Watts OBE	Direcorate Defence Diplomacy
Lt Col BJ Barton-Ancliffe	39 Sig Regt
Lt Col SC Johns	WFM Policy and Implementation
Lt Col JW Oakes	34 (Northern) Sig Regt
Lt Col PA Osment	OCE HQ Land
A/Lt Col IN Hunter	OCE HQ Land
Maj AJ Clewlow	Spec Courses Div
Maj EN Moxon	HQ 4 Div
Maj DK Rackham	DISCSU HQ
Capt MJ Fayers	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Capt ASF Hutton	39 Sig Regt
Capt VJ Kibble	39 Sig Regt
Capt A Senneck	RSS
Capt CM Stoter	2 Sig Regt
Lt KF Allt	ATR Pirbright
Lt KJ Griffiths	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Lt RA Lowe	ATR Lichfield
Lt CG Parkes	39 Inf Bde 213 Sig Sqn
Lt RE Warmington	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt PS Wright	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC)(V)

WOS AND SNCOS, DECEMBER 2005

Rank and Name	Unit to which posted
Sgt M Baynes	SC&IS (Northwood)
Sgt RJP Bowden	Theatre Fleet Sp Unit (G)
Sgt KG Irwin	AFCO Liverpool
Sgt J Martin	21 Sig Regt
Sgt DJ McDonald	HQ Northern Ireland
Sgt BJ Park	HQ Northern Ireland
Sgt SC Pilmer	Systems HQ SOinC (A)
Sgt MG Stowell	10 Sig Regt
A/Sgt RC Vernon	JCUFI (AE)

WOS AND SNCOS, JANUARY 2006

Rank and Name	Unit to which posted
WO 1 Supvr Rad SK Clark	JSSU Cyprus
WO 2 YofS TC Vanandel	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO 2 FofS KS Scaife	22 Sig Regt
WO 2 Supvr Rad BP Matthews	Exchange Off - Australia
A/WO 2 RD P Greenwood	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 RD RD Heynes	22 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD MJ Pollock	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 2 Supvr Rad EG MacDonald	Army School of Ammo
SSgt Supvr IS DB Bain	Battlefield Coord Det (Air)
SSgt Supvr IS L Banks	RSS
SSgt Supvr IS KV Cupper	15 Sig Regt
SSgt Supvr IS SP Fletcher	16 Sig Regt
SSgt Supvr IS IR Hirst	DCSA (CIS)
SSgt Supvr IS ST Hobson	30 Sig Regt
SSgt Supvr IS MP Hobson	30 Sig Regt
SSgt Supvr IS YL Jones	HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt Supvr IS JJ Murphy	2 Sig Regt
SSgt Supvr IS WP Robson	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt Supvr IS DJ Turner	243 Sig Sqn
SSgt Supvr Rad CJ Dunn	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt Supvr Rad AF Slater	521 EOD Catterick
SSgt P Greenwood	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
SSgt PW McLeish	CCU
SSgt AK Young	16 Sig Regt
Sgt IK Arnott	15 Sig Regt
Sgt RL Birch	7 Sig Regt
Sgt N Blenkinsop	JCUFI (AE)
Sgt DN Brown	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt RA Burtenshaw	30 Sig Regt
Sgt EJ Cassee	Bowman SST (G)
Sgt AC Clark	AFCO Middlesborough
Sgt MA Coates	31 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt JJ Connolly	251 Sig Sqn
Sgt MG Cowlard	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt MJP Cree	RSS
Sgt JJ Davey	JSSU Digby Log Flt
Sgt SC Dixon	JSSU (CH)
Sgt JS Greenlee	Bowman SST (G)
Sgt JP Harrison	34 (N) Sig Regt (V)
Sgt SR Ireland	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt CD Matthews	Systems HQ SOinC (A)
Sgt D Morgan	OCE HQ Land
Sgt CD Orr	RSS
Sgt L Rotherford	30 Sig Regt
Sgt DS Rumble	21 Sig Regt
Sgt JS Russell	40 Regt RA
Sgt RD Salter	33 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt MJ Sivewright	21 Sig Regt
Sgt RAJ Sizeland	RSS
Sgt LA Stafford	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt DP Steele	15 Sig Regt
Sgt T Thirwell	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt R Wilson	CIS Naples Sector
A/Sgt ND Henderson	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt D Pruess	HQ SOinC (A)

RETIREMENTS

DECEMBER 2005

Name and Rank	*Date*
Caleb - Maj NRN Caleb	24 Dec 05
Handibode - Maj P Handibode	01 Dec 05
Lord - SR Lord	12 Dec 05
Stewart - Capt FAW Stewart	01 Dec 05

JANUARY 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Brown - Maj LF Brown	01 Jan 06
Lawrence - Maj IG Lawrence	16 Jan 06
Loxton - Capt FD Loxton	16 Jan 06
Smith - Capt T Smith	13 Jan 06
Watson - Capt DG Watson MBE	31 Jan 06

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt RA Moody**
Team Sgt **Sgt AS Butterfield**

The Display Season has now ended, and we are busy with maint, new rider selection, trade courses, outreach programmes, and of course, looking forward to leave.

The 05 Team Capt, **Capt Matthew Mallett** has moved on to Newcastle University and **Capt Russ Moody** is finding just what he has let himself in for. **Sgt Bob Sizeland** has left to take up an instructor post at RSS, and we welcome **Sgt Andy Butterfield** who takes his place. Others who are leaving as this edition of *The WIRE* arrives are: **LCpl Scotty Corser**, **Sig Gav Poole**, **Sig 'Mouse' Fothergill**, **Sig 'Jonno' Johnston**, **Cpl 'Lewie' Lewis**, **Cpl 'Dicko' Dickinson**, **LCpl Nick Pallis**, and **Sig Sam Bowles**.

SELECTION COURSE 2005 - *by LCpl Nick Pallis*

The team ran an induction course in November to find new riders for the 2006 season. The instructors for this course were **Cpl Forster**, **Cpl Brown**, and **LCpl Pallis**, and as the course only consisted of only 6 students, they were under close scrutiny from the word go. It is not a necessity to have any riding experience before coming on the course, and only half of the students had ever ridden before. This proved a real challenge to the instructors, as they had just one day to teach the students to ride to a good enough level to be taken on to Bovington Trg Area.

LCpl Chalky White takes a running jump

All went to plan, and in a few days we were whizzing around Bovington like motocross kings! The students quickly had to learn the skills for steep assents and descents, as well as techniques to negotiate the dreaded deep sand. Water obstacles had to be walked first (to ensure they were safe) and by the end of the week, we were all used to being in waist-deep water. Not forgetting one of the most important tricks, the students, most of whom had never ridden cross country, had to learn to jump in prep for the fire jump in the second week. Participating fully in the riding was the new Team Capt, **Capt Russ Moody** and the new Team Sgt, **Sgt Andy Butterfield**. The outgoing Team Sgt, **Sgt Bob Sizeland**, unexpectedly left the trg area after an accident that left him with a dislocated shoulder and broken wrist. The first week ended with a little confirmation course to ensure that the students could navigate by themselves and get safely around a course unsupervised.

Before we knew it, the second week was upon us and the students were introduced to the famous Triumph Tiger 750 show bikes. The second week brings out the teamwork, confidence, and courage from the students when faced with different challenging situations, from hanging upside down to riding through the fire jump. The week culminated in a small show in front of the Regt Col, **Col Ewbank**, just to give the students a feel of performing under pressure in front of a VIP audience. You could see the nerves on the students' faces, but the show went well, and everyone completed the fire jump safely. They all looked relieved as they were presented their certificates of attendance, but the selection was yet to come. The successful candidates for trg next year were **Cpl Dawson**, **LCpl White**, **LCpl Whitenstall**, and **Sig Sowiak**. A lot more hard work and trg awaits them.

Selection Course 05 in deep water

SOUTH AFRICA 2005 - *by LCpl Dave Kruczek*

The time came around once again for the team to make their annual trip to South Africa. This year, 10 team members made the journey to spend two weeks in Forest Town School, Johannesburg. We were there to help out with any jobs that need doing, the jobs ranging from renovating the benches around the school, to dismantling an old and worn out jungle gym.

Capt Russ Moody was the leader of the pack this year, and was joined by **Sgt Andy Butterfield**. It wasn't the first time that **Cpl**

Mal Cooper and **LCpl Nick Pallis** had been to SA, so they were going to show the rest of us the ropes.

On our first day, the Deputy Head Teacher took us around the School. It seemed like a maze at first, but we all got used to it very quickly. She also told us about the high risk of getting car-jacked and mugged around SA, which put everyone on edge a little. At break time, we met the children. **LCpl Justin Burrows** soon started getting a lot of 'high 5's'. The children were so friendly, and just want to talk to you and make friends. **LCpls Nick Pallis** and **Dave Kruczek** made a few friends playing football with some of them.

We were accommodated at the *Teaspoon and Tankard*, about 45 mins drive away from the school, a place run by **Jim Harrison**, a former member of the Corps. **LCpl Matty Bladen** found out the hard way that the sweet-like things in the room were actually mosquito tablets, while **LCpl Stef McGinn** was taught how to dance South African style (although it looked much like the well-known Squaddie 2 step).

As a break form the continuous work, at the weekend we were lucky enough to go to the Pilanesberg Game Reserve. We stayed in a beautiful hotel, all paid for by sponsors, and we got to see a whole range of wild animals, some up very close up. The following day we went to Sun City, where we spent a day at a water park, but unfortunately the sun decided to stay behind the clouds, although it didn't prevent **Cpl Mal Cooper** from getting slightly sun burnt shoulders. The weather on the second week wasn't as good as the first, so everyone was a bit disappointed. Even so, the sun tan contest was a close call between **Sig Dave Kitchen**, and **LCpl Matty Bladen**.

The trip was thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part, and most of them have volunteered to go again.

Are you up to the challenge of being a display rider in the world's premier motorcycle display team? The next selection and induction course will be held in November 06. You can apply at anytime in the year and you should have a read of Annex A to 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.

Repainting the nursery road system at Forest Town School

NEWS OF TRAINING

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) T Henry**

December saw some changes in RHQ when we said goodbye to **Maj Ian Walton**, our Regt 2IC, who managed to scrounge a dream NATO posting to Brussels on promotion. Well done **Ian** and **Kim**, and best of luck to you both. RHQ is also glad to announce their new acquisition as Regt 2IC, our newly promoted Canadian Exchange Officer, **Lt Col JC Boisvert**, who will be with us until next summer.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Capt GMT Oosterveen**
SSM **WO2(SSM) K Overton**

HARROGATE CUP FOOTBALL COMPETITION 2005
- by Sig Campbell

On Wednesday 09 November 05, it was time for the Harrogate Cup Football Competition, which took place on the all weather pitch near the athletics track on Blandford Camp. All three Sqns entered 2 teams. The night was cold, the air was crisp, tension between the teams was rising, and the atmosphere could quite literally be cut with a blunt knife. 1 Sqn had 2 teams of 8 players with Rhino Tp's team consisting of **Sigs Aitchison**, **McCran**, **Kamara**, **Fyfe**, **Moore**, **Lumley** and **Campbell**. We played our first match against Iron Tp, 2 Sqn, which was a difficult game. We started shakily, but then came into our own, with the deadlock being broken by a good strike by **Sig Kamara**. Almost immediately after that, **Sig Moore** smashed in a second, and we were on our way. Unfortunately, our defence was breached with about 30 seconds of the game to go, but this turned out to be no more than a consolation strike. We had a two minute water break, and then lined up against one of the 3 Sqn teams, but because we had just played a hard game, we were tired and never really got going, ending up losing with a score of 2-0.

The next game was against Lightning Tp, also of 3 Sqn. This game started on fire, scoring two goals early on, these coming from **Sig Kamara** and **Sig Moore**. Some fine defending by **Sig McCran** helped us to keep this lead, with crunching tackles flying in (firm but fair). Some excellent passing and movement forced a hasty clearance by their defence, and earned us a corner. As the ball came in, I thought I would try my luck, and managed to smash the ball into the back of the net, right off my laces. Shortly afterwards, 3 Sqn upped their game, and it was only the cat-like agility of our keeper, **Sig Aitchison**, that prevented a goal. All in all, the event was very entertaining, and some new players for the Regtl Football team were discovered. Rhino Tp achieved a credible third position, and the overall winner was Beaufighter Tp, 2 Sqn. Well done to all!

EXERCISE HOLTON LEE *- by Sig Hennis*

On Friday 7 October, 1 Sqn left for an ex at Holton Lee in the Poole area. It is an annual ex where we assist this worthy charitable organisation to maintain access to its extensive areas.

We arrived early evening and utilised the spare time by doing some unarmed combat with **Cpl Chorlton**. We learned a lot of different moves, and it was good fun. Next time there could be more of the Cadre around for us to throw about (**Cpl Yeomans** maybe!). Later that evening, a few of us went for a nature walk with **Cpl Jackson**, and we saw lots of deer, and some of the other strange and wonderful creatures that roam at night in the park.

The following morning we separated into 2 groups, one building two lay-bys and the other clearing the drainage ditches. It was hard work, as there was a lot of silt and brambles in them, but we had a good time. The brambles and bushes had to be cleared away with a chain saw. One of the locals came down to have a chat with us, said how much that they appreciated what we were doing, and jumped in and helped us.

We stopped at noon for lunch for a well-earned break. Most opted for the good old pot noodles, eyeing up **Cpl McCrone's** scrumptious bacon sandwich! We then went back to finish off the ditch that we had started. We were finished by 14.00hrs and had it checked over by our friends at Holton Lee. Luckily, we were finished by 16.00hrs and before the rain started, so we were back in time to watch football on TV. When I stood back and looked what we had achieved, I felt a great sense of satisfaction. We had a really good weekend, and I would definitely volunteer to go again.

Some hard slogging going on at Holton Lee and a very trusting assistant

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj IJ Carter**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) P Coates**

HARROGATE CUP FINAL EVENT - BOXING
- by SSgt P Hounsell

At the start of August, a small team of 19 soldiers were assembled, ranging from small to tall. Small being **Sig Forshaw** at 5' 5", and weighing in at the Phantom Bantam division, and tall being **Sig Hartland** at 6' 8", just making the Super Heavy Weight Division. Under the watchful eye of **Cpl Hudson**, the physical side of boxing started. Many of the team wrongly thought that **Cpl Hudson** would be a kindly figure who would gently nurture them into a fit state with runs at a stroll pace, the odd press up and maybe one or two sit-ups if the ground wasn't too wet or hard. After the first 06.00hrs start, there was a shocked look on all faces, including **SSgt Hounsell**.

The weeks rolled on, and the team became fitter, stronger and somewhat slimmer (my wife is very pleased). We lost a few members through injury; they were truly down-hearted, as all wanted to fight for the Sqn. The skills part of the trg started after 4 weeks of **Cpl Hudson** and **Cpl Gills** unrelenting schedule, with **SSgt Hounsell** teaching the gentle art of boxing. After many hrs of gloves hitting pads, the coach thought it time that the gloves hit people, and so began the sparring. Like all boxers who first spar, it doesn't quite go to plan! It can only be described as a scene outside of a kebab shop during the early hours. Every single skill the coach squeezed into their heads fell out, and the brawl began...but don't worry dear reader, they got better!
On 5 December the preliminary rounds started. These fights would go on for the next three nights. All three Sqns were blessed with outstanding boxers, each wanting to do their best for their Sqn by making the final, and not letting their mates down! There were some spectacular bouts during the preliminary rounds, and all did their Sqns, themselves and their mates proud.

Sig Carlton throws a big punch that is well deflected by Sig Bradley

By a stroke of good luck, all three Sqns had five boxers in the final, so it made for great evening. Every boxer went in with belief; they fought their hearts out, and they fought with guts and valour. By the end of the evening, when all fights were finished, the prizes firmly in the grasp of the reckless and the brave alike. The time came for the CO to announce who had won the boxing trophy, and more importantly, the Harrogate Cup. I don't wish harp on, so I shall end quickly, by saying that that 2 (Catterick) Sqn won both!

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Capt E Pointon**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Swanson**

EXERCISE HARROGATE FOLLY *- by Cpl Tuck*

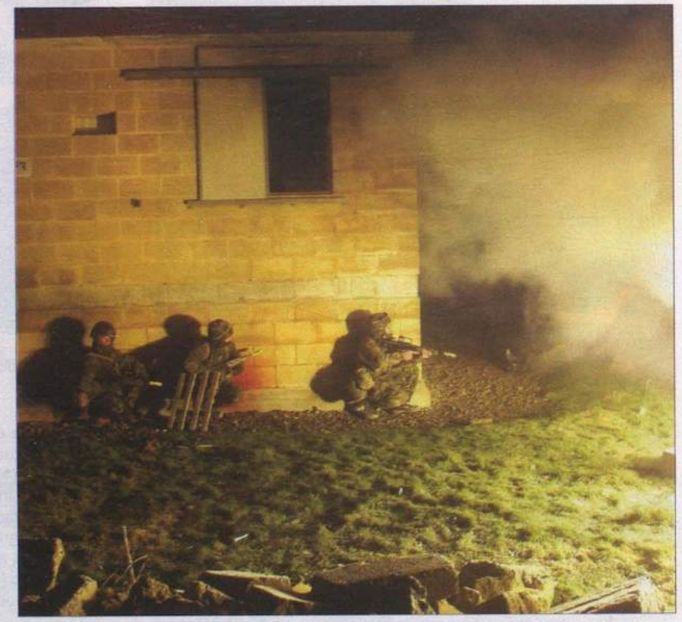
On Friday 25 November 05, members of 3 Sqn deployed to Cope Hill Down FIBUA Village to test their military knowledge, and put into practice the skills and drills that they learned in Phase 1 trg. When the trainees arrived at Quebec, they were met by the ex co-ordinator, **Cpl Dibbert**, who proceeded to carry out all the safety and admin points. The mood was dim, as the winds were blowing, with expectation of the skies about to open up and cover everyone in snow.

One of the trainees is mistaken for a Chorley grenade as the soldiers practise room clearances

The ex was non-tactical to start off with, and the trg staff a bit too generous with the noise and light discipline, as the harbour now started to look like the Blackpool Illuminations at Christmas.

At 06.00 hrs, reveille was called, and trainees were given 45 mins to get some breakfast and a nice hot cup of tea before the day's activities started. At 07.15hrs the first stand started and the trainees were given a short demo on how to use pyrotechnics and blank ammo safely. The rest of the day's activities included the Molotov Cocktail range (conducted by a very scary Irish man), the confidence course, a defended house, and method of entry.

The evening of Saturday 27 November was, for most of the trainees, going to be the first experience of fighting in built up areas, and for some, it would be one of the most memorable of their Army career. The enemy were in place, the fires were burning and the trainees were on their way to the FUP. Everything was going to plan until the SSM, **WO2 Swanston**, walked straight into the trip flare that was set up to catch out the trainees. Once the attack began, it looked like a group of pigs waiting to be fed. It soon sorted itself out, as the section comds and trg staff started to get involved. Once the buildings had been taken, the trainees had a chance to re-group, slow down their adrenalin, and the section comds could get their notebooks out and plan what was going to happen next.



A smoke break gets out of hand during a lull in the battle

On Sunday 28 November, the trg staff were up at 05.00hrs getting ready to sort out the next attack. At 07.00hrs H-hr was called, and all hell broke loose. All 3 platoons were now alert and ready to go. The attack on the first house was awesome, smoke everywhere, grenades going off and covering fire coming from every possible angle. In total, there were 6 houses for the trainees to attack and overcome the little pockets of enemy in each. The last building was the biggest of all, and had the entire enemy force covering every window and door. This now had become a full-on company attack, with the whole of 1 Pl providing covering fire from the adjacent building, and 3 Pl attacking the middle floor of the building. Once the middle floor had been taken, the whole of 2 Pl poised to attack the upper floor. When the Coy Comd was happy, 1 Pl were unleashed from the neighbouring building, and set upon the lower floor, which was the hardest floor to take, as there was no windows, doors or lights, and the enemy leader was lurking in the darkness.

At 10.30hrs, the whole street had been taken, all the enemy were dead, and the leader had been captured. The village was secure and the Coy Comd was extremely happy. When ENDEX was called, the day still hadn't finished. It was now time to pick up 30,000 expended rounds and numerous amounts of detonated grenades and empty smoke. You could feel the electricity and all the hype around the trainees and the training staff. A very well-planned and executed FIBUA ex was enjoyed by all. Well done, **Cpl Dibbert**.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

1 (TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj MP Parke**
SSM **WO2(SSM) L McGrail**

RALEIGH INTERNATIONAL – *by Cpl Mac McCarthy*

Raleigh International is a UK-based youth development charity, formed in 1984 to inspire young people across the globe to reach their full potential through participation in challenging projects world-wide. Venturers, aged between 17 and 25 yrs, participate in a community, environment and adventure project over a 10-week expedition. The overall aim is to give them a rewarding, fun and challenging experience that will help them learn more about themselves, as well as different cultures and people. I joined the Raleigh expeds in Borneo as an Adventure Project Manager this year.

Two weeks prior to the Venturers arriving, the Staff team arrived in Borneo to start our trg and planning for the exped. This was a very busy but exciting time. We learned a whole host of things including low impact camping, counselling skills and canulation. Then we set about the plan for the adventure phase. Once our plan was approved by the Country Director, we were all set for the Venturers to arrive.

The adventure project was split into three phases. The first phase was to trek across the Crocker Range, Borneo's largest national park, following the ancient Salt Trail, a once busy trade route. This was to be the hardest part of the exped for some of the Venturers, who had done little physical exercise at home. To find themselves in the jungle carrying all their equipt, rations and digging was a massive culture shock.

The second phase of the exped was the diving research phase. The aim was to assist the Sabah Parks Marine Research Unit in carrying out a scuba diving conservation programme. The team was to conduct a 2 - day reef survey, collecting data on coral, fish and invertebrates for the International Reef Check Project, to help monitor the conditions of marine life in the park.

The adventure phase finished with climbing Mt Kinabalu, 4,095m, to watch the sunrise. This was a fantastic way to finish the phase. The climb passes through 5 temperate zones, from dense rainforest to a barren (and bitterly cold!) summit.

THE TREK

Day 1 of the exped started with a trek from the Sabah Parks Ranger station at Innabong. It was a good introduction to what life would be like for the next 12 days. We were dropped off at the bottom of the steepest road I have ever seen. With the heat and the weight of the Bergens, some of the team began to doubt themselves that they could carry on. But after some tears and a lot of reassurance, we made our way underneath the jungle canopy.

The noise from the wildlife was unbelievable especially from the *reanne reanne* beetle, which sounds like a car alarm. After six hours of hard trekking and sweating, we made it into Jungle Camp Six, a small clearing where we would set up a small low impact camp. This would be our base for five days, as we worked to improve the trail with the help of the Park Rangers. After setting up our hammocks and bashas, we made our first nightly SITREP back to field base on the team's small HF radio. Then our first taste of Beanfeast, which with porridge and crackers, would be our staple diet for the entire exped. Soon everyone went to sleep with strange sounds of wildlife and even stranger sounding stomachs.

DIVING

After the twelve-day trek, diving was a good way to relax. Our base was the beautiful desert island of Mamutik, off the coast of Borneo in the South China Sea. The team first completed a 4-day PADI diving course, enabling them to begin assisting the Sabah Parks Marine Research Unit.

The sea was warm and crystal clear, and the amount of marine life we saw was fantastic. The beautiful desert island was relaxing, and we spent some time making a huge collective semi-permanent basha. We also challenged the islands Park Rangers in five - a - side football. The survey was hard work, a complicated task, and physically demanding, so the team had to work hard. This phase gave me and my fellow Project Manager, **Anna**, the chance to take a back seat, and let the Venturers take more control of how they wanted to run the phase.

MOUNT KINABALU – BORNEO PARADISE

We set off from our base camp on Mt Kinabalu at 02.00hrs. As a team, we were aiming to get on the summit for sunrise. It was very cold, and for many the altitude was exhausting. But it was good to see the team working hard together, and encouraging each other. We all made it to the summit, just in time to see the sunrise. After some team photos, we raced down the mountain to Borneo Paradise hotel, the base where we change over teams. It was quite a luxury having a warm shower and a sit down toilet, compared with what we have been used to on the trekking

We then had a chance to catch up with the rest of the Staff team, debrief the Country Director, and meet our new team of Venturers for the next adventure phase.

POST EXPEDITION

Raleigh was a very rewarding challenge. I would encourage it for anyone interested in new and exciting challenges, and who like to travel, to try it. It gave me the opportunity to use my military and leadership skills in a totally different environment from the Army. I have learned how to run a successful exped. It also gave me the opportunity to show the Army as a modern professional organisation that relies on teamwork. It was hard work, but most of all, it was fun, and I had the experience of a lifetime.

If you are interested in Raleigh, look on their website, www.raleighinternational.org.

PERU - EXERCISE ANDEAN DRAGON 05

Peru is one of the most impressive countries on the planet. Its variety is astonishing, offering virtually every conceivable scenic attraction. Over half of Peru lies within the Amazon jungle and the world's driest desert runs the entire length of its coastline. But it was the Peruvian Andes that proved to be the opportunity of a lifetime to eight intrepid members of ATR(L).

EX ANDEAN DRAGON began in the ancient Inca capital of Cusco, 3,330m above sea level. This buzzing city, some 350 miles south east of Lima, was to be the metropolis from which two treks would be conducted. As soon as the party got off the aircraft at Cusco airport, it soon became apparent that the thin high-altitude air caused even the battle hardened members of the group to be completely out of breath, even when engaging in polite conversation to one another. Two days were spent adjusting to the altitude, before the group was ready to commence the first trek, along the reputable Inca Trail.

Imagine the scene; eight soldiers in the British Army, among four hundred tourists, to be the only *Gringos* to carry rucksacks, on the four-day Inca Trail. The other sensible holidaymakers paid extra for porters to carry their make-up and personal belongings. The group's local guide, **Washie**, watched with a knowing look, as the team donned their rucksacks on the first day, hinting that the team could be in for an emotional four days.

Approaching 4.200 metres

The first day passed with relative ease, winding through dusty scrub bushes and low-lying hills. However the second day was far more challenging, with a climb of 1,115m in 6km to Dead Woman's Pass. The group soon realised why the other trekkers had paid the wiry porters to transport their possessions up to the 4,215m pass. They soon appreciated that trekking at altitude is a world apart from walking in the Peak District. With the aid of some controlled breathing and a few droplets of perspiration, the party soon made it to the top of the pass. Having descended over 3,000 steps to the second night's campsite at Paqamayu, the group devoured their evening meal, and awaited the challenge of scaling two passes on the third day.

In the morning of the third day the team set off with clear views of the Sacred Valley and the breath-taking Urumbamba River, some 1,700m below. The first pass of the day, at Runkuraqay, was at a height of 3,950m, and led to the well-preserved Inca town of Sayajmarka. The Inca sun gods had quite clearly opted for a holiday in the afternoon, as the magical scenery disappeared into rain and clouds. The final pass of the trail at Phuyupatamarka, was 3,670m, and guided the way to the final campsite at Winaywayna.

Never discovered by the Spaniards and hidden from the world until 1911, the lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu, was the culmination of the four-day Inca trail. After a 03.30hrs start to get to the Sun Gate for dawn, it was almost immediately evident that the Inca sun gods were still on vacation. **Washie** gave the group a comprehensive tour of the ruins. From the Temple of the Sun to the Palace of the Princess, the preserved remnants of the lost city were truly fascinating to experience.

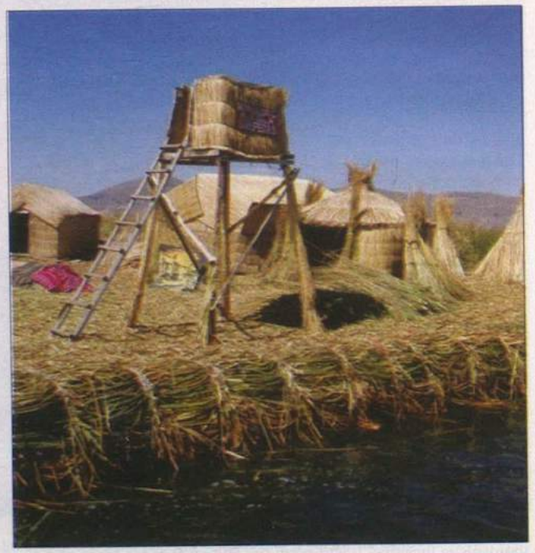
The second trek around the colossal mountain of Nevado Ausangate, standing at 6,372m, started with a life threatening experience. The dilapidated bus that transported the group from Cusco to the mountain town of Tinqui, crashed into the upward side of a dusty mountain road. Luckily the Inca gods were back from their holidays, and nobody was injured. Had the laden bus been turning towards the drop off at the time of the crash, you might not be reading this story. However, with the aid of a satellite phone, we were soon on another decrepit bus to Tinqui.

After walking for 27km and scaling a pass of 4,700m, the group finally reached their first campsite adjacent to the glacial mountain lake of Laguna Pucacocha. The brutal, thin cold mountain air, combined with the rugged terrain, made for quite an arduous day. A few members were suffering from altitude sickness

The route on the second day meandered up and down, through a series of valleys to the highest pass of the trek at 5,200m. The close up views of Nevado Ausangate were spectacular, and each glacial lake posed a stunning, yet different shade of blue. Vicunas, a cousin to the llama are elusive creatures valued for their fine wool. The herds of timid vicunas could often be seen observing the squaddies with the big rucksacks from the safety of the high ridgelines. But their domesticated relatives, llamas and alpacas, were happy to graze in the company of the group.

The omni-present alpaca and llama dung led the way to the final pass of Campa at 5,000m on day three of the trek. The previous cold night deposited a fresh coating of snow on the pass, which made for some impressive panoramic views. The walk off the final pass led the group to the small village of Pacchanta and the eagerly awaited hot springs. Despite waiting three hours for the hot bathing tub to fill up, the group managed to spend a few hours in the soothing water and revitalise their bodies.

The fourth day of the trek was only a short three-hour walk to back to Tinqui. On the way back to Cusco, the band of weary trekkers sampled a delightful gourmet of roasted guinea pigs. Some were distressed that the cute animals were raised as a



The floating islands of Lake Titicaca

colony in the kitchen, underneath the oven. In Peru this dish is regarded as a delicacy, but the group were not entirely convinced.

The exped ended with a recuperation period around the world's highest navigable lake, Laguna Titicaca. The group was hosted by two families on the island of Amantani, who opened their doors with incredible hospitality. EX ANDEAN DRAGON 05, was an outstanding success that challenged all eight members of the group. Without question, Peru, and more specifically the Andes, lived up to its reputation as one of the most remarkable opportunities in the world.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Littlefield**

One might think that with Christmas approaching fast, and the Regt being inundated with the numerous functions typical of the season, that things would be quiet and relaxed. This is far from the truth however, as plans that were made for the distribution of the ICS components of 233 Sig Sqn are being implemented at a furious pace. Many a late night has been put in to ensure that the transition of these units from HQNI and 15 Sig Regt to 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) is as seamless as possible. Nevertheless, time is still found for the abundance of functions that are synonymous with the Christmas period, and it can safely be said that the candle is being burned at both ends.

The New Year will herald a wind of change for Royal Signals in Northern Ireland, with the ICS assets of 233 Sig Sqn being permanently attached to 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213). Times are changing rapidly with Romeo Tp, and this submission will be the last written as a Tp, since they are now due to form into a Sqn on 03 January 06. The move to the mainland is still being mooted, but for the near future, they will remain in Thiepval Bks, Lisburn. It will be a wintry Christmas for the guys deployed in Afghanistan this year, and those in Iraq have failed to convince us of their plans for a BBQ on the beach this year.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

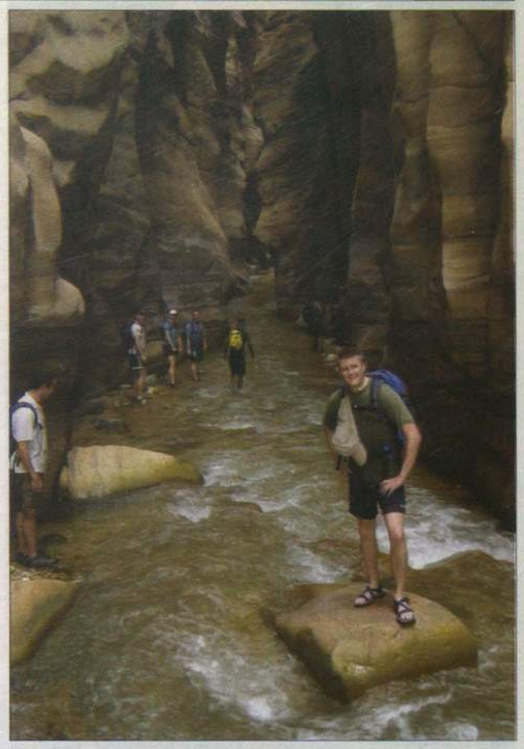
OC **Maj Arthurton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) TJ Bickerstaff**

EXERCISE BEDOUIN FINN 2005 - *by Sgt Nik Savchenko*

With the planning complete for the exped to Jordan, **Capt Bermingham** who had spent the previous few weeks organising everything was unfortunately posted on to new challenges, and a replacement was required at the last moment. We needed a sensible adult, but instead opted for action man himself, **Capt Graeme Endean**. The exped started with a long day's travel, flying from Belfast to London, and then on to Amman. Apart from **Sgt Nik Savchenko** sneakily trying to leave his wallet behind, departure took place relatively incident free.

After a long flight, we finally arrived in Amman, and were met by our French guide, **Pierre**. He directed us on to Madaba and our first hotel, and we all headed straight for bed. An early morning followed, and good day lay ahead. **Capt Endean** had booked extra day's activity for the group. We drove along the coast of the Dead Sea and arrived at Wadi Madjib, where we then spent a full day canyoning, with **2Lt Rob Fell** showing his expert climbing and swimming skills. The day involved wading and swimming our way up a canyon in lovely warm water. We then made our way back down on natural slides made out of the rock, finishing in a cave reminiscent of the film, *The Goonies*. **Cpl Jon Atkinson** unsurprisingly made the best impression from the film!

Following an excellent first day, we then moved on to the town of Petra. We spent two days in Petra, and it was definitely worth the visit. The town of Petra is like stepping back in time. It was actually used during the filming of *Indiana Jones* and this definitely rubbed off on **WO2 Mark Ellis**, who was trying his best to look like a movie star. **Sig Ash Grant** was definitely taken up



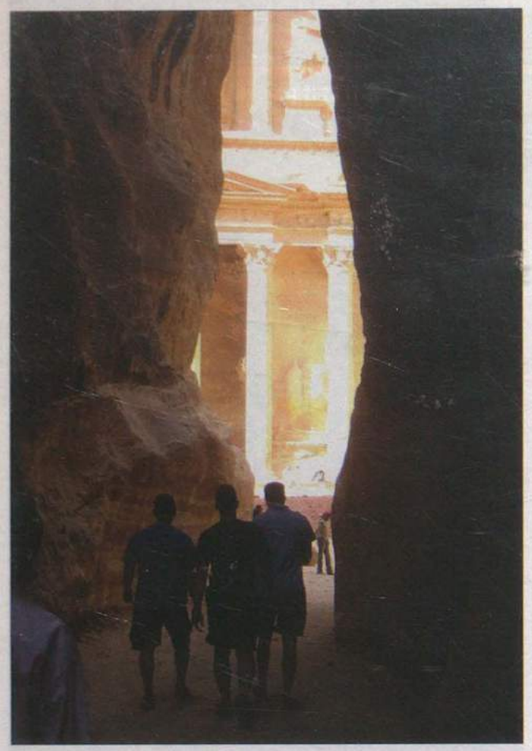
How do we get out of this?

by the moment, as he paid £25 for a 15-metre donkey ride. It was difficult to decide who the actual donkey was! With the exped now in full swing, it was time to move onto the main event, 7 nights at Wadi Rum, living in the desert with only our local guides as company. We had six days of scrambling planned, that would include a climb to the highest peak in Jordan. The temperature was high, and the going tough, but thoroughly enjoyable. The scrambling was thirsty work, but the abseiling made it worthwhile. It also gave **Cpl Atkinson** the opportunity to showcase his slick and quick skills at going both up and down the many peaks.

The evenings were spent eating a good meal, sitting around the fire and chatting about all kinds of stuff. **Sgt Sarah Staff** was definitely missing home, as she decided to explain to the men the benefits of a 90-degree anti-biological wash! I'm sure the guides were as mystified as us men, but they just nodded and smiled. With the dark arriving relatively early, there was plenty of sleep for the tired scramblers, with the officers definitely vying for the Golden Blanket award.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, a member of our party was unable to make the trip to Jordan, so we decided to buy a goat from the locals and call him Patrick. Unfortunately, like his

namesake, Patrick the goat's adventure was cruelly cut short, and we cooked him and had him for one of our evening meals.



Petra. Coming out of the Suk, to approach the Treasury, carved out of the sandstone cliff

On completion of our desert stay we moved to the Wadi Rum Guest House, where we all enjoyed a well-deserved good scrub in the showers. After a relatively short bus drive, we arrived in Aqaba for a couple of days rest and recuperation. This mainly involved eating, drinking and relaxing by the pool. It was all the more enjoyable, due to the fact that we'd all worked really hard the previous week. Fortunately, we all had a good time letting our hair down, and the exped was brought to a fine end.

The experience provided by Jordan fully justified all the hard work that had taken place in order for this trip to go ahead. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed their time there, and agreed that it is a 'must do' trip.

CROSS TRAINING AT MAGILLIGAN TRAINING CENTRE
- by Capt Z White

When Satan was looking around for a place to relocate Hell, he was offered Magilligan, but it is rumoured that he turned it down on the basis of not being able to afford the heating bills. However, the hardy soldiers of Romeo Tp did not show any weakness in the face of a cold snap, and valiantly conducted trg in the arduous and testing conditions of the Northern Ireland coastal area.

The Tp runs a trg week every six months to focus on either the equipt used, or range work. The week in December concentrated on ranges to refresh and test the Tp on the different weapons systems we use. After firing the mandatory APWT for the newer members of the Tp, we moved onto the IBSR, MP5 and Pistol ranges. The aim of the ranges is to get not merely to be familiarised with the weapons, but to be confident and competent with the systems.

At the end of the training **SSgt Trev Evans** ran a confirmatory shoot to determine the best shot. Congratulations go to **Cpl Marie Moore** for achieving the highest score on the MP5 competition shoot, much to the disgust of **Cpl Stu Dickeson**, who was convinced that he had it in the bag. Rumours that he had already started to make the trophy shelf in his house have been quickly scotched...

The trade trg elements of the week were extremely successful in bringing together the Tp, and sharing recent operational knowledge. **Cpl Winzar** gave an excellent brief on his recent tour and the trg that the Tp assists with in MND(SE).

An excellent final Tp-level ex, and much work from **Cpl Paul Harrower**, ensured a smooth run trg programme.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj CM Vaudin**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Spiers**

MERCURY CUP MARCH AND SHOOT COMPETITION 2005

After weeks of intense trg and cold wet days on the range, it all came down to just two hours on 10 November for the 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn March and Shoot team to show what they were made of.

The competition was an eight-mile squadded march carrying 25lbs and rifle, followed by the Henry Whitehead Cup shoot. The team was **Sgt Farrington** (Team Capt), **Capt Senneck**, **WO2(RQMS) Sheard**, **Cpl Buckingham**, **Cpl Davies**, **Cpl Smith** (the only female on the team), **Cpl Allan**, and **Sig Kingan**. They were feeling quietly confident as they lined up to get their kit weighed and inspected, and things started off well, with nobody receiving a penalty.

39 Bde were picked out of a hat to start third, which left plenty of time for a quick warm up and more tactics talk from the RQMS. On the start line, everyone was up for it, but still a little nervous knowing they had eight miles to go. Five minutes into the march the RQ's tactics came into play, with **Cpl Smith's** weight being spread out amongst the team. The pace was fast from the off, and very early on a couple of the team were struggling, but everyone pushed on. They were being led round the course by a PTI from another unit, who didn't seem to know where he was going, getting the team lost on two occasions, but they were assured they would get the time taken off at the end.

Over half way, and the pace was still fast but they knew they were doing well, and that if they kept it up, would be coming in with the fastest time. After eight miles of tarmac, gravel, mud, and sand, including two beach sections, and an hour of banter between **Capt Senneck** and the RQMS, they did just that, crossing the finishing line in 1hr 24mins (and that was before the time was taken off for getting lost), beating the nearest team by about ten minutes.

Only the shoot remained, and despite the Team Capt getting the lowest score, followed closely by the RQMS, the team still won it. This was mainly due to some excellent shooting from **Cpl Buckingham**, who got the third highest score, and **Sig Kingan**, who came second, and only three targets less than first place, who happened to be an Army 100.

With the team winning all but one trophy, everyone was tired but happy as they jumped on the bus back to Thiepval Barracks for more than a couple of celebratory drinks.

MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION 2005

The final event of the Mercury Cup took place at Magillagan Trg Area on 17 November. The competition consisted of five separate events with a distance between each stand. Points were awarded for each part, and for the team who completed their marches in the quickest time.

The 39 Bde team of **WO2 Sheard**, **Sgt Walton**, **Cpl Allan**, **Cpl Davies**, **Cpl Moffat**, **Cpl Oxley**, **LCpl Miles** and **Sig Kingan**, travelled to Magillagan the night before, and after a bad night's sleep they woke at 07.00hrs to find that miracles can happen – Magillagan was dry! The event got underway for the team at 08.30hrs with a kit check and weigh in, with **LCpl Miles** adding a penalty minute for forgetting his weapons card.

First was a mile and a half run before the First Aid stand. The team performed really well on the stand, finishing with top marks. Second was a mile run, followed by the range shoot. Again the team won the event, despite the best efforts of **Cpls Moffat** and **Oxley** with combined score of only three out of eighty! **Cpl Allan** and **Sig Kingan** deserve special mention for finishing with third and second highest shots.

The third event, map reading, was reached after a one-kilometre sprint. This was the teams' first stumbling block, with the highest score of eight and a half out of twenty, it was not surprising that we came third - thanks to **Cpl Allan** for contributing with his three out of twenty. Another run preceded the fourth event, comd tasks on the beach. After completing the first task in record time, **WO2 Sheard** took over for the construction of a 9X9 tent with the rest of the team in blacked out respirators. Again, this task was completed easily. It did help that **WO2 Sheard** is 39 Bde's RQMS!

Finally, after a gruelling final sprint to the finish line, we had thirty minutes to shower and change before the drill contest. This event went really well, apart from **Sgt Walton** tick-tocking - the instructor didn't see you but we did!

The presentation took place, with 39 Bde adding another victory to their list, which already included the Athletics, Tough Guy, and the March and Shoot competitions. It was to complete the clean sweep of the Mercury Cup in 2005!

The team springing into action.

EXERCISE MARKET GARDEN FINN 05

EX MARKET GARDEN FINN 05 was 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn's battlefield tour to the sites of OP MARKET GARDEN, the WW2 allied operation to suppress German forces in the Netherlands. After watching the film *A Bridge Too Far*, and attending the obligatory study evening, we were ready to depart for our 4-day history lesson and Arnhem cultural tour.

All was well on our flight from Belfast to Amsterdam, where we picked up the mini buses, and our journey began. Because of a small navigation problem, all did not go quite as planned, and two hours later we reached Joe's Bridge, where **Maj Steve Harvey** gave us our first bit of history, explaining the key issues of the bridge.

Over the next couple of days, we visited a number of important sites, with various members of the group running stands and giving lessons on the key issues. After their best efforts, our travelling anorak **Capt Norry MacKinnon** would step in with his views on what he would do with his debating sidekick, **SSgt Eddie Edwards**. The final night was concluded with a tabletop quiz, which was keenly contested and confirmed that much information had been assimilated on this short battlefield tour.

The ex came to a close on the final day in an appropriate manner, with a visit to Ooesterbeek War Cemetery. This put the sacrifice made in clear perspective, and when **Maj Harvey** read a prayer and laid a wreath of poppies, there was not a dry eye to be seen. The group then took time to reflect on the number of people who laid down their lives for a cause for which they would never see the outcome. The party, in much more sombre mood made an uneventful recovery to Northern Ireland.

The usual suspects

NORTHERN IRELAND BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

On 8 December 2005 the 213 Sig Sqn male and female basketball teams arrived at Aldergrove to participate in the NI Basketball Champs. All but 2 of the female players had no basketball experience whatsoever!

The female team were led by **SSgt Allan** AGC (SPS), and consisted of Royal Signals, AGC (SPS), RLC and Int Corps personnel. They arrived in good time to watch the men play, and to pick up a few tips and a tutorial for those who were unfamiliar with the rules. The men, also all non-basketball players, lost their first three games, but battled back, finding their form to win their final match.

The female team went straight through to the final, as only 213 Sig Sqn and 6 RMP managed to produce teams.

With the five main players and three reserves raring to go, their lack of experience was unnoticeable. **WO1(RSM) Spiers** and **SSgt Allan** played the ball brilliantly up and down the court, attacking well, with **Cpl Hodgson** providing solid back-up. The team played as a unit, taking no prisoners and defending well, giving 6 RMP no opportunities to score.

All team members had a run out, with those on the sidelines at any one time providing key vocal support and advice. As the seconds ticked by, the team knew the match was won, and eventually triumphed by a very comfortable margin of 8-0.

NEWS FROM THE GULF

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC **Maj AE Percival**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DJ Smith**

7 Armd Bde has returned home - to the desert! After some intensive pre-deployment trg in Germany the Sqn, bolstered to 300, including the Staff, deployed to Iraq in late October. We welcome our attached soldiers for OP TELIC 7. May you enjoy your time with the Bde and look back in years to come knowing that you too are Desert Rats. Following the smooth transition from 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (we appreciate the manner in which you handed over), the Sqn has settled in to its routine. BOWMAN has taken another step forward with its deployment in heavy armour; the immediate benefits for our soldiers are easy to see. Even 2 PARA and 9/12 Lancers, both CLANSMAN BGs, praise the capability offered by BOWMAN secure speech. The rear link dets embedded with them, really are adding value to the BGs; they couldn't do without a Royal Signals presence. Data remains more limited, due to terrain, force protection measures and ECM, but things continue to progress, and it is something we intend to exploit during our tenure. Support Tp, seconded to the Joint Support Unit Basra, seem to be supporting the world – no change there.

The Handover

As we are sure 12 Mech Bde will report, BOWMAN even manages to survive the odd veh fire (as happened to one of our armd staff vehs the day it arrived in Basrah). Much of the equipt is still working, despite being toasted.

Overall, the Sqn is in fine health. We commemorated the Battle of Sidi Rezegh in all Messes, and prepared for the winter with the unveiling of the Be Guernsey, the Be polo shirt, and any other income generation opportunity. Finally we commend to you the OP HOME RAT site on the ArmyNET. If you want to keep in touch with us please log on and send your messages.

Floreat Jerboa

THE OPERATIONS TEAM

Ops Offr **Capt EM Swift**
Bde YofS **WO2(YofS) K Heaton**
FofS **WO2(FofS) R Cleminson**
BSM(F) **SSgt(YofS) R White**

The BOWMAN plan was produced by **SSgt (YofS) Rob White** recently from 21 Sig Regt (AS). **Cpl Mick Constable**, when not doing his Crypto duties, assists the 'BOWMAN Yeoman' on the latest version of the plan. His task is to check the plans submitted by the BGs prior to them being added to the Bde plan. He plays a very important role in the maint of the plan.

The Bde Yeoman, **WO2 Kev Heaton** and **Sgt Gordon Scott** have deployed to many of the BGs to conduct Crypto advisory visits, and bring back stories from the front line. **WO2 (FofS) Richie Cleminson**, when he is not heading up different committees, such as the junior ranks and WOs' and Sgts' Mess entertainments, is co-ordinating the equipt care of the Sqn's various comms platforms.

EUPHRATES TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt N Streetly**
Tp SSgt **SSgt N Elliott**

BOWMAN IN RADCON *- by Sgt C Palin*

Before leaving for Iraq, the crew of RADCON was told that we were taking over BOWMAN there. On arrival in Basrah, we realised that not only was it BOWMAN in Iraq, but it was also Bowman *in a rack*. Once we got to grips with the rack set-up, we turned out attention to the enduring task of maintaining comms. Simple; all we have to do is radio check all the main call signs and keep a synopsis chart.

We are now at the stage in RADCON where we are trying new things with BOWMAN. Tests of the equipt and its capability are providing all the operators with confidence in the kit, and in their own skills. The weekend just past saw trials being set up with Joint Helicopter Force to test interoperability between the aircraft-borne CLANSMAN kit and BOWMAN. Although trials have been done in the past, it will be good for our ops to practise this skill, and learn the associated faultfinding techniques.

Overall, BOWMAN is proving robust and reliable on OP TELIC 7, providing high quality secure comms in a user-friendly package. The planning software appears be a nightmare at times, but thankfully for RADCON, that is left in the capable (and busy) hands of the 'BOWMAN Yeoman', **SSgt (YofS) White.**

TIGRIS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt AD Rea**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J Giddens**

Tigris Tp is the mobile element of the Sqn, a team of highly focused men and women who are ready at a moment's notice. Their primary job is to maintain, deploy and operate an Armd or Light Fwd HQ for 7 Armd Bde.

It was with this task in mind that we deployed the HQ to an exercise loc on Basrah Air Station (BAS) for three days. EX MERCURY RAT 1 involved the deployment of the Armd HQ, including the DRASH tentage never before seen by the Sqn. The Tp worked long hours to prove comms, including trialling various new antennae, such as the HF broadband.

Following the successful maint of comms with the armd fleet, the FFRs were deployed several weeks later. EX MERCURY RAT 2 saw the new BOWMAN plan successfully implemented into the FFRs, again with the HQ being deployed. We also proved the use of the BOWMAN dismounted HQ, effectively doubling the comms capability of the Tp. Also integrated into the HQ was a SYNERGY det that provided email and phone facilities to the users, working alongside the BOWMAN applications. This was combined with TAC SAT to provide additional area coverage.

Both deployments were regarded as complete successes, and the Tp remains at readiness to deploy 7 Armd Bde HQ anywhere in Iraq. This can be achieved by the use of a BOWMAN Rebro, which is also maintained and crewed by the Tp. In order to visit 'the guys on the hill,' we have formed a multiple to be used for re–sup. We are also at readiness to escort the Bde Staff around the AOR.

So with 6 weeks of the tour under our belts, morale is high and the vehs are all ready, with continuous maint being carried out. Unfortunately, we are currently one 436 short, as it is sitting peacefully at the LAD. Within days of it arrival in theatre, our Comms Ops veh caught fire, with most of the CES kit still inside it! The BOWMAN kit was also inside but, despite being a little charred, it still works! The cause of the fire is under investigation, but we believe 12 Mech Bde started it, so that they could stay and remain the only BOWMAN unit to have served in Iraq!

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM **Maj SF Lawes**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Wyatt**

The QM's Dept is now part of Joint Support Unit Basrah (JSUB). With the number of customers and kit we see each day, it seems at times that we are actually the QM's Dept for the whole of Iraq! We have still had time to enjoy ourselves, though.

MT SECTION

MTWO **WO2 G Revell**

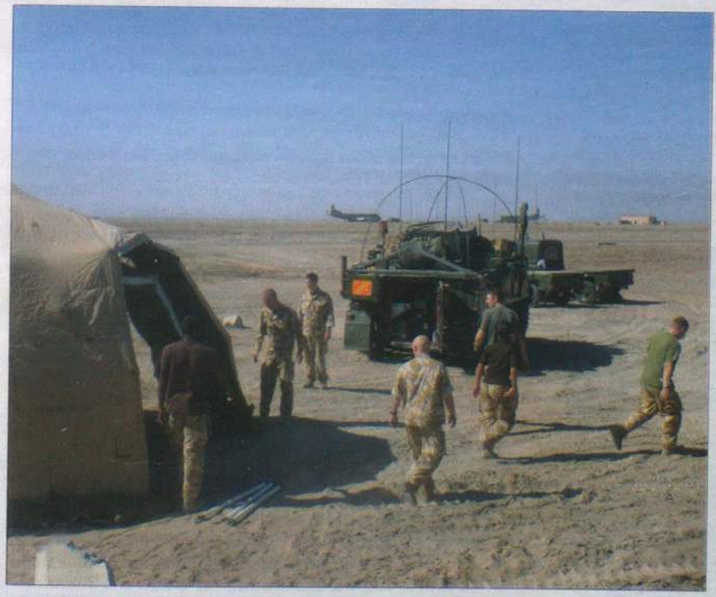
The MT Section has been extremely busy since our arrival in Iraq. The multiple heads twice weekly to the Kuwait border carrying out force protection for the contractors who work in BAS. We have nine guys attached to the RAF Regt on force protection duties, guarding the perimeter fencing of the air station, which covers 20 sq kms.

They enjoy this, as they are driving around in the stripped down Landrovers that 7 Armd Bde would have done many years ago when under the control of Monty; they are affectionately known as Pink Panthers.

We are also heavily involved in the fuel run to the border, it being shared between Cumbria Coy and ourselves. After a few unfortunate incidents concerning Cumbria Coy, JSUB MT took it on for 3 days in a row, not that any of us were complaining. With **Sgt Phil O'Connor** leaving a few weeks back, the amount of tasks have been good for **Sgts Ed Law** and **Zac Topping** to get to grips with being Multiple Comds, which has been a success.

THE MARCH AND SHOOT *– by Lt AD Rea*

Due to the high intensity of ops and the long hours being put into work, the Bde Comd decided that Sunday would be a minimum workday for all. Now that seems great in principal. The only flaw in the plan was that a certain keen, fit and highly motivated SSgt decided to organise a March and Shoot competition for a Sunday morning.



With DRASH on the far side of Basrah Air Station

So with the Iraqi December sun rising over Basrah airport, we drew weapons, checked our kit and warmed up ready for the 10-km tab. The route was simple – 5 km out to the range, a quick shoot and then 5-km back. Six teams from the Sqn entered this test of endurance and set off at 10-min intervals.

Having a PTI as the pacesetter for our team seemed like a great idea, until we had completed the first 2 km at a steady trot. Shins were burning in agony and the sweat was rolling off our faces. Had this been a December Sunday in Germany, we would have been enjoying a late breakfast by the fire, whilst enjoying the view of the snow covered fields outside. This year, I was growing redder and redder in the blazing sun and wondering why I had signed up to run round the airport in Iraq!

So onwards we tabbed, until finally the range came into sight. We loaded up and began. The shoot comprised of 5 little white patches, at which 5 rounds were to be fired. The sweat running off our helmets, combined with the glimmering sun made the shooting less than easy.

Before we knew it, it was time to begin the long walk home. This hurt even more than

the route out, but eventually, the finish line came into sight. The ordeal was over and we had finished as a team. The winning team was from Euphrates Tp, but everyone felt like a winner after completing this 'little' endurance test!

THE LIFE OF THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OPERATOR
– by LCpl Forrester

When we landed in Basrah, I thought to myself, 'What have I got myself in for this time?' Having been on Op TELIC 1, I was very curious to see how different my job would be, compared with moving the HQ through the desert. I'll admit now that I was a little disappointed to find that I would be doing shift work for the whole tour in RADCON, but after a few days of routine, it didn't seem that bad.

A few of us were then chosen to be trained as Immediate Response Operators (IROs) for the Bde HQ. Our trg began with several days of intense learning - not for the faint hearted. We were taught a variety of new comms systems such as TAC SAT, portable I-Net and advanced BOWMAN HF. So after a week of hands on with the kit, along with several trials, we received our first task.

shifts, rotated between days and nights, with about 3 days off a month. Also included in this rotation are our duties on the Camp gates.

A very weary LCpl Warburton

Prepping the Heli

We grabbed our crash out kit, which comprises a fully packed Bergen, webbing, and ancills for the comms kit. This is alongside all the radios and equipt! Within a few hours of our initial briefing, we were airborne in the Nimrod at 32,000 feet looking over target areas. Our task was to co-ordinate ground troops by using our operator and comms skills.

So our first major task had been successfully completed. From then onwards, the ops came thick and fast. I found myself in the middle of Basrah City, at the Palace, carrying what seemed like the world's supply of comms kit. It was a strange and exciting experience, as I was the only operator there. I had to ensure that all the required comms were in quickly, so that the Desert Rats could continue their job. That night I was back in RADCON, on shift and waiting for the next call.

Isn't it funny that we, the static Tp, get out more than the mighty mobile Tp!

THE LIFE OF A TA AUGMENTEE
– by LCpl Warburton, 42 Sig Sqn

Out here in Iraq, I am attached to 207 Sig Sqn as an IS Engr. I work in the JOCS Cell in Div HQ, which is co-located with HQ 7 Armd Bde. I work as part of a shift team, typically working 12-hr

Working in the HQ is a new experience, as we work closely with other nationalities, and there's plenty of opportunity to meet new and interesting people. The days in the JOCS cell pass very quickly, as we seem to be constantly working. As soon as one job is complete, we are straight onto the next! We also have to take turns to escort the LECs around the HQ. From speaking to them, I have gained an insight into what life is like in Basrah City – some of their stories are real eye-openers! The LECs all speak English, but have been trying to teach me Arabic; I have only picked up the basics so far, but I have plenty of time to work on it!

When the tour finishes and I return to Manchester, I will have completed 9 months with the Desert Rats. It will be an interesting change to get back to my 'normal' life, and 42 Sig Sqn.

A ROYAL VISIT

Not so long, one of the soldiers attached to us, **Sig White**, was badly injured in an RTA, whilst deployed on ops in Iraq.

He has since made an excellent recovery, and has deployed back to Iraq with the Desert Rats. On 23 November 05, **Sig White** left theatre and flew to London.

The occasion was to meet with **HRH The Prince of Wales**, who had organised a re-union for personnel injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. **Sig White**, along with several other soldiers from Royal Signals was entertained at Headly Court Rehabilitation Centre for the day, and returned to theatre the following night. 'It was good to meet the Prince,' he commented. 'He's very friendly, and spent a lot of time talking to all of us personally. And it was nice to get back to the UK for a few days!'

CONGRATUALTIONS

Finally, the Sqn would like to pass on their congratulations to our Comms Tp SSgts. Firstly to **SSgt Guido Giddens** and **Michelle** on the birth of **Charlie**, and to **SSgt Nav Elliott** and **Sharon** on the birth of **Tom**. Must be something in the water around the Staffys' houses!

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 Regt has once again been hard at work deploying on EX ULHAN EAGLE, and participating in some exciting sporting activities both at home and abroad.

EXERCISE UHLAN EAGLE *- by Sig Sutherland*

Monday 19 September, and all of RRB Tp was formed up and ready to deploy, just one last check, re-check and check again, to make sure everyone was present and correct, ready to go. One more final brief from **2Lt Evans**, and we were away. We made haste to the Polish border.

The Tp was deployed all over the trg area, with exception to RRB 6, under comd of **Sig Sutherland** and RRB 3, with **Sig Steph Thomas**. Some elements of the Tp were deployed to conduct comms trials in the first week, where **2 Lt Evans** and **Sig Harvey** came close to a near death experience. After getting bogged in up to the bonnet and filling the cab with water, **Sig Harvey** pulled over and nearly jumped onto an anti-tank mine. **LCpl McKenzie** managed to jump in the way shouting 'nooooo!!' in slow motion, pushing **Sig Harvey** away from danger. It later emerged that it was a trg mine.

Meanwhile, EXCON was getting set up, and **Sig Applegate** was climbing up a 50ft mast covered in comms kit, with the help of his assistant, **Sig Read**, who was so scared could barely move, let alone set up EVHFs. The ex was well under way, and things were going well. We had a few replacements to the team, to deploy all the RRBs for the main ex.

The HQ deployed, and a sudden epidemic of 'other-end-itis' developed. It didn't seem to matter that the RRBs had been in and working for the month previously, with no problems. A million or so radio checks later, we were eager to get the last ex over and done with. Some of the crews that had been out for the whole hog and had started to lose to their powers of speech, so they needed to get back in touch with civilization.

After one week of little or no sleep, with the deafening sound of AS90s firing 300m from their loc, it was finally over. The Tp came back on 25 November with some good experienced operators, and more importantly, the Div Staff were happy with a good ex.

INDIA HOCKEY TOUR 2005 *- by Sig Wall and Sig Bell*

The three-week tour of India was aimed at promoting the British Army, experiencing the culture and playing hockey. The exit from the plane in New Delhi was an experience in itself; at 02.00hrs, the temperature was 32° C. We travelled to Jalandhar for a bit of sight seeing, and then we moved on to Amritsar, where we visited The Golden Temple, the holiest Sikh shrine. From here, we went to the Wagah Border to watch the Changing of the Guard, an aggressive, but friendly parade in conjunction with the Pakistani border guards. It is performed every night, and every night the stands are full. The standoff of chanting between the two crowds is deafening, but you cannot help but feel and embrace the atmosphere. In this spirit, the guards gave the Indian flag to **LCpl Gary Fairburn** RE to run up to the border to wave at the Pakistani crowd. It ended with a spectacular display with the Indian guards lowering the flags simultaneously with the Pakistani guards.

From the Wagar Border we went to Chandigarh for our first game. As we arrived, we noticed TV cameras and reporters. We were to discover that our opposition had loaded their side with seven Indian National players. Needless to say, the game didn't go as we had planned, but we did get a consolation goal in the dying seconds of the game, from **Cpl Gary Graham** RE. Afterwards, we were hosted by opposition, and were also joined by the Indian National coach and an ex-Olympian.

After Chandigarh, we travelled back to New Deli for our second game at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, where we encountered several more Olympians and a couple of national players, but this time there was no consolation goal. That evening, a few members of the squad went to experience the nightlife. A few clubs later they hired a rickshaw, but the weight of the westerners flipped it over. Everyone, except **Lt Paul Carpenter**, managed to get clear, but the rickshaw fell on his leg, snapped it and that was the end of his hockey tour.

From Agra we moved on to Jodhpur, visiting Mehrangarh Fort and Umaid Bhavan From New Delhi we carried on to Agra and the Taj Mahal. Pictures do the Taj Mahal no justice. The sheer size and craftsmanship is overwhelming, and trying to comprehend how they built it is almost impossible. The detail, from the smallest stone to the four pillars that lean outwards so they cannot collapse inward, it is a wonderful sight to be viewed first hand.

From Agra we moved on to Jodhpur, we visited Mehrangarh fort and Umaid Bhavan Palace, this is Palace, where they filmed the James Bond film *Octopussy*. From Jodhpur we went to Udaipur, spent a bit of time sight seeing and shopping, then we carried on to Bombay. We had two days of sightseeing and relaxing before

The Team show off their red tour shirts contrasting with the white marble of the Taj Mahal

our game. We performed better individually and as a team, but still not good enough to beat half an Olympic team.

We then travelled to Hyderabad, where we stayed at St John's Regional Seminary. Whilst there we visited an orphanage in a village called Motokundo, where we spent a lot of time interacting with the children and answering their questions. We also looked at the accn and classrooms. They have fifty children sleeping on the floor in each room; the roof on the school was incomplete. The following day, we returned with hockey sticks, balls, paints, clothes and other small gifts for the children, and we set up stands of various activities, such as football, cricket, drill and a few educational stands. After the day's events were complete, the children sang Happy Birthday to **Sgt Jason Johnson** AGC. It was an amazing experience to see people in those conditions having fun and being in such good spirits; the looks of joy will never be forgotten by any of us. The following day we had another game, against Hyderabad Hockey Team, the same club that the Indian National Team's captain plays for. Needless to say, they were good and we lost, but our team game was growing ever stronger. The following day we travelled to Bangalore.

After lunch, it was on to our final game, against the President's XI. We were now down three players, **Maj Chris Hart** AGC was bedded down with flu, **Maj Angus Harper** AAC had to return early, and **Lt Paul Carpenter** had departed earlier with his broken leg. We received a very warm welcome from the dignitaries and the weather. The game was going to be interesting from the start, especially playing against three National and four Olympic players. Both teams started strong, with the President's XI scoring first and then beginning to dominate, but in the second half we managed a bit of a comeback, with a goal by **Cpl Derek Farr**. We were then awarded a penalty, which **Lt John Moore** RA took, but unfortunately, the goalkeeper got a glove on it. From here in we started to dominate. **Sig Tom Bell** had a shot that beat the keeper, but just flew wide of the goal. In spite of our best efforts, we could manage only one more goal by **Cpl Derek Farr**. After the game, our Man of the Match was not our top goal scorer, but our goalkeeper, **Sgt Justin Coward**, for the commitment shown in some of his saves in this and previous games.

We had another day to experience Bangalore before moving on to Madras. Here, we visited the beachfront where the tsunami had struck last year, and did a bit more sightseeing. We then ended off with a Team meal, before departing for the airport and heading back from whence we came.

REGIMENTAL CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM

The Regtl Cross-country Team has stayed true to the Corps motto, being both 'swift' and 'sure'. The runners competed in the BA(G) Cross-country League with the Team being well looked after by **Capt Walsh**. Individuals were being dragged back from EX UHLAN EAGLE in Poland for a well-earned shower to compete at the hilly Paderborn event.

The race was a complete mud bath, with a few competitors having to retrieve their shoes from various parts of the course! **Sig Walsh** won the male event, aiding the strong position of the male team, whist the females put in an impressive team performance, with the help of their recent additions **Lt Hood** and **Cpl Cartmell**, to ensure their place in the League was just as firm. Away from the mud, 10 people from the Regt escaped to the sunshine in Malta to participate in the Malta Marathon Challenge. This was a gruelling event, run over 3 days, starting with a tough 11.6 km, followed by a comparatively short 6km on second day, and a long 25km in the sun on third day.

Over all, the Regt did exceptionally well, with the female team finishing first overall, with **Sig Scribbins** being the second fastest female, **LCpl Powell** finishing sixth overall, and Sig Mulligan an impressive seventh. The Regt fielded two male teams, finishing second and sixth overall. **WO2(QMSI) Stoddard** finished second, and **LCpl Walsh** finished fifth overall.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

2 Sig Regt are now slowly getting to grips with our new commitments with CORMORANT. Exciting times are ahead, with members of 214 Sqn assuming R1 for SLE, deployments continuing to Ops HERRICK, VERITAS and backfill to TELIC, 219 Sqn taking over the JFLogC component and 246 Sqn being stood up with NRF.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj Mark Tivey**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Leask**

COMBINED SERVICES CATERING COMPETITION

The Catering Dept of 2 Sig Regt has had a very productive last couple months entering the Combined Service Catering Competition (CSCC). This competition is a Blue Ribbon event within the Armed Forces Catering Depts; there is only one bigger event and that is Hotel Olympia.

A team of **Sgt Webster**, **Cpl Perrin** and **Pte Rashid,** was entered into the Open Field category, requiring them to produce a meal for twenty people in two hours, using two ten-man compo boxes, with an allowance of £5.00 for extra ingredients. The standard was high, with twelve teams entered from Army, RAF and RM. Nevertheless the 2 Sig Regt Chefs triumphed, walking away with a Gold Medal for their menu, the Food Safety Award for the day, and Best in Class. This means that our Regtl chefs are the best in the field in the whole of the Armed Forces.

LCpl Easson assisted another unit in the Cook and Serve category, where she and the team walked away with a Bronze Medal. **Pte Makisi** entered the Novice Chicken category, having been out of trg only two months. There were five other entrants, and **Pte Makisi** received the Bronze Medal and Best in Class title, whereas everybody else managed only a Certificate of Merit.

In all these categories, the judging is strict and extremely critical; so well done to all involved. That said, the Festive Season is now upon us, so they are back into working in a busy main kitchen, with the prospect of a very busy 2006.

REMEMBRANCE PARADE

On Sunday 13 November, 2 Sig Regt took part in the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade held at both the Memorial Gardens and York Minster. The 30-man marching contingent from HQ Sqn was led by **Maj Mark Tivey** ably assisted by the SSM, **WO2 Leask** and the Right Marker (at a height of 5' 4") **Sgt Bailey**.

The service in York Minster was once again outstanding, thoroughly enjoyed by all Regtl personnel and the attending

dignitaries, such as the Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire, the Lord Mayor and Sheriff of Yorkshire, the High Sheriff of North Yorkshire, the MP for York and Comd 15 (NE) Bde, to name but a few.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

SPEARHEAD LAND ELEMENT

In preparation for the assumption of the strategic comms support to the Spearhead Land Element, Viking Tp has been busy converting the support the SLE BG usually enjoys to CORMORANT. The subscriber facilities have basically remained the same, but thanks to CORMORANT's increased bandwidth, the quality and level of service available to the HQ is markedly better.

In addition to commissioning the various services, the Tp has been busy completing the raft of pre-deployment criteria necessary for soldiers held at Very High Readiness. This has ranged from specific Special to Arm courses, to range work, to OPTAG.

The Sqn has also taken seriously the task of building relations with the SLE Bn (2 Bn Light Infantry) and has been very successful on this front.

The commitment transferred from 30 Sig Regt at 0900Z 01 Dec 05, and the Tp are looking forward to supporting SLE BG, and hopefully to deploy during their tenure.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dave Duggan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Hunt**

SENIOR BRITISH MILITARY ADVISOR

Life at SBMA has settled back down after pulling through unscathed from the threat of hurricane WILMA, thankfully it was much like a windy winters day, causing little damage. The Det has seen the arrival of **Capt Si Smith**, **Cpl Dott** and **Cpl Beal**, all of whom seem to be extremely pleased with their latest tour.

The festive season commenced with Thanksgiving, a 25lb turkey, all the trimmings and James Bond films all day long; just like Christmas at home. A special thanks goes to **Sig Thomasson's** wife, **Anna** who slaved over the cooking all day to make an excellent meal for the Det.

Capt Smith, **Cpl Dott**, **Sig Thomasson** and **Sig Woodward** have signed for Macdill United FC. The only downside is that trg starts at 05.30hrs. We live 30 mins from the Base, so we have to be up at 04.30hrs each Tuesday and Thursday to arrive on time.

OPERATION HERRICK - COMMCEN, CAMP SOUTER, KABUL – *by Sig McNee*

Here in Kabul our IS Engrs have been rushed off their feet, sorting out every IT problem, from teaching Staff Officers how to turn on a computer, to building servers and restoring a LAN within the HQ. It is a busy time at the moment, with preparations for the arrival of the ARRC, and we are ensuring everything is up to speed to allow a smooth HO/TO.

We also work with ISAF personnel, so when we get tasks over at their HQ, there are always volunteers to get out of our dark narrow Commcen for a couple of hours of sunlight. Most of us have been on the ranges and had the opportunity fire different weapon systems. **LCpl Rob Smeijkowski** and **Sig 'Tez' McNee** have been on driving details to Mazar-e-Sharif, through the magnificent Hindu Kush mountain range. Out of hours, there are regular social events, including the quiz, bingo and the popular Camel Racing, where our Det Comd, **SSgt Nick Ulley** recently made a couple of successful bets, but we have yet to see him share his wealth.

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, MAZAR-E-SHARIF – *by LCpl Ellson*

We are now half way through a four-month tour in Afghanistan. Our main tasks are to support the PRT, provide IT and SATCOM support, but also fix the comms equipt the infantry break. **Cpl Drewry** patrolled along the Afghanistan border with a MOT (Mobile Observation Team) checking the border police. **LCpl Kinson** has been out with the forward tactical ops, digging holes. **LCpl Ellson** has travelled south to assist with comms trg, and **Sig Thompson** is enjoying regular trips into town.

CHILDREN IN NEED

There was a big push to raise money for Children In Need in 2 Sig Regt this year, with 3 events organised. It began on 11 November, with the CO kindly agreeing that all could forgo a 10-Mile PT March if they paid £2 for the privilege on that day, with a further £2 on 18 November! The second event was a 24-hr York to London Inter-Sqn Charity row, in the Regt gym. The event was won by 214 Sig Sqn, by a few lengths over 219 Sig Sqn and HQ Sqn. The third event was a Charity Car Wash and collection on the front gate. Fortunately, as the temperature dropped below zero, people very generously put their hands in the pockets to avoid their windscreens being frozen!

All in all, the event was a huge success raising £3,200.43 for Children In Need. There was lots of local media coverage of the event, including BBC Radio York, the York Evening Press and a 15 second of fame performance presenting the cheque live on the BBC by 4 members of the Regt at the Millennium Square in Leeds. A special thanks must go to all the members of the Regt who contributed their time and effort, and **SSM (WO2) Hunt** for this cameo TV performance!

After a long day with him, WO2(SSM) Neil Hunt becomes very possessive about Pudsey

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Ade Clewlow**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Priti**

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS EXERCISE

Over the period 18 – 22 September 05, **Cpl Binod Limbu** (246 Gurkha Sig Sqn) and **Sig Stanley** (214 Sig Sqn), deployed on *HMS Exeter* to participate in a Joint Comms Ex (JOCOMMEX). After the train journey from York to Portsmouth, we arrived at Fenton Lake jetty to get our first view of *HMS Exeter*, a Type 42 Destroyer (Batch II).

As we arrived on board, our hosts took us to the lower deck, where we were accommodated in 3P Mess. We were made more than welcome by all Mess members who showed us typical Matelot hospitality, plying us with beers long into the night. Although the bunks on board were tiny, they were big enough for us both to get a good night's sleep.

The first 24 hrs were spent sailing through the Solent to the start of the ex, by which time, we were approximately 550 km from York. Within the first 2 hrs we had established both voice and secure data comms between *HMS Exeter* and the det from 2 Sig Regt. After a successful 12 hrs of the ex schedule, it was decided that sufficient trg had been achieved, and both stations closed down. It was then time to retire to 3P Mess to receive another dose of Naval generosity.

After spending 3 nights on board ship cruising at 30 knots, we were both longing for dry land, and on the morning of the fourth day it was time to head for home. But *HMS Exeter* was not going to dock in Plymouth just for us to disembark! Instead, we had a 45-minute journey by speedboat to the jetty at Plymouth. We then connected our train from Plymouth to York. It was something that neither **Sig Stanley** nor I had experienced previously but would jump at the chance to participate in again.

All units equipped with either CLANSMAN or BOWMAN CNR can get involved with the PJHQ-led JOCOMMEX schedules, and cross-pol is encouraged between land-based units and ships. Further information on the forthcoming JOCOMMEX serials can be obtained from **WO1 Angus Cameron** on (9360) 32462.

TRANS 333 RACE – *by Lt DN Higgins*

In mid-November I met with 62 other nervous competitors in the car park of Cairo Airport. At that moment the scale of the adventure on which I was about to embark was hidden from me, but after the 5-hr drive out to the Western Desert, the adventure began to unfold…

The Trans 333 is a little known extreme race. An ultra-race is any running race that is longer than the normal Marathon distance of 26.2 miles. At 333km, or 208 miles, the Trans 333 is one of the longest around. What makes it extreme is that unlike most other ultra-races, competitors must carry their own equipt, including sleeping bag, first aid kit, food, water and GPS, with limited facilities for re-supply along the route. Finally, most other extreme races, such as the famous Marathon des Sables, are stage races, where competitors rest for up to 10 hrs overnight. The Trans 333 is a non-stop race; once the clock starts, it doesn't stop until one crosses the finish line up to 4fi days later.

As the klaxon sounded to start the race at an arbitrary point in the desert found by GPS, the elite runners sped off. I was not tempted to join them, but was happy to drop back into last place, knowing that towards the end of the race, I would be able to catch people up as they grew tired.

The race itself was undoubtedly the hardest thing that I have ever done. It tested me physically, mentally, and emotionally in ways that I never imagined possible. And I find it hard to describe in words exactly how difficult it was during the low points, but equally the feelings of elation during the high points. During the low points, the race was relentless; I would run for hours without stopping, across harsh, windswept desert plains, without seeing another person. In the day, I was burned by the 40° C heat, thirsty, with aching limbs. By night, temperatures would drop to just above freezing, the wind would rise, and I would be frozen, reduced to wrapping my sleeping bag around myself and wearing socks on my hands just to keep warm as I ran. The only islands in this vast sea of sand and nothing, were the 14 CPs, which I arrived at approximately every 6 hrs. Here I would have brief respite, some food and maybe 20 mins sleep before I was up and away again.

After almost four days of running and walking, the end was slowly approaching. By this stage, after nothing but a few 20-min naps since the first night, I was hallucinating wildly and experiencing severe paranoia and voices in my head. It started with me thinking that the devil was chasing me, which was not helped by the cloven-hoofed footprints I thought I could see! I also had faces in the rock talking to me, giant spiders on the ground that disappeared when I tried to touch them, and butterflies fluttering around me, which I started talking to.

The feelings of happiness and joy as I climbed the final sand dune to the finish cannot be matched anywhere or bought for any sum of money. I could not believe that the most intense, most arduous experience of my life was over. I crossed the finish line into the camp, and after a meal fell asleep face down in the sand, backpack and hat still on. When I awoke I found that I was unable to walk for 2 days!

A sunburnt, yet elated, David Higgins crosses the finish line of the Trans 333 race as the First UK Male

Sixty-two people started, 20 people dropped out along the way. I came 23rd in a total time of 100 hrs and was first UK male. My total distance ran was 360km or 230 miles – 333km as the crow flies, hence the name Trans 333. The oldest person to complete the race was 70 yrs old, and I was the youngest at 24. Two people went missing - one was picked up wandering the desert after 3 days, another ran 100 miles in the wrong direction, hitchhiked back and still finished the race before me! Would I recommend it? If someone had asked me during the race I would have sworn at them, but now it's over? I would say wholeheartedly… Do it!

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AG Hill**
RSM	**WO1 MJR Wakeling**

RHQ welcomes the new RSM, **WO1 Matthew Wakeling**, for his third tour with the Regt, (where according to legend he was originally born). He completes the change over of the RHQ personalities and with the New Year approaching, we are ready for whatever NATO throws at us for the NRF 6 standby period.

SSAFA CHARITY AUCTION

In focus this issue, is the SSAFA charity auction run by **Sgt Alan Donaldson** and **Sgt Kenny Burns**. It has become a familiar spectacle in the Regtl Sportsman's Bar over the previous years. Attended by the Chairman of SSAFA, **V Admi (Retd) Sir Barry Wilson**, the auction catalogue attracted a huge amount of interest, boasting a large variety of sporting objects, with a healthy commercial price tag on most items. Football memorabilia signed by amongst others **Pele** and **Bobby Charlton** were complemented by the many articles from the world of boxing signed by the likes of **Mohammed Ali,** dating back over 30 years.

These historic collectables were generously donated by well-known sporting personalities for the benefit of this worthy charity, and the bidding on the night took the amount taken to a staggering £16,000. A good chunk of this was donated by **Cpl Dawn Bailey** and **LCpl Sam Wallace**, who clubbed together to pay for the star attraction. Holding their nerve until the hammer went down on a very competitive bidding contest, they were rewarded by picking up tickets to the semi finals of *The X Factor*, complete with limo, tea at the Ritz and a night in a flash Mayfair hotel. For those out-bidded, they went home empty handed, but not with an empty stomach; the delicious hog roast saw to that.

The evening was a cracking success, and a credit to all the organisers, particularly **Sgt Alan Donaldson** and his wife **Denise**, who do so much for SSAFA. We await the photos from Nepal later next year.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

LAD

OC	**Capt SG Green**
ASM	**WO1 A Wright**

LEADERSHIP TRAINING DAY - *by SSgt Padley*

16 thrusting junior ranks took part in the recent Leadership trg day, the aim of which was to give all those involved an insight into what is expected of a leader, covering both aspects of our roles as soldiers and as tradesmen. The day consisted of essay writing, problem solving, group discussions and student lectures, the latter giving the students a chance to blind the DS with their knowledge of absolutely anything. **Sig Gaz Armstrong** gave an excellent lecture on the 3-pin plug, but when he asked which colour the live cable was it was a little scary when 15 soldiers sat there looking blank and slightly nervous!

CRAFTSMAN CUP FOOTBALL - *by SSgt McNulty*

The LAD team were drawn against the JCBRN Honington in the Craftsman Cup Competition. With a very inexperienced team, we set off dreaming of glory, travelling the night before to enable us fully to prepare for the game.

The first 15 minutes saw us all over the opposition like a rash, but our best laid plans went out of the window, when our goalkeeper **Cfn Mike Price** dropped the ball into his own net, to give them the lead. The cracks started to appear, and soon we were picking the ball out of our net again. The rest of the first half saw the LAD play far below our usual standard, leaving us 4-0 down. After some strong but deserved words from the team captain **WO1 (ASM) Tony Wright**, we started the second half pushing everyone forward to try to claw back the goals. **Cfn James Barclay** deserves a mention for his unusual shooting ability, as does **Sgt Steve Clark** for his ability to claim a penalty after been knocked over by one of his own team. Sadly, we toiled in vain; we were caught twice on the break, and the opposition punished us both times. At the final whistle, the 6-0 score line flattered the opposition, but a big thank you must go to all those who travelled and took part, in particular the team manager, **Cpl Gaz Welch**.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM VISIT - *by LCpl Ward*

In November, the LAD managed a visit to the IWM in London, primarily as a team-building ex. After conquering the traffic, we were warmly welcomed by the Museum staff, and all personnel experienced the magnificent displays of vehicles, weapons and an expanse of other memorabilia. The Holocaust exhibition was particularly moving and thought provoking. All personnel from the LAD had an excellent time and enjoyed a well-deserved break from the rigours of the normal routine. Our thanks go out to **SSgt McNulty** and **Cpl Bill Booth**, who organised the trip and made it a successful day.

The LAD's big guns

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Smith**
SSM	**WO2 Chay Hook**

EXERCISE ALLIED WARRIOR

EX ALLIED WARRIOR represents the culmination of all our work in preparing the Regt to take over as the NATO Land Component HQ on NRF 6 in the first half of next year. Final accreditation was tested on this CPX, focusing on the staff procedures for the planning and conduct of a Crisis Response Operation. Of course, the use of the words 'staff' and 'planning' in the same sentence immediately sent alarm bells ringing throughout the Sqn.

The moving of the Div HQ over such a distance was new to the Sqn, and brought up many new and interesting problems that

have tested the Ops Team to its limits. The ever-shifting ISO container collection date, and the numbers of personnel deploying to support the HQ has given the Foreman, **WO2 Tony Nicholls** and the Yeoman, **WO2 Laura Midwinter**; plenty of long working hours and sleepless nights (as usual).

We were also led to believe that one of the benefits of the ex would be its loc, Montijio Airbase, in Portugal. Plenty of sun, sea and sand - or so we thought. But to say the least, the loc was plain and the weather dreadful. Just as well that we reserved ample container space to move our TVs, DVDs and video games to entertain the troops. **LCpl Matty Jackson's** attempts to spread the rumour that the **Spice Girls** were reforming just to entertain the Sqn was crushed when he went too far by stating that he was definitely in with the 'ginger one'. Had he said the 'blonde' one' from *Robson and Jerome* then he would probably have got away with it! In the end, however, a splendid R and R package set up by the SSM saved the day. Cultural visits to Lisbon and trips to the local wine and port making industries, combined with **Lt Manley's** mountain biking and trekking extravaganza, made it all worthwhile!

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj LJ Hawkes**
SSM	**WO2 A Watkins**

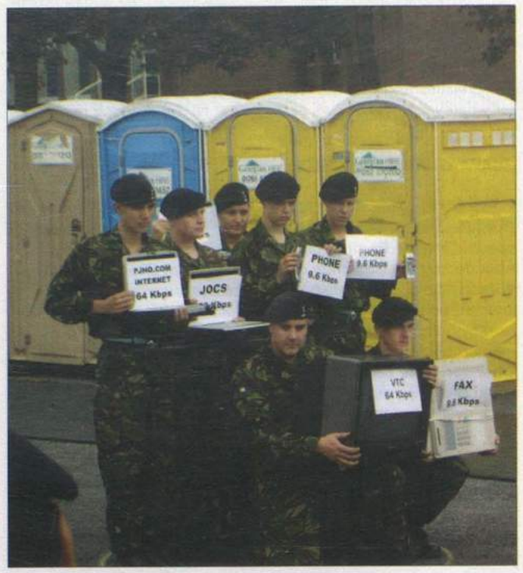
STAFF COLLEGE DEMONSTRATION

This year's Staff College Demo was held in Bulford. The weeklong event saw members of various arms and services from around the world arrive for a brief look at the capabilities that Royal Signals can offer. Amongst the various stands were assets from PTARMIGAN, BOWMAN, CORMORANT, TALON and PSC 501. There was also a chance to see squaddie humour first hand with a skit presented by **LCpls Pete Allen**, **Darryn Norton**, **Hillary Crossman** and **Sig Tom Harrison**. These individuals were hand picked by the CO for their combined amateur dramatics skills, which went down a treat!

Messrs Allan, Norton, and Crossman act up for the Staff

The recipe for the Staff College Demo is simple. 4,023 cups of tea, 5,292 sticky cakes, 200 square metres of tented floor space, 600 metres of nice new shiny razor wire, unthinkable amounts of cam net, several antiquated 43 armd vehs. Throw in a sprinkling of visiting Staff Officers, some from Kuwait and others of a civilian variety, and you have all the ingredients you need.

To achieve the desired effect, the Sqn moved the armd Fwd HQ across the road to Picton Bks and onto the beautifully manicured lawns next to the Sgts' Mess. Damage was kept to a minimum by the excellent driving skills of Waterloo Tp drivers! Brand new (albeit a little blood spattered) razor wire was paid in 'guardsmanesque' straight lines, comms were not necessarily in and working, (or even connected) but there were enough flashing lights - and the pièce de résistance, a huge plasma screen TV, to entertain all but the most technologically-minded visitor.



The actors with props and portaloos

So after all this, what did we perceive the Staff College Demo to be all about? In all seriousness, it is an excellent chance for the Regt to showcase itself and its capabilities in front of the up and coming Staff Officers of the future. The Regt played an integral role in the demo with 206 Sqn providing Div Main, 222 Sqn showing PTARMIGAN assets and 202 Sqn setting up an armd Fwd HQ. 101 Log Bde also provided a Rear Ops Stand, and elements of the Royal Artillery a Deep Ops Stand. Apart from British Staff College, there were groups or individuals from Kuwait, Australia, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, the Far East, to name but a few. It was a good opportunity to show off our knowledge to a variety of people, including the YofS and FofS courses from Blandford.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj RJ Farrimond**
SSM	**WO2 A Minorczyk**

EXERCISE RED DRAGON - *by LCpl Derek Hunter*

Having previously completed my Competent Crew certificate on the Regtl AT camp in September, I decided to follow up my interest in sailing further. This was the Winter Sail Trg Week organised by the JSSTC for Competent Crew and Day Skipper continuation trg. Five soldiers from the Regt attended: **Cpl Dan Mountford**, **LCpl Murray**, **Sig Chappell**, **Sig Saunders** and myself. Our voyage took us to Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight, to Poole and to Southampton. We also had to act as the Committee Boat for the start and finish of the race. After the race was concluded (with **Cpl Dan Mountford's** boat winning), the fleet retired to Admiral's Quay in Southampton Water, to go ashore for a night's relaxation; and each boat had a last get together before returning to Gosport.

EXERCISE LOYAL LEDGER - *by LCpl Colin Martin*

Saturday 15 October; what a lovely day for deployment! At 14.00hrs the dust settled on Ward Bks parade square and there was 222 Sig Sqn ready to roll. The eagerly anticipated EX LOYAL LEDGER, the biggest FTX for 5 yrs, was in preparation for NRF 6 and would last 3 weeks; so thoughtful packing was necessary (i.e. the Playstation). After numerous inspections by the MT, we were off, carefully manoeuvring the Bedfords over **SSM Tony Ward's** tactically placed video camera. On arrival at Rollestone and Westdown Camp, we did the professional thing, setting up comms 2 days earlier than everything else. During the first week we had numerous attempts by strange forces to hinder our comms efforts; mainly RAF helicopters flying ridiculously close to our RR masts, and some weird force causing **Sig Steve Roscoe** to slip and fall into the SW and FC VDU, cracking it in the process. The RAF made up for it later though, as they gave some of us the chance of a ride in a Chinook, the highlight of the ex.

With us as supporting troops, the Sqn didn't move very much, if at all, meaning we had to try and entertain ourselves in any way we could. We managed to produce pumpkins and fancy dress for Halloween, including 'trick or treating'. Some dets got involved in a poetry competition, but the lyrics were not necessarily suitable for publishing here! **Sgt Steve Kelly** also did his bit for Sqn morale by using his head to check an earth-spike was securely in the ground with obvious bloody results!

Sig 'Massive' Harrison acting up again

ROYAL SIGNALS LEADERSHIP COURSE
– by Sig Gaz Wharton

In September I was lucky enough to participate in the Royal Signals Leadership Course at Blandford, which was a very good experience. I had previously been RTU'd from an earlier course because of an injury, and the DS were amazed that anyone would choose to come back for another go. I was not the first in the Tp to attend this course, and I have recommended it to all the people who have not been on it, as it has given me a lot more confidence, both within myself and when in comd of a group. During the course, I did a wide range of activities that tested my mental and physical abilities. By no means was this course easy, but definitely worth the experience. During the course we had the opportunity to work with the Police, Fire Brigade and the Navy. Apart from these activities, I can't give too much away, but I was tested in many different ways and all over the country. I even found myself in Blackpool, but that's another story! If you would like to know any more, you will have to find out for yourself.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

With the two Sqn Groups based around 232 and 229 Sqns now safely returned from ops in Iraq and Bosnia taking some well-deserved POTL, the Regt continues to train hard for future ops during 2006. As always, the emphasis of our approach remains with the individual soldier, the undoubted strength of this Unit. And, as always, the men and women of 7 Sig Regt have responded magnificently, pushing and testing themselves to the limits, be it during trg, on ex, or through AT and sport. Consequently, I can say with absolute conviction (and not a little pride), that whatever challenges 2006 may come our way...bring it on.

EXERCISE LONG LOOK – THE BRIT ABROAD
– by *Lt Nigel Clay*

The aim of EX LONG LOOK is to continue and, on occasion, strengthen the relationship the British Armed Forces have with the Australasian Defence Forces. It is also of tremendous benefit to the individuals selected to enjoy a four-month tour of either Australia or New Zealand.

I was fortunate enough to be selected, and after the flight from hell, landed in Brisbane. I was immediately introduced to the Regtl hierarchy, and then to a number of Australian beers. This would be a sign of things to come, as the Australians have a very healthy attitude to the consumption of the amber nectar.

Lt Nigel Clay on EX LONG LOOK

I was employed as a Tp Comd of a high profile, quickly deployable Tp known as the Rapid Comms Element or RCE. The equipt is similar to our own, as is the Australian doctrine, the soldiers, and the way the ADF generally go about their business. I deployed on two exs. The first was a large-scale Combined Arms ex with the Americans. This gave an interesting insight to the ADF, as I was a foreigner inside the ADF seeing how they work with a foreign nation. The second was a Regtl Battlecamp. This was good fun, and ran along the same lines as a British Army Battlecamp. The main differences were the consideration of heat and the terrain, which often allowed little if any cover.

Immediately after the Battlecamp, I was sent on a working road trip. I visited Units in Townsville, Darwin and Sydney. Townsville and Darwin were interesting, as I was given the opportunity to see another facet of the ADF, the Armour. I also went on safari to see some kangaroos and crocodiles, and continued my experimentation with the Amber Nectar. Sydney was very interesting, as they have a quite unique Sig Sqn supporting the whole ADF, and I took the opportunity to be a tourist for a week. I also visited Canberra and the impressive War Memorial, and Duntroon. After the three-week road trip, we were given two weeks leave for our own exploration. Being a man of culture, I swiftly visited Dreamworld, the Big Brother house, Australia Zoo, the Sunshine Coast and Surfers' Paradise. I also visited my long-lost relatives in Adelaide, and went to watch a game of Australian Rules Football. I jinxed all teams that I have chosen to follow out there. Brisbane Broncos failed in the NRL, Queensland lost the State of Origin, and Brisbane Lions are about as competent at AFL as I am. At least I was out here to watch England win the Ashes, which was almost the highlight of the Trip.

It is difficult to pin point one singular event that I have enjoyed above all others during EX LONG LOOK. I have definitely benefited from the exchange professionally, and I have also made some good friends; it was undoubtedly the experience of a lifetime. The ADF are excellent; it was an absolute pleasure to serve out there and, at the same time, to take the opportunity to see the majority of Australia.

EXERCISE LONG LOOK – THE AUSTRALIAN ABROAD
– by *Lt Samantha Jackson RA Signals*

After a 25-hour flight from Sydney, and an overnight stop at Gateway House at Brize Norton, I finally arrived at 7 Sig Regt, Javelin Bks. During my time with the Regt, I was attached to 231 Sig Sqn. One of the highlights of the four months I spent in Germany was the two-week Battlecamp on Haltern Trg Area, which introduced me to Ops Other Than War, tactics that are not regularly practised in Australia. The other highlight was the Basic Freefall Parachute course at JSPC(L) Sennelager, where I learned how to throw myself out of a perfectly good aeroplane. I also had the chance to take part in Regtl sports, the summer fête, and went deep sea fishing in the North Sea.

Lt Sam Jackson on EX LONG LOOK

Life in the Officers' Mess was a real eye opener. I have many fond memories of the Summer Ball, Cocktail Parties, Dinner Nights, and many impromptu late night sessions at the bar to remember my time here.

Overall, my time on EX LONG LOOK has been a fantastic experience. I have had a wonderful time, made some great friends, and was shown true British hospitality for the duration of my stay. Without a shadow of a doubt, I would fully recommend that anyone who is given the chance to participate in the exchange programme takes it. I would like to thank the Officers Mess, 7 Sig Regt and, in particular, 231 Sig Sqn for this exceptional opportunity, and wish you all the best for the future.

EXERCISE PYRENEAN BACKSTOP – *by Lt Kelly Griffiths*

In rebellion against their deployed counterparts, the intrepid rear party of 232 Sig Sqn packed up their waterproofs and Helly Hansens and headed for the French town of Bagnères-de-Luchon, in the foothills of the Pyrenees. The main aim was to gain their Summer Mountaineering Proficiency, but there were a few other activities thrown in too.

After an emotional drive from Elmpt Station via the Paris Ring Road, the 24 members arrived at a local campsite, from where they would base the activities of the first few days. On the menu was two days rock climbing and a one-day beat-up walk on Mont Né (2,147m). The rock climbing was a great success, and many who had never even climbed before, found themselves scampering expertly over overhangs. **Sig Mark Brymer** overcame his initial fear and reached the top, after **Sig Tom Webster** threatened to tie him off on the rock whilst he went for lunch. Then all were given a day on Mont Né, not only to get used to carrying heavy rucksacks, but also to work out one end of a map from the other.

Leaving Luchon, the next six days were spent on the Spanish side of the border, hiking between mountain refuges across the Aigüestortes National Park. Groups split up to walk in different directions, and although spirits were dampened slightly on the first day by heavy rain, the remainder of the exped was blessed with gloriously sunny weather. Exped members gained plenty of practice in all aspects of the course, particularly navigation and hill walking techniques, as there were plenty of boulder fields to be crossed!

Groups climbed smaller peaks every day, including the Pic Montardo (2,833m) and Pic d'Amitges (2,824m), before all converging for an ascent of Pic d'Aneto (3,404m), the highest peak in the Pyrenees. As the ascent crossed a glacier, this was, for most people, a first try at winter mountaineering. Teams split into smaller numbers and **Didier**, **François** and **Jean-Louis**, three Alpine Guides, joined us. The sky was overcast, and it was actually snowing on the glacier, but conditions were OK to ascend. Still yawning at 07.00hrs, the groups donned head torches and set off. It was a slow and steady climb across a huge boulder field to the col that leads through to the glacier, but all eventually crossed it.

Donning harnesses and helmets, each group trudged slowly and carefully across the glacier in ridiculously poor visibility. The whiteout meant that there were no views, but it may have been a blessing – at least we couldn't see what we had to climb!

Everyone reached the summit after five hours, and took a well-earned rest to take pictures. Then it was crampons and ice axes out for a quick descent back to solid ground. With a break for lunch and a snowball fight (well, soldiers will be soldiers), the day continued with a long descent across more boulders, and the final climb back into the refuge. This then left only a short hike out the following day and a winding drive back to Luchon.

With one remaining day, a choice of paragliding, rock climbing or mountaineering was offered to all. This was a huge success, leaving only **Sig Reid** feeling a little embarrassed after falling off his bike. 19 members of the exped were awarded their Summer Mountaineering Proficiency (the rest were the instructors), and hopefully, all will continue mountaineering in the future.

EXERCISE ARMISTICE JAVELIN – by *LCpl Ardley*

EX ARMISTICE JAVELIN was a two-day QM's Dept Battlefield tour of the Somme and Ypres that took place on 10-11 November 2005. We had gone with the purpose of laying three poppy wreaths on behalf of 7 Sig Regt, RBL and the Royal Antediluvian Order of the Buffalos, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Armistice Day since the end of WW2.

The ex participants deployed in the wee hours of Thursday 10 November after a large early breakfast (courtesy of *JB's Restaurant*), and set course for the Somme. The first port of call was *Tommy's Café*, where we had a light lunch and visited the re-created trenches behind the Café. We further visited Lochnagar Crater (where 60,000 lbs of explosives were detonated under the German trenches by the RE), Thiepval Memorial, Delville Wood, and finally the War Museum in Albert.

Finally there! The Menin Gate, Ypres

The morning of 11 November saw us on our way to the Menin Gate at Ypres, to take part in the Armistice Parade and lay the wreaths. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we ended up running a bit late, and had to stop at a motorway service station to observe the two-minute silence. Oddly enough, as we stood in silence, we received some very strange looks from passers by, as we must have looked like some weird religious cult gathering. However, the words spoken by **Maj (QM) Boyle** gave the unusual occasion a quiet dignity.
We arrived at the Menin Gate as the Parade was finishing, and we laid the wreaths along with the many others from all around the world, taking time to look around at the names engraved on the walls. **LCpl Ardley** spoke to a few of the veterans present and heard many tales of the battles from both wars. Finally, after lunch in Ypres, it was back on the bus and off to Hill 62, where you can walk around the re-dug trenches to get a feel for the conditions that both sides had to fight in during the Great War. **LCpl Ardley**, again, managed to find a visiting British Veteran. He spent a long time talking to **Mr Samuel Dodds** (RE and SAS) who is 107 years of age, and was one of the first men at the Dunkirk evacuation.

All in all, the tour was a great couple of days away from the office, and the chance to lay a wreath at the Menin Gate made a huge impact on all present.

EXERCISE 3 BLOCK WAR – *Sig Dan Brent*

Readers will remember earlier in the year when 7 Sig Regt ran EX YOUNG LEADER where the infamous terrorist **Sheik or'Lik Mar Salarmi** was killed by 231 Sig Sqn, along with some attached others. No sooner had we begun to rest safe in the knowledge we had made the world a safer place, than the **Sheik's** infamous protégé, **Seamus Patrick Uilean Docherty (SPUD)** vowed to avenge his mentor's death.

This was the scenario that led to 231 Sig Sqn's deployment on EX 3 BLOCK WAR. With the evil **SPUD** mounting cross border raids, it was up to us to gather information on his nefarious activities and put a stop to them. The first two days were situation trg, which involved Anti-Ambush drills, First Aid, Mine Awareness, VCPs and Foreign Weapons. On the Foreign Weapons Stand we were lucky to have a subject matter expert, **Sig Frank Martinson**, who had previously trained on AK47s at home in Africa.

The third day was taken up by moving into the FOB to carry out our ops, which included a show of force in order to dominate the ground. During the evening hrs, VCP's were carried out, and int was gathered. Clearance patrols around the area of the FOB lead to **Cpl Wood** and his patrol being abducted by the **SPUD**, before a plucky counter attack by **Cpl Broderick's** patrol saved the day. Thus morale was high as the sun rose on Day 4.

During the morning we received a message that there had been an IED-related RTA on one of the major roads in our immediate vicinity. Sending out a patrol to extract any survivors of the unfortunate incident, was a good experience for **Sig Thomas** and **Sig Cunningham**, as they had to clear a cordon to the veh, and extract the casualties, whilst their comrades gave covering fire, and conducted patrols around the area.

On getting back to the Harbour Area, we received orders from **2Lt O'Neil** who had collated all the int gathered, and had decided to mount a platoon attack on the suspected enemy arms dump. The OC, **Maj Bever** came and gave us an inspirational pep talk, before we moved out to carry out the attack. After a successful attack and recovery back to the relative calm of Javelin Bks, we were able to enjoy a picture show of the week's ups and downs during a short debrief - in the bar.

Sig McCalla prepares to attack during EX 3 BLOCK WAR

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col SJ Vickery**
RSM **WO1 J Reid**

As the pace of life in the Regt picks up with preparations for future ops in Afghanistan and the maint of all our ongoing commitments and high readiness tasks, it has proven harder and harder to fit in the fun things.

This has not stopped us trying; with Safe and Skilled Driving Competitions, Inter-Sqn Basketball Competitions and two live firing packages reported in this issue alone. Just before going to press, the Regtl Cross Country was held around a particularly devious course devised by the collective minds of Scott². **Maj Scott** and **WO2 Scott** (no relation) organised a fantastic event, and here are two photos to prove it.

It's amazing how a 432 can cut the ground up

Total commitment, even when injured

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Williams**
SSM **WO2 T McIntyre**

SAFE AND SKILLED DRIVING COMPETITION - 9 NOV 05

On Wed 9 November 05 a Safe and Skilled Driving Competition was held within the confines of Cawdor Bks in conjunction with the National and Divisional Road Safety Week. The organiser was **Sgt Gaz Welch**, the unit Road Safety SNCO.

The aim of the competition was to promote road safety and driving skills to raise the standard of driving, and allow drivers to carry out their tasks more efficiently and responsibly. A total of 4 teams were entered from the following sub units:

HQ Sqn/LAD	x 2 Team
245 Sig Sqn	x 1 Team
237 Sig Sqn	x 1 Team

The competition comprised a total of 6 stands. Stand 1 was the Reversing Skills located in the MT Compound – not as simple as it sounds. Stand 2 was the most entertaining part of the day – the Skid Car ran by **Cpl Crosby** – lots of squealing tyres and yelps of fear! Safe and skilled driving involved a Driving Test under the evil eye of **LCpl Taylor** – few passed! Theory and Grand Prix involved a Theory Test and the Playstation Challenge – blindfolded! Recovery and Fault Finding speak for themselves. The final test was the Advanced Driving course using a football as the pendulum – drive too fast, lose the ball and lose points.

Football skills – advanced driver training

A badly parked Skid Pan car

Highlights included the CO and RSM attempting the Skid Car Challenge with terrible results – no tread left on them tyres then! The day was an immense success, with the HQ Sqn A team, led by **SSgt Daz Roberts**, winning from 237 Sig Sqn by 1 point. Congratulations to all who took part – perhaps next year one of the field sqns might give HQ Sqn a decent run for their money.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj CN Cooper**
SSM **WO2 I Conlan**

CASTLEMARTIN RANGE WEEKS

As part of the build-up trg for ops, 226 Sig Sqn conducted 2 separate range weeks at Castlemartin Ranges. This was to fulfil the aim of making the Sqn current with the APWT and progressing onto a live firing package. This culminated with fire team fire manoeuvre and top cover shoots.

The Sqn started progressing through the APWT, with most people doing very well and passing first time. However some needed additional tuition and the age-old cries of, 'But I am normally a good shot!' or, 'My rifle isn't zeroed!' could be heard.

Moving onto the individual battle skills course made some people quite nervous, as they had not done it before. But everyone did enjoy it, and there was a definite air of excitement about progressing through pair and fire team fire manoeuvre. The person who probably enjoyed it the most was **Sig Gibson**, who played God operating the targets.

On the final day, everyone received trg and completed a top cover shoot. We all found it a very new experience trying to aim and fire a rifle from a moving Landrover. As part of the safety staff, **SSgt Janvier** was our only casualty, receiving hot empty cases down his top at least twice. All in all, the ranges went extremely well, and everyone found it to be very valuable trg for the future.

KITE SURFING COURSE

To make the best use of the Brawdy weather before it got completely inhospitable, members of 640 Sig Tp spent a week gaining a Kite Surfing Qualification. Kite surfing involves is using a large parachute like kite to drag you through the water while standing on a small board.

The week started with the mandatory safety briefs, including being told that this is a potentially lethal sport - nice! We were taught how to fly the kites properly and, more importantly, safely. Once mastered, we progressed into the water for some body dragging, which is exactly what it sounds. We walked out into the sea flying our kites and then let them drag us through the water like an aquatic superman; it was a lot more fun then it sounds.

The course progressed on to different kites and techniques, with everyone graduating. The week was enjoyed a lot by all; and anyone interesting in trying a new and different sport should contact Castlemartin AT Wing.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Flavell**
SSM **WO2(SSM) L Tobell**

-by LCpl Bates

South West Wales may have its limitations, but being so close to some of the best beaches in the UK during the summer months, is undoubtedly one of the biggest attractions of our Regt's loc. But dreams of early finishes to go surfing, and sports afternoons playing beach volleyball, did not seem to meet our trg directives.

Regtl, Sqn and Div exs, and a spell of AT took priority, and this has brought us towards the end of the year in a sound state, ready to take our place as part of the forthcoming NRF 6 commitment.

EX LOYAL LEDGER provided some valuable equipt ranging and quality testing. Two Rebros were deployed to transmit from all areas of SPTA to allow the sensors at two different locs to intercept and position fix. This process allowed us to map the area for future use, and more importantly, to test the capability and limitations of our equipt. The best part of the ex was the eight till eight working, living in non-tentage accn with hot running water and showers - better than an average EW ex!

The new Sqn Mascot makes another appearance

TANGO TROOP ALL AT SEA – *LCpl Bell and Sig Thomas*

On Wednesday 9 November **LCpl Jo Bell** and **Sig Tommo Thomas** were sent to Portsmouth to spend 8 days on *HMS Mersey*, a fishing protection vessel, to conduct a JOCOMEX back to our Sqn at Brawdy. We were a bit apprehensive because neither of us have sea legs, and we both get seasick - even in the bath.

On the Friday night the ship dropped Anchor just off Falmouth. Because of severe weather warnings, they couldn't launch the boarding boat, and so we stayed there until lunchtime on Sunday, participating in the ship's Remembrance Service in the Officers' Wardroom. The next time we would see land would be on the Thursday night, when we passed the Isles of Scilly.

The JOCOMEX started on Monday morning; we established comms with our Sqn immediately, and with 30 Sig Regt soon after. The equipt on the ship was civilian and was new to us, and the RN comms officer informed us that this was the first time in three years that he'd been on an all-informed Data Net with Army Call Signs.

The opportunity to go and board a trawler arose on the final day. We boarded a French trawler, and after having checked his nets, his freezer hold, log books and permit to fish, we made our way back to the ship, with the driver of the boarding boat trying his best to act like an aqua **Damon Hill**!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SG Scott**
SSM **WO2 K Smith**

It has been a busy time for 245 Sig Sqn in recent weeks, with field firing exs, ECIs, OPTAG trg and inter-Sqn sport. Having recently picked up the SLE tasking, there has been a rush to get

everyone trained and up to speed on new equipt. This was achieved very quickly, with to some quick in-house courses and an expensive (for some) OPTAG in Edinburgh.

The Sqn keeps evolving, and has said farewell to **Cpl Hamilton**, **LCpl Collins**, **LCpl Freeman** and **LCpl Walton**. However we welcome the new arrivals: **Sig Mason**, **Sig Thomas**, **LCpl Eccles**, **LCpl Gingel**, **LCpl Sommerville** and **Cpl Bromhead**. Congratulations go to **Capt Wadia**, **Cpl Lancaster** and **Cpl Smith**, all three of whom have become the proud fathers of baby daughters.

CHARITY EVENTS

During the deployment to Iraq, 245 Sqn managed to raise almost US$4,000 through a variety of charity events. This money was split, with half going to a local Iraqi charity that installs filtration systems to give clean drinking water to schools. The second half, which came to £1007.31, was donated to a local Pembrokeshire charity, Treginnis City Farm. On 19 November members of 245 Sig Sqn who had been involved in fundraising went to meet the staff and kids there. **Lt Haines**, **Cpl Addison**, **LCpl Hoszowskyj**, **LCpl Devey**, **LCpl Baker**, **Sig Grice**, and **Sig Brown** handed over the cheque to the Friends Of Treginnis Association, which provides farm holidays for inner-city children. 'That's not a holiday; that's slave labour!' observed **LCpl Devey** as he watched a small child push a large wheelbarrow through the rain! The kids were clearly having a great time, and to have a group of soldiers turn up with a big cheque added to their day.

INTER-SQUADRON BASKETBALL – *LCpl 'Biscuits' Brown*

With the upcoming and highly contested inter-Sqn Basketball Competition, our team managed to take time from their busy schedule and hit the court for trg sessions. Under the guidance **SSgt (SQMS) Woods** and **SSgt (Supvr R) Berry**, they went through the skills, plays and team tactics. We saw that 226 Sig Sqn would provide our stiffest competition, and as luck would have it they were our first opponents. In a highly-contested first game, we ran out 16-8 winners. From this result, we knew if we kept our wits and heads, we could win the Competition.

HQ Sqn was up next; they came out strong and we were a little rattled. But after a strong team talk at half time, we put in a better second half performance, and won 18-12. Our last game was against our bitter rivals 237 Sig Sqn. We unleashed our secret weapon upon them, a half-court press. We dominated the game, and ran out easy 26-2 winners, to take the Competition. It was a great team effort, with everyone contributing, and with all the training and hard work we put in paying off. It was trophy time, and up stepped **LCpl Brown** to collect the Award. A few photographs later, it was time to celebrate.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Jase Goldsworthy**

EX MAASAI BACKSTOP, Adventure Training in Kenya
– by Lt S Bill

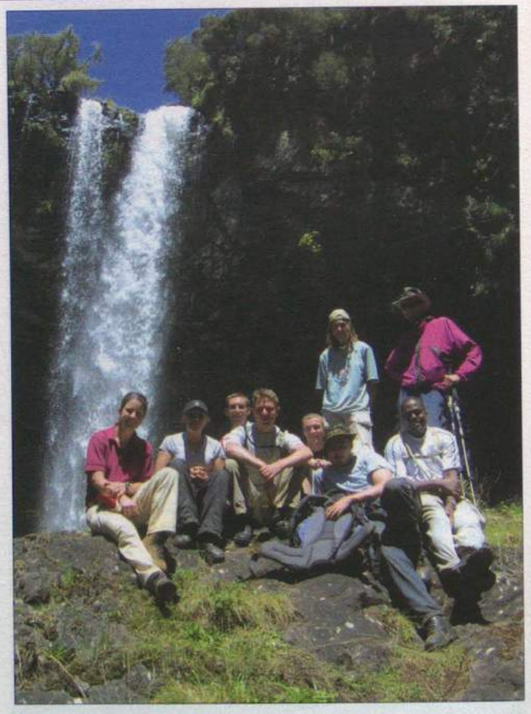
While the Regt is gearing up for ops in Afghanistan next year, an element planned and executed a high-risk trekking exped to Mt Kenya. AT of this sort assists in the trg of our soldiers for ops by developing mental and physical robustness, initiative and leadership. Kenya also proved to enhance our negotiation and bargaining skills as dealing with the locals could be challenging at times. Furthermore, a foreign culture, unfamiliar territory and an extreme climate are common hurdles whether on exped in Kenya or ops in Afghanistan.

Eight members of 16 Sig Regt plus two JSMEL instructors (one RN and one TA) embarked on EX MAASAI BACKSTOP. The aim was to reach the highest trekking peak, Pt Lenana (4985m) on Mt Kenya. On arrivial in Nairobi we used the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) as a base. It is a haven of experience, with personnel who are brimming with local knowledge.

Because we would be ascending to a very high altitude, we conducted acclimatisation trg in Aberdares National Park situated 50 km west of Mt. Kenya. Our Kenyan Wildlife Service guide, **Stephen**, had worked in the park for over a decade and taught us to recognise the various tracks of animals. Before long we were able to identify and differentiate elephant, buffalo, hyena, panther and bush buck prints and dung. We slept in two-man tents and were self sufficient living in the field.

Our acclimatisation treks took us to waterfalls, caves and also included an afternoon of African survival skills in the bush. An African guide taught us to fish with bamboo sticks and bait dug from the marsh. The results of two hours labour were two small trout. However, the RLC chef of the group **LCpl Andy Saunders** cooked them over our fire and they proved really tasty.

The acclimatisation trg paid off as once on Mt Kenya no one suffered from altitude sickness apart from the odd headache.



Acclimatisation training in Aberdares National Park.

The breathlessness was a combination of the lack of oxygen at the higher altitudes and the arduous nature of the ascent. Most tourists on the mountain carried a mere day sack and porters carried the majority of their kit; our exped carried full kit.

There are 3 main trekking routes up the mountain: Sirimon, Naru Moru and Chogoria. We ascended via the Sirimon Route and descended the Chogoria Route. The ascent took us 4fi days, including 2 acclimatisation trekking days. On the final day of ascent, we woke at 02.00hrs and departed from Shipton's Camp at 02.30hrs, having feasted on biscuits and coffee. With head torches on, we organised an order of march, so that no one would become separated from the gp in the darkness. Sunrise was at 06.05hrs and by 06.00hrs all 10 members were standing triumphantly at 4985m on top of Pt Lenana.

The skyline and surrounding peaks were spectacular and the mountain was ours!

R&R was a once in a lifetime experience of safari in the Maasai Mara. We saw it all! A family of hippos bathing in the river outside our lodge, crocs, lions and their cubs, zebras, buffalos, warthogs and much more. A trip to a Maasai Village was a fascinating eye opener. We learnt how the nomadic tribe live and about their culture. Maasai men need at least 7 cows as a dowry for a wife. The tribe's identifying features include body scars caused by burns and expansion of the ear lobes.

The expedition was highly successful, challenging and very enjoyable.

Sig Sarah Smyth on Point Lenana (4985m), Mt Kenya.

EX BROADSWORD

Back on camp, the Regt had been having some unanticipated adventure of its own. The CO, **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**, crashed the Regt out the gate unexpectedly on Sun evening for a 3 day ex, Ex BROADSWORD. Within a few hrs of the crash out being initiated, the Regiment was ready to deploy. The ex included a series of scenarios involving civ pop. 'Protesters' blocked veh convoys; comms sites were confronted by 'locals' needing food and water; while the Regt MO treated 'civilian casualties'. The short notice of EX BROADSWORD created an uncertain environment, which tested the mil and professional skills of individuals and teams at all levels within the Regt. It also highlighted the Regt's resourcefulness, flexibility and ability to respond to a challenge as we look forward to going on ops next year.

24-HOUR CHARITY BIATHLON – *by Sgt Lake*

At 10.00hrs on the 29th Nov 2005, **Maj Wood**, 2I/C of 16 Sig Regt and **Maj (Retd) Tyler**, the SSO, officially marked the start

The 24-hour charity biathlon team

of " EX CASH, SWEAT and TEARS" at Javelin Barracks in Germany. It was a chilly morning, and as **Maj Wood** and **Maj Tyler** headed off to their warm offices, the first pair in the team, led by **Sgt Micky Lake**, set off. Starting with a 3 mile run, followed by a 3 mile cycle ride, 4 pairs rotated through the many grueling loops around the camp in order to raise much needed money for charity.

The chosen charities were: 'The Little Haven Children's Hospice' in Essex; a specialist unit where care is provided for children and their families who are affected by life threatening and life limiting illnesses, and SSAFA Forces Help; a charity that gives financial assistance to local serving pers and families.

Fortunately, volunteers were not in short supply, **LCpl Mike Kervell**, **LCpl Mo Morrison**, **LCpl Rob Passey**, **Sig Lee McClarence**, **Sig Jay Emmanuel**, **Sig Luke Chadwick** and **Sig Rayon Johnson**, became caught up with **Sgt Micky Lake**'s enthusiasm. With **Sgt Tosh Pope** running the admin team professionally, along with **Cpl Andy Poole**, **LCpl Kev Orr** and **Sig George Stansfield**, the admin team supported the team's efforts during the 24-hour biathlon, and also raised 1000 Euros in charity buckets on the day.

During the daylight hrs, everyone was spurred on by donations of money and words of encouragement from those driving by. However, the early hours of Wed 30th Nov were the hardest to get through. It became increasingly difficult to feel enthusiastic with no one to cheer you on.

By the end however, the team had clocked up a whopping total of 336 mile, with each individual covering 42 miles. The team was delighted to raise approximately 5000 Euros amd there is no doubt that the money will be welcomed by both charities.

EX CAMBRIAN PATROL - by Sig Griffiths

After only week's trg and a grueling 40km tab, it was time to head to Brecon for EX CAMBRIAN PATROL. The Cambrian patrol competition involves section size teams from various cap badges moving tactically through a series of checkpoints over a 3-day period. The weather was poor, but this didn't affect our morale. We started with an 8km insertion tab. The day proved testing but we carried out our recce patrols well, and made all our checkpoints on time. It was approaching night and we had just spoken to our last agent. He had given us a grid for a safe house location but there was a catch, it was another 8km. We made it to the safe house and got some much needed sleep, took on some food and water and received our orders for the next day. The next day proved to be the most challenging day of all. It involved a

60m river crossing at night in freezing temperatures and a 27-hour tab straight up some incredible hills. It was at this point that the section's morale started to drop. **Sig Cridland** had a knee injury, **LCpl Rea** was suffering from dehydration, the rest of section had sore feet and shoulders, and I was suffering from cramp in my legs. Despite the injuries, it was the early hours of the last day and we were nearly there. In fact, we could smell the finish. After an interrogation stand, a section attack and the added bonus of 1km ammo box run, **Lt Jim McMillan** could finally call "endex." The job was done, we received our debrief and hurried back to Sennybridge Camp to receive our Bronze medals. Despite the many ups and downs, I would urge young Signallers to give it a go.

LEICESTER TROPHY – Football

The Leicester Trophy is the 16 Sig Regt inter sqn sporting competition. Throughout the year the Sqns of 16 Sig Regt come head to head to battle it out on the sports field for the Trophy. On Friday 28th Oct it was the football competition. All three sqns entered a team. The rules were simple: 2 halves of 30 minutes, at least 2 members had to be over the age of 33 and no more than 4 regtl players per team were allowed on the pitch at any one time. 230 Sig Sqn started the day as clear favourites after their 4-2 victory over second placed 255 in last year's competition and a humiliating 6-2 victory a few weeks previously.

The first match to be played was HQ v 230, which was closely fought with 230 scoring a late goal to clinch the game, 2-1. Next up was 255 v HQ Sqn. Despite missing two regulars owing to ex commitments, 255 still managed to dominate the game with Brazil-like football to win the game 5-1. The only downside to the victory was the injury to **Capt Mark Dennis** of HQ Sqn who suffered a fractured leg.

During the last game of the day, 255 took on their old enemy 230 Sig Sqn. Both teams started the game like a cup final. The game, as expected, was scrappy with tackles flying in from all angles and little quality football being played. Eventually however, 255 were crowned this year's Leicester Trophy football champions when 230 conceded an unlucky "own goal." Better luck next time.

The Sqns battle it out on the football pitch

Cpl Miller and LCpl Yarwood

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Horton BEM**
SSM	**WO2 Gaz Chapman**

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP
– by Capt Nat Baker

Sandwiched neatly between a vast array of Regtl exs, JHC exs, Sport, equipt care days, and the occasional 'normal days' work, 6 October 05 was found to be free. 'Aha,' came the cry from RHQ, 'The perfect opportunity for the final event in the CO's Mil Cup Competition.' From the initial embryo of the CORGI (CO's Really Good Idea) came a day of physically demanding inter-Sqn competition, known officially as the CO's Cup Competition, but known unofficially during the events as a great deal of other titles that are totally unprintable.

An early morning mist welcomed the morning's round robin of events, as Sqn teams moved around a series of tasks, from the physically demanding Casualty

The Log Run Relay

Extraction led by **Sgt Pool**, to the physically demanding Veh Recovery stand. The highlight of the morning (at least, as far as the spectators were concerned) was the QMSI's Surprise stand. **WO2 (QMSI) Steve Collis** and his sadistic team had created a number of individual tasks to make your eyes water. Few members of the Regt will ever forget the sight of 2IC 244 Sig Sqn, **Capt Erin Brooke-Smith's** 5'1" frame hauling in vain against a static Rover screaming, 'Is the brake on?'

The simple idea of a sheet of plastic and a water hose drew the greatest crowds with the teams diving for glory for the longest slide. **SSgt Bell's** self imposed wedgie/thong appeared to work, as he scored the longest dive of the day.

After a short lunch break, the afternoon's head-to-head relay began with each Sqn fielding a ten man team for a Log Run, followed by a Rover Haul, followed by the Assault Course and then…. the same again! The joy of the audience could be felt as they were briefed. Then came the clinch. As it was a relay, some sort of baton was needed - and what better to use than the log!

Performances during the afternoon race varied from excellent to superhuman, although a Regtl ban was placed on spreading snippets of Rover haul news, such as the fact that the CO's team was not the fastest, or that OC 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn travelled most of the course inside the Rover.

REGIMENTAL 'X FACTOR' - *by WO2 (RQMS) Crooks*

As part of the CO's Challenge Day the Unit Welfare Office was asked to run a Regtl *X Factor* style Competition. 9 soldiers volunteered to stand in front of 400 people and aspire to be the next Britney or Robbie. Behind the scenes, the organiser was struggling to find volunteers for the *X Factor* panel (**Simon**, **Louis**, and **Sharon**), but eventually 3 individuals were cajoled/bribed into the role. The evening started with a live band, to show all volunteers what standards they had to reach, followed shortly after with an introduction by **Kate Thornton** (AKA **WO2 Steve Crooks**).

A convincing Kate Thornton

The famous 3 panellists were then let loose on the stage: **WO1(FofS) Martin Flather** as **Louis Walsh**, **SSgt 'Dinga' Bell** as **Simon Cowell** and **Gita Wyman** as **Sharon Osbourne**. All 3 panellists happily agreed to be in costume. The audience had formed a semi circle in front of the stage, just to add to the already nervous competitors.

First on was **LCpl Nicky Earl**, who gave a superb account of herself by singing that unforgettable, famous Titanic song entitled … ermm? All nine competitors performed brilliantly, especially **Sgt Lancaster**, **Cpl Kirsty McEwan** and **Sig Danny Mark.** The panel then chose the best 3 of the 9 contestants, who then had to give another live performance. The final 3 were **Cpl Kirsty McEwan** and **Sigs Danny Mark** and **Danny Unsworth**. All 3 were again fantastic, but the audience chose their favourite, **Sig Danny Mark** AKA **Marti Pellow**. He was presented with a cash prize of £100.00 much to the delight of his fans in 220 Sqn. The evening was a great success and the Regt enjoyed a much-deserved get together after a hard day on the CO's Challenge.

REGIMENTAL GOLF DAY
– by WO2 (RQMS) Angus MacPherson MBE

The Beaufighter Society Autumn Golf Meeting was held at Lansdown Golf Club on Tuesday 11 October. The meeting was open to all ranks, civilian staff and dependants who held a recognised golf handicap(ish). The day was very well supported with some 32 people battling it out to win prizes.

The morning round consisted of a fun 9 holes Texas Scramble, which gave the less experienced golfers some confidence to battle their way around in the afternoon, an 18-hole Stableford.

Throughout the day some good and bad golf was played. There were a few air shots, some excellent chipping and putting, however shot of the day goes to **Capt (TOT) Bob Wymer** who hit a divot so far on the 9th hole it made it past the ladies' tee.

A nice swing down the fairway

The day was overcast, but fortunately the weather held out and the last group just made it round as they played the 18th hole in semi-darkness. Back in the 19th, we all enjoyed a hot meal with a few beers, prior to prize giving. Everyone had a most enjoyable day, and they eagerly await the Turkey Trot on Monday 12 December.

The winners of the Texas Scramble were **WO2 Stallard**, **Sgt Counter**, and **Mr Hutchinson**, with a net 31.3; followed by **Capt Dick**, **Sgt Walsh**, and **Mr Laing**, with a net 32.8.

In Division 1, **Cpl Dacosta** was first, with 39 points (on countback), and **Sig Dye** second with 39 points. In Division 2, **Cpl Painter** was first, with 37 points, followed by **WO2 Connelly** with 36 points. In Division 3, **Mrs Gray** was first, with 38 points, followed by **Cpl Anderton** with 37 points.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Lloyd Golley**
SSM **WO2 Wayne Dunbar**

EXERCISE SHORT SPEAR / RED BEAUFIGHTER 4

- by Sgt Bury and Sig May

EX SHORT SPEAR started with a road move in the early hours of the morning to Bramley Trg Area near Basingstoke, for a 5-day ex supporting the RAF. This was based on op pre-deployment trg. The ex began with the RAF setting up the most important thing, their sleeps, and then hitting the ground running (well maybe a brisk walk), with anti -ambush drills and duties of a sentry. In the meantime, the Tp were hard at work setting up Tac HQ to act as EXCON. As the ex came to an end, the RAF packed up and left, leaving us to tear down and head for the remainder of EX RED BEAUFIGHTER IV which was taking place in the delightful Sennybridge.

EX BEAUFIGHTER IV was the final confirmatory ex in the trg year. The deployment was based around a peace support op. The Regt deployed from Colerne to Caerwent into a staging area on 15 November 05. When we got there, we moved into separate Sqn areas, and conducted comms testing. This was also an opportunity for the newly formed Herrick Tp to have a shake out and practise a dismounted HQ in the bunkers.

On the 17 November, the Regt deployed over to Sennybridge. This is when we moved in as a non aggressive force, showing a presence in the area. But we did have a few dramas with minor aggro situations, and various dets were actually attacked and had to move out. Bravo Tp LSS (Logistics Suppt Site) then moved down to A Ech for mutual support (fresh rations and cookhouse, very nice food as well I might add) as initially we were an isolated det.

The hostile attitude of the locals in the area started to wind down, and we then deployed as a Regt to Keevil Airfield. Whilst here, we went into a regeneration phase, preparing for enduring ops and a prolonged presence in theatre of 4 – 6 months.

This was a very testing time, with the Sqns being given various missions, ranging from force protection, through to establishing a TAC HQ and setting up a camp with all the logistical support to sustain us. Every single asset was deployed from the Regt, including the gym, shop, Internet welfare terminals, and it was amazing what was achieved in 36 hrs. The cookhouse was catering for 350 plus people at one stage. Finally on 24 November, ENDEX was called and we all deployed back to Colerne.

This op was not as simple as it sounds, bearing in mind all the deployed assets we had out on the ground! Overall, this being the culmination of a year's trg and hard work, the CO's Test Ex was viewed a success, and most beneficial to all parties involved. Oh, the anticipation of RB IV 2006 – bring it on!

PHAB VISIT – *by Sig Shearn*

As we had raised money for PHAB, we decided that rather than do the usual cheque presentation, we would like to hand over the cheque in person to those we aimed to help. Therefore a suitable location was chosen... a pub! And off we went.

When the members of PHAB turned up, **Cpl Mac MacGregor** was there to greet them and help them into the bar, where we all started to get to know each other over a few drinks. I started chatting to one of the members of PHAB, who told me that he was planning on doing a parachute jump to raise money for the Charity. For the average person this may be a challenge in itself, but given that he is blind, a parachute jump will be an even more daunting experience.

Before too many shandies were consumed, we decided to start our games of skittles. After a very close first game, we enjoyed sandwiches and cakes provided by PHAB. Then it was time for the final game, which was very close, but in the end 244 Sig Sqn were crowned the winners and presented with a trophy from PHAB.

Lt Bruce Scott then handed over a cheque for £300, which he'd raised for the Charity by doing a sponsored triathlon. As the night ended, we all said our good-byes, and expressed how much we'd enjoyed ourselves. We're all looking forward to meeting up again for a re-match in the New Year.

248 GURKHA SIG SQN

OC **Maj Jason Kennedy**
SSM **WO2 Surendra**

DASHAIN CELEBRATION 2005

Dashain, the most auspicious and glorious festival for Hindus and Nepalese ended 2005 with a grand celebration involving all units in the Brigade of Gurkhas. As part of this, 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn celebrated its Sqn Dashain party on Friday 14 October 05.

The CO, **Lt Col DG Halstead** as chief guest, together with other respected personnel from the Regt were invited. The party started with spiritual joy and high excitement in the Regtl function Hall. The main attraction that day was a Nepalese cultural programme, including a welcome song and folk dances, culminating in Khusi ko Nach.

Despite such a hectic period, thanks to the hard work of Sqn personnel, the party night was, without doubt, a brilliant success. We look forward to have a Dashain 2006 as good as Dashain 2005.

Jai 248 GSS!!!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Gareth Lamb**
SSM **WO2 Wayne Dunbar**

This month the Sqn must say goodbye to **Sgt Lee Palmer** and **Sig 'Horrible' Horan** who are leaving the Army to pursue careers in Civ Div and we say hello to **Sgt John McLoughlin** who joins us from the nerve centre of Blandford.

OPERATION MATURIN

As part of the international aid effort, following the recent earthquake in Pakistan, 3 Chinooks from RAF Odiham were sent to assist in the immediate aftermath. As the VHR Sqn supporting SHF, 220 Sig Sqn were tasked at short notice to supply a Det and crew to provide ground-air comms to the airframes. Four members of the Sqn were on the Hercules to Pakistan within 5 days of volunteering. **Cpl McPherson**, **LCpl Lyon**, **LCpl Thurston** and **Sig Chadwick** were immediately packed off to London to pick up visas, and flew out to Islamabad at the end of October. Since being in Pakistan, the crew has been busy providing comms and have been spotted several times on TV news assisting in distributing aid in the more remote areas of the country. The inevitable cratings will surely follow. The tasking proved an excellent opportunity to exercise VHR in real time and roll a det out the door at very short notice. The crew is due to return at the end of November; there will be more in the next issue...

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) JS McGraw**

REGIMENTAL MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION

- by Sgt Moore

A Military Skills Competition was held on Monday 24th October 2005, as the 3rd event of the Commanding Officer's Challenge Cup. The competition comprised of 8 stands that the teams rotated around, and then a final Physical Challenge. The day started with a full kit check, carried out on the parade square. Unfortunately the rain didn't hold off, and the teams were soaked before they even moved off to the first stand. **SSgt James** was responsible for organising the majority of the day, ensuring that all teams were at the correct location, and ready to start on time. Each stand took 30 minutes and the 8 subjects were: Military Knowledge, Command Tasks, Ranges, First Aid, Field Craft, Map Reading, Recognition and NBC. After all teams had completed 5 stands there was a 30-minute lunch break.

This allowed the teams to ponder and speculate about the pending physical challenge. Once the teams had completed all the stands, they made the way to the 501 Club to begin a warm up. At this point Team A, 250 Sqn, were clear winners of the day's competition, but this was kept a closely guarded secret. The teams then lined up for the start of the physical challenge. After completing an ICFT, the teams were required to: carry 2 jerry cans 100m, do a ditch jump, do an 11 stone drag in pairs run, a 100m sprint, and finish with an Ammo Box lift. The physical challenge was a closely run battle for the second and third places. The final results were 250 Sqn in 1st place, 258 Sqn in 2nd, 256 in 3rd and Sup Sqn in 4th.

Thirsty work!

CAMBRIAN PATROL 2005 - *by Lt Adrian Morris*

The Cambrian Patrol is the premier patrolling event of the British Army. It is held annually in Wales, and is organised by HQ 160(Wales) Bde, on behalf of HQ 5 Div. In the event, a team of 8 (a Patrol Comd: Offr/WO/SNCO, a Patrol 2IC: NCO and six signallers) is tasked with a recce patrol in enemy territory. This is combined with a number of other tasks along the patrol, culminating in offensive action. The route is long, difficult under foot, and over the Black Mountains, all done with 30kg of weight.

250 Gurkha Sig Sqn entered a team for Phase 3 of Cambrian Patrol 2005, representing 30 Sig Regt. The team completed the patrol with all 8 members, and were awarded a bronze medal. During this phase only 5 of the original 12 starters completed the event, and only 2 completed with all 8 members of the patrol.

The team's preparations consisted of 6 weeks trg: in Bks, in Sennybridge and in Catterick. The trg consisted of mil trg, practising recce patrols, and lots of long tabs across unforgiving terrain. On the event itself, the weather was a big factor for which the team could not train, with horizontal rain for most of the first 36 hrs. As well as a recce of an enemy mine, other tasks included crossing a 60m lake, identification of enemy weapons and mines, PW handling, BCDT, a section attack, an ammo re-supply and finally withdrawing through flooded sewers. All on top of the long march.

The small number of teams that finished the event, and the number of infantry teams that dropped out, is proof of its difficulty. As a first effort for 30 Sig Regt, a bronze medal was an excellent result. The team consisted of **Lt Adrian Morris**, **Cpl Phil Williams**, **LCpl Sahabir Gurung**, **Sig Padam Gurung**, **Sig Nimesh Subba**, **Sig Laxman Rai**, **Sig Shankar Gurung** and **Sig Bhesh Gurung**.

EXERCISE FALKLAND FORUM - *by Sig Flann*

Recently 258 Sig Sqn deployed on an ex to the Falkland Islands, as part of their role in JTFHQ. This gruelling ex took place between 26th September and 7th October 2005, in the Mount Pleasant complex. After a physically draining 18 hr flight aboard a Boeing 747, with only a 2 hr stop at the Ascension Islands, we landed at Mount Pleasant. We were lucky enough to receive an escort from two RAF Tornados, on approach to the islands, to make sure the plane landed safely, and without incident.

Once landed, the building of the complex began. Although no tents were taken, all the comms equipt still needed to be set up. Once built, the shift patterns began, with the JOCS personnel, ICC personnel, and techs taking on their respective jobs. When personnel were not working, they were lucky enough to get away on trips such as Sea Lion Island, battlefield tours, and troop movements in a Chinook. Other trips were run; one of which was a guided tour of *HMS Southampton*. **Cpl Luke** had the chance to fly in a Tornado, as part of a money-raising event for charity. The main ex phase went without any major incidents.

As the ex drew to an end, all the equipt was packed up and manifested. Some people were told that they would have to stay a while longer on the island, as the plane had an unfortunate accident when the steps used for getting on and off the plane were driven into the side of it! During that week, it gave us all a chance to work on our fitness, and explore the Islands' natural beauty, before returning on the 18 hr mind numbing flight.

When leaving the Falklands, there was great satisfaction in a job well done, but Foxtrot troop cannot relax yet, because they are preparing to deploy to Norway on a medium scale ex for JTFHQ.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CADRE COURSE

- by 2Lt Sarah Drescher

OC Cadre Course **2Lt Drescher**
CI **Sgt James**

The Cadre Course begins at 06.00hrs on Sun 6th Nov 2005, with a relaxing CFT. It is noted from the beginning that this is a strong course, with no one admitting defeat and dropping back from the

squad. The course continues, and by the end of Day 2, after completing all the entrance tests, the 30 students who started the course have all passed, and sleep deprivation and death by Power Point begins.

EX SHAKEDOWN begins well with morale high. All the students are eager to put into practice all the lessons learnt, but **Sig Ridguard** and **Sig Whyte** find themselves slightly navigationally embarrassed after an encounter with a rampaging herd of pigs, during the night navigation exercise. **2Lts Drescher** and **Whitaker,** with the aid of **Sgt James,** test out their stalking prowess, taking delight in jumping out on unsuspecting students during the aforementioned night nav.

After a weekend back in camp to defrost, it is back out into the cold for the final ex. First things first, and the Course construct a small, yet perfectly formed, harbour area. **Cpl Robertson** is in his element, as Platoon Sergeant, and **Cpl Smith** is living the dream, coordinating the enemy. Pistols drawn at dawn, and the final attack begins. The Cadre Course give the enemy the good news, and they withdraw, leaving just enough time for tea and medals.

Pass off parade and **2Lt Drescher** displays her drill prowess for all the Regiment to admire. Then into the bar for a few celebratory cokes!

A tough day in the office!

EXERCISE SPHINX RIDE *- by Lt Simon Witcher*

EX SPHINX RIDE was a JFHQ campaign study tour to Egypt with the aim of examining the Battle of El Alamein of 1943 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973. Twenty-one personnel attended the ex, including **Capt Marc Bentley** and **Lt Simon Witcher** of **30 Sig Regt**. The group was split down into 4 syndicates, for the purpose of creating presentations on various aspects of each battle, in order to lead the group study.

The itinerary consisted of a day at El Alamein including the Railway Siding, the start-line for Op Lightfoot, the site of the battle for Objective Snipe and finally the Marseille Cairn, marking the crash-site of one of the Desert War's most deadly German fighter aces, Yossi Marseille.

Day 2 was spent in the Suez Canal Zone. First, the group attended a lavish reception, hosted by the Comd of the Egyptian 2nd Field Army, responsible for defence of the Canal. After much feasting, and the presentation of gifts between nations, presentations were given at significant points along the Bar-Lev Line, the Israeli chain of strong-points that were overcome by Egyptian forces, at the start of the Yom Kippur War.

On the final day in Cairo, the group was shown around the Cairo Military Museum, the Cairo Museum, including displays of the spectacular death mask of Tutankhamun, and the mummies of the Pharaohs.

The Staff (and others) in the North African deserts

Last, but certainly not least, we were taken to Giza, on the edge of Cairo, to see the Pyramids and the Sphinx. A spectacular sunset behind the pyramids provided a fitting finale to the ex.

BEDWORTH ARMISTICE DAY PARADE *- by Lt William Mawby*

With 2005 marking the 60th anniversary of the end of WW2, and this Armistice Day being the 60th Armistice Day since the end of that conflict, it was with some trepidation, that we departed from Gamecock Bks for Bedworth ex-servicemen's club to take part in that parade. Drill had been OK throughout the week, but drill is drill, and you always think that you should have done more in preparation, despite not having wanted to at the time. Anyway it had been cold; making 'strike, seize and grasp' all the more uncomfortable.

Preparation time was over, and although not a big parade on the scale that you see on the TV, butterflies were still present. So after the usual flapping as we donned our service dress, 26 members of 30th Sig Regt stepped out into the morning sun, under the command of **Lt Mawby** and **Sgt Pearson**. Even before the parade had started, there were what seemed to be a huge number of people on the route. As we marched through Bedworth, toward the war memorial, it was clear to see that there were about two to three thousand people, all waving and clapping. Once at the war memorial, and after a bit of free styling from **Lt Mawby** and **Sgt Pearson,** the service began quite literally with a bang as a maroon sounded, and we all had to spring to action to get the drill movements out before the 11th hour struck. The General Salute seemed to last an age, but soon rifles were back in the shoulder and we were stood at ease.

Representing the Regiment in laying a wreath was the CO, **Lt Col D B Warne**, who was ably supported by **RSM (WO1) J S McGraw**. In all a thoroughly enjoyable day, because of the enormous pride we all felt during, and after the parade.

Lt Mawby leads the way

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

CO **Lt Col SL Streets MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGrail**

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Walton**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Curless**

TOP SOLDIER AT ATR LICHFIELD *- by Sig Le Roux*

Run by Para and Inf personnel, ATR Lichfield is known to be one of the hardest Regular trg camps in UK. It was the most hectic 2 weeks of my life. We had to learn in 2 weeks what the Regular Army learn in 12 weeks. It sure wasn't a holiday camp.

The days involved getting up at 05.00hrs for kit, looker and room inspection and from there it was nonstop until 20.30hrs. You have to be in bed at 23.00hrs, so the time from 20.30hrs was spent ironing kit, polishing boots and preparing, mentally and physically, for the next day.

There were 30 recruits in total. I was the third oldest at 29, with the ages then dropping to between 24 and 17. We stayed in Bagnald Block, where I was in a room with 8 blokes all genuine, good people, without whose banter, laughter and general camaraderie, I would not have lasted the 2 weeks.

On the PT side, we had 6mile runs (with intervals of sprinting and doing pressups). We had four 4mile TABS with an 18kg Bergen, helmet, weapon and waist pouches up hills and through mud! We had 2hr circuit trg sessions, sprinting round a room, with more pressups and situps. We were not allowed to walk around camp; we had to march. Now I have to check that I'm not marching to the Tube or marching up and down the corridors at work.

The classes were intense; we learned about NBC, trying CS gas in a chamber, so that we could know what it felt like. We did first aid and survival. There were a lot of weapons drills, mostly on how to engage and overcome the enemy.

The hardest thing was going into the field for 3 days. It was cold and wet, and for 3 days we were in wet kit, sleeping and crawling around in the mud. We had to patrol every night, and because a few of my section dropped out, we ended up doing 3 patrols. It was the coldest that I have ever been, but it was good fun. We had loads of lessons on concealment, fire and manoeuvre procedures in case we came under enemy fire. For me, the last day was the best. We engaged in FIBUA, which involved clearing the enemy from designated buildings and the surrounding area. I led my section in a second wave attack, and cleared out the enemy in record time. It was good fun, but at the same time, it was scarily realistic!

We had our PassOut on the afternoon of Saturday, 12 November. It was awesome to see everyone kitted out. There were 5 awards handed out to the best recruits. Best PT went to a guy called **Brown**, a huge lad who always put in 100% effort. Best Drill and Presentation, went to my mate, **Monahan**, exRM TA. Best Shot went to **Miller**, a Scottish lad, the second oldest at 30 yrs. Most Improved Recruit went to **Boyle**, a short Irish lad, full of character. The final award was for the Top Soldier and it went to me! I was so proud; I wish that my mom had been there, but I will have to save that for another time. I received a framed Certificate, a Trophy and a Royal Signals Belt, making me very happy.

On the first day of the course, when we were interviewed by the Tp Comd, I had mentioned that I wanted to go to Sandhurst to do an Officer's Course. After the Awards Ceremony, the CO had chat with me, and if all goes well, this might happen.

During the course, I learned so much about myself my limits and about what I want to with my life. But the most important thing that I learned is that as a team, section or troop, you are only as strong as the weakest person. I would not have completed this 2 weeksjf my section and troop didn't help each other through all the hardships that we faced.

41 (PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj John Kendall**
SSM **W02 Ian Mackay**

PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

As usual, the PLK Remembrance Service was held in Kensington Town Hall on the first Sunday in November. The **Rev Will Gibbs** (Vicar of Kensington) took the short Service in the library, and wreaths were laid by the Dep Lieutenant for Kensington and Chelsea, **Clir Richard WalkerArnott**; the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, **Clir Warwick Lightfoot**; the President of the PLK Association, **Col Keith BruceSmith**, the CO, **Lt Col Sarah Streets** and our OC, **Maj John Kendall**. **Sig Cheryl Glover** read the lesson. After the Service everyone enjoyed a smart lunch in the Mayor's Parlour.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

On Remembrance Day the Sqn split into 3 directions, with members on parade at the Cenotaph, Kensington and Coulsdon. **Sgt Simon May** lead the Sqn's Cenotaph party, which consisted of **LCpl Chris Page**, **Sigs Rajogopal**, **Wise and Sherwin**. The rest of the Sqn was divided almost equally between Kensington and Coulsdon. Fortunately, the cadets were short of an officer at Cousldon, and so decided to join the Sqn's ranks to create a Much larger force than has ever been seen marching out of Cousidon before.

LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

The Sqn also took the lead in this year's Lord Mayor's Show. **2Lt James Cleary** led the Regtl contingent, which consisted of two Landrovers bearing Regtl publicity material, followed by some patrolling soldiers, It must have been tough work, as all the photos show them resting!

RECRUITING DRIVE

As if all this wasn't enough the Sqn has also fully participated in the twoweek recruiting drive the Regt recently undertook. We took a town centre display to Croydon town centre, ran comd tasks at Coulsdon College, and assisted the Regtl recruiting team with their visits to local schools and colleges. Last Tuesday saw 12 potential enquiries visit the TAC to find out more information. Let's hope all this hard work pays off...

LONDON CENOTAPH PARADE

Twentyseven soldiers from 31 Sig Regt had the honour of representing the TA in the presence of the Royal family and Veterans at Whitehall for the National act of Remembrance.

The class that passed off. Cpl Zoë Davies, Capt Andrew French, Lt Sara Barnes, Sig Stacy Harrison, Pte Nerys Pearce and former Cpl Joanne Brown

Getting all these people properly dressed and drilled to be seen in front of millions on TV screens around the world was no mean feat. Finding Greatcoats and getting Royal Signals buttons as well as peak caps and ammo boots is hard for a Regular unit, let alone a TA one.

Thanks to our QM **Capt Harry Kemp**, it eventually came to fruition. Four weekends of rehearsals with former Guards Depot instructor **CSqt Phil Walton** (now SQMS at HQ Sqn) got us knocked into shape, and it was an immensely proud and humbling experience. Many thanks to the SVWO **W01 Matt Cahill** for stepping into the breach at the last moment when **W02 Paul Curless** had to withdraw following a RTA. The SVWO had only just recently become a father; so getting that little extra time away from home was much appreciated.

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj S Walker**
SSM	**W02(SSM) Allen**

EL MUGHAR PASS OFF

A number of officers and soldiers from 94 (BY) Sig Sqn have spent the past year learning to ride at the HAC Light Cavalry stables in Windsor Great Park.

October saw the first of what is hoped to be many PassOffs, where the class showed off there riding skills to friends, family and their inspecting officer for the evening, the CO, **Lt Col Sarah Streets TD**.

With the wind high and the rain battering down, it was not the ideal weather for the event, but at least it was inside! Feeling the tension, both horses and riders had to work hard to complete the 25min event, and despite not everything going quite to plan, all the riders stayed mounted which is a testament to their riding skills, especially **Sig Stacy Harrison**, whose horse Jake got very excited by the whole event.

So with the serious tasks of individual drills in walk, trot and canter, and section work in walk and trot completed, the riders hafted in the centre of the School in front of the audience to receive their Certificates. Their final order given by their instructor, **CofH Kendall** of the Blues and Royals was 'round the world, both to the left, and then to the right!'

Lt Sara Barnes, who has been acting as Tp Comd, and who had organised the evening said 'It was great to be a part of the first Sqn Pass Off, and hopefully, this won't be the last. The next step is riding with swords and lances, and who knows where this could lead us...'

Looking smart and elegant for the Cenotaph Parade

The Tp was named El Mughar after the final horseback cavalry charge of the British Army at the Battle of El Mughar, Gaza on 13 November 1917, during the Great War. At that time the Berkshire Yeomanry were mounted, and during the charge, one officer, **Lt WVR Sutton** was killed and 7 other ranks wounded, along with 12 horses killed and 18 wounded.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Lamb**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Paine**

Recruiting has been the main effort down at Eastbourne for the last couple of months. All the hard work has paid off, with sixteen new recruits having been attested in November alone. The Sqn now stands 92% manned, which is a great achievement. We look forward to the amalgamation with 884 Tp in Brighton within 56 Sig Sqn, in alignment with our new role in supporting the South East of England.

With the new structure of 31 Sig Regt within the UK ops environment, and our close support role for 2 SE (Inf) Bde, all these troops will be surely needed. Indeed, Comd 2 Inf Bde paid the Sqn a visit in late November to see what we can offer him. The traditional tour of the Sqn and a briefing from the CO and OC, with a buffet afterwards seemed to leave him with a good impression. Much work lays ahead for us. We await keenly the final details of our full role, and the equipt we will receive.

We welcome former **SSgt Shane Higgins** to the Sqn. After completing his 22 years of colour service, he arrives in the Sqn to take over the recruit trg cell. His years of experience as a mil skills instructor will be of great use to the Regt and Bde Trg Team.

We also welcome back **LCpl Gareth Hulin** and **Sig Leigh Ashton** from OP TELIC safe and well; and our other Sqn chef, **Pie Steve Jukes** is due back at the end of December. We also welcome all the new recruits to the Sqn and hope their time in the Royal Signals is a long and pleasurable one!

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Keith Williams**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Mark Carrick**

CONGRATULATIONS

Well done to **2Lt David Chalmers** on being awarded the Lee Sword as Best Subaltern in 34 Sig Regt. Also congratulations go to **Cpl Claire Norton** and **LCpl Sonia Draper**, on their well-deserved promotions.

745 TROOP ON EXERCISE LOGISTICS FOCUS

745 Tp deployed from its home in Hull to Watton Airfield via every conceivable route possible, mostly planned diversions, but there were some noticeable 'route recces' courtesy of the Tp Comd, **Lt Ross Anderson**. The SAN supported 27 Tpt Regt RLC for the duration of the 2-week ex. 27 Regt were graceful hosts, with their legendary 03.00hrs egg banjos, appreciated by the Tp's appetite. Mil trg sessions, organised by the RSM, consisted of Public Order trg, PW handling and Convoy Protection drills, which helped to focus us on defending against the terrorists' transport of choice, the red pickup truck. We were soon following the battle south to Bicester.

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SA Smith**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) CA Phillips**

Since the last *Wire*, we have welcomed back **Capt Shane Ferris** and **Sgt Paul Standing** from an OP TELIC tour, just in time for a miserable UK winter. Congratulations to **Capt Ferris** on keeping the extra pip he was given for the tour. Well done to **SSgt Rob Love**, our SPSI, who was part of the Corps team that won the Inter-Corps Waterpolo Championships, bringing back a big trophy for table decoration. We have said goodbye to **Sgt Jez Smith**, who has been dragged from the Sqn to a NATO posting in Naples.

Trade trg is now in full swing here in Darlington, and occupying much of the Sqn with masts and generators. Much credit goes to the Sqn slave driver **SSgt (FofS) Sanderson**, who has kept his mid-week crew hard at work in the garages, and on the squash court. Even the OC, **Maj Simon Smith** has been dragged from his office to play, although only **Sig Andy Clark** has been clever enough to let him win (his promotion is in the post). Not to be outdone, **Sgt Micky Jemmett** ran the Sqn pool championship, and expected an easy victory over the many hopefuls. He reckoned without **LCpl Rob Prothero**, who thrashed everyone, and then asked when the real players were going to turn up. Next year's invite will get lost in the post.

The Darlington Remembrance parade was, as ever, expertly organised by our PSAO, **Capt JJ Wilson**. The numbers of both the marching contingent and spectators surpassed last year. **Capt Ferris** led the parade whilst technically he was on POTL, and only managed to turn the parade the wrong way once. He blamed it on still having sand in his marching boots, and the shock to his wallet after the OC mentioned his promotion to the whole Sqn.

Our final event in 2005 was hosting the Regtl Christmas weekend. After months of recce and planning, all was in place for an unusual and fun weekend to take place in Catterick - until the heating system collapsed 10 days before the event. So Plan B became Christmas in Darlington. Having done all the hard work once, **WO2 (SSM) Carole-Ann Phillips** and **SSgt (FofS) Sanderson** had to start again, rearranging everything. But with sterling assistance from **SSgt (NRPS) Jeff Martin**, **WO2 (RCWO) Neil Berry**, and many more, it all fell into place just in time. A fine time was had by all. 90 Sqn took first and second place in the competitive activities, and there was a huge queue to take turns at trying to knock the CO, **Lt Col Sixsmith** off the podium in the gladiator competition. Even the Inter-Sqn sumo wrestling went to plan, as OC 50 Sqn, **Maj Simon Smith** happily threw OC 49 Sqn, **Maj Keith Williams** and the Regt 2IC, **Maj Chris Jones** onto the mat. Fortunately, **Capt Jenny Bowes**, standing in for OC 90 Sqn, withdrew after leaving OC HQ Sqn,

Maj Steve Wayman, flat on his back, and OC 50 Sqn happily claimed victory. A medieval fancy dress party followed, interrupted only by a fire alarm and power cut, although a highly-skilled Regt was well able to drink in the dark. The next morning OP TELIC 1 medals were awarded to **SSgt Alex Durnall**, **SSgt Darren Leach**, **SSgt Rob Love**, **Sgt Chris Heap**, **Cpl Paul Kenny**, **Cpl Kev Pountain**, and **Cpl Stu Wilson**. Also **Cpl Iggy Paterson** received his Lord Lieutenant's Certificate.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj P Denning**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Hunter**

This year's Annual Camp, EX LOG FOCUS, proved to be a resounding success for 90 Sig Sqn. Access Tp managed to claim the Colonel's reward for catching and successfully interrogating a PW, whose intention, it was initially thought, was to disrupt **Cpl Pountain's** 21st birthday party. During the riot control ex, **Lt Helen Baxter** was seen to take the bull by the horns when she misheard the instruction 'Group 2, move on in' as 'Group 2, get stuck in'. She needed no further invitation, and had to be removed to give everyone else a chance!

No PW was hurt during this ex.
The CO awards SAN 668 with the prize for capturing the first PW

RECRUITING

In the last couple of months 90 Sqn has taken recruiting off the streets and lured potential recruits into the TAC to take part in team-building Days. **Cpl Liddle**, and his band of many, (**Pte Longstaff**, **LCpl Metcalfe**, **Sigs Edwards**, **Fortune** and Lockey to name but a few) have been organising comd tasks for the potential recruits, and giving them a chance to see us in our true light.

We have welcomed back our SPSI, **SSgt Cassidy**, who has rejoined us after his 6-month excursion to Bosnia, and said goodbye to **SSgt Heather Taylor** (nee **Fraser**) who has moved across to the Regtl Trg Office. We also welcome a new officer into the Sqn, **Lt Matt Usher**, who has seemed to fit in very quickly.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

STRETCHING IT A BIT!

Normally at this quiet time of the year, it is usually a struggle to find stories that would whet the appetite - until a brief look at the calendar of events highlighted two dissimilar activities that were taking place over consecutive weekends.

Now this is normally a no-no in TA terms as it is always difficult to run two weekends back to back and engage the support you require to ensure successful and well-attended events. Added to that, the Regt, thankfully, has been experiencing a flood of recruits, so one or two induction weekends had to be added to cope with this.

Now you may say this is stretching it a bit, but when you looked closely at the calendar and the nature of the events, success was almost guaranteed.

The first event was packaged to give those members of the Regt who had not yet qualified for their annual bounty to carry out their remaining ITDs. The other event was a tough mil trg competition designed by 143 Bde G3 staff to provide an opportunity for leadership trg (with a difference) for junior comds, and team-building for all ranks. Were both weekends successful? Please read on to find out...

TRAINING PAIN WITHOUT THE RAIN

The Regt is making great use of the trg resources available at the RTC, Lichfield before it closes next year, and took advantage of these superb facilities during the weekend 21/23 October. EX MIDLAND WARRIOR offered perhaps the last opportunity to complete ITDs and qualify for bounty this trg year. It was exceptionally well attended.

The weather wasn't too bad either, making it an agreeable combination of trg pain without the rain. The first day concentrated on range activities that included an LSW fun shoot headed by **WO2 Craig Kinsey** and **Sgt Robbo Roberts**, and NBC Drills conducted by **WO2 Simon Wright** and his team, followed by Battle Casualty Drills and Recognition skills. The APWT shoot saw some excellent scores, and the majority completed their APWT many with memorable scores, as 89 Sqn's best shot of the year, **Cpl Pete May** will testify. Everyone enjoyed the fun shoot in on the LSW, with **Sig Marcus Thompson** of 48 Sqn in particular having a whale of a time. Sadly we lose **Marcus** (a former Best Recruit and gifted trombonist) to the Regular Army soon, as he has secured a place with the Corps Band.

Finally day two dawned with the highlight of the weekend and everyone's favourite, the CFT, which followed a quick APWT re-shoot for the few that needed it. Never a good time for this one, especially after a hearty breakfast - or was it after the social the

Sig Marcus Thompson having a whale of a time

night before. Once the first mile had been completed, I don't think anyone could really tell the difference, and after completing the final stretch, one or two surveyed the contents of their earlier meal before triumphantly making their way back to home TACs.

For some it all ended here for the remainder of the month, but for others top gear was engaged to prepare for the following week's event at Swynnerton Trg Area, where Regtl teams took on all-comers.

AGAINST ALL ODDS!

EX ASSAGIO CHALLENGE is an annual 143 Bde mil skills challenge competition, that for this year, was combined with EX EXECUTIVE STRETCH a management and team building ex for civilian businesses and organisations in the West Midlands region. This unique event, held at Swynnerton Trg Area during the weekend 28/30 October saw, perhaps for the first time a total of five military and five civilian teams pitched against each other. The military teams were drawn from 35 Sig Regt, The West Midland Regt, RMLY and BUOTC.

Stands were balanced, to ensure no team had a particular advantage, and took into account the wide variety of skills and competence levels. The aims of the challenge were clear; to develop leadership trg and skills for the military teams, while fostering closer links with the civilian business community, and to develop self-confidence, leadership and team work in all participants.

The ten teams had to tackle ten demanding stands. These ranged from fire control exs, comd tasks and combat survival, to coping with the demands of an assault course, recovering vehicles in the harshest conditions, leading to the final bridge building race.

The Regt entered two teams – a Northern team, composed of elements from 58 and 95 Sqns, but led by an officer from the Southern element, **Lt Rachel Stanley**, and a Southern team, composed of elements of 48 and 89 Sqn led by **2Lt Naomi Docherty** from 48 Sqn.

Tensions were high, since the team players had to bond together during the event itself. The first day was tough going, and both our teams were lagging a little behind the front runners, but after some sterling, exhausting and spirited efforts during the combat survival and the assault course, the gap was beginning to close. Even some of our newly qualified recruits were involved, and **Sig John Copson**, who completed his final recruit trg only a month earlier, was dismayed to find that it was beans mixed with a little mackerel he was eating, and not a selection of edible grubs

Meanwhile **LCpl Jethro Towers** still cannot believe his luck in setting light to some bracken while a deflated **Naomi Docherty** got wet in her basha but still managed a huge grin. At the foreign weapon stand **Sig Mel Barber**, **LCpl Phil Wills** and **Sig Emelda Evans** were found grinning from ear to ear they had so

Sorting out a casualty

Isn't this just so enjoyable?

much fun - but that was before they negotiated the assault course, which wiped the smile off their faces.

Day 2 dawned with one final trial, the bridge building. The success of this depended on how many credits you earned the day before, and these credits were also reduced if you received penalty points.

If you had plenty of credits together with ample bridge building skills, then you were given the equipt to build your bridge. We were not confident of success, but against all odds, we snatched victory by a combination of useful credits, a natural aptitude for bridge building, and secured first and second team places. It was nothing short of miraculous, especially with the difficulty of raising two teams.

In first place was the Northern team from 58 and 95 Sqns, but the Southern Team from 89 and 48 Sqns was also ecstatic at their very fine achievement at securing the runner up place – an excellent result for 35 Sig Regt, that we intend to repeat next year.

OTHER NEWS

The Regtl FofS, **WO2 Kev Peters** got an early Christmas present when he came off the recent WO1 Promotion Board and is warmly congratulated by all members of the Regt. He is also busy updating the Regt website which has now taken on a new momentum, just in case he is posted early! With the Christmas season now kicking off, we are now moving into a period of enjoyable parties and quiet reflection. The Regt can reflect and look back with pride and satisfaction on an excellent year. On this note the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, in his message to the Regt, has extended his best wishes to all members and hopes you all have a prosperous, peaceful, happy and fulfilling New Year.

Sig Copson enjoying his grub

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col PN Willmott TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) J Davis**

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Riley**
SSM **WO2(SSM) T Mansell**

HMS HAVOC

What is the TA doing trg on a warship, you might ask. Well, we asked the same question when the trg programme for Annual Camp was produced. *HMS Havoc* is a trg simulator located at *HMS Raleigh*. It is used extensively by the Navy to train all personnel on how to deal with a variety of disasters, ranging from fires to collision or battle damage.

Sgt Lindsey Westwood assists another team member who is under water at this stage and out of camera shot

The Regt was extremely fortunate to be able to participate in a few days trg using this facility. Teams of up to 10 were taken through a theory and safety brief, a dry run and were then thrown into the deep end, to coin a phrase.

LCpl 'Stu' Swinnerton in the foreground wishing he hadn't just received his promotion, but he did well as the team leader

The scenario was that missiles had hit the ship and extensive damage sustained. A number of breaches to the ships hull occurred, and the team had to enter a flooded compartment to repair the damage. This sounds easy, but the ship was rolling from side to side, lights were out and large volumes of water were cascading down the stairs.

This was an ideal opportunity to nominate JNCOs as team leaders, and to assess individuals in an arduous environment. It was an excellent trg aid to promote leadership and team building skills, and was enjoyed by all. Our thanks go to the staff at *HMS Havoc*, who ensured that we received a high standard of instruction and explained that since the simulator had been operational, at least three ships had been saved due to the trg of the ship's company.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj K Metcalf TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R Francis MM**

EXERCISE VIXEN'S PRIDE

This year's annual camp was a mil trg ex on Dartmoor. It was split into 2 weeks, the first week being intensive trg in prep for the ex in week 2. On the last couple of days, the Regt took HELD its Annual Sports Day and an interest day for the individual Sqns. Trg in the first week included various stands such as survival, NBC, mine clearance, various ranges, and a plethora of other activities to keep the troops busy. Highlights were the RM trg – beach landings and the *HMS Havoc* simulator. The ex during the second week was mainly on Dartmoor.

The troops found all the tabbing up and down steep tors arduous work. But most of them managed it admirably, and took to it with grit and determination. With plenty of rounds of ammo expended during the few days, and a shedload during the final attack, everyone got plenty of enjoyment. The Sqn did well during the ex, with everyone putting the previous week's (and the previous year's) trg into action.

But the hard work didn't stop there. There was still a sports day to get through.

Unfortunately we didn't do as well as the previous year. But everyone put in 110%, and must be rewarded for it. Next year we intend to win everything. The last day before returning home was spent on an interest day for the Sqn. We all went to Plymouth for a tour round *HMS Devonport*. Everyone found it educational and interesting, as many had never been on a ship - or indeed, a submarine. After the tour, we all enjoyed a nice meal and a few bevvies in Plymouth.

93 (EAST LANCASHIRE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Capt N Reid**
SSM **WO2(SSM) G Small**

REGIMENTAL SKILL AT ARMS MEETING

The Champion Sqn departed to Sennybridge to defend its title and honour in this years CO's competition. The weekend's event was the Regt SAAM.

Again, fielding the most soldiers (considering we had the furthest to travel), the Sqn was feeling confident. We arrived at Farms 1 and 3 at 02.30hrs and settled down into our accn to await a 06.00hrs reveille.

Typically Sennybridge didn't let us down with its world-renowned weather cycle of rain, rain, and more rain. The Sqn departed to the ranges, and the fun began. After much running around, and converting live rounds into empty cases, it became clear that all the Sqns were taking this very seriously, and the scores were going to be close!

After the ranges, we returned to the farms for a Halloween party, where the Sqn pulled out all the stops and produced some of the best fancy dress costumes across the Regt. The results of the shooting were announced, and honours were spread quite evenly, around the Regt. However, 93 Sqn won the individual pistol shoot, with **LCpl Andy Joynson**, and **Cpl Thommo Thompson** coming second. 93 Sqn came out overall winners of the SAAM, and now surely have one hand on the Trophy, for the second time.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

As with the other Sqns, 96 took part in EX VIXEN'S PRIDE at Okehampton Trg Area. All troops thought the first week had exceeded expectations, and that they were looking forward to the field ex with to test the skills they had learned. For 96 Sig Sqn the drop off point for the start-ex was the beginning of how the rest of the ex would pan out. Section 1 had the pleasure of assaulting a hillside position from the moment of de-bussing with Section 2 providing the covering fire. After the firefight was won, Section 2 moved on to breaching a minefield – much to the interest of civilian ramblers on a quiet day's walk. With both tasks successfully achieved, it was then on to Oke Tor to set up a harbour loc and get in to the standard drills of patrolling and stagging on.

We then moved forward to a holding loc, whilst 2 teams of 4 from Sections 1 and 2 carried out an OP on Ditsworthy Warren House, with the intent to carry out an assault on the building to use as a harbour loc, prior to our final attack. The assault would prove to be interesting, with a slight comms problem at the time of assault, but once everyone realised that the attack was in progress, it all seemed to fall into shape. It was during the stay at the house that **Sgt Stu Adams**, having just assumed the role of CSM, seriously injured his ankle.

This was a chance for **Sgt Olly Neeve** to try his skills as callsign '0' for the ex net. The next objective was to secure Ditsworthy Plantation (a good 4km away across fairly poor terrain with a number of barbed wire fences and babies' heads) with each of the Platoons being given a section of the wood to fight through.

96 Sig Sqn (V) were tasked with hugging the left hand side of the woodland upon receipt of the signal or things going loud. As it happened, we were spotted, and things got loud very quickly. Smokes were thrown into the middle of all the troops trying to cross the barbed wire fence, and bangs and flashes were going off left, right and centre.

The effects were amazing and really got the adrenaline flowing in the troops. The firefight lasted a good while, and you could see the exhaustion and excitement on the faces of the troops when the re-org was called.

This was a sight that definitely pleased **SSgt Mick Robinson**, who had organised the whole thing. A number of long nights had been spent planning this phase of the ex, and without exception, everyone commented on how impressive the last few days had been.

The culmination of the ex was the Regt photo, with everyone cammed up and looking like they'd just spent the last few days living rough. As if people weren't exhausted enough at this point, it was time to grit teeth for the march and shoot competition. Not 96 Sig Sqn's finest hour, but the best was to come during the Regtl Sports Day.

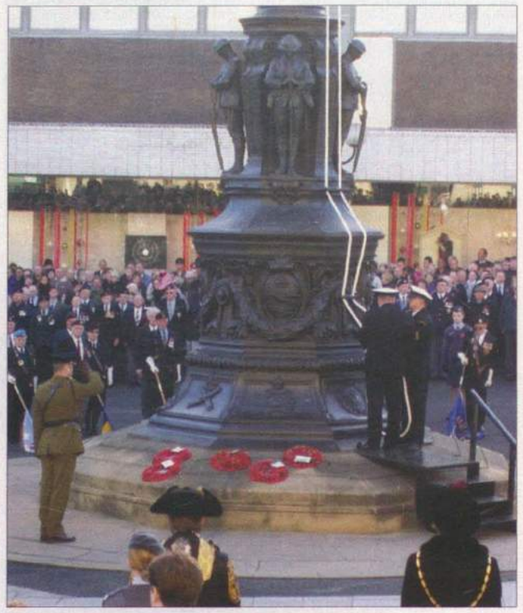
The Sqn's football and softball teams ran out winners in all games played. Good efforts in the basketball and volleyball meant that, going in to the tug-of-war, we were just in pole position. Huge spirit was shown, as a final pull against 67 Sig Sqn (that seemed to last for an eternity) eventually went our way, and 96 Sqn were declared winners of Regtl Sports Day 2005.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col AD Smith MBE TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Simcock**

Firstly, congratulations to **WO2 (RQMS) Haughton** on being selected for promotion to WO1. MCM Div must have been in an unusually good mood, as he is posted to his preferred appointment as RSM 33 Sig Regt.

Although he is not leaving us just yet, we wish him all the very best for the future. Also this month, we welcome our new Regtl Recruiting Retention and Welfare Officer, **Capt David Edmunds**. The CO has wasted no time in giving him his first task – thinking of a snappier title for his job!



The CO lays a wreath at the Cenotaph

REMEMBRANCE DAY

The Regt once again took the lead for the City of Sheffield's Remembrance Day Commemorations. The marching contingent was led by **Lt Hamish Fell**, who did a superb job of keeping the Parade in check and (mostly) in step.

As the Adjt pointed out to **Lt Fell** afterwards, in the great scheme of things, it doesn't really matter whether you step off before or after the band! Following the ceremony at the Cenotaph, the Regt hosted a luncheon on behalf of the Lord Mayor for VIPs and local dignitaries.

As usual, **WO2 Medley** and **WO2 Rooney** pulled out all the stops and the day was a great success befitting the occasion.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Adams**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Hatton**

One of the first things that **Lt Col Adams** was told about on his HO/TO was the possibility of **HRH The Princess Royal** officially reopening the TAC in Horfield, should the refurbishment be complete.

The pressure of the visit assisted the pressure to get the refurbishment complete, and by 28 October, things looked set! Rehearsals complete, 1 November dawned. **Her Royal Highness** started her visit by meeting members of 57 Sig Sqn at the new garages, before moving up to meet members of HQ Sqn.

The visit then moved inside the main building, where **The Princess Royal** presented OP TELIC medals to members of the Regt. There was then a light lunch, where she met and chatted with the recipients and family members. Just before leaving, she officially re-opened the TAC, by unveiling a commemorative plaque.

57 Sig Sqn Medal recipients: Sig Watson, Cpl Airey, LCpl Walker, LCpl Downs, Sgt Jones, LCpl Jarman, Maj Ruthven

5 Sqn Medal Recipients: Sgt Shields, Sgt Goodwin, LCpl Rye, LCpl Godwin

HEADQUARTER (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

OC **Maj RR Loveridge**
SSM **WO2 Simpson**

SWYNNERTON DRIVING CADRE

Part of Annual Camp for 39 Sig Regt this year, was to be a driving cadre to get people through categories B, B+E, C and C+E in preparation was for comms exs throughout the year, and ultimately Annual Camp 2006. It was run during 10-24 September, with a change of students midway, and by combining with 37 Sig Regt, both units were able to pool their instructors, examiners and familiarisation staff for best effect. It also threw together some old faces from previous joint ventures, such as trade camps and skiing exs.

The course began with Landrover and trailer students, and heavy licence students, under civilian instructors, practising the reversing manoeuvres on the square. This was all quite new for some people, but the B+E students can take heart from the fact that their task was probably harder than the large vehicle students, because of the shortness of their trailers. There was plenty of time to perfect these throughout the week, and very soon, everyone was out onto the Staffordshire roads, as the driver or the driven.

At the end of the day, everyone was glad to get back to the cookhouse, surprised at how tiring the days were. In the evening, there was the gym available on camp, or people could go for their two cans in the bar - or even both. Testing began at 09.00hrs on the Tuesday morning, leaving plenty of time for familiarisation on military vehs; and by the time of the course social at the nearby pub on Thursday night, the majority had passed. Of those who hadn't, nearly all were to pass by the end of the week, so the course had been a success.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Ruth Empson**

EXERCISE HAKIN HUSSAR

5 Sqn began their annual camp in full flight, with a heli lift from Castlemartin to their departure point, St Justinian's, on a stunning part of the Welsh Coast. Here they commenced an arduous two-day hike across 30 km of rugged and challenging terrain. It was with visible relief that the Sqn reached the campsite, where they spent Sunday night. The day had taken its toll, and Monday morning saw several pulled muscles and aching bones.

Those who continued on the walk were not disappointed; the view of the sea from the hilltop path was fabulous, and some of the groups were rewarded with the sight of seals frolicking on the rocks far below.

Tuesday dawned bleak and rainy, but the Sqn concentrated on achieving their ITDs. **Cpl Morris**, **Maj Empson**, and **Sgt Milner** coached the groups through First Aid, NBC and APWTs. Despite the uninspiring weather, several members of the Sqn managed to shine and **Maj Empson**, **Lt Orr**, and **Sig Gilmore** demonstrated their admirable skill on the ranges, achieving impressively high APWT scores.

The following day saw the Sqn abandoning C95 to don wetsuits, as they headed once more for the coast. Coasteering was a sport new to most of the Sqn, and all tackled it with characteristic alacrity. The guides issued buoyancy aids, and led the group to its first challenge, a vertical climb into a cave! Much swimming and coastal climbing ensued. Next came what was for some, the most exhilarating moment of coasteering, the opportunity to jump off a 20ft cliff. This was an occupation at which **Sig Machin** proved himself to be a natural and was able to give some advice to the men: 'Just take a big jump and keep your legs shut or you'll be singing soprano!'

The other half of the day was spent land yachting. After some upturned vessels and plenty of sound effects, the Sqn warmed to the sport, and the final race became distinctly competitive. With comments like 'I don't drive that quick' and 'It's quite scary going on one wheel when you've got no seat belt,' it was easy to understand the laughter in the bar that night.

Thursday was strictly business, as the Sqn devoted their time to the Sqn Main Effort: recruiting. Some very imaginative stands depicting an O Gp, a comms mast and section attacks, were set up under the guidance of the Sqn YOs. We now have some excellent photos for recruiting purposes, and we also got the Sqn splashed across the local papers upon our return. The Sqn also found time to visit the QRL, who were conducting a live firing ex. This provided a unique opportunity to watch the cavalry in action, and to see their Scimitars at close range. The day finished with a trip to the swimming pool, with everyone relaxing and looking forward to the final day.

On the last day, three options were on offer: riding, deep-sea fishing, and dinghy sailing. The riding group were treated to canters along the beach, and jumps in the forest on a variety of good-natured Welsh Cobs. Meanwhile the dinghy sailors were being given a run for their money, with **Lts Brumfitt** and **Curtis-Rouse** sailing their vessels at an incredible angle, often with the end of their masts nearly dipping in the sea.

Camp concluded with a Sqn Mess Dinner held at Picton Castle. Our thanks to **Col John Bridgeman DL**, 5 Sig Sqn Hon Col, for making the long journey down to be at the dinner; it was excellent to have you with us. The Hon Col had the pleasure of presenting **Sig Julie Gilmore** her award for the Best Soldier on

Camp. A superb evening was had by all, and it rounded off a very successful and enjoyable week. We thank **Capt Dai Jones**, and **SSgt Don Garner** for organising the ex, and making it all happen so smoothly.

Last, we bid a fond farewell to our SSM, **WO2 Robbie Hall**, who has emigrated to New Zealand; and to our outgoing PSAO, **Capt Bob Sheldon**, who retires at the end of the year. We welcome **Capt Carl Jelfs** and his family to the Sqn. Congratulations to **WO2 Judith Phillips**, **Cpl Lisa Green** and **LCpls Kerry Butt** and **Darren Kidley**, all on promotion.

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

EXERCISE BOLD ALLIANCE

Without most of its officers, the Sqn departed Uxbridge for Sennelager, and on the way, achieved the first aim of EX BOLD ALLIANCE - to become the first Middlesex Yeomanry Sqn to cross the Rhine since 22 Armd Bde Sig Sqn did 1945.

This time it was done with the aid of a coach, the channel tunnel and several motorways, rather than the beaches of Normandy and a hard-fought slog through the Low Countries to Germany. Some 10 hrs after leaving the TAC, we eventually arrived at Sennelager. Meanwhile, the Sqn officers were a long way behind the front line, bravely munching canapés and sipping Pimms at the Regtl Cocktail party in Oxford.

The next day, we rose bright and early to visit Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp. The Sqn was privileged to receive an account of life at the Camp from **Prof Yehuda Blume**, who was detained there in 1944-45. Later, the Sqn, now including its officers (freshly arrived by plane) visited Becklingen War Cemetery, where **Sig Brown** laid a wreath on behalf of the Sqn.

After a hearty breakfast the next morning, it was off to the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT). This multi-million pound device gave everyone a taster of the confines of an Armd veh, as well as how to fly, drive and shoot an Apache, Warrior and Scimitar. After the CATT, there was only one thing for it – to see the real thing. The Sqn duly deployed onto the Sennelager Trg Area, where we watched live-fire Warrior trg. Afterwards there was a chance to chat to the crew and give the Warrior a once over.

The following day we visited the QRH, and were introduced to Challenger 2, Scimitar, Warrior, CRARRV and the 434, as well as an introduction to gunnery practice and 'painting' the target. It was a well thought out and executed programme, and we learned a lot in a short time. In the afternoon we took advantage of the excellent sporting facilities.

The next morning we finally started to spend some quality time with our host Sqn, who had been jiffed for so many duties that week, that we thought we would never get to meet them. Nevertheless, with many of their ex deployment procedures completed and their OPTAG duties coming to a close, we were able to interact with our Regular counterparts, as they went about their daily routine. The Sqn's Ops and EDs worked on the vehs, and the Techs were put through their paces in the Tech Wksp. The last part of the working day was a medal presentation.

Our Sqn Hon Col, **Lt Col (Retd) Don Grocott TD**, as part of his visit to the Sqn, presented the Iraq Medal to **Cpl Daryl Evans** and **SSgt Gary Cheshire** for their services on OP TELIC.

The Sqn used the final day to receive familiarisation trg on BOWMAN and Combat, followed by joining 200 Sig Sqn for some AFV 432 driver and ground comd trg. The last social function of the week was the internationally renowned 'Uxbridge Assizes'. With judges **Sgt Ian Lane** (the hangman) and **SSgt Gary Cheshire** (the executioner) presiding, there were no end of cases to be successfully prosecuted. An entertaining (and late) evening was had by all, as many a lemonade was consumed.

Thanks to our PSI, **SSgt Dave Rimmer** for all his hard work in organising the visit, and to 200 Sig Sqn and especially to **Maj Simon Spiers** and **Capt Katherine Jardine** for their efforts. We now have a much better understanding of what an Armd Bde Sig Sqn is all about, which should stand us in good stead in the event of future mobilisations.

71st (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT

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

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Michael Wood**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Brian Malyon**

ANNUAL CAMP - *by WO2 (SSM) Malyon*

Camp this year started with a mobilisation ex, after which the Sqn travelled up via Beckingham Camp for to Catterick for an extensive three day OBUA package, planned and controlled by **Sgt Slaughter** the PSI Tech at 70 Sqn. From Catterick we moved on to Otterburn ATE, we then moved onto a live fire by day and by night (and rain) along with a CBRN trg package.

The next move involved us heading for Barry Budden Camp, which was to be our home for the next two nights. We had a day off in Edinburgh, with a tour of the castle.

Unfortunately it rained most of the day. We set off south the next day for the start of the UK ops phase, in which the Sqn would be tasked with various types of incidents during its move. Our first loc was back in the Otterburn area, where the soldiers quickly got into a routine and performed well in all the tasks presented to them. The next stage was a move down to Swynnerton, and after the Sqn had established itself, the OC decided that we would have a Sqn dinner. Our chef, **Cpl Christie** produced (in the field) an excellent four-course meal.

Our final move of the ex was to Hullavington Camp for the regimental smoker. The Sqn organised some games, and Karaoke was laid on. And despite the hundreds of miles and numerous activities the soldiers had undertaken, they still enjoyed the evening to the very end.

The next morning the heavens opened up, making maint and checking of kit particularly difficult, but by lunchtime the task was complete and we left Hullavington on the final leg of our journey, with the M4 and M25 on a Friday afternoon to be conquered. Of all the moves, this was the shortest journey, but took the longest time. We arrived early evening back at Chelmsford all safe and sound, to be greeted by an amazing sight.

The girlfriend of **Sig D'Aranjo** was waiting in a wedding dress with champagne to issue a proposal of marriage. To our relief, he accepted, and she left happy. The Sqn then finished the evening with a meal cooked by the SSM's wife **Mrs Lisa Malyon**. This concluded camp for 2005.

FAREWELLS

On the 8 October 2005, the Essex Yeomanry Sgts' Mess held a ladies night to dine out three of its members: **WO1(SVWO) Jim Swain**, SPSI **SSgt Simon Kenny**, and **Sgt Mark Middleton**.

WO1 Jim Swain receives his farewell gift...

...and SSgt Simon Kenny receives his

VISIT TO THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

On 14 October 2005, the Sqn was invited to the Metropolitan Police driving school by **DCI Mark Lewis** to take part in a team building ex. This was organised by **WO2(SSM) Malyon** whose wife is a DC in the Met, and also works with **Mark's** wife. There were four stands to test the team's physical and mental ability. Stand 1 was to manoeuvre one of their large vans (used during riot controls) through a course of bollards in reverse. Then we used a state of the art simulator (or 'stimulator' as **Sig Theabold** said). After lunch came the highlight of the day, the skidpan and the anti-highjack manoeuvres. The skidpan was great fun, but the anti-highjack J turns and Y turns were excellent. The event culminated in a timed course that really got the adrenalin going. The day finished with an address from **DCI Mark Lewis**, and presentations. We are hoping to host a return visit in the near future.

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

DCI Mark Lewis presents the prizes

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC	**Maj Lomax** Int Corps
SSM	**WO2 (Supvr R) C Ashworth**

RUN YOUR AGE - *by SSgt (Supvr R) Steve Roche*

In April 2004, shortly after my 32nd birthday, I decided that it would be interesting to see whether it would be possible to run a mile for every year that I had been alive.

To be honest, it was purely an idea and I didn't really imagine putting the theory to the test. However, after sharing my thoughts with some colleagues, **Cpl Adam Nelson** (34) and **CPOCT Steve 'Jed' Dymond** (38), the idea grew and a charity event began to take shape.

The first step was to identify a suitable route that would keep us away from main roads so as not to cause a hazard to motorists. We decided on the old train track that runs from Scarborough to Robin Hood's Bay.

The distance we measured was 34 miles. I decided to run that, as I didn't want **Adam** to say that he had run further than me - a decision I was to regret at about the 32-mile point! **Jed** would have to complete his additional miles on his own. After several dates had to change because of work commitments, October 9th was decided as the day all three of us were available.

Trg began in earnest during the summer and we soon realised that building yourself up to such a distance is very time consuming. Because of domestic commitments, it was very difficult for us to all train together; so much of the work had to be done alone.

I found this difficult, as I find it easier to get motivated when I have someone else to encourage me! **Adam** proved himself to be the slave driver and the most conscientious: this was evident when the big day arrived.

In what seemed like the blink of an eye, the day arrived, and the conditions were ideally suited for running; overcast and cool with a very slight breeze. **Jed** had set off at 06.00hrs to complete the extra distance, whilst **Adam** and I set off at 08.00hrs, aiming to meet **Jed** at the halfway point.

We set off at a steady pace, and having previously run the London Marathon, I was feeling very confident. We had all

agreed that many charity events are 'do-able' but none of us were sure that our bodies could manage this one.

The halfway point came and went without incident, and we met **Jed** who was looking well and raring to embark on his return leg. It was then that I realised that we would have to ascend out of the bay for about 4 miles. This was where **Adam's** trg regime began to pay off and my lack of trg began to show itself. However all came good in the end. **Adam** and I finished in a time of 5 hrs 45 mins and **Jed** came in slightly after us.

Thanks to the generosity of family, friends and work colleagues, we managed to raise over £740, which was handed over to the Irton Moor Charities in Scarborough. The Charities Committee agreed it would be appropriate to donate the money to something specific, so following contact with the Engineering Department at Scarborough Hospital, it was agreed to buy two Respiration Monitors.

The three of us are very proud to have been able to help such a worthy cause, and felt that it was important for an isolated unit such as the TSSP Scarborough to be able to contribute to the community.

SSgt (Supvr R) Steve Roche hands over the monitors to the Children's Ward, Scarborough Hospital

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj MS Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Forrester**

EXERCISE LOYAL LEDGER – *by LCpl Kelly Godfrey*

In October, the Sqn deployed on to the Bde CP5 ex. This ex was to bring the Bde in line with the standards required for its commitment to NRF in 2006. Bravo Tp was to supply Bde Main HQ, whilst also providing key rear link dets to the BGs. It also became necessary for the Tp to provide long range HF BOWMAN and SATCOM links to distant BGs. Bde Main was based in and around Salisbury Plain, whilst the BGs dispersed into a wide AOR, including the 1 Bn Kings Regt, who conducted ops in Caerwent, South Wales. We ran a number of different comms systems, including TACSAT, which proved to be particularly useful.

Bde MAIN at Rolleston Camp

The HQ remained static for the majority of the ex, but demonstrated effectively that it was capable of moving and re-establishing under sensitive conditions, especially in the rain, wind, and fall of night!

On several occasions, the Sqn worked with RAF, proving its air-portable status. Certain members of the Sqn also got a ride in the supporting Chinook, although some were a little greener for the experience afterwards.

The ex was hard work, and the Sqn was well tested. We performed really well, and got a big pat on the back.

A tight fit. The Bde Comd's Rover in a Chinook

EXERCISE LOYAL LEDGER – *by Sig Fisher*

Alpha Tp deployed to Caerwent to site Bde Fwd HQ. On arrival, several other members of the Tp and I were selected to carry out a recce. En route we were attacked by enemy, who tried to get into our vehs and 'liberate' our equipt. We successfully repelled the attackers with some offensive driving, and continued. This was to be a mere taster of what was to come.

Once safely in loc, **Lt Whillis** organised a guard, whilst the remainder of the Tp broke into work parties to build site defences and establish comms. All duties were swapped around regularly, so that everyone got a chance to do something different from their everyday work.

The HQ position was repeatedly attacked by insurgents, and even chemical attacks were simulated. The requirement to 'stand to' became ever necessary, and the Tp did its utmost to prevent disruption or damage to the loc.

The Tp was required to build several sangars to defend the position, and this was hard work! We had to fill and move about one thousand sandbags, but when complete, the sangars were a good defensive measure, and we would be able to repel the enemy.

The bad weather caused a few problems, and constant rain meant that several vehs became bogged in. Raised walkways had to be fashioned out of sandbags to keep the quagmire at bay.

We were in Caerwent for just eight days, but they had been a challenging eight days. We had all been involved in loads of diverse trg and really had been in the thick of it.

EXERCISE LOYAL LEDGER - REAR LINK DETACHMENT PERSPECTIVE - *by LCpl Royal*

Our job throughout EX LOYAL LEDGER was to establish and maintain comms, using a variety of systems over a very wide AOR. These systems included TACSAT 117F, 506 Manpack SATCOM, PTARMIGAN Loop Extended Access (PELA) over INMARSAT, BOWMAN HF, and if all else failed, the trusty IRIDIUM and mobile phone.

Cpl Thompson and I were attached to the Queen's Royal Lancers. We deployed two days after the Bde Main, so we had a little more time to prepare for the battle. Our first port of call was STANTA Trg Area in the Southeast. From here, we had to establish comms back to SPTA and to Caerwent in South Wales. This went without a hitch. All our equipt was dismounted into a building, which was a first for the BG. We stayed static for a week, and we came under fire from mortars and small arms fire.

The QRL's job in the battle was perimeter security of the AOR, so we didn't move around much on the Plain. During this period, we had enemy recce within 100m of our loc, which meant complete silence for the rest of the ex, no use of generators or running of vehs, which made it quite impossible to carry out our jobs.

The battle finally came to its pinnacle, not at ENDEX, but when one of our own operators, **Cpl Ant Kirkby** was deployed with the recce platoon to carry out some CTRs. This came to a close when the DS informed Bde that the building had burned down with the patrol team still in the building, (at least he got a tan).

All in all, a very good ex to keep the Bde up to speed, before we move to support NRF in 2006.

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUANDRON (215)

OC **Maj SPM Nesmith**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) PA Buckley**

The Sqn has had a very busy time over the last few months deploying elements to Cyprus, Malaysia, Norway and even to Malawi in support of the PI Comds' Battle Course. Mixed in with the prep for BOWMAN conversion, DII installation, tentage trials and support to Royal Signals recruiting, our feet have hardly touched the floor. We look forward in the New Year to the majority of the Sqn undergoing intensive BOWMAN trg and getting our hands on the new kit as it comes off the production line.

Sadly the Sqn has bid farewell to the OC, **Maj** (now Lt Col) **Pete Drew** and 2IC, **Capt Murray MacDonald**, and wish them all the best in their new jobs at Corsham. Farewell and good luck to FSA **SSgt Bill Taylor** and **Cpl 'Lewy' Lewis** who has now left the Army. Congratulations to **Cpl Wendy Shaw** on her promotion to Cpl. Hello to the new OC, **Maj Sharon Nesmith**, 2IC **Capt Mel Crawford**, and the new FSA, **SSgt Stephen Snowdon**.

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt P Hodgkinson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt S Barras**

The past few months have been hectic as ever for Sabre Tp, with a number of postings in and out. First of all we say our good-byes to **Sgt Upcraft**, who has gone to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. **LCpl 'Mav' Britton** is of to 215 Suppt Tp. **LCpl Douglas**

has also left us heading off to 14 Sig Regt (EW). New arrivals include **Capt Pete Hodgkinson**, **SSgt Sid Barrass**, **Cpl Turner**, **LCpls Prest** and **Hughes**. New out of the Factory, we welcome **Sig Ewan**.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt M Webb**
RQMS	**WO2 M Morgan**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Hunt**

TIDWORTH FUN RUNS - *by Sgt Munslow*

The Tidworth 10k and 3k Fun Runs took place on 16 October 05 at the Lucknow Moolton sports pitch in Tidworth. Over three hundred runners from Tidworth/Bulford Garrison and civilian walks of life turned out for the first Tidworth 10k, which ran cross-country through SPTA. The 3k Fun Run also attracted a lot of attention for the youngsters and some of the less athletic among us. There were also several pensioners who gave their everything to get round. Fortune was on our side for the day, the weather was fine for an October day, and the burger van was on standby for a quick Sunday breakfast.

Nothing could have stopped this great event from happening. **WO2 (RQMS) Mark Morgan** and **Sgt Paul Munslow** were the event organisers, and gave up a lot of their own time to make this happen. The whole Sqn from top to bottom, made an effort in the fancy dress stakes. The day went extremely well, raising in excess of £8,000 for the Pembroke Unit at Salisbury District Hospital. This is now to be an annual event, and will no doubt get bigger and better every year with the potential of raising thousands of pounds for the worthwhile charities.

EXERCISE LION SUN - *by Capt P Hodgkinson*

For a change of scenery this year, it was decided that 215 Sig Sqn would deploy to Cyprus in search of some quality trg. On arrival in the country, we were somewhat shocked at the temperatures, 40° C during the day was a common occurrence. With a few days of acclimatisation under our belts, the trg package began. This consisted of practising all of the skills that would be required for the final ex: navigation (which proved to be quite tricky), patrolling, harbours, various attacks and ambushes. With the Pls looking more SF by the day, the final ex was eagerly anticipated.

An intensive 4-day field-firing package had been organised prior to the final ex. This proved to be a fantastic 4 days and the improvement was obvious to all. The highlights of this package included the grenade.

The 2 Pls then set out for the 4-day final ex. Apparently, some baddies had captured Cyprus, so you guessed it, 1 and 2 Pls were sent in to save the day. The start of the ex saw the platoons assault the beach from rigid raiders, before destroying enemy positions left, right and centre.

Fortunately for the enemy, it was too hot to fight through the day, so the attacking forces were held up in harbour areas during the most savagely hot periods, finding any shade possible. Once the heat of the day had passed, the tempo again picked up with the Pls mounting OPs and ambushes.

The third day was particularly exciting, with the sections being picked up by helicopter to set up snap VCPs. No ex in Cyprus would be complete without the obligatory attack on Paramali Village, so early on the last morning, the troops formulated their plan and assaulted the Village in style. Smoke everywhere ensured that the enemy were confused; in fact it looked like the Red Arrows had done a fly by.

Clearing out the baddies from Paramali Village

Battered bruised and full of thorns, the troops then set out for the R and R package. This consisted of a pirate cruise, and a trip to the Pissouri Water Park.

The Sqn was then split in half, with the lucky ones spending 3 days conducting water sports, whilst the others headed up to the Troodos Mountains to do climbing, trekking and mountain biking.

Watch out behind you! The baddies aren't all dead yet!

EXERCISE SUMAN WARRIOR

1 Mech Bde HQ and elements of 215 Sig Sqn deployed to Malaysia for 3 weeks during September to support EX SUMAN WARRIOR, a Five Power Defence Arrangement ex involving contingents from Singapore, UK, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. The ex took place in Kuantan, the home of 4 Malaysian Mech Bde.

After nearly 32 hrs travelling, we arrived at 04.00hrs to be greeted with the same heat and humidity you would find in a mushroom farm. Typically in the monsoon season, we immediately began perspiring and only stopped some 3 weeks later. Our initial task was to establish the entire CPX build located in and surrounding a gymnasium, by simulating Bde level comms down to BGs. **Sgt Matt Ashurst** and **LCpl Bates** soon got stuck into the task, by commandeering a number of Malaysian soldiers as a fatigue party. The CPX consisted of a NEO and Offensive Ops TEWT, followed by an ex over 4 days, covering both areas and utilising a 19m x 12m map.

1 Grenadier Guards deployed as the Admin Support unit and laid on a whole host of background activities, such as jungle trg and cultural visits. The former was most enjoyable until **Sig Rachel Baxter** was offered a piece of barbecued monkey for lunch.

At the end of the ex, a few days R and R were on offer. Half the Sqn spent a few days in the vibrant capital of Kuala Lumpur, sampling its many delights and excellent nightlife.

Some fantastic bargains could be found in China Town, where a genuine Gucci watch can be haggled down to £1.50! **Capt Herring** took the remainder of the Sqn down to Singapore, to partake in a 2-day battlefield tour, concentrating on the fall of Singapore, and culminating in a short Act of Remembrance at Kranji Commonwealth Cemetery. The evenings were whiled away consuming Singapore Slings and other delights in *Raffles Bar*, before returning to UK.

The ex was very much a success and an enjoyable experience for all who participated. Some excellent relations were formed with the other participating contingents, and a broadening of knowledge gained by interaction in the world of CIS. A big thank you must go to 4 Mekanis Bde Sig Sqn for their continued support throughout the ex.

Lighting a fire, jungle style. Ray Meares, eat your heart out!

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC	**Maj J Gunning**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) C Coates**

EXERCISE ALPHA STRIKE - *by LCpl Goring*

On 6 – 8 September 05, Alpha Tp of 216 Sig Sqn deployed on their biannual infantry ex to Friday Woods, Colchester. The ex was organised by **SSgt Henderson** before he departed for 7 Sig Regt. The Tp deployed as an inf platoon of 26 soldiers, commanded by **Lt Jagger**.

The first morning consisted of an insertion tab into the first harbour loc. Once harbour drills had been carried out, we began a non-tac phase of lessons on patrolling, harbour drills, section attacks and formations, taught by **Lt Jagger** and **SSgt Henderson**. These were then put into practice as sections back in the tactical environment. The scenario was that enemy forces in the area were threatening the operation of oil facilities. The three sections, commanded by **Cpl Simmons**, **Cpl Risley** and **LCpl Miller** respectively, conducted patrols to dominate the ground, and to gather int on the enemy in the area of operations.

Following these patrols, there was opportunity for more lessons, this time, on the Orders Process, Mission Statements and Quick Battle Orders. After the teaching phase, the harbour area was compromised by an enemy patrol, forcing Alpha Tp to move loc and set up another harbour area.

From the patrol reports that the sections had produced, Alpha Tp planned a deliberate platoon attack on an enemy position. One of the patrols had recce'd the enemy positions closely. The ex was brought to a close with a well-organised and ferocious platoon attack on the two enemy positions at that loc. The enemy force in the area was provided by Charlie Tp and had a strength of 8 men. This attack concluded a good ex in our local trg area. We are grateful to **SSgt Henderson** for booking the good weather. Overall, we learned a lot about the infantry role, and we had a rewarding time.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC	**Maj JP Hazlewood**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) P Storey**

MY TWENTY-FIRST IN THE FIELD - *by Sig Blair*

16 October 2005 dawned bright and early, and it felt like just another glorious day in the Corps. The Sqn was on EX MERCURY HALBERD 2/3 in Sennelager as a build-up to EX FORGED HALBERD 05. The previous night was the real beginning of my 21st, as we completed a complete teardown and set-up of the Main HQ build in record time. This was all done as tactically as possible, in order to prove we could set up such a huge complex and yet keep the noise discipline. It was extremely tiring trying to erect the biggest cam net ever introduced to Royal Signals.

After this I had the great joy of stagging on the main entrance to the complex. As you can tell, things could only get better, which they did when I was told of a briefing in the cook's tent at 18.30hrs. The only problem with this was I had to help cam

LCpl Brown's rover up five minutes beforehand, which I soon discovered was a diversion from the true activities of the day!

Finally after a call from **SSgt Dunbar**, **LCpl Brown** ran off to the cook's tent, with me in close pursuit. As I walked into the tent, I noticed balloons hanging from the tent toggles, and a hell of a lot of people staring right at me. At this point, I thought it best to beat a hasty retreat, and left quite suddenly. When I re-entered, people began to sing, and my face was so red, the enemy could have spotted me from miles away! I didn't think I could have ever felt that embarrassed in my life again, until I got a kiss on the cheek from OC Sqn, **Maj Hazlewood**. As you can see it was not quite the birthday, I was expecting. Thank you to everyone, especially the chefs for making my amazing cake.

Sig Blair receives her Birthday cake

EXERCISE FORGED HALBERD 05 - *by LCpl Madgewick*

EX FORGED HALBERD 05 was conducted at Alten Grabow trg area, near Berlin. After a tedious 8-hr drive, we were given some well-earned rest in a disused Soviet Propaganda Hall, before the ex began.

The move out to the trg area was confused by the second packet of the convoy arriving first. We were wondering where the first packet had got to, when we discovered that **Capt Wartemberg** had decided to give them a taste of cross-country driving. We then pumped ourselves up for the hard work of setting up the Bde Main HQ. 24 hrs later, all the out dets had deployed, and we were ready to receive the Bde Staff.

A week into the ex, the Rebro still hadn't deployed, and **LCpl Sidorowicz** had resigned himself to the day shift, stagging on the Help Desk. The whole ex was a complete success, and the one thing that kept us going was the awesome food cooked by the head chef, **Sgt Till** and his band of merry men.

EXERCISE TEUTON MERCURY 05 - *by Sig Bowman*

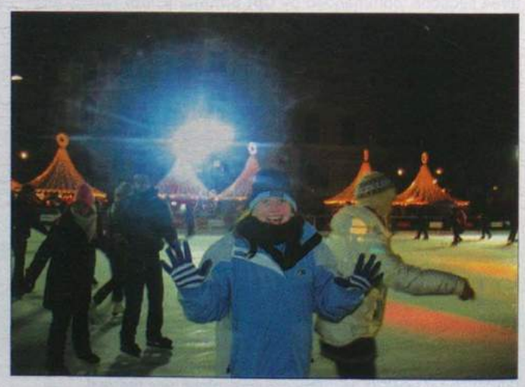
After months of careful planning by **LCpls Hetherington** and **Issitt**, A Tp was ready to embark on EX TEUTON MERCURY 05. The ex was a Tp-level activity, aimed at developing our understanding of the city of Berlin and its immediate history, focussing on WW2 and the Cold War. The morning started with an early breakfast at 06.00hrs to build up our energy for the weekend ahead. It was a brave move by the Tp hierarchy to take 25 soldiers out of their natural environment. We had even noticed the fear in the RSM's eyes before we left.

After a quick settling in period at the accn, we were off to see the Brandenburg Gate. The sight of this monument was awesome enough, without finding out that this was the focal point at the end of WW2 and that so many Russian and German soldiers lost their lives in the final battles of the War. From the Brandenburg Gate, we moved to the Soviet War Memorial. There, many of us were dumbstruck by the sheer enormity of everything around, from the huge statue of a Soviet soldier, to the names of all those brave individuals who fell in the fight for Berlin, many younger than 25. The rest of the afternoon was spent shopping, sightseeing and relaxation. We then adjourned to a fantastic little Irish Bar, where we held an impromptu leaving do for **Sig Price** and our outgoing Tp Comd, **Capt Wartemberg**. An additional selling point was the fact that it was Karaoke night there.

The majestic Brandenburg Gate

Saturday dawned bright and early, for a free walking tour of the great city. Our guide, **Per**, claimed to be from the UK, but his excitable nature and strange American accent gave us doubts. It soon emerged that though he was as mad as a fish, he really knew his history. The tour took in Check Point Charlie, the old Luftwaffe HQ, the Holocaust Memorial, the Museum Island, and others.

After the 4-hr tour, it was off to various parts of the City, for ice-skating, shopping, watching football, and enjoying the local sights. We then decided as a group to enjoy the cultural side of Berlin, by joining a minor pub-crawl, which gave us the opportunity to meet Australians and Americans, and join in the brotherhood of mankind. Everyone behaved impeccably.



LCpl Madgewick is surprised that she is still standing

Sunday's activities included an in-depth return to the Topography of Terror, with displays showing accounts of the Nuremburg trials of all major Nazi officials; and from there we had a quick trip to Checkpoint Charlie, and went through the Museum cataloguing the methods of escape used by East Germans to get into West Berlin. This included one-man submarines, tunnels and even double suitcases. From the Museum, we returned to Gütersloh all safe and sound. It was a fantastic trip, and a fitting end to A Tp as we know it, as half of us will be joining B Tp when it starts on 4 January 2006.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO **Lt Col CJ McIntosh**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) SK Cook**

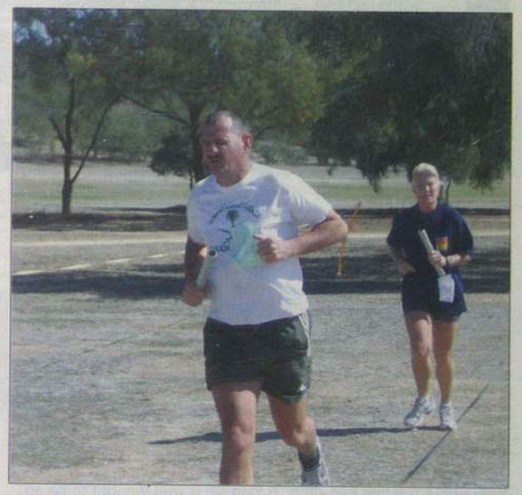
THE DHEKELIA DASH – *by LCpl Steph Armsby*

The annual Cyprus Dhekelia Dash took place on Sat 22 October, drawing teams and crowds from all over the Island. Teams from Ayios Nikolaos were well prepared, and ultimately completed the day with one victory and other respectable results.

The many teams, consisting of 15 members each, ran a total of 15 miles in a relay style, passing the baton over each mile to the next team member.

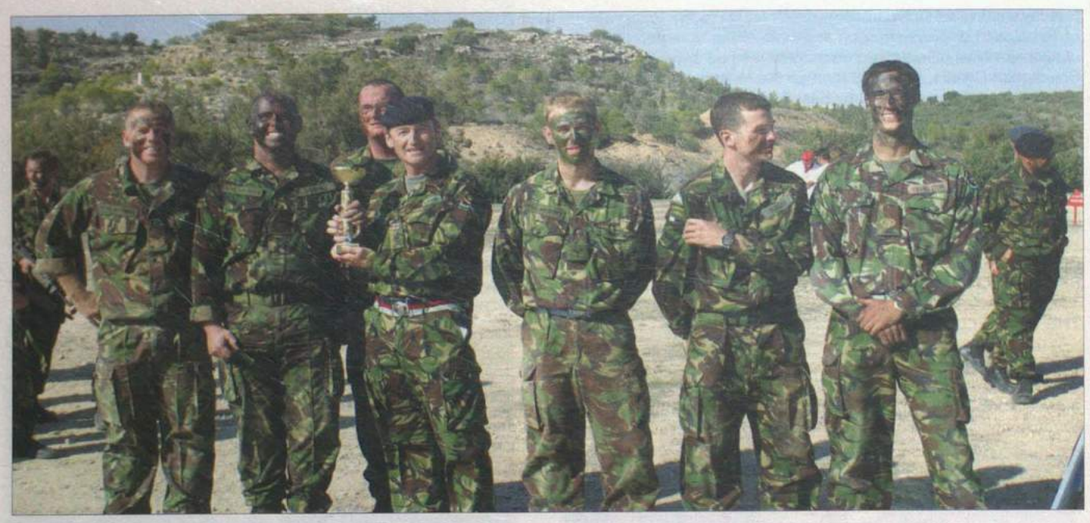
Teams from Ayios Nikolaos worthy of special mention, are the JSSU Girls team who, after an amazing start and initial unbeatable lead, finished in triumph over the other three ladies' teams. Of the fifteen members, the Royal Signals contingent worthy of an extra special mention are **Capt Hannah Frost**, **LCpls Gemma Archer** and **Steph Armsby** and **Sig Clare Pugsley**.

The Veterans race was fiercely contested, with four teams entering. It was questionable if the minimum age of 35 was indeed worthy of the title 'Veteran', but even so the JSSU Veterans team, led by **Maj Terry Crane**, came in a close second to a team of 'racing snakes' by just 20 secs. It didn't matter too much, as the medals didn't say 'Winners' or 'Runners Up', so it'll be a good lie to young grandchildren in our old age! The JSSU Veteran Royal Signals contingent were the CO, **Lt Col CJ McIntosh**, **Majs Terry Crane** and **Chris Hymas**, **Capts Richie Angove**, **Bob Vowles** and **Rich Quinsey**, **WO1 Col Raynor**, **WO2 Gaz Middleton** and **SSgt Ian Dickinson.**



Capt Richie Angove battles on for the JSSU Veterans Team

The JSSU Girls Team, the ultimate victors



Maj Crane presenting the trophy to 2 Sqn B Team, the winners of the USAAM

UNIT SKILL AT ARMS MEETING – *by Sgt Glen Ruscoe*

It all came to a head as the sun was rising on a cold (well, 25° C) November morning on the ESBA. The stage was set for a glorious winner takes all shootout. This was of course the notorious JSSU annual SAAM competition. Four six-person teams entered: HQ, 1 Sqn and an A and B Team from 2 Sqn.

The competition consisted of a number of pistol and rifle shoots over a 3-day period. As the event progressed, it was clear that the title would be hotly contested by the 2 Sqn teams. 2 Sqn A Team had taken an early lead, and managed to hold on throughout the first two days, taking what was thought to be an unbridgeable gap between first and second place, into the final falling plate shoot.

On the toss for shoot order, 2 Sqn A Team knew the only way they could be caught was if they drew 2 Sqn B Team and lost in the first round; and even if this happened, 2 Sqn B would also have to beat the winners of the HQ v 1 Sqn shoot, to go home with the battle honours.

It was a closely fought contest, with 2 Sqn B Team resulting victorious, eventually battling – and winning – the final against HQ Sqn.

Commiserations go to the 2 Sqn A Team, captained by **Sig Gavin Quinlan**; and congratulations go to the 2 Sqn B Team, captained by **WO2(FofS) Martin Frangleton** with **Sgt Glen Ruscoe** and **Sig Russell** joining the ranks for Royal Signals.

START OF THE CYPRUS RUGBY SEASON: THE AYIOS NIKOLAOS 15s – *by Capt(TOT) Bob Vowles*

The curtain-raiser to the Cyprus Rugby season took place on a hot and humid afternoon on the pitches of Ayios Nikolaos, in front of a large and appreciative crowd. Six teams, drawn from all over the island took part in a series of hard-fought and entertaining encounters.

After the initial brief to all the team representatives had taken place, the first of the matches kicked off, and saw the competition hosts, *Ay Nik Stags*, play their old adversaries, *Akrotiri Flamingoes*. Heading up the Ay Nik team were the older generation, **Capts Richie Angove** and **Bob Vowles**, ably helped by the newer generation, **LCpls Merv Wride** and **Ben Willcox**. Following the initial exchanges, consisting mainly of gruelling forward battles, an attacking scrum allowed the Stags to pass the ball out side to score the first try of the new season. The match ended with the Stags running out winners 12-0. The second match featured the reigning champions, *Paphos Tigers* against rivals *Epi Eagles*. In a close game, in which no side took a step back, the Eagles managed to come from behind to win 7-3. It was then the Stags' turn again, this time against *Dhekelia Jugglers*, triumphing in a well-contested contest 14-0. Back in Pool 2, the Eagles were shocked to go behind to a try by *Limassol Crusaders*, but soon rallied to take a commanding lead, eventually winning 59-5. The final pool games saw *Akrotiri Flamingoes* beat *Dhekelia Jugglers* 25-0, and the Tigers convincing winners over the Crusaders 38-0.

The semi-finals saw the Eagles v Flamingoes and Stags v Tigers, with the Plate final contested by the Jugglers v Crusaders.

The second semi-final pitted arguably the best two packs on the day, Tigers v Stags against each other, producing a tension-charged match, and the closest of the day, with the Tigers winning 14-12. The final proved to be a repeat of earlier between *Paphos Tigers* and *Epi Eagles*, with a somewhat different result; the Eagles amended their game plan, avoiding the impressive Tigers' pack and keeping the ball out wide. This paid dividends, with the smooth handling and electric pace of the Eagles pack taking advantage of the tiring Tigers back row, to find space to notch up a number of well worked tries, with the Eagles deservedly winning 29-7.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Terry Crane**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Gaz Middleton**

SQUADRON MANAGEMENT DAY – *by LCpl Gaston*

On 12 October, MT Section organised a Management Day, in the form of a Go-Karting championship. 36 budding Michael Schumachers took place: 6 teams of 6.

The first of the 6 heats started with a 2-lap warm-up, followed by 25 race laps, each kart with a 10-second interval. When all had completed their 25 laps, the first and second places from each of the heats progressed on to the semi-finals. With all the racers discussing what was the 'racing line' and who had beaten whom, it was finally decided not by the human eye, but by the technical wizardry fitted to the cars. With accuracy down to the 100ths of a second, there was no argument. Those who didn't win had the best excuses; like **SSgt Gaz Sinclair**, who claimed there was

'something wrong with his kart' and that 'it wasn't as fast as the others.' A fair point, as he finished up with only 2 wheels left!

At the end of the day there was a trophy presentation, and first place went to **WO2(SSM) Gaz Middleton**, who also managed to clock up the fastest individual lap. Everyone had the best time and talked about it for days afterwards.

1 SQUADRON

OC	**Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) MacDonald**

Things have remained busy for the Sqn in the last few months, with operations remaining a top priority but with many other things going on as well. The activities have ranged from an inter Unit Safe Drive Competition (won by the sqn's **Sgt Gibbs**) to the Unit Coomber Cup Orienteering Competition. Unfortunately, despite a valiant effort from the OC **Sqn Ldr Rayner** coming first out of 100 runners, the Sqn still came last. Coming into the festive season many events are looming, ensuring all will be kept busy in the run up to Christmas.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We say a fond farewell to **LCpl Emma Marklew** and welcome back **LCpl Jim Allen** from a deployment to the Falkland Islands.

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Lt Cdr Neil Bassett**
A/SSM	**SSgt Ian Dickinson**

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to **Kim Dickinson** (oh, and her husband **SSgt Ian 'Dicky' Dickinson)** for the recent arrival of their first-born, **Maisie**. After 12 years of DINKY (Dual Income No Kids Yet), the luxury of three holidays a year, and fast cars, has come to an abrupt halt! **Ian** was quoted as saying he can't wait for the little lady to grow to 36lbs so he can go tabbing with her in his Bergen....

Congratulations also go to **Sig Clare Pugsley**, on her recent selection for promotion.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Congratulations and farewell to **Sgt Jamie Leishman** from the IT Section, who not only has just married **Monica**, but has also been posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW). As a sideline to his main job, **Jamie** provided those much-needed quality photographs for both the Unit and *The WIRE* magazine. Replacing him we welcome **Sgt Jase Clayton** and family from 30 Sig Regt. TM Section welcomes **Cpl Webster,** from the recently disbanded 242 Sig Sqn.

JOINT SERVICES SIGNAL UNIT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Dennis Weir MBE**
PSAWO	**WO1 John Farrell**

ITD Training

After the informality of ITD Training at Chicksands, the Unit was introduced to RAF Digby's Ground Defence Training (GDT) Flight Team. Staffed by Royal Signals and RAF Regt pers, the trg was superb and a sign of things to expect in the future.

An introduction to the local Digby countryside doing the TACFT blew the cobwebs off and gave a quick reminder to a number of the Unit on the importance of keeping their fitness current.

Co-ordinated by **WO2 (QMSI) Chris Oakes**, the squad were tabbed round the course and finished 'strongly'.

After Weapon Handling Training (WHT) and a successful pass at the WHT test, Digby's 25 m range was the venue for Grouping and Zeroing. The prize for Unit 'Marksman' went to **WO1 Pat Hannan**, who ended up with the tightest grouping of the day. Realistic Battlefield Casualty Drill Trg with rain, smoke and bodies everywhere, certainly focussed the Unit and the weekend's trg finished with Recognition trg and testing; a shock to the members of the Senior Service, who were definitely left out of the water – Where were all the ships?

Unit Dinner

The Annual Unit Dinner was held for the first time in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess at RAF Digby. The usual gathering of past and present members of the Unit descended on Lincolnshire for an evening of promotions, awards and the eagerly awaited 'State of the Nation' speech from the OC, **Maj Dennis Weir**. Guests of honour for the evening were **Cdr Andy Jackman RN** and **Lt Col Dave McCreath** Int Corps, both from the Joint Service Signal Organisation (JSSO) HQ, plus an old friend of the Unit, **Mr Graham McGowen.**

Following the OC's address, **Lt Col McCreath** presented a number of promotions:

WO2 (Supvr R) Andy Marshall was promoted to WO1, as was **WO2 Bryce Campbell** and **WO2 Harry Butland**. **Cpl Matt Collins** was promoted from Cpl to Sgt and **WO2 Bob Rhodes** became the first ever WO1 in the RNR CT Trade Group.

Lt Col McCreath presents WO1 (Supvr R) Andy Marshall with his Badge.

In addition to the evening's promotions, a number of medals were also presented: **WO1 Pete Derrick** and **SSgt Jack Horner** were presented with their first clasp to the VRSM and **WO1 Bernie McCormick** was presented with his VRSM.

The highlight of the evening was the annual presentation of The Berry Trophy. This was won by **Maj Graham Barber** for

Lt Col McCreath presents Maj Graham Barber with The Berry Trophy.

outstanding performance prior to and while serving on EX COURAGEOUS BATT in Canada this summer. An excellent evening was had by all, which ended with the CMC, **WO1 John Farrell**, awarding bottles of port to **Maj Jez Bailey** and **Capt Clive Sanders** for misdemeanours at the table – top tip, do not beat the PSAWO at dice the night before a dinner!

Staff Training

The Staff Pool has had an interesting few months coming to grips with the new version of JSP 101, and can now consider themselves Official Defence Writing Spotters. Presentations on the role of JSSW (Digby) brought the Staff up to date with their host's current and future operational role and an introduction to joint working, with a brief on the Joint Service Warrant Officers Course at the Joint Services Command and Staff College. Staff trg ended the year with a look forward to Annual Camp 2006 and a number of presentations on JSSU (AN) and Golf Tp, which set the scene for next year's deployment and has hopefully inspired the Staff Pool to book their 2 weeks for May.

Inter Troop Volleyball

Having just about recovered from the Inter Troop Cricket competition, it was time for the Troops to turn their hands to Volleyball. As always there was much competition between the teams and just so people would not get bored watching the matches, **Capt Chris Lowish**, the Trg Officer, designed a fiendish plan, whereby, if you were not playing, you were running!

In the end Radio Tp came out on top, although the team talk of the day must go to **WO1 Marina Neighbour**, who was heard to say 'OK the plan is this, we play to lose!' She must have been a little worried at one stage when the Staff Pool went 7-6 up over the subsequent winners but her inspirational 'look of death' obviously worked because the Staff Pool did not win another point in the tournament.

Unit Christmas Dinner

Following the success of the previous year's Christmas Function, the Unit converged on the Legionnaires Club in Sleaford for another night of celebration.

Organised by **WO1 (CT) Bob Rhodes** and **CPO (CT) Ian Dudley**, the Unit opened the doors to family and friends. It was particularly nice to see an ex-member of the Unit, **Dave Foley** and the newest recruit to the team **WO2 (Supvr R) Steve Jacklin** on his first weekend with the 'Volunteers', entering into the spirit of the evening.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly – answers on a postcard to JSSU (V)!

OTHER UNITS

THUNDERER SQUADRON

VICTORIA COUNTRY PARK MINIATURE RAILWAY

The members of Southampton University's Thunderer Sqn are training to become Engineering Officers in the Army, Navy, RAF and MOD Civil Service. Aged between 18 and 22yrs, they are being sponsored to obtain an engineering degree. Whilst at University, Thunderer Sqn provides trg to help prepare students for their future careers as Officers in their respective Service. Community service on the Royal Victoria Country Park Miniature Railway was a part of this trg.

The students completed many tasks to enable the railway track to be extended. Such tasks included painting, laying and maintaining track - and lots of digging! Two students provided a disabled carriage specification as a part of a University design project. Other students were able to put their degree to good use by using a theodolite whilst surveying a certain part of the railway.

OCdts Till and Ward laying the stones for the new platform

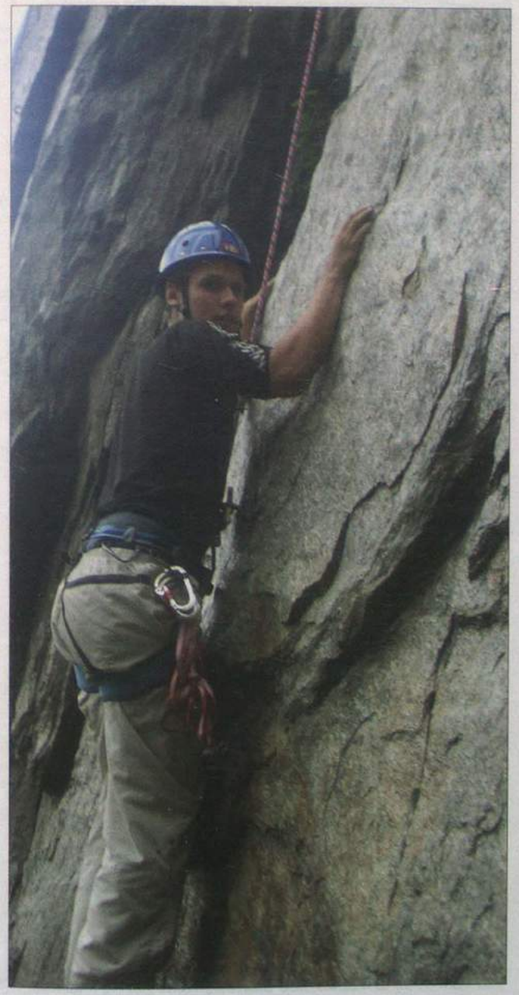
Thanks to their efforts, the track is now a mile longer, and many tedious, time consuming tasks have been completed. As a way to thank the students, the Staff at the Railway organised a barbeque, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

EXERCISE PINNACLE TIGER

EX PINNACLE TIGER was the culmination of months of planning by a group of 6 Army Officer Cadets at Thunderer Sqn with an aspiration to conduct at in the French Alps. The planning phase was a steep learning curve for all involved, as there were a number of unexpected pitfalls that led to tearing out of hair a night before a deadline.

As the exped date approached, thanks to many hours of hard work by the exped leader, all planning came together, and the group left early in the morning to get the first ferry from Dover to Dunkirk. **OCdts Phoenix** and **Vincent** drove the 14-hr trip in shifts through France to Chamonix, staying as far as possible from the manic French drivers.

The first day was a climb on the imaginatively named Aigille L'Index, so called due to its resemblance of an index finger. The multi-pitch climb offered magnificent views of the surrounding mountains, and once at the top we abseiled down. The climb was a fine introduction to rock climbing, as none of us had even been on a climbing wall before!



OCdt Vincent getting to grips with climbing

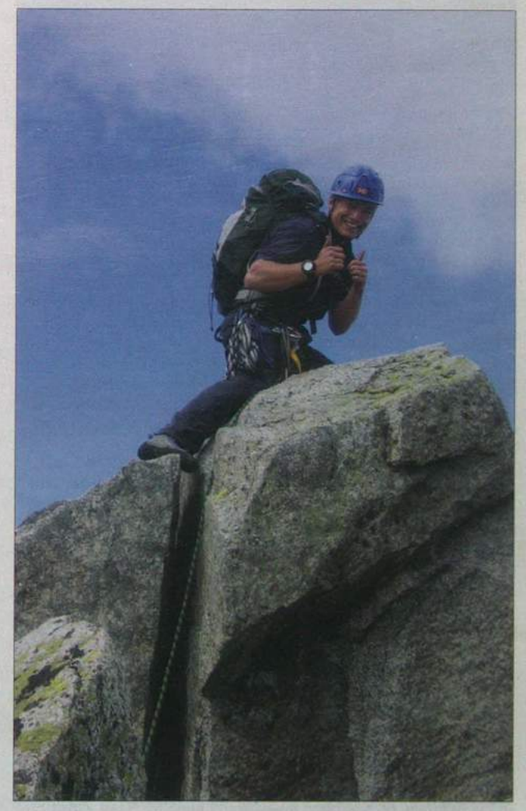
As the exped progressed, everyone soon mastered the basics of rock climbing. By the end, everyone could move quickly, confidently and safety over the rock, finding smaller foot holds, and using move advanced techniques to take advantage of different handholds. Occasionally, when our instructors were not looking, **OCdts Watson** and **Windard** used leg up techniques more suitable to the assault course!

We were particularly lucky with the weather, and despite a few days stuck in the valley due to thunderstorms, the time was used well, exploring the local area by mountain bike. **OCdt Hadley** was particularly cautious on his bike, following an 'accident' he had the previous year at Trails End Camp, Canada.

The final climb was on the Cosmique Arête at 3,844m. The early start to reach the summit before the hot midday sun started to melt the snow, was easily justified by the perfectly clear day, with such good visibility, it was possible to see the earth's curvature on the horizon.

For all involved, the exped was an excellent experience, with everyone achieving RCP and sparking a renewed interest for AT and leadership in the Sqn. The group are already planning a Winter Mountain Proficiency course in Scotland, and a will return next year to summit Mont Blanc.

Special thanks should go to **Col Knoll** at 4 Div for his help in organising the exped, and BIBMTF and Thunderer Sqn for their financial support.



OCdt Lancaster tops out on Cosmique Arête

MCM DIVISION

Div Col **Col SK MacRostie MBE**

ITALY ROAD SHOW AND RCMOS' SEMINAR

As the autumn season starts to take its grip, elements of MCM Div set off for warmer climes. This year it was suggested that the Italy Roadshow could be the ideal venue to host the RCMOs' Seminar. This suggestion was put to the floor and received a unanimous approval. **Col MacRostie** thought this would also be an ideal time to see another side of his staff, particularly the RCMOs. To ensure that the week was well utilised, a battlefield tour to Monte Cassino, a trip to the war cemeteries in Anzio and the obligatory sightseeing trip to Rome were arranged. We were delighted to be joined this year by the Int Corps SO2 Soldiers **Maj Maisy Markham**, the two Int Corps RCMOs, **Capt Dan Duel** and **WO1 Andy Tyler**, and SPSO, **Capt John Fradley**.

The Team at the American War Cemetery

We arrived on Monday 31 October 05, and once the team was settled and the Div Col had 'tipped his hat' to the Commandant, we set off for Anzio to visit the Commonwealth and American War Cemeteries. We were fortunate to have **Alfredo**, a local who was in Anzio as a 15-yr old boy during the war, as our guide. His stories were both fascinating and humbling, although why he felt the need to show us a flyover that was only 25 years old flummoxed everyone. The War Cemeteries were a sight to behold and immaculately maintained. They were clean, tidy, with manicured lawns, and not a stone was left out of place. There was a blissful silence, befitting the fallen heroes.

That evening, **Lt Col Gus Colville**, **WO1(RSM) Jim Alger** and some selected members of the NATO Comms School hosted us on our first eating extravaganza. The Italians enjoy their food and wine like nobody I have ever met. Course after course was laid before us, until we finally gave in, and ended the night with a local liqueur called *Lemoncello*. Day 1 was deemed a success, so we retired for some much-needed shuteye.

Tuesday was the Italy Soldier Wing Roadshow. Soldiers from Naples and Latina met at the school for the roadshow, and were only just outnumbered by the team. That afternoon we had the RCMOs' Seminar. This was an opportunity for all the RCMOs to get together to ensure policy and the way that we do our business. Stomachs rumbling and thirsts to be quenched, **Capt McNaught** booked us into a restaurant. Imagine our surprise to walk into a room laid out for 60, when there were only 16 of us. In his defence, he has been away from Latina for 3 yrs. **Capt Mark Jolly** however, hadn't lost his linguistic skills, and was almost successful in ordering the food. His method of sticking an 'O' after everything almost worked. Several courses later, and all fed and watered, we popped next door to a Karaoke venue. **Lt Col Compston** went down well with the locals, and several of them pestered **Capt Paul Williams** for an audition.

Wednesday was an early start, and off to Monte Cassino. Each RCMO had been given a topic to research and then present. The usual rivalry meant that a lot of effort went into the various stands, ensuring a first class battlefield tour. **Capt Tony Manktelow** started the ball rolling with a briefing on the background to Monte Cassino and the invasion of Italy. Each RCMO and the SPSO then gave their presentations as we hiked around the battlefield. Topics were wide-ranging, and varied from The Effects of Strategic Bombing, The Four Battles, to Practicality over Technology, finishing with Intelligence Preparation of the Battle presented by **Capt Dan Duel** Int Corps (RCMO).

The vista was outstanding, and the enormity of the tasks that faced allied troops in the four battles of Monte Cassino were beyond imagination. **Capt McNaught** is to be congratulated on his use of a 60-year-old map; he got us there in the end! With our blood re-oxygenated, and the repatriation of **Maj (Retd) Campbell**, we decided to stop off en route back to Latina for a feast. All evening meals in Italy are a feast, with not one, but several starters, and of course something to wash it down. With colour in our cheeks and amply fed, we returned to Latina.

Capt Tony Manktelow briefing on the Invasion of Italy

The rigours of the battlefield tour over, a day out in Rome was planned for Thursday. After a train ride (for most) or a nail biting car journey, we all met up at our hotel, prior to setting out to explore the city. Many took the tour bus; some preferred to go by foot. Either way, we visited the Vatican, Coliseum, Trevi Fountain and many other sights. The team split up into small groups vowing to meet up for dinner and refreshments. One or two never made the final RV, but everyone made it back to the hotel safely.

Friday was time to bid a fond farewell to Italy. There was plenty of talk about return visits, and tales to be told. The visit was a resounding success. Roadshow, Battlefield tour, Seminar, and of course, the most essential element, team bonding, were all achieved.

Our thanks go to **Lt Col Gus Colville** and his staff, for hosting us and enabling our visit to take place. Finally, a special thank you from us all to **Capt Vince McNaught**, for pulling it all together.

BRITISH TELECOM IN IRAQ

– by SSgt JE Collins

Four BT engineers were mobilised for service in Iraq in February and March 05 and have just returned to the UK. They were due to demobilise in November/December 05 before rejoining BT in January 06 and picking up where they left off. The four are **Sgt Nick Parkyn** from Plymouth, a Falklands war veteran, **Cpl Matt Holmes** from Boston, **Cpl Stuart Green** and **SSgt John Collins** both from Manchester. **Cpl Green** is from 33 Sig Regt and the others are from 81 Sig Sqn. This is sometimes referred to as the BT Sqn as the greater part of its ranks work or have worked for BT.

During their deployment they have been the SNCOs responsible for a team of up to 20 Inst Techs. Because the rest were regular soldiers, there was the inevitable good-natured banter about who was best, Regulars or TA. But as we were in charge, we came out on top in that debate. The team was employed on various projects across MND(SE); installing and repairing a variety of comms systems and infrastructure for the many different nations represented in the coalition.

The team has received several commendations from the units we provided comms for. We were attached to 12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn based at Basrah Air Station and except for **SSgt Collins**, we carried out predeployment trg in the UK with them.

We know we have done a good job during our deployment and can be rightly proud of what we have achieved. We had great support from our Regular counterparts, who we have learned to respect. Hopefully, they have the same respect for us. 7th Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn have now taken over and we would like to wish them a safe and productive tour as we return to our every day lives back in Civvy Street.

UNITED KINGDOM LANDING FORCE COMMAND SUPPORT GROUP (3 COMMANDO BRIGADE)

CO **Lt Col PS Cameron OBE** RM
RSM **WO1 (RSM) RS Harper** RM

BOWMAN PROGRESSION

Since our last submission, the Bde has continued with BOWMANISATION. Vehicles have been coming and going to get fitted with BOWMAN. All pers have been attending BOWMAN courses in preparation for the exercising and testing phase and some of the techs have attended ComBAT courses.

EXERCISE BOWMAN VANGUARD

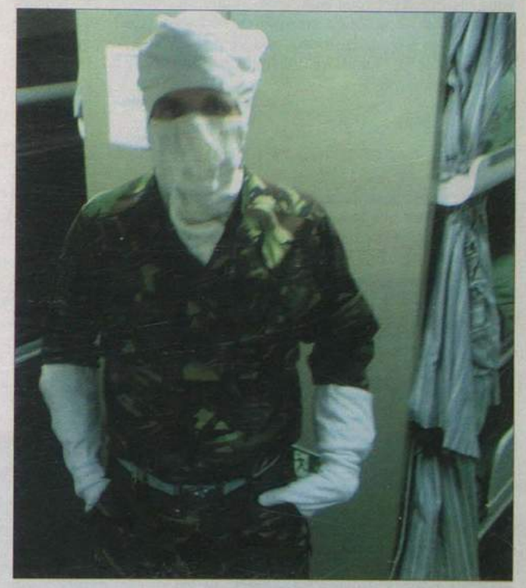
This was the Bde's main BOWMAN exercise bringing together the Bde HQ, UKLF CSG, 42 Cdo, 29 Cdo Regt RA, 50 Cdo Sqn RE, CHF and the Littoral Manoeuvre Elements. The exercise started on 5th Sep with 3 weeks at Tregantle Fort in Cornwall. This allowed all the elements to come together for the first time with the aim of trying to communicate with one another both on land and then all going well with those at sea.

This required the Cypher Cell to work night and day running CI plan variations through the P-Con and being on standby for 'Cypher Issues'. This was tested when **Cpl Dan Crossley** had to jump onto a Sea King to problem solve on HMS Exeter. By the end of the 3 weeks, things were really starting to come together, although it was a hard old slog for all those involved.

While the BOWMAN stuff was going on, **Sgt Chadders Chadwick** and myself were busying looking after the 501, which for some reason had no end of problems.

After the Tregantle phase, the exercise was to continue on HMS Bulwark**,** the shipping platform from where the Bde HQ works when afloat, but engine trouble delayed this. Eventually it set sail with the Bde staff and Comms Sqn including **Sgt Russ Fyfe** and **Cpl Pee Perkins**, who gained their sea legs. The ship sailed around to North Devon just off RM Barracks Chivenor at Branton Burrows. Then began the 'Wader Phase' of the exercise, moving vehicles and pers ashore by Landing Craft, Rigid Raider, Hover Craft and various helicopter variants.

Once all the vehicles were off loaded, the CP was set up and comms were in, the Bde Staff graced us with their presence for about 2 hours before going back on ship. During this time a successful Change of Control from ship to shore occurred and then back again.



Cpl Dan Crossley in his Anti-Flash Kit aboard HMS Bulwark

The weather then decided to close in, and after 4 days on the beach at Chivenor, the exercise was swung back to Plymouth Sound. There a full Cdo assault took place, supported by Apache helicopters, with the Bde CP setup on Staddon Heights. The final phase of the exercise was on SPTA. To achieve this, a tactical pause was taken to issue a new CI plan to all exercising units, allowing the comms to switch areas.

The Bde Cp loaded up 12 BVs for the move to Salisbury, but only managed to arrive with 10 after a slight RTA when 2 fell off the back of the low loader.

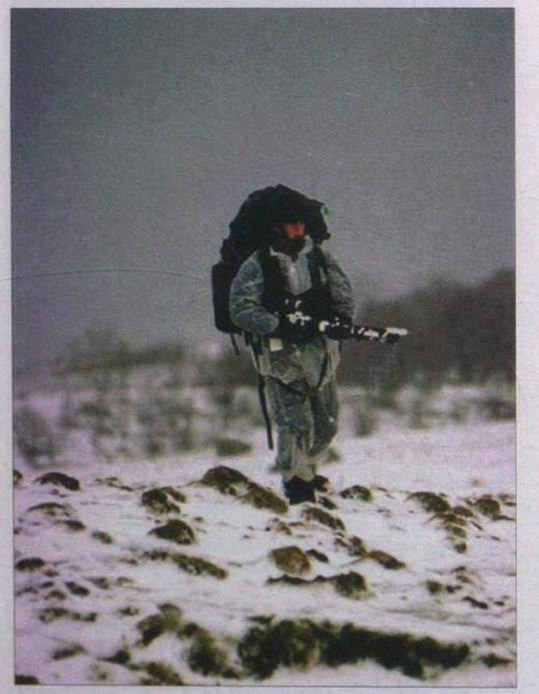
The weather on arrival was horrendous, which only added to the fun of erecting the CP, especially when the majority of the roof poles snapped due to the weight of the canvas and the cam-net. Eventually, all problems were rectified and the Bde Staff joined us after a Chinook lift from *HMS Bulwark*.

Cpl Pee Perkins and Sgt Russ Fyfe enjoying a hearty meal.

Comms down to *HMS Ocean*, off the coast of Dorset, were attempted using a Rebro chain, one of which was ably commanded by **Cpl Taff Morris**. Unfortunately, although all legs were proved, the circuit was never 'made', although it was a nice drive. As usual, ENDEX came after a successful dawn attack, which led to a quick teardown and swift return to Plymouth. After 6 weeks, our first full BOWMAN exercise had finally finished and comms had worked.

EXERCISE CADENCE BRAKE – COLD WEATHER WARFARE COURSE

The Unit is not one to sit on its laurels and is in preparation for our winter trg. Pers have been to Scotland and Norway on preparatory trg. **Sgt Phil Chadwick**, **Sgt Andy King** and **Cpl**



Cpl Wayne Tutty managing for once to stay upright.

Wayne Tutty flew out to Norway at the beginning of Nov. This training started with EX CADENCE BRAKE, the winter skills driving course. Unfortunately when they got out there they found there was no snow – the Gods were smiling on **Chadders** yet again. The snow eventually arrived for their Cold Weather Warfare Course, although apparently there wasn't a lot of it so they couldn't do much skiing. **Cpl Wayne Tutty** fell through the ice in the first couple of days. He had to be evacuated back to base to prevent hypothermia but once he was given the all clear he was straight back out in the field.

The pace has now picked up in the run up to Christmas for the remainder of us getting vehicles and equipt prepared for a 3 month Winter Deployment to Norway starting in Jan.

Although busy, the Royal Signals pers have still found time to have fun as ably demonstrated by **Sgt Mat Coverly** and his wife **Karina** on the Dodgems at the Summer Ball.

Sgt Mat Coverly and his wife Karina going all out on the dodgems

Also keeping our links with Blandford and the Corps, **Sgt Phil Chadwick** and **Cpl Dave Allen** have been working with a local Plymothian resident to recover some old WWII Cypher equipt. This has subsequently been delivered to the Corps Museum, although I think they were more interested in receiving the white cam net they asked for.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

There has been a big change in manpower with the departure of our Foreman **WO1 (FofS) Ski Sharpe** to Oman and a warm welcome to his replacement **WO2 (FofS) Brett Palmer. Cpl 'Gilly' Gillard** decided he had enough of being a tech and went off to the gym in Bulford, prior to going on his PTI's course with a view to joining the PT Corps. **Sgt Jim Stewart** handed over the reins of the Cypher Cell to attend his Yeoman's Course. We will also shortly say farewell to **Sgt Stu Tucker** (29 Cdo Regt RA Rear Link Sgt) who leaves early next year to become a police officer with the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. No doubt we'll bump into him on a night out in Union Street. It is hello from the techs to **Cpl Wayne Tutty and Cpl Charlie Brown**, both from 16 Sig Regt. The Cypher Cell welcomes **Cpl 'Pee' Perkins** and **Sgt Russ Fyfe** who are currently on their respective CLM's.

Congratulations go to **Cpl Paul Lomas** on successfully passing his All Arms Commando Course. A full report will follow for the next issue.

BATUS - BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD

SO2 CIS	**Maj Owen Finnie**
YofS	**WO2 (YofS) Craig Scott**
BSM	**SSgt Pete Watson**
Ops SNCO	**Sgt Andy Conley**

- by WO2 (YofS) Craig Scott

As mentioned in the last issue of *The WIRE*, BATUS is located in Alberta, Canada, and is the premier trg establishment for combined arms groupings to carry out live fire and manoeuvres. There are 4 Royal Signals on the permanent staff, and a number of temporary staff join us for the exercise season, which runs from 1 April to 31 October.

The season typically comprises 5 x 28 day Armd or Armd/Inf BG deployments (EX MEDICINE MAN), and a range of other exs. In addition, other activities, such as range sweeps and prairie reconditioning are conducted. To enable such large exs, HQ Land deploys around 400 temporary staff of which about 10% are Royal Signals. Royal Signals temporary staff are employed in a wide range of duties, from manning the Ops Room, Driver/ops for range staff, to targetry ops and QM Staff.

The Ops Room staff are placed on a shift pattern, that not only allows them to work on the busiest radio net in the British Army (2105 voice transmissions in a 2 hr period), but also allows them recreational time, so they can experience what Canada has to offer. Temporary staff are trained on the procedures in range standing orders, and will work in the Ops Room under **Sgt Andy Conley**. He will further instruct the shift comds in the emergency procedures that are to be followed; these range from veh break down action to emergency casevac. The Ops Room is manned 24/7 from mid-April until range sweep has finished at the beginning of November.

The Driver/ops undergo an intensive period of about 20 days trg prior to the first ex. It is then their responsibility to ensure that their veh is fit, both automotively and for comms, in prep for the days' activities. The Drivers normally book out of the Ops Room at 05.00hrs, and during the special-to-arms live fire phase, will come back to Camp at 21.30hrs. The Driver/ops get 4 days off between each ex and, depending on which recovery flight they return on, they can get up to 10 days after the ex season to take some well deserved R and R.

BATUS is currently undergoing a comms transition period, migrating from CLANSMAN and MOTOROLA (the commercial radio system used for range safety and admin) to BOWMAN and the Observer Controller Comms Network (a commercial digital trunk system). BATUS's conversion to BOWMAN has been ongoing since mid 2004, and the last veh should be converted by April 2006. As expected, there have been teething problems with each system; the 2006 trg season will be the first time that both new systems will be fully exercised.

BATUS from the air

Each of the Royal Signals permanent staff has a unique role in BATUS. SO2 CIS, **Maj Owen Finnie** works within HQ BATUS, and is responsible to Comd BATUS for everything from Infrastructure CIS within BATUS, to co-ordinating BOWMAN conversion and upgrade activity. As the only Royal Signals officer on Camp, he is involved in a broad range of CIS issues.

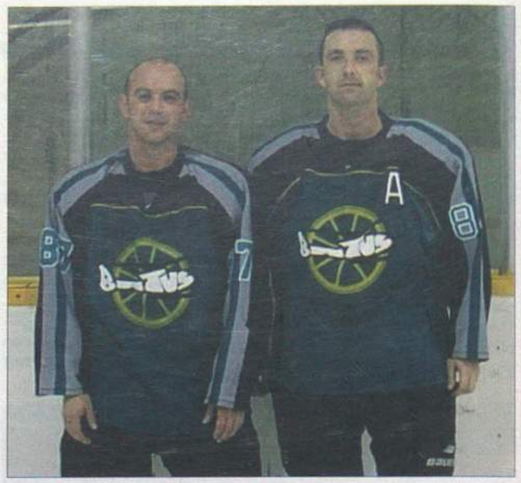
The BATUS Mission is to provide trg and trg support to the Field Army and others, within resources, in order to prepare BGs and units for ops

Unlike in a normal Royal Signals unit, the YofS does not work for the G6 Branch, but works for G7 under the senior Maj appointment at BATUS, SO2 Tac/Ops. As you would expect, the YofS, is responsible for all comms systems deployed onto the prairie, and is the G6 advisor to Comd BATUS during an ex. He has also landed the prestigious role of Ops Room WO. Prior to an ex season, the YofS is responsible for co-ordinating BOWMAN trg for the temporary staff (about 185 soldiers), and ensuring that all Driver/ops are conversant with the comms in their vehs.

During the ex season, **Sgt Andy Conley** is responsible to SO2 Tac/Ops for the safety and movement of the BG, Safety staff and OPFOR. At about 05.30hrs each day, the Ops Room SNCO will ensure that all BG vehs have been accounted for from the previous night, and ensure that all the medical and range safety staff are in the correct position for the next days' activities. Once this has been confirmed, then the procedures can be put in place to 'turn templates to red' to carry out live firing. The Ops Room SNCO is also responsible for the day-to-day running of the commercial radio system. He is constantly on call to the Ops Room shift, and will normally leave the Ops Room at about 21.30hrs, if there is no live firing that night. During the HO/TO of the exercising troops, crypto has to be accounted for and handed over, and the next BG briefed. However, there is a 2-day stand-down between each ex for the Ops Room SNCO to catch up on some sleep.

The newest post in BATUS is that of the BOWMAN Sys Mgr, and has been taken up by **SSgt Pete Watson**. With no previous exposure to BOWMAN, he arrived and was expected to produce a CI plan for a BG and the range safety staff. With minimal guidance, he accomplished this, and produced a CI plan that was successful first time. Once the BG is deployed, the BSM is responsible for ensuring the BOWMAN Sys Supt Teams are informed of any faults, and are deployed in a timely manner.

Once the Ex Season has finished, AT packages such as Alpine Skiing, Winter Climbing and Dog Sledging are enjoyed by the 4



Sgt Andy Conley and WO2 (YofS) Craig Scott after Ice Hockey trg

permanent Royal Signal personnel. With temperatures averaging -25° C, all PT sessions are taken inside, with an emphasis on Ice Hockey. All the Ops Room staff play for the BATUS Flyers, and are the current BATUS Champions, as well as the BFBS Champions. Special mention to **Sgt Andy Conley**, who was voted the Best Player in the Tournament, and to **WO2 (YofS) Craig Scott**, who currently leads the Penalty Minutes Achieved league. The trawl for temporary staff will be confirmed in the New Year, so if you can work hard, play hard in a challenging environment, then we look forward to seeing you on the prairies at BATUS, Canada.

SPORT

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 9 – A SKIER'S PERSPECTIVE

- by Maj Domhnall Dods and Lt Kelly Griffiths

That time of year has arrived again for those who know waxing to be more than just a beauty treatment… Time to dig out those trusty long johns for the Royal Signals Alpine Winter Sports Championships. Ski teams from across the Corps, including the TA, gathered in Zell am See in Austria for three weeks of intensive race trg, followed by a week of competition in the Slalom and Giant Slalom (GS) disciplines.

Not wanting to miss a second of the sub-zero temperatures on the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier, trg began promptly on the first Monday at 08.30hrs, with a ski-off, placing skiers in ability groups. The emphasis of the first week was improving general technique, and thus began a series of strange exs, such as one-ski-skiing and carrying imaginary trays of drinks… **LCpl Si Rowe's** acrobatics on the slopes earned him a few days' luxury full board in the local krankenhaus, courtesy of **LCpl Richie Squires**, whom he met in mid-air! Otherwise, a good level of skiing was demonstrated by all.

The second week was speed trg, with the top group's trg in gates. In accordance with tradition, all gates trg was carried out on the coldest, darkest pistes, in driving snow and howling winds! Early snow this year meant that a many slopes were open, giving a greater variety of conditions on which to train. It could even be said that there was too much!

Ski Instructor Sgt Robbo Robertson gives the Boarders a chance by using only one ski

Week 3 saw the arrival of the remainder of the teams. All groups spent this week trg in gates and developing confidence at speed. Unfortunately, the weather impeded the trg programme, when it took a turn for the worse, with temperatures dropping, wind

A snowboarder in action in the sunshine

speeds rising and snow generally blowing in all directions. **Lt Col Huw Jenkins**, not a man noted for fair-weather skiing, was even heard to tell his group that conditions were, 'just evil' and that they could have a full 30 mins for lunch! All of **Sgt Robbo Robertson's** group scoffed at this remark – they had become accustomed to not getting lunch at all… The week ended with the Seeding GS Race, which determined the start positions for the following week.

And so to Race Week, with everyone kitted out in brand new bibs thanks to the generous support of our new sponsor, The Occupational Health Force. Awful weather conditions on the Monday, meant that the only racing that took place, was running away from the evil Krampus that evening. For the uninitiated, Krampus is an ancient Austrian tradition that involves the local men dressing up in elaborate demonic masks and costumes, arming themselves with horsehair whips and birches, and then beating the evil spirits out of children before Christmas, so that St Nicholas will then bring them presents. However, in Zell am See, the punishments are warmly extended to any visiting British soldiers… So everyone headed into town for a glass of Gluhwein and a beating. Some particularly foolish souls chose to wear kilts, whilst others, namely **LCpl Johnny Bedford**, volunteered for a beating as a bet – it takes all sorts! All were pleased to hear on Tuesday that thanks to some covert reconnaissance by 18 Sig Regt (namely **Sgt Gaz Pope**), the racing would be moved to the Schmittenhöhe, where there was rumoured to be sunshine occasionally.

The Team and Individual GS Races were held on the Tuesday, with only hundredths of seconds separating the top seeds. The standard of skiing this year is the highest ever shown in the Championships. Wednesday arrived with sunshine, ready for a technical course for the Individual Slalom. The enthusiasm clearly affected **SSgt Andy Dawson**, as he destroyed both drills when setting the course, and only one run was possible. The course also proved too much for the Belgian ski team, who had kindly volunteered to act as forerunners. After the fourth Belgian had crashed out, the call came from the Finish Officials, 'Hello Start, this is Finish; the Belgians say this course is too crazy to ski!' Undaunted, the Chief of Race decreed that British soldiers ski slower than Belgian children, and everything would be fine. While many of the top seeds followed the example of our Belgian friends, both authors are delighted to report that they completed excellent runs, and finished some thirty and forty places higher than they had started the race, so it can't have been that hard.

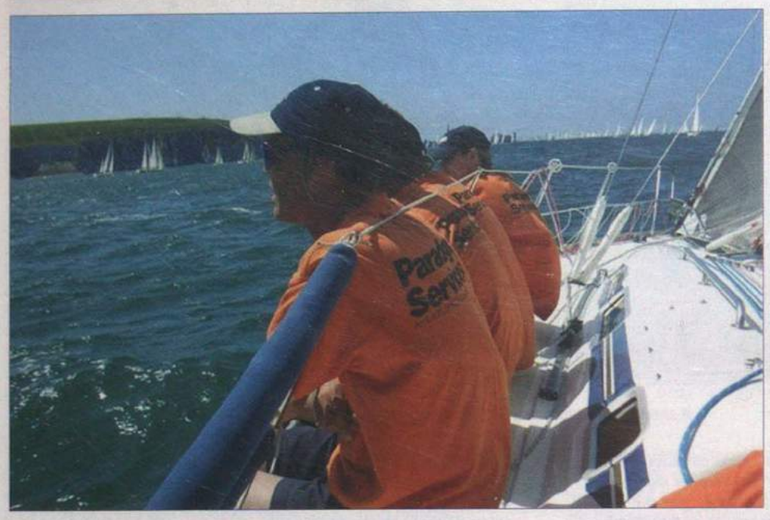
Thursday saw the final day of racing, and the Team Slalom event. The day would be the decider over the Corps Champion Team and Individual. This time, armed with a brand new drill, courtesy of The Occupational Health Force, two runs were raced. Some incredibly competitive times were achieved, and only one or two skiers mistook the trees lining the piste for gates… On a bright sunny day, conditions were perfect to finish off the exercise.

Sgt Bruce Findlay of 15 Sig Regt in the Individual Slalom

Our kind hosts, **Stefan** and **Bettina Pecile**, to whom we extend our warm thanks for their continued support, presented the prizes. **Capt Michele Worden** kindly donated a new prize for the Best Improved Skier, to mark her last season at the Camp. This went to **Sig Triplett** of 30 Sig Regt. The Winning Team was 30 Sig Regt, with 15 Sig Regt and RSS hot on their heels. 31 Sig Regt (V) took the TA team prize. The champion skiers in the Male, Female, Junior and Veteran categories were **LCpl Rowe** of 1 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, **Cpl Fewster** of 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl Taylor** of 3 UK Div HQ and Sig Regt, and **WO2 Neil Pollitt** of 102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, respectively.

Thanks go to those who have not only made the exercise happen, but who have made it an enjoyable and rewarding month for all involved: OIC Camp and instructor, **Lt Col Huw Jenkins**; Exercise Coordinator, **Capt Michele Worden**; Chief Instructor, **SSgt Andy Dawson**; OIC Admin/Discipline, **SSgt Frank McGuinness**; and the instructors, **Maj Andy Harrower**, **Capt Liz Pointon**, **WO2 Dave Alleyne**, **SSgt Sammy Samuel**, **Sgt Matty Thomas**, **Sgt Robbo Robertson**, **Sgt Bruce Findlay** and **LCpl Chris Day**.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB OFFSHORE SECTION
ROLEX FASTNET RACE 2005



A shot for the sponsors - the T-shirts

After assembling at JSASTC the previous evening, the crew of **Sgt Windy Gale** (Skipper), **Lt Rachel Thompson** (Mate), **Maj Jason Kennedy**, **OCdt Rachel Clayton**, **SSgt Daz Cattle, Sgt Ginge Davies**, **Sgt MJ Holt** and **Cpl Andy Anderton** awoke bright and early to complete the prep for the Rolex FASTNET Race.

The first job was to convert the Corps yacht, *Skywave* from a cruiser to a high performance racer. China crockery was exchanged for plastic bowls, all unnecessary equipt removed, and the water tanks emptied. The cruising sails were swapped for the extensive race inventory, comprising one main sail and four foresails, not to mention the three spinnakers.

Then the rations were loaded. The 'weight watching' continued here, with **Sgt Gale** insisting on the team eating boil-in-the-bag rations, with a water limit of three litres per person per day. With everything stowed, personal kit was the last to be loaded - a short task, as each person was limited to one small bag. We then departed Gosport for Cowes, where the race would start. We were ready for action, complete with orange T-shirts generously provided by Paradigm Services!

The start day, 7 July, day began with a quick assessment of the weather. Good fortune had provided a few knots of wind, so we left land for the last time in good time to assemble before our 11.00hrs start. An impressive sight followed, with the other 282 yachts entered in the race also gathering just outside Cowes. Being amongst the smallest boats in the race, *Skywave's* class started first, leaving the big boats to follow. **Lt Thompson** helmed the boat to a clean start, avoiding all other boats in the race, and putting us in a positive position as we made our way down the Solent.

A steady wind led to a good passage, and some skilful tactics and sailing had *Skywave* leading the Class at the Needles. She was also third overall on the water, as the rapidly dying wind had not allowed the larger boats to catch up. On leaving the Solent, spirits were high and the focus was set on reaching Portland Bill. We had to reach it before the tide turned against us. Some good navigation had us there before the worst of the tide was against us, but with the wind failing, the crew settled in for a long evening.

At 20.00hrs, with the main crew split into two watches: the smokers (Cancer Watch) and non-smokers (Stop Watch). Stop Watch, **Maj Kennedy**, **OCdt Clayton** and **SSgt Cattle** kicked off the system of three-hr watches into the first night at sea.

After an uneventful night of diminishing wind, and contemplating being at sea forever, the next day dawned with very little wind. Several sail changes kept the on-watch crew on their toes, as they battled against the tide and uncooperative wind, to continue forward progress. Rationing was well and truly underway, although our water rations had not accounted for having to take Baz the basil plant sailing too. When sent to the shop in Cowes before departure to get mint for Pimms, **Sgt Holt** had returned with a basil plant.

After a night with a good breeze, *Skywave* finally reached Lizard Point – our last sight of land until the Fastnet Rock! A second tidal gate was reached with perfection, taking us out into the Irish Sea. The crew continued to work hard through the day, again in light winds, with several sail changes interrupting valuable sunbathing time! An adverse tide even had *Skywave* going backwards for a few hours. **Cpl Davies** remarked that 'It's a long way to Tipperary, but not as far as it is to Fastnet Rock in this wind!'

There was also speculation that the nice new chart plotter may be malfunctioning, as it couldn't possibly be taking that long to get anywhere! Morale was then raised by the sight of several dolphins playing around the boat - and even a few sharks were seen. The sunset left little wind behind, and the crew faced the prospect of another slow night.

Many shooting stars brightened the otherwise slow night, and the following day dawned with the crew hoping for more wind, and starting to get fed up with beans and bacon/sausage/burger. More dolphins arrived to play, keeping the crew entertained; there wasn't much else to look at!

The length of the race was starting to become apparent, with fewer and fewer other boats in sight. This made it hard to judge progress, so the crew had to rely on the word of **Sgt Gale** and **Lt Thompson**, as skippers and navigators, that we were in fact going the right way, and we were making good time! Moods were then raised again (and racing momentarily forgotten) by the sight of unmistakeable killer whales not far from the yacht. This was confirmed shortly after, as a baby killer whale decided to come and play. The crew could have been mistaken for children in a sweet shop, leaping around in excitement at the whale. There was slight concern that the mother (keeping a safe distance off the back of the boat) would object and ram us, but fortunately she didn't, leaving the crew excited by the baby whale swimming inches off our boat.

We were brought back down to earth with the news that *Skywave* was now only a matter of miles from Fastnet Rock, and as the breeze finally started to fill in (to the very regular calls of 'Breeze filling in!' from **Sgt Holt**), the crew was suddenly back into racing mode. An overheard radio conversation gave a brief position report, confirming that we were ahead of at least some of the other Military boats, and everyone was looking out for the Rock.

Down comes the spinnaker

We rounded it at 21.42hrs, 34th in Class and 156th overall. It was a beautiful sight at sunset, leaving the Rock silhouetted against the fading sky. With the crew firmly sat on the windward rail in the increasing breeze, it was decided to save the celebratory champagne for the end of the race. The night watch rotation kicked off with renewed enthusiasm, and the hope that the wind would stay until the end of the race.

After a much faster night's sailing, Thursday brought *Skywave* perfect sailing conditions: sunny with a nice breeze. Glad finally to be sailing well, the crew worked hard to achieve steady runs of 25NM per shift, bringing her rapidly closer to the Scilly Isles. Some expert tactics and spinnaker work saw the crew reeling in several other yachts, including several of the larger ones.

Having left the Scilly Isles firmly behind, and with the Lizard Point lighthouse looming on the horizon, morning brought high hopes that the race would finish that day. The breeze had continued through the night and into the morning, so progress was swift towards the south coast of England.

With the end in sight, the watch system was out the window, and the human ballast would be sitting on the less-than-comfortable rail for the estimated seven hours until the finish. Another gourmet breakfast was served, and the crew were definitely dreaming of having a meal that wasn't in a small aluminium bag.

Conditions were hotting up along the coast, with the wind strength and angle leading to some crazy manoeuvres. The bow team of **OCdt Clayton** and **Sgt Holt** were kept busy with several sail changes, as we made swift progress towards the finish, aided by some skilled mainsheet playing by **Cpl Anderton**. After nearly five days at sea, Plymouth finally came into sight, spurring on the crew and seeing us close on other boats in Class. At 12.01hrs, *Skywave* finished the race in fantastic weather, with the sun shining, as the photographers came out in their boats. Magnums of champagne were rapidly found on deck to celebrate numerous achievements for both the boat and the crew.

Finishing 30th in Class, 67th overall (out of 283 entries) and 1st Services yacht (beating the Army Team on *Longbow*, RAF and Navy teams), *Skywave* achieved a top result. The race also acted as a milestone for *Skywave*, being the furthest she has sailed offshore, and the longest distance in one go.

ROYAL SIGNALS WATER POLO SQUAD TOUR TO AUSTRALIA

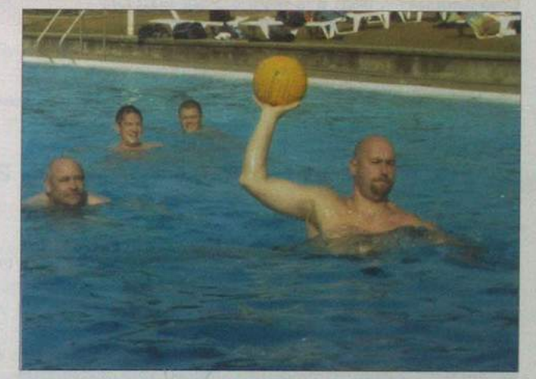
- by Maj Tim Langford

A Water Polo squad of 16 officers and soldiers from the Corps toured Eastern Australia over the period 6-21 October 05. Additionally, an ex WO2 who represented the Corps, Army and Combined Services during his career kindly agreed to act as our coach during the tour. The squad consisted of 11 males, including the coach, and 6 females, and was designed to develop individual skills and of course to enjoy the social aspects of Oz!

We spent the first 6 days in Sydney based in *HMAS Kuttabul*, a shore base that happens to be in the Kings Cross area, which is in the infamous red light district. The squad went out on the first night to sample the local cuisine and refreshments.

After 24 hrs to adjust to a time difference of 9 hrs, the squad suffered its first training session under our coach, **Mr Graham Weavers**, on Friday 7 October. For this session, we used the pool in Randwick Bks, a local Army base. As we came to find in all swimming complexes in Oz it provided us with an Olympic 50m pool! Outstanding!. **Graham** ensured that the full 2 hrs were used to benefit the individuals, especially those that had sampled the local hospitality the night before!

On Saturday 8 October we took the train to Cronulla, a southern suburb of Sydney. Sydney is a rather large city! In Sydney they play 8 grades of water polo. Grade 1 is national/international level, with Grade 8 being novices. We mixed our players with their Grade 4 and 5 players. They had one individual that **SSgt Bas Ward** chased on 3 occasions in the pool, but couldn't catch. We found out later that he held the world record for the 50m freestyle



Graham Weavers demonstrates how to produce a shot like a howitzer!

for his age group; he was 45 years old and his time was 25.5 secs! The game was played in a great spirit, with everyone learning some new tricks of the trade. The game finished 15 all, with **Maj Tim Langford** scoring the first goal offor the squad. We then retired to a local Sports Bar to rehydrate the body.

On the Sunday we took taxis to the University of NSW to play. They turned up with a mixture of players, some playing regular Grade 2 polo, who had shoots like howitzers right through to a couple of novices. Needless to say it was an educational game.

Cpl Sarah Hardy breaks through to score.

We mixed the teams again, which allowed individuals to learn fromoff some of the more experienced and talented players. The game finished with one of the teams scoring 2 goals more that the other; which team no one knew, but I think the final score was 14-12. We then retired to Coogee Bay. Again, the team went through the rehydration phase of the day one of the beach areas famous in Sydney, to enjoy the local ambience.

Monday 10 October was a rest day with everyone taking the opportunity to enjoy some sightseeing. The squad shot off in different directions with the Botanical Gardens, the Opera House and the Sydney Harbour Bridge being one popular tourist route. Others made their way into central Sydney to visit other tourist attractions like the Zoo:.

On the Tuesday we flew up to Brisbane and picked up hire cars to take us to Gallipoli Bks. The accommodation was comfortable and food consumable. On arrival we had another hour and 45 mins trg session in the camp pool. **Mr Graham Weavers** again ensured we utilised the time to the full!

Wednesday 12 October was another rest day with the majority of the squad driving south to *Wet and Wild*. **Capt Andi Davis and Cpl Kirsty Burgmans** went whale watching.

On Thursday we had 2 games. We played the local Army team at lunchtime, which was a good game that ended in a 14 all draw. **Capt Andi Davis, SSgt Bas Ward** and **Sgt Matt Lee** all contributing 3 goals apiece, and **Cpl Dan Hine** produced an excellent display in goal.

Cpl Dan Hine plucks the ball out of the air

After the game we moved south to the Gold Coast to play the Miami Water Polo Club. We watched one of their teams playing who had 2 players that just missed out on the last Australian Olympic Team. Awesome!

We played another mix and match. They had some tremendous players including a young lady who will play for Australia. Again, the game was played in the correct spirit with everyone working hard. **Maj Tim Langford**, **Capt Harriet Cairns**, **Sig Dom Byrne** and **Sig Aisake Nukutabu** all scoring 2 goals apiece.

Friday 10th, we flew north to Townsville where we were accommodated at the local RAAF camp, next door to the civil airport. The accommodation was excellent with each room having its own air conditioning; obviously the RAAF in Oz are like the RAF in Britain, well looked after by the system. Food was also superb. On arrival we found the camp swimming pool and took advantage of this facility to have an hour and a half trg session. Again **Graham Weavers** used the time to full potential for the benefit of the squad. Afterwards **Maj Tim Langford, Mr Graham Weavers**, **SSgt Bas Ward**, **Cpl Chris Yapp**, **Sig Gav Pearce** and **Sig Carrie Atherton** moved down town to enjoy a meal at *TIM'S SURF AND TURF*. The quantity was incredible as was the quality. **SSgt Bas Ward** and **Cpl Chris Yapp** both ordered the New York steak, which was sufficient for a Sunday meal for at least 4 people. Needless to say, they both upheld the finest traditions of the Corps and consumed it all!

On Saturday we moved up to the local Army camp and played a local triservice team in their pool. They fielded 3 Australian Defence Force (equivalent to Combined Services level) players. Initially, we went 3 goals down but with goals by **Cpl Sarah Hardy** and **Sig Brent Greatbanks** we managed to get back to 3 2 by half time. **Capt Kerry Larsen** then scored to even the scores at 3 all, but they eventually ran out winners by 6 goals to 3.

SSgt Bas Ward (No 4) and Maj Tim Langford (No 2) battle for the ball

On Sunday, the majority of the squad booked for the Barrier Reef. Amazing! **Capts Harriet Cairns** and **Kerry Larsen** went diving, whilst the majority of us went snorkelling. Luckily we only saw one shark, which looked massive about 3 foot!

Capts Harriet Cairns and Kerry Larsen prepare for their dive

Monday 17th we had a BBQ just off the local beach in a park. They even provided the BBQ facilities:

On 18 October we had a 2fi hour flight two and a half hours flight back to Sydney, and then 2 nights in a local hostel prior to flying back to UK. The next day was the last chance for some sightseeing. **Sig Gav Pearce** and **Sig Carrie Atherton** took the chance to go whale watching.

Unfortunately, **Carrie** does not have sea legs, so saw little of the whales and spent most of the time in the loo! The remainder of the squad went to the four corners of Sydney including tourist attractions such as Manley and Bondi beach. At Bondi beach **Graham Weavers** managed to get hit by a 12 foot wave side on that almost drowned him! Luckily he is a reasonable swimmer!

On 20 October, the squad set off back to UK. **Capt Harriet Cairns**, **Capt Andi Davies**, **SSgt Bas Ward**, **Cpl Dan Hine** and **Mr Graham Weavers** all took the chance for an extra 24 hours in Tokyo, which they enjoyed although they found it a little expensive. **The future?** – In October 2007 we will tour NZ. It's a hard life but someone has to do it!

Squad photo with the Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge as a back drop

TV LICENSING

TV LICENSING MOVES IN ON MOD SITES

TV LICENSING

TV Licensing are anxious to ensure that Service personnel and their families are covered at all times by a valid licence. All personnel, whether living in quarters, mess or in single accommodation units, are required to be covered by a valid TV licence. It is also necessary to notify TV Licensing of any address changes.

Research has identified that over a third of people who have recently moved, did not realise that they had to transfer existing licences to their new address. Most Military personnel experience frequent postings. In UK, over 45,000 personnel moved in and out of MOD sites last year.

Even if they are just relocating to a different barracks, a quick visit to the TV Licensing website, www.tvlicensing.co.uk/moving, or a call to 0870 242 3349 will ensure the details are changed on their database. Similarly, if Service personnel are posted abroad, and will not need their TV licence again before it expires, they can call to claim a refund for any unused quarters.

Anyone who watches TV without a valid licence is breaking the law and runs the risk of an embarrassing trip to court and a fine of up to £1,000 plus court costs. They will also still have to get a licence if they need one. A colour TV licence currently costs £126.50.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

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Chairman: MajGen AH Boyle CB

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General Secretary and Treasurer:
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 and **Affiliated Assn accounts** Branches, and associations affiliated to the RSA, are reminded that Rule 8 requires a certified copy of their balance sheet for the year ending 31 December 2005, to be with the General Secretary by 15 February 2006.

RSA AGM The 2006 AGM will be held at the Victory Services Club in London, on Sat 1 April 2006 starting at 1030 hrs. All Life Members of the RSA are eligible and welcome to attend. For purposes of planning for seating and catering, it would be appreciated if you would give your name to Assn HQ (or your branch) if you intend attending. For branches: if you haven't sent in your return yet, then please do so now.

HM The Queen meets Hugh Bayley

Field of Remembrance Over 20 members paraded at the Corps plot at the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on 10 November 2005. Our member **Hugh Bayley** (aged 92) represented the Corps at the front of the plot and met **HM The Queen**, after she had officially opened the Field at 1100 hrs. The plot contained a poppy cross for each of our branches and affiliated associations.

There were numerous, individual crosses planted in memory of loved ones. Our thanks go to OC 238 Sig Sqn, **Maj James Vosper** and **SSM Jim McEwen** for arranging transport from the Abbey to Chelsea Bks after the service, and for hosting us in the Sgts Mess. Our members enjoyed comparing their time in the Corps with those of the mess members, who kindly joined us in the bar.

Reunion If you would like full details (including application forms) for the reunion, either download them from our website in March, or ask Assn HQ to put your name on the mailing list. Don't forget that a list of local accommodation is available from this office. Another reminder that the DVD and Video of the 2005 reunion is available from this office.

Searching for old pals? Don't forget that the Assn's 'Lost contact' Internet page is freely available to all members. Several old pals have been reunited through this means.

Postings As I visit our branches, I am still surprised when members tell me have not heard about our 'Register of postings'. Can I please again ask Secretaries to inform their members of this free service? All the details we need are the unit titles and the from .... to ... years at each. Once a member's posting details are registered in Assn HQ, I can send them (by e-mail preferably, or post if not) the list of RSA members who served in their units around the same time. Following on from that, we can then start talking about getting in touch with familiar names on the lists.

Do you live in Cyprus? Our member **Bob Harvey** is trying to start a group of former Corps members for the occasional get together. If you are interested, please contact Bob at: robvicky9@hotmail.com or contact Assn HQ if you are not on the Internet. **Diving and Powerboating in Cyprus**. Bob Harvey has started a business in Cyprus as a RYA powerboat instructor and diving instructor. He offers packages, including flights, food, accn, and a comprehensive programme, with qualified instructors. Soldiers may use either their SLC or ELC to offset costs. More info can be found on his website: www.dive-in.com.cy or e-mail him at: dive-in@cytanet.com.cy

New Members. The following members have been enrolled since the last issue of *The Wire*:

Rank/Name	Service	Branch/Assn/Unit
WO1 Kevin Hallett	1976-99	
Sig Geoffrey Walker	1940-46	
WO2 Gary Bateman	1977-01	
LCpl Martin Bagshaw	1995-01	
SSgt John Hodkin	1966-90	
Sig Rob Richardson	1977-81	
LCpl Simon Frost	1995-01	
Cpl Paul Evans	1992-01	
Sig Jean-Claude Hedouin	1985-94	
Cpl Mac McFarlane	1989-04	
Cpl Alan Warburton	1969-91	
Sgt John Overington	1948-50	Air Fmn Sig Regt Assn
Cpl Chris Binns	1978-01	
Cpl Tony Cherry	1988-00	
SSgt Mal Eatwell	1977-01	
Sig Graham Ludditt	1996-01	
Sgt Stephen McIntyre	1978-01	
LCpl Philip Webster	1992-99	
WO2 Adrian Glover	1983-00	
LCpl Reg February	1957-59	
Maj Peter Handibode	1970-05	
Lt Col Brian Scott-Morton	1969-06	
Cpl Les Farnsworth	1964-88	
Capt Harry Taylor	1955-63	
Cpl Pat Goggin	1962-71	
SSgt Les North	1979-01	
WO1 (RSM) Mark Simcock	1986-date	Sheffield
Sig Walter Harris	1949-55	
SSgt Eddie Allen	1994-date	Bedford
Sig Simon Meech	2003-date	Bedford
Sig David Smith	1972-78	Reading
SSgt Jim Hagan	1974-04	N Ireland
Pte Margaret Irvine	1961-69	Glasgow
Capt Alf Cupper	1977-date	40 Sig Regt (V)
WO2 Garry Melding	1979-01	
Cpl David Waller	1972-87	
Sig Peter Lowe	1974-83	
LCpl John Harding	1982-92	
Cpl Graham Brown	1965-76	
Sig John Williams	1952-54	West Wales
Sig Paul Rattray	1989-97	
Sgt Derrick Paz	1985-04	
Sig Derrick Lamb	1952-56	Spennymoor
Sig John Watts	1949-53	
Sig Michael Roberts	1988-96	
WO2 David Hizzett	1981-06	
Sig Brian Berry	1956-58	
LCpl Dave Ings	1979-89	
Sig Stuart Adams	1998-00	
Sig Roland Linfitt	1959-61	
SSgt Jim Barr	1983-05	
WO2 Pete Farmer	1975-99	
Sgt George Sandy	1943-47	Exmouth
LCpl Simon Richens	1992-01	
WO2 Andy Fullwood	1972-97	
LCpl Andrew Stenton	1993-00	
SSgt Simon Link	1986-date	
Maj Nick Bradley	1959-82	
Cpl Ray Liversidge	1962-70	
SSgt Dean MacKenzie	1983-06	35 Sig Regt (V)
Cpl Jenny Ingram	2000-06	213 Sig Sqn
Cpl Stuart Milnes	1986-01	
Sig Darren Lewis	1997-01	
LCpl Joanne Loach	1997-02	
Sgt John (Geordie) Simpson	1968-01	
Sgt David Taylor	1982-06	
Sgt Ralph (Johnno) Johnson	1977-06	HQ NI
Cpl Michael Lashford-Spinks	1952-55	
Capt Fiona Loxton	2001-06	
Sgt Mark Brundle	1986-date	
Cpl Greg Miller	1991-01	
Sig Daniel Shore	1997-01	
LCpl Phillip Watkins	1991-01	
Sig Harry Ruckley	1942-45	
WO2 Gary Davies	1984-06	
Cpl Joanna Owens	1998-06	RSS
SSgt Tony Black	1984-06	
LCpl Bob Thirsk	1985-01	
WO1 Norman Yarwood	1976-01	
Sig Fred Crewe	1942-45	
WO1 Vince Tipple	1984-06	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt Dave Watson	1983-06	
SSgt Alan Pritchard	1974-01	
Sgt Chris Mayman	1962-76	
SSgt Paul Boughey	1982-06	HQ SOinC(A)
Sig Craig Broadbelt	1994-97	
WO2 Vincent Barry	1933-63	Southport
LCpl James Caffry	1948-50	Southport
LCpl Stan Duncan	1961-73	Southport
Sig Alan Mawson	1959-61	Southport
Sgt John Pownall	1943-46	Southport
Cpl Ray Petrie	1959-68	
LCpl Gary Whetlor	1993-01	
Sgt Martin Stannage	1978-03	
Sgt Paul Davies	1978-01	
Sig Cheryl Murray	1996-01	
Sig Joanne Wood	1996-01	
WO2 Trevor Taylor	1979-01	
Cpl Andrew Shepherd	1988-01	
Cpl Terence Mundin	1961-67	
Cpl Jon Shepherd	1982-05	
Sgt James Richardson	1982-05	
Cpl Michael Breydin	1983-06	
WO2 Mark Evans	1982-06	3 Div Sig Regt
Cpl Alan Daniell	1977-87	
Sig Bob Atkinson	1972-76	
Sgt Alan Townsend	1986-00	
Cpl David Morton	1968-92	
Cpl Tony Moritz	1959-67	
Sig Debi Heath	1996-99	
SSgt Nigel Back	1981-04	
Sig Jim Watts	1945-48	
Sig Fred Cheeseman	1943-47	Air Fmn Sig Regt Assn
Sig Thomas Dicks	1951-53	Beverley Ex Boys Assn
Maj John Hamilton-Williams	1952-70	Aldershot
Sig Tom Lynch	1955-57	Aldershot
Lt Col Guy Rogers	1950-85	Aldershot
Sig Chris Clarke	2005-date	Chester
LCpl Lee Fidler	2003-date	Chester
Sig Ian Parsons	2000-date	Chester
SSgt Brian Heslop	1982-06	209 Sig Sqn
Sgt Nick McIllorum	1985-00	
Sig Leslie Jones	1948-50	
Maj Craig Jones	1980-06	
Col Dick Crombie	1972-05	
Sgt Terry Loud	1952-76	
SSgt Adrian Fadzilah	1987-date	38 Sig Regt (V)
LCpl David Lyall	1956-57	Cotswolds
Sig Keith Bell	1991-97	
Sig Ian Townsend	1970-78	
Cpl David Turton	1986-date	1 Armd Div Sig Regt
Cpl Kerry Davis	1994-01	
Sig Robin Kenworthy	1953-55	AFSR Assn
Sig Bernard Babb	1943-46	AFSR Assn
Sig David Oddie	1983-05	
Sgt Darren Twigg	1981-05	
Sgt Lee Coffill	1987-01	
Sgt David Baldwin	1981-05	
Sig Danny Lockett	1989-04	
Sig Chris Spendiff	1975-83	
LCpl Royston Bray	1974-88	
LCpl Ronald Hirst	1980-89	

DONATIONS

R Waldron	£10.00
From the will of **Derek Alan Willson**	£2,000.00
Ray Vasper in memory of **Col Tony Lewis**	£20.00
Bournemouth Branch in memory of **Phillip Ashpool**	£5.00
Peter Mills	£50.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£30.00
Jamie Bixby in memory of **Ronald Bixby**	£50.00
Southampton Branch RSA	£25.00
In memory of **Col Anthony D Lewis**, cheques totalling	£420.00
Mr S James-Robertson	£10.00
Leslie Ladbrooke	£10.00
Malta Libya Command Assn	£50.00
Reading Branch RSA	£160.00
Mrs JM Barnes in memory of **Col Anthony D Lewis**	£25.00
Mr R Waldron	£20.00
York Branch RSA	£25.00
Cardiff Branch RSA	£100.00
Erpingham Parish Council in memory of **Roy Williams**	£25.00
Mr & Mrs LJ Simmons in memory of **David Alan Pocklington**	£20.00
In memory of **Maj CM Maycock** cheques totalling	£245.00
Aldershot Branch members	£407.00
Cornwall Branch RSA	£500.00
SC Finch in memory of **Col AD Lewis**	£50.00
Col GAW Hickman OBE in memory of **Col Tony Lewis**	£50.00
Glossop and District Royal Signals OCA	£25.00
19 Sig Regt Assn in memory of **Col Neil Donaldson**	£50.00
Poole Branch RSA	£100.00
East Kent Branch RSA	£250.00
42 Sig Regt Officers' Club	£234.00
Mrs ML Britt	£25.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of **Sig SG Hounsell**	£10.00
Mrs Joan Greenstreet	£30.00
Col I Swann	£50.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig N Moss**
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

Our 'Weather Signs' talk in November proved a very pleasant evening. We were hosted by the serving Corps at Duchess of Kent Barracks who furnished a very welcome buffet during the interval. We owe our thanks for their hospitality and organisation. The following morning the Branch was represented at the Service of Remembrance at the Canadian Cemetery at Brookwood, where we were invited to parade. It was a short but very impressive service. **Peter Unwin** laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch.

On Remembrance Sunday our members attended the service at the Royal Garrison Church. This is always a very emotive occasion. The church is full and the service is followed by a march past and the laying of wreaths. **Mike Wilson** laid our Branch wreath.

The St Omer lunch has for some years past been a notable occasion for the Aldershot branch. This year it was held in mid Nov but it produced the same jovial atmosphere as our Christmas lunches had in the past. As our guests, we had the pleasure of the company of the OC, **Nick Beecher** and members of 251 Sig Sqn and the Editor of *The Wire*, **Bernard Redshaw**. After the luncheon both **Nick Beecher** and **Bernard** said a few words to the assembled company. As usual, we had an excellent repast and impressive service. We are still hopeful that we may not have seen the last of St Omer.

The December lunch, arranged by Mary Pagan at the *Bat and Ball*, went off with its usual success. At this time of the year, the event engendered a festivity lacking in mid summer. It was well attended and the choice of dishes and the quality make this a very popular event.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Allibone**
Secretary **Phil West**

Twelve members of the Branch attended the Commandant's Parade in August at Sandhurst. This is the final rehearsal for the annual Sovereign's Parade and passing out of cadets at the end of training in the Academy. After the parade our members joined those from Aldershot, Reading, Southampton and West London for a picnic.

In September, the Branch held an informal lunch in the village of Small Dole. This was well attended and enjoyed by all present as the pub serves good food. The organisers attributed the success to careful, in depth, reconnaissance as recommended in all military manuals.

Remembrance Day was a beautiful, bright, but chilly day. Our Standard was carried by **John Chinchen**, with **Gordon Holloway** and **Tony Allibone** as escorts. **Dave Tupper** laid the wreath on behalf of the Branch and **Michael Lockyer** took quite a few photographs. Afterwards **Ken Brown** and **Ursula Lockyer** joined the others at the TA Centre at the invitation of 884 Tp. Our Chairman, **Tony Allibone**, was pleased to present the Tp OC, **Paul Maple-Durham**, with two framed photos of the members of 884 Troop who provided the Honour Guard at last year's Remembrance Service.

The Gurkha Fundraising Night was held in October. **Mr Jim Thomsett**, the fund raising Director for the Trust, gave an interesting presentation, illustrated by slides, showing the work of the Trust. It was of particular interest to hear up to date news of our sponsored pensioner, giving a sense of reality to a link across the world, and how the funds raised helped to ensure that the Branch could continue to assist this work. At the end of the evening, Jim presented a replica Kukri to the Branch.

Fourteen Branch members have been issued with the RSA WW2 Veterans lapel badge. These were well received and some have already been seen on blazer lapels at social events.

There was a slightly smaller turnout for the October coffee morning, but it continues to be a very pleasant occasion particularly for those members who do not find it easy to attend evening functions, or for those where travel is involved.

The Branch Annual Dinner took place at the end of November at the usual venue in Hove. Nearly 80 guests and members sat down to an excellent meal in beautiful surroundings, resulting from the hard work of the Committee. Apart from our usual members, we had guests from Cyprus, Portugal and Brazil. Our President, **Brig Colin Brown**, and his wife **Heather** attended and after the meal our guest, **Brig Michael Lithgow**, responded for the guests with an interesting account of the current work of the serving Corps.

Finally, we had an interesting evening meeting to round off the year with a magic lantern show. There were two Victorian lanterns working, to enable us to see moving slides, which were very amusing.

The oldest slide was from 1870, and there were slides of the old Brighton seafront with fire-eaters, strong men and clowns. There were beautifully painted slides of amusing characters that told a story. We even had the words of a carol which we all sang to and gave the meeting a truly Christmas flavour.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

It cannot have escaped the eagle eyes of other association contributors, that in the last three editions of *The Wire*, the usual lively descriptions of East Kent Branch adventures, social events and personalities have been conspicuous by their absence. We apologise and trust that our reappearance, especially in the brilliant, new, all colour editions, will enliven the Association section even more.

As usual, the summer months have been busy for the Branch. A brief summary of events will show that our absence from print, did not mean a falling off of interest and enthusiasm, on the part of Members.

Twenty-two Members enjoyed the Annual Reunion in Blandford, and double that number joined the ranks marching through the streets of Canterbury to the Cathedral, in commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of VE/VJ Day. The Committee performed their annual thespian extravaganza in **Gen John's** lovely garden, with a very loose version of a *Dad's Army* sketch. In October, a coach load of us went to the Imperial War Museum in South London, where we wandered amongst guns, tanks, vehicles and things, and reminisced. This year's Remembrance Day saw a goodly number, the largest of all the various Associations, marching the streets of the City to the Cathedral. As on all occasions, where we have ventured away from home, the Committee have ensured that we have eaten well afterwards, but in September they excelled themselves. This was thanks to a recommendation from the Chairman, when a party of over two dozen went to sea across the Channel, remained on board the P&O ferry, enjoyed a meal of banquet proportions and partied!

Much else has happened whilst we have been off the air, but we will not appropriate valuable space in the new colour *Wire*. Suffice it to say that we are back in business. Sadly, during our absence from print, we have lost three Lady Members: **Mrs Meta Sawyer**, widow of the late **Lt Col Bert Sawyer**; **Capt Sara Banks,** who died after a short illness; and **Hilda Watkin Edwards** who was admitted to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital in October and sadly passed away.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) P Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

At the end of October, around 100 Branch Members and friends attended our annual Supper and Disco, with a splendid curry and all the trimmings supplied by **Shirley Anderson**. While **Denny Austin**, singer and DJ kept us thoroughly entertained - it turns out that he had appeared in *Stars in their Eyes*. We would certainly recommend him.

The end of the evening was performed in traditional style, with **Roy Bilby** parading the Standard to signify the end of another very enjoyable evening. Congratulations to the Social Committee for another well organised event.

On Remembrance Sunday our Branch Members along with 36 Sig Regt and the local Royal British Legion paraded at the Ilford War Memorial at Newbury Park. It was a dry but very cold morning, and we were grateful for the invitation from 36 Sig Regt to attend the TAC afterwards, where a few drinks and hot curry soon warmed us up again.

At our last 2005 meeting in November, not only did we have our normal end of year social occasion with a buffet, but we also managed to fit in a guest speaker, **Leslie Sutton**. He gave a talk on the 60th anniversary of the Nuremberg Trials. This provided a fascinating insight on the massive amount of administration involved in bringing the war criminals to justice. **Leslie** was serving in the RAF at the time, and his personal memories added greatly to the re-telling of this information.

Whilst writing, we would like to make a special mention to two of our Branch Members; **John** and **Brenda Eggleton**. Over the last few months, they have put in a tremendous amount of effort, organising a massive number of photos and newspaper cuttings about the Branch and attached Signals units, from the last 30 or 40 years. They have collated these into three very impressive albums. When they volunteered for the task early in 2005, it looked an impossible job to catalogue all the collected bits and put them into some kind of chronological order, and identify who was in the photos. The fact that they have now done this superbly, is reflected by the fact that members are queuing up to borrow the albums, to look through them and bring back all the memories.

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, Regt and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 22.00hrs on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

To see the latest news on all our future events, please visit our web pages at
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon/index.htm

EASTBOURNE BRANCH

Chairman **Chris Deadman**
Secretary **Ron Brodie**

It's been a reasonably good year for the Branch. Attendance at meetings has fluctuated with the weather, as our older 'stalwart' members find it getting harder to get out in the colder climes. We have, however, rekindled our liaison with 56 Sig Sqn (V) and this has resulted in a small influx of new, younger members, and brought our average age down considerably!

Our Annual Dinner was held on 15th October in the seafront Langharn (Quality) Hotel. For a variety of reasons, we had our lowest attendance for many years. Even so, quality made up for quantity and our honoured guests, The Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan** and the CO 31 Sig Regt (V) **Lt Col Sarah**

Guests of Honour, General Sir Sam Cowan and Lt Col Sarah Streete flanked by Celise and Col Alan Dexter, the Branch President.

Streete enjoyed themselves immensely, as did everyone else who attended.

We recently hired a small coach, and several members of the Branch journeyed in to London, to visit the Cabinet War Rooms and the newly opened Churchill Museum. After an absorbing three hours between the two attractions, we had a couple of hours at the Imperial War Museum before escaping London, just ahead of the rush hour. It was an interesting and full day, which everyone enjoyed.

Thus ends the report from Eastbourne the 'Resort of the Year'. Remember, if you are holidaying in the area look us up!!

The Branch meets on the second Thursday of each month at 20.00hrs in the Royal Engineers Association Club, Latimer Road, adjacent to the TAC. We extend a warm welcome to any visitors to Eastbourne, to come and join us.

Each meeting, except for the AGM in May, is basically a social evening. If there is anything to report, the Chairman or Secretary calls for attention and passes the information on accordingly.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Bill Irving**
Secretary **Mrs Olive Irving**

The Exmouth Branch of The Royal Signals Association was proud to be part of the emotive Remembrance Services, held in Exmouth on both 11 and 13 November. Our Branch Standard was paraded on the 11th by **Paul Upton**, and on Remembrance Sunday by **Sally Reggler**.

The Branch members were proud to march following the Standards of so many organisations. It was a humbling experience to see so many service and exservice personnel, proudly marching with pride and displaying their medals. What a sight for all the young people who were there contributing, or,just watching.

Three wreaths were laid by lady members of our Branch: The Royal Signals wreath; one for The Royal Canadian Legion (Kincardine, Ontario); and one for all those who did not return from the Cyprus Conflict (1954-57). A wreath was laid on 11th November in Kincardine, Ontario in comradeship for the Exmouth Branch RSA.

The three wreaths laid on 13 Nov. Olive Irving, Chris Manley, Rita Goodman

As the year comes to a close, our Branch is looking towards party time. On 1 December, the Branch is meeting for Christmas lunch at *The Cat & Fiddle*, Clyst St Mary. On 20 December, it is party time! Instead of a Branch meeting, we are celebrating the Festive Season in style with a party, buffet and entertainment.

May we send all the Military Associations Festive Greetings. We hope that Exmouth continues to have such Associations, which nurture and support friendship and comradeship, for those who have seen so much and given so much.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

On Tuesday 8 November, Ex Branch Chairman **Bill Taylor**, Branch members **Bobby Dickson**, **Andy McArthur** and **Ian Woods** represented the Branch in George Square Glasgow. **Bill** placed a cross in the Field of Remembrance.

On Sunday 13 November, 22 members of the Branch attended the Service of Remembrance at the memorial in George Square Glasgow. Branch member **Ian Woods** laid the wreath, and Branch Standard Bearer **Bill MacNamara** paraded the Branch Standard. After the service, Branch members joined the members of 32 Sig Regt (V) at HQ in Jardine Street for lunch, provided by the Regiment's Chefs.

The Annual St Andrew's Dinner Dance was held on Saturday 19 November, with an attendance of over 70 members and guests. The Drill Hall in Jardine Street, Maryhill Glasgow was decorated with the Signals colours.

At the top table with Branch President **Lt Col A Petrie** and **Mrs Norah Petrie**, were Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan** and **Mrs Isobel McMillan**, and **WO2 SSM Ross Dunn,** representing 32 Sig Regt (V), with his partner. **Lt Col Petrie**, in his speech, thanked the members and guests for their attendance, and invited the Chefs, **Master Chef WO2 John Wren**, **Cpl Carruthers** and **LCpl McCormack**, and the volunteer waiters to line up in the hall. He then asked the assembled company to show their appreciation, by applauding them for their splendid efforts.

Branch member **Tom Connor** proposed The Loyal Toast and the Toast to the Colone lin Chief. **SSM Ross Dunn** proposed the toast to The Royal Signals Association, Glasgow Branch. A raffle was held, with the proceeds being donated to Erskine Hospital. The committee members wish to thank all members and friends who donated the prizes.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Secretary **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

We start these notes on a very sad note having just learned of the sudden death of the General Secretary, **Col (Retd) GN (Neill) Donaldson, OBE**. The Northern Ireland Branch Officers and Members would like to convey their deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

Our ever busy Standard Bearer **Billy Dixon** was honoured to be asked to parade the Northern Ireland Standard in London on 10 July, along with other RSA Standards, in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the ending of WW2. The parade route was along the Mall and into Buckingham Palace, where the Queen appeared on the balcony. **Billy** tells me he felt very proud to be there to represent the Branch, and fly our Standard and he enjoyed the experience immensely. **Billy's** next outing was to parade the Branch Standard at the Royal British Legion pageant, in the Waterfront Hall Belfast, again in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the ending of WW2. To crown it all, I believe he managed to get his photograph into the 'Soldier' Magazine but without the Standard this time.

On Monday 7 November, Royal Signals Units in Northern Ireland, led by 15 Sig Regt, gathered at the Garden of Remembrance in Palace Bks, Holywood, Co. Down. We gathered to remember all Royal Signals personnel who were killed in Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands. Wreaths and crosses were laid. Branch Vice President, **Lt Col (Retd) CN Lightfoot**, represented the Branch and also laid a cross for his son, **Paul**, who was killed on active service in the Falklands.

As usual in November, our Chairman, **Jim Reilly**, joined with The Lord Mayor, City Councillors, Regular and TA Forces and ex-service associations at Belfast City Hall, to lay a cross on behalf of the Branch at the Cenotaph. The Branch is grateful to **Jim**, who has carried out this task for some years now. On Remembrance Sunday Branch Members, led by Chairman **Jim Reilly**, and preceded by the Branch Standard, ably carried by **Billy Dixon**, joined with 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt (V) and the ACF in a parade to St Mark's Parish Church, where a wreath was laid by **Jim Reilly**. After the parade, the Hon Sec **Ian Wolfe** laid a cross at a memorial in the camp, for the late past Chairman **Tom Maguire** and others. **John Loveday** also laid a cross. At the conclusion, food was provided for all by 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt (V).

The time for our 50th Anniversary dinner on Friday 3 March is drawing nearer. The major arrangements have been settled, particularly with the very willing help of the CO, RSM and many members of 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt (V). Tickets are selling well. Anyone reading this, who may be contemplating attending, should book their tickets very soon, as they may be limited. Our books of ballots are still selling. Let us know if you would like to have some. We are looking forward to hosting our good friend **Peter Cuckow** at last, and of course to our National Chairman and also our own Northern Ireland product The Master himself.

A welcome awaits any serving or ex-Signaller at Clonaver Camp, Belfast on the 3. Wednesday of each month. Why not check out our web site for 'what's on'?

READING BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Pauline Tennant**
Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Hugh Nealon**

2005 was a very successful year for the Branch, and now we look forward to an equally successful 2006. The 2005 Remembrance period gave us time to pause and reflect on times past, as we attended the various ceremonies in the area. A small party from the Branch travelled to Windsor on Remembrance Sunday, as usual, to join 94 (BY) Sig Sqn at the riverside memorial, and were entertained to a curry lunch afterwards.

The usual admin had been tidied up at the Branch Meeting, held at the beginning of November, followed by a very good pub lunch. Then the year was rounded off nicely with a very enjoyable Christmas Social at the beginning of December. Nearly forty people attended, and although it was probably too early, for some, to get in the Christmas mood, everyone tucked in to the spread organised by **Thelma Wakefield**, and husband **John**. The singing of traditional carols followed supper. One or two knew alternative versions, and the awkward squad helped with the descant.

By the time this item is published we shall be wishing 'Bon Voyage' to **Bernard Redshaw**, as he returns to the Antipodes. Not only has he been the highly successful Editor of *The Wire*, but he has also been a very valued member of this Branch. We are sad to see him go, and wish him every success and happiness for the future.

The next major event in the calendar will be the Branch AGM, which will be at Caversham Heath Golf Club, on 11 March 2006. Further details will be found on the Branch web site, which is ably administered by our Information Officer, and Assistant Secretary **Col (Retd) George Verdon**. The address is: http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/reading/index.htm or if you are as baffled as the rest of us, search on Royal Signals Association, and follow the Branch links!

A belated Happy New Year to all our readers.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Chairman **Sid Smith**
Secretary **Tony Dear**

Ex-signaller **Wayne Broadhurst**, of RSA Southampton and District Branch, has decided that he misses the green kit too much. During his service, **Wayne** served with 3 Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, 206 Sig Sqn, 201 Signal Sqn, as well as being attached to 207 Sig Sqn for OP GRANBY. He has recently undertaken his first steps, to become a qualified adult instructor with Hants and Isle of Wight Army Cadet Force.

Wayne is working with 7 Tp, Y Company based in Millbrook, Southampton, passing on some of his military knowledge and skills, to the keen and eager cadets. He also had the honour of taking the recruits on their passing out parade at a recent Company training weekend. He was the first Potential Instructor to ever have this privilege, because a qualified instructor normally takes this parade. 7 Tp conduct many public duties within the Southampton area, so this was good practice for keeping the ACF in the public eye.

Wayne Braddock on the parade square.

Wayne is keen to get his adult instructor qualification, and has already assisted the Company Signals Officer with signals training and competitions. His aim is to get the 'tick in the box' by completing a Signals Instructor course in 2006. If there are any others who can spare an evening a week, and the odd weekend, then the ACF are always on the look out for more instructors. Wayne also plays an active part in the RSA Southampton and District Branch by maintaining the branch website, and keeping it up to date with recent events and news at www.rsasouthampton.freeuk.com

If you are interested in being an instructor with the ACF, then enquiries would be welcomed at your local ACF HQ (see www.armycadets.com or the phone book for details).

SWINDON BRANCH

Chairman **Rod Ashman**
Secretary **Peter Howells**

On November 24 2005, the Branch hosted 215 Sig Sqn at the TA Centre, Swindon. An excellent buffet was provided by our barman **Fred**.

The photo shows our Chairman, **Rod Ashman** presenting the OC, **Maj Nesmith** with a print of the Royal Signals in the Gulf War. It was a great evening with stories of the old days and what is going on today.

YORK BRANCH

Chairman **Mr A Spray**
Secretary **Hazel Spray**

It is with deep regret that we announce the recent demise of two of our members:

Bill Bentley (served 1939 -1946) and **Shaun Whittaker** (served 1984 -1995). **Bill** was one of our few WW2 members, and a veteran of Dunkirk. Condolences were afforded to the families, and Branch representatives attended both burial services.

Our Annual Dinner was held on 25 November and prior to grace being said, we held a minute's silence, in respect for our recently departed comrades. Fifty-two members, partners and guests attended the dinner. Our Guest of Honour this year was hard to establish because 'owing to the exigencies of the service', the majority of RHQ officers were visiting units deployed around the world. However, on the night, we were extremely pleased to host **Maj (QM) T Keates** and **Mrs Sarah Keates**. Those present enjoyed a delicious meal, prepared and presented by the mess staff. Once again, it was a glittering occasion, the tables aglow with candelabra reflecting from the display of mess silver, a sight that always evokes memories of dinner nights that have gone before. With the passing of the port, and toasts over, our President **Maj (Retd) Bryan Abbiss** thanked all those attending.

He informed us that this was the fifty-eighth consecutive dinner held by the Branch, and then introduced **Maj (QM) Keates** to the assembled company. The speech that followed, gave us all an insight into the vast and varied areas of deployment by the Regt. There was a continuing need to visit these units, and he mentioned that he had volunteered for this task, preferably to the detachment in Tampa Florida USA.

Appreciation of **Maj (QM) Keates'** discourse was shown by long and loud applause, after which the company moved into the mess bar and lounge for general socialising, to end a very pleasant evening.

We would like to conclude these notes with the heart felt wish of 'A HAPPY NEW YEAR ' to all members of the Corps, serving and retired.

254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Toby Seymour**
Secretary **Jess Weir**

1945 was a vintage year proclaimed the identity tags worn by the members of the 1945 intakes to celebrate their 60th Anniversary, as all 254s assembled for their Annual Reunion on Friday 14 October 2005. Of course, there were the usual fifty who had arrived the day before. Each of the 1945ers present wore a nametag bearing a photo taken from their original squad photos. It was very interesting to be reminded of how they used to look compared with how they are now.

Friday was the usual meet and greet experience, and as normal, it was not long before the decibels rose to a crescendo. Marvellous what a couple of drinks can make to the noise level. Following a most excellent meal, the meeting and greeting continued until the bars closed. For the first time at the annual OBA Reunion, our newly-acquired RSA Standard was displayed. It will eventually be sent to the Museum for permanent display after the demise of the OBA.

Saturday dawned drab and misty, not really conducive to standing in the open at the Arboretum. However, by the time the coaches arrived and we had all assembled, the sun had broken through, with a promise of a fine day. We arrived at the Arboretum at Alrewas in good time to attend the memorial service at 11.00hrs. Afterwards, we all assembled at our newly-installed Bench and Rowan tree. Our Standard was paraded by **Jim Braid**, and the resident Chaplain conducted a short dedication Ceremony. The Bench and tree bear brass plaques to show that they are in memory of all 254s from the period 1942 to1948. It was then back onto the coaches for a trip to the McArthur Glenn shopping outlet, near Mansfield. Soon after, we were back at the hotel, where it was all hands on deck to get ready for the Champagne Reception provided by the 1945 intakes, followed by the Formal Dinner and dancing.

Toby Seymour had organised the 1945-ers so that the distribution of the champagne, flowers for the ladies and suitably inscribed pens, were given to all. The pieces of the Celebration Cake were wrapped in inscribed napkins. Both the napkins and pens were brought from USA by **Malcolm Peplow**; a very nice gesture. The formal dinner came next, and it was a sumptuous feast. Our outgoing Chairman, **George Severs** called on **Peter McNaughton** to pay tribute to our departed colleagues. Before doing so, **Peter** congratulated **Toby Seymour** on taking over as our new Chairman, and then paid tribute to both **George** and **Margaret** for their seventeen years of dedicated effort and support to 254 OBA. **George** will still be our Life President, keeping an eye on us all. **Peter** then reminded the assembled company that our Memorial Roll now stands at 144, an increase of ten over the past year. The ten who had passed away were: **Mac McKay**, **Don Marsh**, **Ron Nicholas**, **Peter Dixon**, **Doug Bower**, **Keith Hopwood**, **Ron Rearsall**, **Bob Wagstaff**, **Stan Whitehead**, and **Terry Canham**. In addition, there were two ladies: **Isobel Fairbairn** and **Irene Rose**. The toast was proposed to all 254s who have gone ahead on the Advance Party to that final posting. We do remember them.

George Severs then welcomed the long distance attenders: **Bob Shaw** from Oz; **Malcolm** and **Gloria Peplow** from USA; and **Tony** and **Evi Taylor** from Germany, and then thanked the Committee for all their hard work during the year. **Ann** and **Pat Fox Roberts** then conducted the raffle. During the dinner, a bucket had also been passed round to collect for the Aisian Sub Continent Earthquake Appeal. A grand total of £646 was raised on behalf of the earthquake survivors of Pakistan and India.

The next item was the dancing to the *Del Poulton Band*, joined by **Josephine Baker** the wife of **Jeff (Deadly) Baker**, who kept the company entertained with her spirited rendition in the jazz style of many old favourites. At last, the 'witching hour arrived, and it was off to bed for a couple of hours or so. Sunday morning came all to soon, and after a good breakfast, goodbyes were said, and all but the few who were staying until Monday, departed for all points in UK.

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

SEARCH FOR THE KHAKI SPEEDWAY RIDERS

- by Trevor Davies

Question: What do **Gordon McGregor**, **Jim Gregory**, **Squire (Split) Waterman**, **Eric Boothroyd** and **Wally Green** all have in common?

Answer: They all rode speedway in war zones whilst serving in the British Army, in either Egypt, Germany or Italy. On demob, they also went on to ride for professional clubs with **Split Waterman**, **Wally Green**, and **Eric Boothroyd** riding in the Wembley World Individual Championships in the 1950s

There were many squaddies who rode on primarily REME-constructed tracks, using modified DR bikes between 1945-52. This largely forgotten era of motorcycling history is being researched in preparation for a book on the subject.

I have recently completed *Speedway Flyers*, a tribute to RAF speedway riders. During my research, I unearthed details of tracks at Bari, Trani, Molfetta and Naples in Italy, and Tel-El-Kabir, Kabrit, Fayid and El Bella in Egypt.

In addition, in 1946, significant Forces speedway took place in Germany at Hanomag Stadium, Hannover, with team racing and a visit from an ENSA team in the winter of 1945, all entertaining the troops.

I would be delighted to hear from any veterans who rode, spectated, helped construct the tracks or worked on engine tuning. Paper cuttings, pictures or personal memories of these days are all required, so that this amazing period can be recorded for posterity. I will be happy to meet any copying and postage costs.

Please send what you have via **Peter Cuckow**, RSA Admin Offr, Blandford Camp, Dorset, DT11 8RH.

LOST PALS

Terry Bartlett is trying to find old mates shown in the following photos:

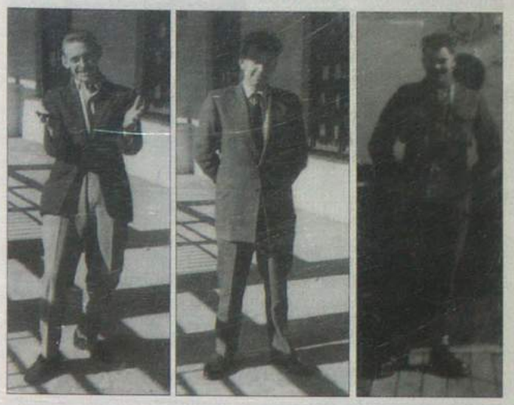

Photo A was a Geordie guy. His trade was DR. Posting: Murray Bks, Hong Kong – Year: 1955-56. He used to earn a few dollars singing in a nightclub in Hong Kong, taking off Nat King Cole.

Photo B This chap is called **? Bell**. Also at Murray Bks, Hong Kong 55-56. Does anyone

Photo C This chap is called **? Hayden** and is a Londoner. Posting Main Division, Korea, 19? Sig Tp, Trade Cipher Op. This posting was opposite Gloucester Hill about 4 miles from the 38th Parallel.

If anyone knows their full names or whereabouts, please contact **Terry Bartlett**, 12 Bridges Road, Norton Canes, Cannock, Staffs WS11 3PB. Tel: 01543-278265.

CORPORAL PETER CHRISTIE (JOCK)

I was married to **Cpl Peter Christie** serving in 3 Sqn, 13 Sig Regt in Berlin 1971 - 1975 (approx). **Peter (Jock)** died in 1976 from cancer. Our son, **Scott** recently broke his back and, realising how near I came to losing him, prompted me to do what I should have done many years ago, i.e. seek out anyone who remembers **Peter**, and has photographs/anecdotes, etc. that I can give to **Scott** who, unfortunately, barely remembers his father, as he was only 3 years old when **Peter** died.

I would also dearly love to visit Berlin with **Scott** to show him where he spent his early years, and to visit the 'hill'. If anyone can help please, contact me. My e-mail address is enigma1@blueyonder.co.uk.

Thank you in anticipation, **Margaret Hancocks**

MR R FERGUSON

SSAFA Livingston have asked if we can help a client of theirs. **Mr R Ferguson** (aged 79, whose wife passed away 3 years ago) is lonely and would like to hear from any former Corps members of his era (India 1945-48).

Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Mr Ferguson** at:

69 Redbrae Ave
Bo'ness
West Lothian
EH51 9TN

2LT PEMBERTON

Mr Nick Austin is hoping that someone will recognise the photograph of whom he believes to be 2Lt **Pemberton**, who came from the Republic of Ireland and was killed in the Normandy campaign in 1944.

Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Mr Austin** at:
91 Calabria Road
Highbury
London
N5 1HX

CORRESPONDENCE

GRENDON UNDERWOOD

From: **Michael Aimable**
70 Wallisdean Avenue
FAREHAM
Hampshire
PO14 1HS
Tel: 01329 311513

Dear Sir

Some time ago I saw a film on TV, about code-makers. There was a short piece about agents' traffic to the wireless station at Grendon Underwood. I would like to get hold a picture of this House (also with the girls at work).

If anyone has a video, disc, or picture, that I could purchase or borrow, I would be very thankful.

Yours...

MEMORIES OF THE TROUBLES

From: **Peter Ormond**
8 Penryn Close
Nuneaton
Warks
CV11 6FF

Dear Editor

Having read your editorial in the October edition of *The WIRE* about Northern Ireland, it has brought back some happy memories of my time spent there with 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn from November 1979 to October 1980.

Variety could be the keyword for the posting. I distinctly remember my second day there, when I was being shown around and taken to the Whiterock Base in Anderson's Town which was just being set up. On the way out in the back of a pig, I saw a bloke get out of a car and put his hand in his inside jacket pocket, so I ducked down. He was only looking for his wallet to pay the taxi fare, but my fertile imagination thought otherwise.

On the job front (done mainly in civvies), maintaining the kit for the roulement units, setting up new control rooms as each unit changed over, the late night call-outs to repair kit or circuits, installing kit for the Int Cells and installing the Heli-Tele cameras in the choppers provided a variety I did not see anywhere else in my Army career. Coupled with this were the other duties when I wore uniform, such as the security duties around Lisburn with mobile patrols. The most memorable one of these was when I was tasked to cordon off a road with my team, due to a suspect device near a hotel. Trying to keep householders from returning to their homes was a task in itself. One stopped in her car and demanded to be let through. 'Madam,' I said, 'there is a suspect...' BOOM!! She realised we weren't joking when she saw the hub caps of whatever vehicle it was, fly high into the sky.

One serious incident involving the Unit was during the set up of the Whiterock Base, when two of the riggers were up the masts and a shout of 'Contact! Wait out.' was heard from the radio room. Shots had been fired at the riggers, and one had been hit. Fortunately, even though he had lost the use of a leg, he managed to get himself down hand-over-hand. Luckily he made a full recovery.

Working closely with Bde Ops had its bonuses, in that I managed to see how other elements worked. I managed to wangle a trip in a Gazelle for a top cover flight during the Parade Season - and wished I hadn't! I have never felt so queasy! They also allowed me on the Wessex post run around the Province. Bandit country was most interesting, with the 'dive-bomber' approach to landing.

It was very much a work hard and play hard Unit, with an excellent team working mentality, and a good social and sport scene. So many memories! All in all, it was a cracking posting, but times move on.

Yours faithfully...

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION PEDAL TO PARIS

- by Maj Angela Scott Galli

8-15 September 05 saw the 10th anniversary of the RBL's flagship fundraising event, Pedal to Paris. Amongst the 270 cyclists taking part were 5 Royal Signals members: **Brig Mike Lithgow**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde; **Maj Angela Scott Galli**, HQ SOinC(A); **WO1 (Spvr IS) Nick Fletcher**, HQ SOinC(A); **WO1(FofS) Kevin Clarke-Brown**, HQ SOinC(A); and **SSgt 'Tommo'** Thompson, ATR Bassingbourn.

The 280-mile challenge began with an early morning start in Greenwich, with a Police escort leading the peloton on its way to Dover for the cross-Channel ferry. The gruelling first day was capped off with a well-earned over-night stay in Calais.

Enjoying the countryside

The following day we split into 3 groups, with riders selecting the speed that most suited their own ability; Fast (ave 18 mph, but actually reached 23 mph most days); Medium (ave 14 mph, but generally stayed at 16 mph); or Social (ave 10 mph, but tended to hover around 14 mph).

Supported by a team of French outriders and British mechanics, the next 3 days of cycling took us through the scenic Pas de Calais, heading south through the Somme and Oise regions of Picardy, via the towns of Abbeville and Beauvais. The route led us through sweeping wooded countryside, peaceful canals, picturesque hamlets and villages and quiet country lanes...cycling country at its best!

All along the route we were touched by the warm welcome of the local villagers, particularly from the people of Picardy and Auchy la Montagne, for whom Pedal to Paris is one of the highlights of their year.

However, nothing compared with the finale, where, as a group, we were escorted by French Police down the Champs Elysée to l'Arc de Triomphe, to the sound of horns blowing and lights flashing - an experience never to be forgotten. The culmination of the formalities was a formal ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, flanked by a French military band, and a number of WW2 veterans from both sides of the Channel.

Triumphant at l'Arc de Triomphe

Along with 2 of my colleagues from Blandford, we raised just over £3,300 for RBL. This could not have been possible without the support of family, friends, and colleagues in Blandford Garrison. The Blandford Branch of RBL, BAE Systems, Fletcher Thomson Associates, and a number of small businesses also donated raffle prizes to assist our fundraising events.

The money raised this year has already reached an amazing £250,000, every penny of which will make a lasting difference to the lives and memories of many serving and ex-Service personnel in the UK.

If you have not already made a donation but would like to do so, you can donate online at www.poppybike.org.uk and follow the link to 'Sponsor a Rider' using any of the individuals named above to access the donations page. Alternatively, if you enjoy cycling and fancy a challenge for 2006, then log onto the website at at www.poppybike.org.uk and check out the Future Events link. Thank you for your support.

REUNIONS

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON (SAM) ASSOCIATION

Reunion to be held at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Leicester on the weekend of 28 - 30 April 2006.

All former members the Sqn, including ex-members of 653, 654 and 655 Sig Tps will be made most welcome.

Contact: **Geoff Scott**,
2 Waverley Road
Elland
West Yorkshire
HX5 0NL
Tel: 01422 373075
Email:
berylandgeoff@alfiesworld.freeserve.co.uk
or Visit: www.260sigsqnsam.abelgratis.co.uk

LAST POST

Ashpool - Sig PS Ashpool	*Served* 1942/46 *Died* 08/10/05
Ayerst - Cpl JH Ayerst	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 03/10/05
Beacher - LCpl RG Beacher	*Served* 1959/68 *Died* 01/09/05
Benson - Sgt J Benson	*Served* 1966/91 *Died* 12/09/05
Bixby - ?? R Bixby	*Served* 1950/53 *Died* ??/10/05
Blood - Cpl G Blood	*Served* 1950/56 *Died* 16/10/05
Canham - Lt Col TP Canham	*Served* 1942/82 *Died* ??/10/05
Cooper - Capt J Cooper	*Served* 1946/76 *Died* 30/09/05
Cresswell - Sig RR Cresswell	*Served* 1946/48 *Died* ??/09/05
Custance - Sgt R Custance	*Served* 1939/46 *Died* ??/08/05
Donaldson - Col GN Donaldson	*Served* 1966/03 *Died* 25/11/05
Fox - SSgt AR Fox	*Served* 1963/90 *Died* 24/10/05
Gale - Lt Col AR Gale	*Served* 1967/00 *Died* ??/11/05
Giffiths - Sgt FS Griffiths	*Served* 1933/45 *Died* 01/11/05
Harker - LCpl AE Harker	*Served* 1939/45 *Died* 21/02/05
Hewitson - WO2 EJ Hewitson	*Served* 1942/70 *Died* ??/11/05
Hull - LCpl AHS Hull	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 28/10/05
Huxtable - Sgt DJ Huxtable	*Served* 1939/46 *Died* ??/09/05
Kendrick - Wo2 S Kendrick	*Served* 1937/59 *Died* 07/11/05
Lawson - Capt FG Lawson	*Served* 1934/48 *Died* 22/08/05
Ledger - SSgt EG Ledger	*Served* 1937/59 *Died* 02/09/05
Littlefield - Cpl DW Littlefield	*Served* 1949/51 *Died* 06/10/05
Lydiatt - Sig G Lydiatt	*Served* 1975/83 *Died* 16/11/05
Makin - Sig K Makin	*Served* 1947/49 *Died* 10/01/05
Ruston - Maj PR Ruston	*Served* 1941/83 *Died* 22/11/05
Salter - Dvr DA Salter	*Served* 1944/48 *Died* 26/07/05
Smith - Cpl DJ Smith	*Served* 1959/82 *Died* 09/11/05
Stevenson - Cpl TW Stevenson	*Served* 1950/56 *Died* 09/11/05
Stoddard - WO2 BJ Stoddard	*Served* 1954/76 *Died* 07/10/05
Tyrrell-Gray - Lt Col RJ Tyrrell-Gray	*Served* 1940/67 *Died* 2005

OBITUARIES

DONALDSON - Col (Retd) Neil Donaldson OBE died on 25 November 2005.

Neil Donaldson was born in August 1948, and was educated at Bishop Auckland and West Hartlepool Grammar Schools. He entered RMAS in September 1966 and was commissioned into Royal Signals in August 1968.

His first appointment was as a Tp Comd in 1 Div Sig Regt, after which, he served in a number of varied posts in the Far East, Germany, Northern Ireland, the Gulf and UK.

In 1988, he assumed command of 30 Sig Regt in Blandford. Later he served in Namibia, leading the British contingent of the UN Transition Assistance Gp. For this, he was appointed OBE.

He was in the Gulf following the invasion of Kuwait, and after attending JSDC in 1991, he returned there on attachment to the UN Special Commission in Bahrain.

Back in UK, he served in HQ NE District, then as DCOS 5 Div, and in 1996, Dep Comd 19 Mech Bde.

During 1999 – 2000, he was back in the Gulf - in Umm Qasr, with the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission. In 2000, he returned to Blandford as DCOS/Regt Col, until his retirement from Service in 2003.

After a short absence in Preston as an MOD civilian working on plans for civil emergencies, **Neil** returned to Blandford and the Corps in June 2004, making his mark as Regimental Secretary.

Neil Donaldson was well-known, respected and loved by everyone who knew him. There are so many people in the Corps who can relate a **Neil Donaldson** story, and each one exemplifies his character. He was adept at cutting through peripherals to get to the things that really mattered.

He was also well known for his dry wit. Sayings such as '…he was expelled from the Khmer Rouge for cruelty,' or '…if having a brain were a criminal offence, he would be acquitted' are instantly recognised as being attributable to him (often known as 'Donaldsonisms'). But above this, he was a kind and generous man, always willing to give help and encouragement to anyone who needed it. He will be greatly missed by the Corps and all who knew him.

Neil leaves his wife, **Nicky** and daughter, **Milly**, both of whom he was utterly devoted to.

HAWKINS - Edward Tristram Hawkins (Ted) died on 28 August 2005.

Ted Hawkins joined the Middx Yeomanry in 1939 and was posted to the Middle East with 4 Sqn, the only Middx Yeomanry Sqn to remain intact throughout the War. The unit provided comms for 22 Armd Bde, part of 7 Armd Div (The Desert Rats) throughout the Desert Campaign, through Italy, thence via France, the Low Countries and into Germany.

In December 1941, during the withdrawal from Agedabia, when **Ted** was wireless op in the forward ACV, they were bombed by Stukas, and the veh caught fire. Other vehs were also hit, and there were many casualties. **Ted** escaped with minor injuries, but returned immediately to the burning ACV for his colleague **Teddy Barton**. **Ted** pulled him out, but his friend had succumbed to his injuries. He was Mentioned in Despatches.

After Salerno, 22 Armd Bde returned to England to prepare for D-Day, and **Ted** landed on Gold Beach. He was IC Sig Office for the remainder of the European Campaign. At the end of hostilities, the Sqn spent time in Germany, and **Ted** being an excellent horseman, was selected to represent the Sqn in competition.

He was demobbed in 1946, and he remained with the same group of Army friends after the war. He immediately took an active part in the RSA, his first contribution being to put together a Role of Honour for 1939-45. This was a challenging and painstaking task but, with the help of his wife **Marian**, he compiled the book which now resides in St Paul's Cathedral.

Despite a heart attack in 1990, **Ted** took on the demanding roll of Membership Secretary. He wrote a brief history of the Yeomanry, and continued to attend quarterly and annual Assn meetings until 2004. He was known and admired by young and old alike, and was respected by all who knew him.

Last year, **Ted** and **Marian** made several visits to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, to arrange for the plaque to be placed on the Middlesex Yeomanry tree. He had looked forward to a Dedication Ceremony.

Ted is survived by his wife, **Marian**, his two children and five grandchildren.

LAWSON - Capt Francis George Lawson died on 27 August 2005.

Frank Lawson joined Royal Signals as a boy soldier in 1934. His first posting was to Northern Ireland in 1935, and then to Hong Kong in 1936. From 1937 to 1939 manned the British Embassy radio station in Peking, until he was forced out at the start of WW2. He was then posted to War Office Signals in 1940, serving in various theatres during the War, ending up in Ceylon until demob in 1948.

After demob, **Frank** went into car sales, and later into clothing, where he became Director of a large textile manufacturing company. **Florence**, his wife for over 50 yrs, died in 1993, and their only son also passed away 6 months later. Later, he met **Dorothy**, a widow, and they married in 1996.

Frank was a Freemason for over 50 years, and President of the Sale Branch for 10 years. Over the last 23 years, illness had taken its toll, and at 87, he could no longer attend Branch meetings or functions.

He leaves a widow **Dorothy**, sister **Ada**, daughter in law **Wendy** grandchildren **Helen**, Colin and **Janet**, and five great grandchildren.

STOCKTON - Sig John Stockton (Stocky) died on 20 September 05.

John Stockton joined Royal Signals in Shrewsbury on 15 April 1943, aged 18. After the mandatory six weeks' infantry trg, it was on to Catterick for DR trg, before posting to 15 AF Sig Regt forming up at Crumlin near Belfast, and 145 DR Section for further intensive trg for active service in Europe.

Following VE Day, he was posted to 147 DR Section, 18 AF Sig Regt, returning to UK in June/July 1945, for 28 days embarkation leave prior to the planned invasion of Japan. This event didn't take place, so in October 1945, he transferred to 3 Inf Div, destined for Egypt and Palestine. It was not until 28 June 1947 that **Stocky** eventually arrived back in UK to receive his Civvy suit.

He will be sadly missed by his wife **Milly**, son **John**, daughter **Janet**, and his 5 grand children and one great grand child.

PRINGLE - Brig Douglas Pringle OBE died on 18 April 2005, aged 93.

The elder son of **Maj Alexander Pringle**, formerly of the Indian Army and the Egyptian Police, **Douglas Pringle** had a varied career that took him to India, Eritrea, North Africa, East Africa, Palestine, Cyprus and Hong Kong.

Born in 1912, he was educated at Dean Close School, where he excelled at cross-country running. He entered RMA Woolwich in 1930, and was commissioned into Royal Signals in 1932, having gained his colours for Athletics, Swimming and Modern Pentathlon. After trg at Catterick, he was posted to 4 Div Sig Regt, serving initially in Colchester and subsequently in Canterbury. An exceptionally fit young officer, he ran successfully for the Three Services Milocarian Athletic Club, competing in the British Games at White City in 1936. That year, he was selected as a member of the British Olympic Team for Modern Pentathlon at Hitler's Berlin Olympic Games. His early life revolved round the horse drawn Cable Wagon, horses in general, hunting and athletics.

In 1936 **Douglas Pringle** was posted to India, where he joined 2 Cav Bde Sig Tp in Sialkot, completing the demanding Indian Cavalry School course at Saugor, qualifying in the top grade. He became proficient in polo, pig sticking and show jumping. At the outbreak of WW2, he was Adjt 5 Indian Div Sig Regt, and went with them to the Middle East, seeing service in Eritrea and North Africa. He returned to India in 1941 (by which time he was a temp Maj and 2IC of the Regt), to study at Staff College, Quetta. The journey was in a RAAF Sunderland flying boat, taking off from the Nile at Cairo, and refuelling in the Dead Sea, Lake Habbaniya (West of Baghdad), and Basrah en route to Karachi.

Returning to 5 Indian Div in similar manner, he was summoned by **Maj Gen Penney**, SOinC Middle East, to be informed that he was to be Lt Col, at the age of 29, jumping the rank of Maj entirely. He was to be the first Royal Signals instructor at the ME Staff College in Haifa, spending just over a year there.

He spent a short period as GSO1 Ops at HQ Palestine and TransJordan in 1943, where his focus was primarily on the defensive requirements against a possible German invasion from the North via the Caucasus. One of the tasks was the layout of a defensive line along the Carmel Range, from Haifa to Jenin and back to Jericho. This was to be the second line of defence, the first being in the mountains of Syria and the Lebanon.

At the end of 1943 he was recalled to India for parachute trg, and to raise the new 44 Indian Airborne Div Sig Regt. The War ended shortly before the Div was due to drop, either on Bangkok or the Causeway at Singapore. He commanded the Regt until 1946, when he returned to the Airborne Trg Establishment in Salisbury and Aldershot. By the end of 1946, he was back in Palestine, this time commanding 6 Airborne Div Sig Regt, where he was twice Mentioned in Despatches for gallantry. He returned from Palestine with the Regt in 1948 to Perham Down Camp, Tidworth, to the subsequent disbandment of 6 Airborne Div, and the reduction of the Regt to form an Independent Para Bde Sig Sqn, later numbered 16 Independent Para Bde Gp Sig Sqn, the 'one' and 'six' coming from the two famous Airborne Divs. He remained a keen supporter of Airborne Signals, regularly attending their Annual Dinner. He regarded the Airborne Signals as the elite of the Corps, with a spirit and style that made them worthy successors to the horsed Cavalry Bde sig units of early years.

From 1949 to 1953 he was Comd Victory College, RMA Sandhurst, as a brevet Lt Col. He went on to be AQMG, GHQ East Africa Comd, 1953-1956, in Nairobi, where he was awarded the OBE for service during the Mau Mau uprising. After a year in UK Land Forces, working on the formative stage of Civil Defence planning in the nuclear age, he was promoted Colonel and became GSO1 Signals 5 at the War Office. In this appointment, his work was of considerable importance in planning the structure of the Corps in the newly emerging all Regular Army.

He was promoted Brigadier in 1958, and became CSO GHQ Middle East in Cyprus from 1958 to 1961, during the EOKA campaign. After further brief service in 1962 as CSO Northern Comd in York, his final appointment was Comd British Bde and Garrison in Hong Kong. He retired in 1965, his all-round experience having been of great assistance to his Corps.

From 1966 to 1974 he was the Bursar of the Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover. In addition to the traditional responsibilities of Bursar, he took enormous interest in the boys' military affairs, advising and assisting those who wished to join the Army, and stage-managing the school's annual Trooping the Colour Parade, in a manner that would have done credit to Horse Guards. He was an enthusiastic military historian, and member of military societies till the end of his life.

Douglas Pringle, together with his brother, **Maj RC (Colin) Pringle**, a Royal Signals officer who served with the Chindits in Burma and 6 Airborne Div Sig Regt in Palestine, was the third generation of Army Officers in his family. His elder son followed him into the Army, and was commissioned into The Royal Green Jackets in 1966. In 1940, **Douglas Pringle** married **Wendy Gordon**, daughter of **Col RE Gordon MC** RE. It was an exceptionally happy marriage. **Wendy** predeceased him by six months, and his younger son by two years. He is survived by his daughter and elder son.

Douglas Pringle was a man of strong personality, strong views and sincere convictions. Modest, private and self-deprecating, he had no time for self-seekers or for those that did not pull their full weight. He always fought, without fear, for what he believed to be the rights of those who worked for him, even when it was plainly contrary to his own interests. He never feared to speak up. He had no time for eyewash, and with impeccable personal standards of turnout, he always insisted that no technician was any better for wearing long hair or a grubby hat.

GRIFFITHS – Sgt FS Griffiths (Fred) died on 1 November 2005, aged 95.

Fred Griffiths enlisted in the TA, in 1934, and joined 43 (Wessex) Div Sigs. Peacetime soldiering was brought to an abrupt end on 1 September 1939, when he joined the Regular Army.

He spent four years training all over the south of England, mostly in Kent, and became Cable Section Sgt, ready for the invasion of Europe in June 1944. On D-Day+12, his unit assembled at West Ham Stadium, and from there, embarked on a Liberty ship at East India Dock, to join a convoy forming up at Southend-on-Sea.

On the demise of his Section Offr, **Fred** took over dual roles of Section Offr and Section Sgt, a position he held for most of the rest of his service in Europe. He was involved during the advance through Europe, and took part in the many battles, including OP MARKET GARDEN and the Ardennes Offensive. He crossed the Rhine to Bremen, where 43 (Wessex) Div fought its last battle.

At the ceasefire, **Fred** ended his military career at Celle, from where he was demobilised. He received a Certificate from C-in-C 21 Army Gp, **FM Bernard Montgomery**, and a ticket home. His war was over. **Nancy**, **Fred's** wife of 70 years, died on 14 October 2005, just nineteen days earlier.

He leaves behind **Keith**, **Martin**, **Jean**, **Peter Alfred** and **Betty**, and grandchildren, **Sally**, **Michael**, **Andrew**, Sarah and **Elaine**.

HARRISON - **Edgar Harrison OBE MC BEM** died on 26 November 2005.

Edgar Charles Harrison was born in South Wales on St David's Day 1915. In 1929, at the age of fourteen, he was attested at the Welsh Fusiliers' Depot at Maindy Bks, Cardiff, joining the Corps as an apprentice. He trained at Catterick,

After serving his apprenticeship, he was sent to China, where he found himself in the wireless room of the British Embassy in Peking. He worked to other stations in China, to Hong Kong, and later to the SIS (M16) station then situated in Barnes.

In 1939, he was sent to St John's Wood Bks in London, where he was given a sealed envelope and a railway pass to Northampton. He was instructed not to open the envelope until he was on the train. He then found he was to alight at Bletchley Station, where 'someone will meet you.' This was to be **Charles Emary**, of M16 (Section VIII). **Edgar** was taken to the Mansion at Bletchley Park, where he was put into civilian clothes to train agents going into Europe in Morse code. He was now a member of Section VIII.

In September 1940, he was asked to go to Greece to set up a covert station in Athens at the British Military Mission. Thus **Edgar** entered the Middle East zone, where he served for a number of war years.

When the British Army was driven out of Greece, **Edgar** evacuated with them. He fought at the Battle of Kalamata, even taking part in a bayonet charge, before being forced to leave, first to Crete, and then on to Egypt.

He had many adventures, including working with a covert team in Georgia, and Ukraine. He was parachuted into Yugoslavia, worked with the Long Range Desert Group, and was **Churchill's** wireless operator, whenever the PM was in the Middle East.

Churchill always wanted to have the benefit of uptodate ULTRA intelligence during his travels, especially in the presence of **Roosevelt** and **Stalin**; so **Edgar** was included at their conferences.

After the War, he stayed with the organisation, now renamed the Diplomatic Wireless Service (DWS), as it moved from Whaddon Hall to Hanslope Park, some few miles north of Bletchley.

In 2004 he attended a Champagne reception at Bath to celebrate the 75th anniversary of his having 'taken the King's shilling' in 1929, and many tributes were paid to him. The nation has lost a fine and unassuming man.

RUSTON - **Maj PR Ruston MBE (Pat)** died on 22 November 2005.

Pat Ruston was born on 24 September 1918 in West Bromwich. After attending West Bromwich Grammar School, she was initially employed as a shorthand typist at Mills Aluminium Works, before joining the Civil Service as a Post Office Switchboard Operator and then as a Supervisor Class 2.

She enlisted into the ATS, as a Switchboard Operator in 1942, and saw 5 years in the ranks before being commissioned in 1947. 2 years later, she transferred into the newly-formed Women's Royal Army Corps.

Throughout her career, **Pat** was attached to Royal Signals, serving in Aldershot, Scotland, Germany, and for a long period, as an instructor at RSS, then in Catterick. In 1961 she was posted to Cambridge as the Senior WRAC Officer in 54 (EA) Sig Regt (TA), in time becoming the PSAO when the Unit was reformed as part of 36 (E) Sig Regt (V) in 1967. She held the post until her retirement in 1983, when she devoted herself with equal conviction and commitment to the Barnado's Charity Shop in Royston.

Universally known by all ranks as **Auntie Pat**, she devoted herself to the welfare of the soldiers in the Sqn, frequently being mistaken by them for the Sqn OC.

She took huge pride in her work as an admin officer, always insisting that the pay sheets were completed on time, even if this meant completing them in bed! In younger days a gifted athlete, she maintained an interest in the sport to the end, as she did in crosswords and newspapers in general. An active member of the Altrusens, The Lady Taverners, The Mission to Seamen, and the WRAC Assn, and as a stalwart of the RSA Blandford Reunions, **Pat** was appointed MBE in 1983, a fitting recognition of a life of devoted service to her country.

BIXBY - **Sig Ronald Thomas Bixby** died on 6 October 2005.

Ronald Bixby served as a Signalman in the 1950's, initially attached to a Rhodesian unit. He went on to serve with the first Royal Gurkha Rifles in Malaya.

He will be much missed by friends and family. He leaves behind wife, **Chris**, daughters, **Kay** and **Joanne**, and son, **Jamie**.

ADVERTISEMENTS

TOT/FofS LUNCH

A TOT/FofS lunch will be held on 29 March 06 in the Blandford WOs and Sgts Mess.

It is open to serving or retired Officers and SNCOs who have passed the FofS course.

For further details, contact **WO1(FofS) PA Holland** on 01258 482411 or email corps.fofs@rss.army.mod.uk

ARMY LADIES TUG OF WAR – SELECTION CAMP

A Selection Camp to choose the Team will be held at RTMC Chilwell on 11-12 March 06.

Anyone interested should contact **Cpl Sam Martin** on 94475 2296 or **Bdr Bridget Harrington-Smith** on 94322 5729.

HARROGATE APPRENTICES - 53A AND B INTAKES

To coincide with the annual AOHA reunion, I am organising a 'draft' 50th Anniversary Reunion for all members of 53A and B Intakes. This will take place on the afternoon and evening of 7 October 2006, at the Swallow St George Hotel, Harrogate.

If you would be interested in attending, please contact **Alan Roberts** on 01342 714984 soonest.

JUST RECEIVED YOUR PENSION TRANSFER PACK?

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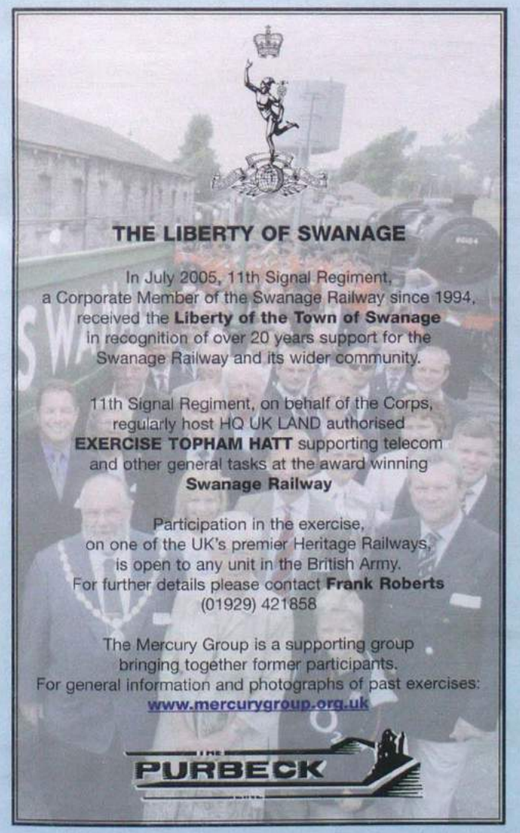

THE LIBERTY OF SWANAGE

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**

PURBECK

THE ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

are holding Winter Training Weekends

10 - 13 February 06
24 – 27 February 06
10 – 13 March 06
24 – 27 March 06

Anyone wishing to take part should contact:

Maj HL Bosley Tel: 07879 682895
Email: bowtat8tl@henlow.raf.mod.uk

ROYAL SIGNALS OPEN HANDICAP AND NOVICE DINGHY REGATTA 2006

The 2006 Open Handicap and Dinghy Regatta will be hosted by 14 Sig Regt (EW) and Dale Yacht Club in Pembrokeshire over 18-19 May 2006. The race will be organised by the Royal Signals Yacht Club, and will be governed by the rules as defined in *Racing Rules of Sailing*.

Racing will be open to all Regular, TA and Retired members of Royal Signals. Dependents and MOD Civil Servants employed with Royal Signals establishments may also apply to race, provided a member of Royal Signals is a member of the crew.

The following classes will be raced:

Open Handicap All dinghy classes are eligible to race, using the Portsmouth Yardstick and low pointscoring scheme.

Laser Pico This class will be sailed by novice helms with less than1 year's sailing experience (must be RYA Level 2 qualified and show log book experience).

The first race will take place as close to 10.00 hrs on 18 May 06 as is practicable. Race registration will close at 17.00 hrs on 17 May 06.

Novice Sail Training to RYA Level 2 will be given from 15 to 17 May 2006 inclusive for any person who does not hold the RYA Level 2 qualification prior to the event.

Race training/clinics and spinnaker training will be provided for all those who wish to enter the Open Handicap racing from 15 to 17 May 2006. This training will be for those who wish to expand their knowledge of these skills prior to racing.

Entry fees are:

£20 for entries into the open handicap racing.
£10 for entries into the novice racing.
£40 for the complete RYA Level 2 course (this includes the race entry fee, RYA Level 2 certificate and Logbook).
£40 for race/spinnaker training (this includes the race entry fee and appropriate RYA certificate (Sailing with Spinnaker or Start Racing).

A limited number of Laser 2000 will be available on a first come first served basis. Individuals who wish to bring their own dinghies are encouraged to do so, provided the equipment is seaworthy and appropriately insured. Proof of Insurance will be required for personal dinghies. Laser Pico, provided by the Race Committee, are available for use by Novice entries.

Prizes will be as follows:

Open Handicap 1st Place, The Royal Signals Dinghy Regatta Cup
2nd Place
3rd Place

Novice Regatta 1st Place
2nd Place
3rd Place Most improved sailor

Entry/Registration forms are available from:

Capt RA Owens
14 Sig Regt (EW) Adv Trg Wing
HQ Castlemartin
Merrion,
Pembrokeshire
SA71 5EB
Tel: Mil 94361 4284 or Civ 01646 662284

THE wire

April 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

WARRANT OFFICER CLASS ONE (CORPS REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR) C BRUCE BEM

Enlisted as an apprentice at the Army Apprentice College Harrogate in January 1984, completed training as a Radio Telegraphist and graduated in December 1985 and was posted to 30th Sig Regt at Blandford. Whilst at 30th Sig Regt was promoted to LCpl and completed various tours including Belize and Namibia as a member of a UN contingent.

In July 1990 the CRSM was posted to 7th Sig Regt in Herford and later that year deployed on Op Granby 1 as a Cpl. On return from the operation he was awarded the British Empire Medal for his efforts during the confilict. He was then posted to 15th Sig Regt at Lisburn as a Sgt working in Comms Ops which was responsible for the Incident and Admin Nets province wide. During his time in NI, Sgt Bruce attended his NBC, Advanced Drill, First Aid and SAA course setting his sights on the RD world.

From there he was posted to the RAC Sig School at Bovington as a morse instructor. Whilst serving at the school he also completed the RAC Signal Instructors and potential School instructors course gaining an A grade in each of the disciplines. Due to promotion to SSgt he moved on after 15 months to 31 Sig Regt (V) as a permanent staff instructor where he spent 3 years teaching both military and trade skills.

A tour in Kosovo followed prior to promotion to WO2 and a posting to the 3rd (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt based at Bulford. During his 3 years there he carried out appointments such as MTWO, SSM HQ Sqn and finally SSM 222 Sig Sqn with whom he deployed with on Op Telic 1. SSM Bruce was then successful on the A1 board in January of 2003, taking over his RSM appointment in February 2004 at 1St (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt at Herford.

WO1(CRSM) Bruce BEM became the CRSM in Feb 2006. He has been happily married to **Pamela** for 20 years and has two daughters, **LaurieAnn** (17) and **Leona** (15). His interests include rugby, football, general fitness and carp fishing.

VISIT OF HRH, THE PRINCESS ROYAL TO BLANDFORD CAMP

HRH The Princess Royal opened a multi-million pound extension to the Land Systems Reference Centre (LSRC) in Blandford Camp on Thursday 9 March 2006.

The LSRC is where all military communication and information systems are trialed and tested to ensure that all communication equipment, such as radios, satellite phones and computer systems, are compatible or interoperable under benign or stressed environments.

The Princess Royal then visited the Headquarters of the Signal Officer in Chief (Army) in her role as Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals and was greeted by over 180 children cheering and waving Union Jack flags.

FUTURE OF *THE WIRE*

It is the intention to make future copies of *The Wire* accessible on line on the Corps Website. The target is the June edition; more details about how it can be accessed will be published on the Website in April or May.

April 2006 Vol. 60 No: 2

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94371 2079 / 2085 (mil)
Email: thewire@royalsignals.mod.uk

Contributors
Deadline for June issue is 15 April.
Please refer to *Guidelines for Contributors*.

Subscribers
All enquiries regarding subscriptions/ despatch should be made to:
01258 482087 (civ) 94371 2087 (mil)

Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

The Magazine of the Royal Corps of Signals
Established in 1920

The Wire

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Editor Lt Col (Retd) Alan Wallace
Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER

WO1(CRSM) C Bruce BEM greets **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal** on arrival at Armstrong Building, Blandford Camp.

BACK COVER

Sgt Sharon Scutt and **Sig Matt Burgess**, 31 Sig regt - Map reading.

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

HONOUR FOR CYPRUS

JSSU Cyprus was presented with the Wilkinson Sword of Peace 2004.

There is an account of the presentation on page 134. The sword was one of the last to be made by Wilkinson Sword Ltd who has been in the business since 1772. The award to JSSU Cyprus is a tribute to the unit.

VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS ROYAL

HRH, The Princess Royal opened an exciting new £240,000 display at the Royal Signals Museum called 'Operation Secret Wave' and met members of the Museum staff.

An article on the Museum and the new display is on page 149.

NOTES FROM SOME 'NEW' CONTRIBUTORS

This issue includes welcome contributions from several small or detached units, who do not regularly appear.

The Joint Communications Unit in Sierra Leone reports on page 138.

The NATO CIS School in Italy has submitted an article on page 136.

628 Signal Troop has also submitted a comprehensive report on their recent activities on page 141.

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

As a final farewell for **Bernard Redshaw**, the Master of Signals hosted a special lunch for him, after which **Bernard** was awarded the Master of Signals Award, in recognition of his contribution to the Corps during his tenure as Editor of *The Wire*.

His surprise and gratitude were only tempered by his alarm about the addition to his baggage allowance for the flight home. I am pleased to report that Bernard got to New Zealand safely and is re-establishing himself as a resident Kiwi.

It is a testament to the good health of *The Wire* that the main problem I have had, with my first solo attempt at editorship, has been to cope with the number of contributions that has been sent in. With the input from the Regular and TA units alone, I had enough words and pictures to fill a magazine of over 140 pages; leaving no space for the other standard items in the magazine. With much reluctance, I have had to be ruthless in cutting back the submissions so that the whole magazine could be contained in 80 pages. I have cut duplication, where possible, but tried to retain items that described different views of the same events.

Some contributors may be disappointed by this. The general rule has been that I have included items that have been well prepared and supported by good photographs. This is the message from the new Editor for future articles. I intend to reissue guidance notes for submissions, both to help those tasked with producing them, and to help me in compiling the magazine itself.

The Wire is now losing one of its major contributors in Northern Ireland as the reorganisation takes place. Previously, we had written about the changes that were due to affect HQNI and15 Sig Regt in the New Year. Although the Regt has drastically shrunk in size, there are still a great many details that need to be ironed out, which will ensure that RHQ is kept busy right until the very end.

Nevertheless, the major changes have now taken place and the ICS assets of the Regt have moved across en-masse to 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) where they are in the progress of integrating with their new unit. An ECM (FP) Sig Sqn has been created and is busy preparing itself to meet the increased requirement for its specialist capability.

It will be sad not to see HQNI and 15 Sig Regt contributions in future, but we look forward to hearing from the Sqns.

DEPUTY EDITOR

This issue is special to me, I have my own personal story of my introduction to our Colonel in Chief, **HRH The Princess Royal**.

A day that will long be remembered. See more about the Royal visit on page 69.

News from down under, Bernard is settled, and is eagerly awaiting the April issue of *The Wire*.

BOOKS

Op BANNER – The Book

The Royal Corps of Signals have commissioned Mr David Truesdale to write an interesting and accurate book recording the contribution made by Royal Signals personnel to Op BANNER. The book will be available from 31 July 07 which is the date on which Op BANNER is scheduled to cease. The likely cost of the book will be £20 - £25. The idea is that it will be about a hundred thousand words in length and contain up to 200 photographs or documents.

It is intended to set up a website for those who wish to contribute to the book. Contact through this website will provide a questionnaire for individuals to complete. These will be forwarded to the author. He may then make contact to obtain individual stories and photographs. Details of this website will be promulgated shortly. This book is endorsed by the Corps, and is the only planned record and recognition of our work in Northern Ireland.

MAYHEM IN THE MED: A CHRONICLE OF CYPRUS EMERGENCY 1955 – 1960

- by Richard GM Styles

This work is the culmination of ten years research, and fills a major gap in post war British military history. The hardback volume contains many previously unpublished photographs, most of which were submitted to the author by veterans of the period. The book is written in an easy to read, journalistic style and it includes full obituaries for all personnel killed. This included twelve members of the Royal Corps of Signals. It also includes honours awards and unit dispositions during the emergency.

This is an important period in the history of the Army and the Royal Corps of Signals, which is normally eclipsed by the operations in Suez in 1956. This book is available from the publishers direct or through leading high street bookshops or online. *Mayhem in the Med: A Chronicle of Cyprus Emergency 1955 – 1960*, at £28.00, is published by Savannah Publications, London: ISBN 1902366387.

INFORMATION

THE ROUTE TO BECOMING A SUPERVISOR OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

SUPERVISOR IS SELECTION - *by SSgt Turner*

My path for selection to attend the Supervisor IS course began with ensuring my CO/OC had endorsed and submitted the Annex to SOinC(A) PD 14, in time for the filter board.

Once the filter board results had been released, and individuals were informed of their selection to attend the Supervisor IS Selection board at RSS Blandford, reality hit home and I realised that I had some serious work to do.

I enrolled at the local education centre for an essay writing course, this turned out to be extremely beneficial, and I would recommend this to anyone contemplating attending any supervisory selection board.

Next was the Selection Board itself. It started with the essay on the Sunday afternoon, my speedwriting definitely needed some work and I just hoped that my 'best handwriting' could be read. I was fairly aware of most current affairs circulating in the media at the time so I had some pertinent points to make.

The discussion groups were next, which involved each candidate leading on a given topic, picked at random. It soon became clear that some topics stimulated more debate than others.

Each candidate also had to lead on a Command Task, which generally involved tyres, barrels, wooden planks, and rope combined with lots of imagination and an equal measure of enthusiasm. The selection process also included an appreciation and culminated with an interview with the board members.

SUPERVISOR IS COURSE - *by SSgt Banks*

The Supervisor IS course seemed to adopt a systematic and rigorous theoretical structure, enabling all of the students to develop and broaden their own personal experiences and knowledge base.

The first 3 weeks were spent with Command Division. These weeks would lay the foundation for any managerial appointment. The art to Defence Writing and Presentational Skills were enhanced with the ability to think on your feet, and develop a plan. This culminated with EX DIAMOND BAYONET.

The ability to correctly address, and carry out report writing, also took place during these valuable, first couple of weeks.

With the foundations laid, the course would address the subjects that everyone relates to the IS trade. The course covered such subjects as Data Comms, Systems Development, Network Management and Network and Information Security, just to name a few. During the 7 months, the students had the opportunity to attend a day at the Government Computing Exhibition at Earls Court. This was very informative in the way industry is moving, within the IS environment.

Visits to field units were also found to be extremely beneficial. These visits were not just seeing the different work environments, but also they gave everyone on the course the opportunity to socialise with other members of the IS Engineer and Supervisor IS fraternity.

As time progressed, it was evident that the course was not only about developing theoretical and practical aspects of Information Systems, but also about being able to provide solutions to unpredictable problems, in unfamiliar situations.

It gave all the students the tools and techniques required to be able to carry out analytical problem solving, together with the practical and managerial skills required for use, within the field of information systems. The most difficult aspect of the course was the undertaking of a real IS orientated project.

The project topics had been submitted by various MOD and civilian agencies. They had been designed to produce practical and business solutions, to real time engineering problems. The course were broken down into syndicates of 3, and this was when team work became extremely important.

The final project culminated with the production of a written report, and a presentation, which not only demonstrated the ability to stand in front of a number of people, with varying levels of expertise, but also the ability to perform analytical judgement.

The end of course dinner night was a most welcome night. Sometimes, during the course, it seemed like it would never arrive. The arrangements for the dinner night had to be planned and arrangedin addition to the course requirements.

All Traffic and Supervisor IS from the Corps with partners and guests were invited to attend, and celebrate the achievement of the course. Needless to say, a good night was had by all!

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the course, and feel better equipped to tackle my new job as a Supervisor IS. The trade is still evolving and in a constantly changing world, will continue to do so. I would recommend to all IS Engineers within the Corps, that the Supervisor IS course is something that they can achieve, with just a bit of hard work.

One of the benefits, for those students considering attending selection, is that the course has now successfully been accredited for a Foundation Degree (FdSc) in Management of Military Information Systems.

INSTRUCTOR SELECTION AND TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

In excess of 900 Royal Signals soldiers pass through the Initial Training Group (Phase 1) and the Defence College of CIS, which encompasses the Royal School of Signals (RSS)(Phases 2/3) training every year. Much of their training is delivered by Royal Signals personnel who act not only a military and trade training instructors, but also as mentors and role models, for the trainees entrusted to their care. It is clear therefore, that individuals selected for employment as instructors in whatever capacity,

must be of the highest quality and must be suited by their nature and background to the role. The system for identifying, selecting, training and encouraging soldiers to become instructors is changing, and this article outlines the new process.

SELECTING AND TRAINING INSTRUCTORS

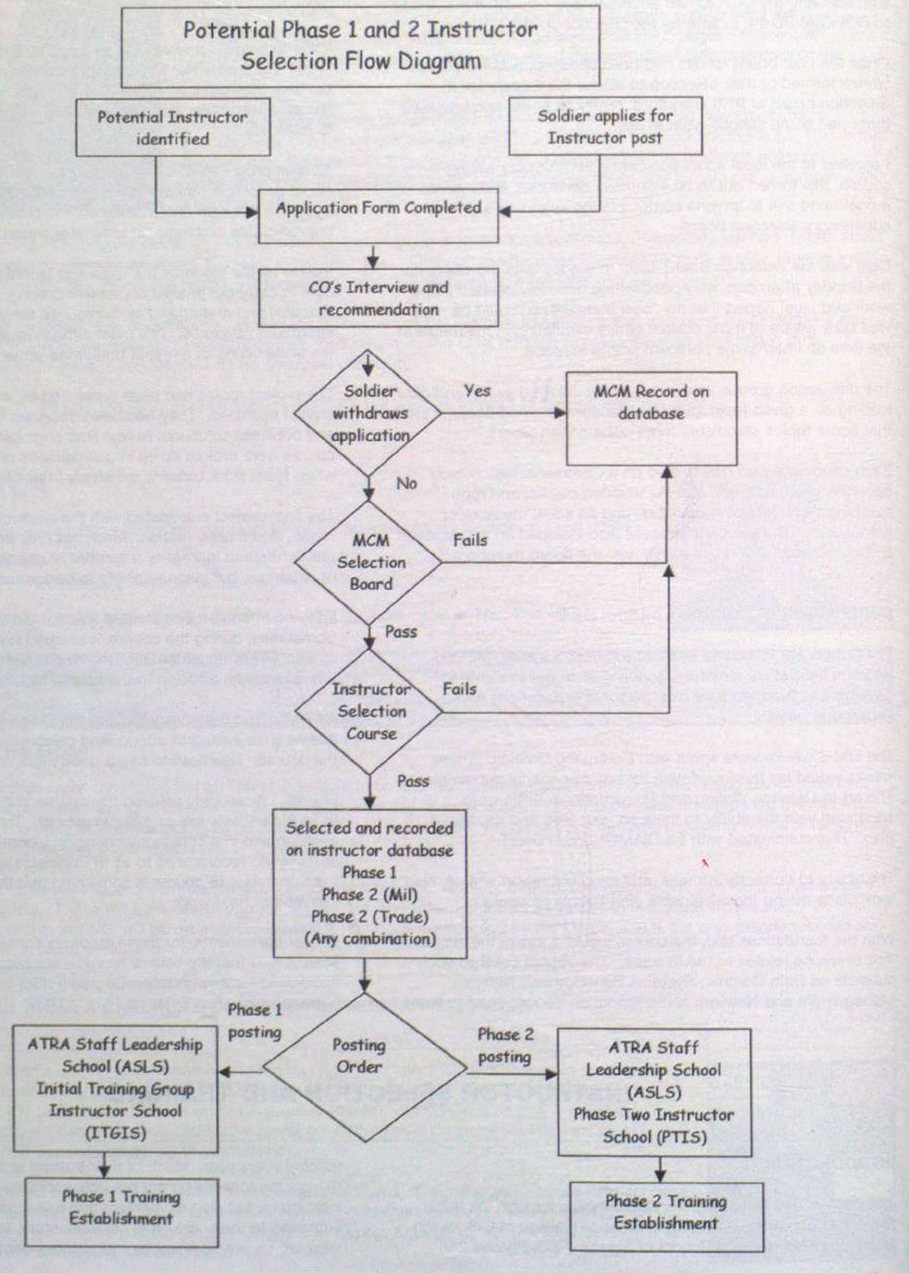
All instructors will subsequently attend the new ATRA Staff Leadership School, to prepare them as instructors.

The process is outlined in the flow diagram.

To better identify potential instructors a new procedure has been put in place. This consists of an interview process, carried out by the Chain of Command, and a selection board carried out by MCM Div R SIGNALS and Int Corps, which is then followed by an Instructor Selection Course, held at the RSS.

The Selection Course will identify those soldiers who are suitable to be employed as Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 instructors, in either a military or trade training capacity.

Once selected as a potential instructor, an individual will be posted to either a Phase 1 or 2 training establishment.



INCENTIVE

Those who are selected for, and who successfully complete appointments within the training organisations, must be recognised and rewarded for their contribution to operational outputs.

Effective individual training is vital to the generation of operational capability. Equally, those outside the training environment must recognise that individuals who succeed as trainers develop unique skills sets, that are of immense relevance and benefit in future appointments in the Field Army.

In future, it will be unusual for any soldier to be selected to fill a senior regimental duty appointment in Warrant Officer rank, unless he or she has successfully filled an appointment in one or other of the training organisations.

ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST (RMAS) INSTRUCTORS

An instructor post at RMAS is the logical pinnacle for those who have been previously employed in military training appointments, and it will be highly unusual for anyone to be nominated, unless he/she has successfully completed a tour in a training establishment.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Full details and application forms are available in SOinC(A)'s Policy Directive No 19.

Alternatively contact your RCMO for advice and guidance on becoming an instructor.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, FEBRUARY 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig SG Hughes	Defence Academy HQ
Col DJ Whitby	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col Campbell-Black	G6 HQ Land
Lt Col B Hewitt	HQ 2 Div
Lt Col ID Westerman	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Lt Col PN Willmott	HQ 2(NC) Sig Bde
Maj RH King	EC/CM(BM)/DEC(GM)
Maj GJH Maloney	Y List MCM Div
Maj BM Sowerby	2 Sig Bde
Capt ACE Burdge	30 Sig Regt
Capt RJ Herring	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Capt CM Hill	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt PM Hodson	HQ Northern Ireland
Capt AT Limb	30 Sig Regt
Capt E Rae	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt HJ Stoy	16 Sig Regt
Lt RJ Foster	ATR Lichfield
Lt IJ Kirk	102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
Lt SC Panting	Army Foundation College
Lt RJ Thompson	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)

OFFICERS, MARCH 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Maj RP Grist	NCSA HQ
Maj SJ McConnell	SO 2 O and D
Capt KT Bates	1 PWO
Capt MJ Crinnion	RSS
Capt CP Gill	HQ BFFI
Capt L Griffiths	1(UK)Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt JD King	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Capt K Sturman	238 Sig Sqn 10 Sig Regt
Capt F Watson	4 Armd Bde HQ Sig Sqn
Lt DG Galley	ATR Lichfield
Lt SA Russell	4 Bn Reme 9 GS Coy
Lt ES Williams	3 (UK) Div 206 Sig Sqn

WOS AND SNCOS, FEBRUARY 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD C Bruce	11 Sig Regt
WO1 FofS K Robinson	7 Sig Regt
WO1 Supvr IS VH Body	JSSU Digby
A/WO1 RD LS Crossing	JSSU Cyprus
A/WO1 RD CS Tucker	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO1 YofS JJ Cade	10 Sig Regt
A/WO1 FofS S Brown	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO1 FofS OD Leyland	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO1 FofS KR Peters	30 Sig Regt
A/WO1 FofS SA Robinson	RSS
A/WO1 Supvr Rad JG Simpson	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 RD J Saunders	15 Sig Regt
WO2 RD B Thornton	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
WO2 YofS AM Watts	30 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD A Lilburn	11 Sig Regt
A/WO2 FofS RD Allen	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO2 FofS DG Ware	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt Supvr IS GL Christie	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
SSgt Supvr IS WM Wardrope	HQ SOinC(A)
SSgt BR Baynham	4 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt AJ Delaney	33 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt ME Pay	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt NJ Snape	21 Sig Regt
Sgt EG Banks	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt SJ Barrie	16 Sig Regt
Sgt TD Brooksbank	37 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt MJ Eltringham	AFCO Hull
Sgt K Francis	16 Sig Regt
Sgt WT Jones	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt CM Ramsden	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt DJ Reade	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt PE Smith	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt KG Stenning	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt N Tipping	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt JS Xieilleon	2 Sig Regt
A/Sgt SJ Powell	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt C Stephenson	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

WOS AND SNCOS, MARCH 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 FofS NJ Trengove	HQ SOinC (A)
A/WO1 RD TRG McIntyre	Birmingham UOTC
A/WO1 FofS DM Cook	Sp Branch Liaison Officer NI
A/WO1 Supvr Rad PJ Rowlands	JSSU Digby
WO2 RD RJ Atherton	Queens UOTC

WO2 RD TJ Bickerstaff	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO2 FofS A Thomson	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt RJ Allen	7 Sig Regt
SSgt H Baker	101 Log Bde Hq & Sig Sqn
SSgt MJ Peace	JSIO
Sgt AC Clark	AFCO Middlesborough
Sgt SJ Gray	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
Sgt P Henderson	JSSU Digby
Sgt DJ Hudson	RSS
Sgt IAF Johnston	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt MR Knowles	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt J Martin	1 (AS) Sig Sqn
Sgt M Meaden	2 Sig Regt
Sgt D Roberts	2 Sig Regt
Sgt SS Sabuda	DCTO IA E3A
Sgt RJ Smith	RSS
Sgt TJ Trafford	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/Sgt AL Hill	AFCO Sheffield
A/Sgt AB Savage	HQ SOinC (A)
A/Sgt TR Sherlock	RSS

RETIREMENTS

FEBRUARY 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Jones - Capt M Jones	20 Feb 06
Scott-Morton - Lt Col BJ Scott-Morton	16 Feb 06
Wong - Capt MJ Wong	14 Feb 06

MARCH 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Cassidy - Capt CE Cassidy	30 Mar 06
Docherty - Capt JW Docherty	04 Mar 06
Hudson - Lt Col JP Hudson	12 Mar 06
Manktelow - Capt AH Manktelow	11 Mar 06
Muirhead-Smith - Capt NT Muirhead-Smith	18 Mar 06

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

The second selection course for potential riders for 2006 started in January. Many applicants for the November course could not get away, due to other commitments. Seven soldiers decided to take on the course, which is designed to challenge all potential Team members, mentally and physically over 2 weeks, for a place in the World's Premier Motorcycle Display Team.

MY SELECTION COURSE – *by Sig Mel Quinn*

I arrived at Blandford on the Monday of the course, and was issued with the key to my room and an arrivals pack. Our first parade was Tuesday, where we were briefed on the 2 weeks ahead of us. We were introduced to the instructors on the course and then sent to the stores to get our kit. For the next 2 weeks, I was to be known as 'Number 40'.

After this we were straight onto the airfield at Blandford Camp. The first bikes we used were Honda CRF 100s. These are small light bikes, which are easy to ride, and are great to learn on. It wasn't long before we progressed on to the Triumphs, which are much bigger and heavier than the Hondas.

We were shown the 'first works' procedures, and then came the hard part, starting them. I really found this difficult, but once I mastered the technique, it was not so hard. Once we had started our bikes, we rode round the airfield doing follow my leader, where you had to copy the person at the front. We started with basics, like taking a hand off, but we were soon stood up, and then had our feet on the handlebars, as we were going around. I could hardly believe that I was riding a motorbike with my feet on the handlebars, after only a day!

The next 2 weeks were a steep learning curve. By Day 2, I was hanging upside down from a ladder on a bike being ridden by **Sig Mustoe**, one of the other guys on the course. Most of the time it went well, but there were times when I fell off. I still have bumps and bruises a month later.

Relaxing during training

One of the biggest challenges on the course was the fire jump, and it was the thing I was most nervous of. We started off on a small ramp, getting used to taking off and landing. I found this hard because I couldn't seem to get the technique right. Once I was more confident, I went over the real fire ramp, but without the fire. I found it easier going over the larger ramp, and as I got more confident, the frame was added, and then straw. When it was lit, I was second in line to go through, but it wasn't as bad as I though it would be. The last day was our show, where everything that we had learnt was put in to practice, in front of the SOinC. After the show we were congratulated and presented with our certificates.

I really enjoyed the 2 weeks selection; it was hard but enjoyable. I would recommend the White Helmets to anyone, and I learnt as much about myself as I did about riding motorbikes. It is possibly the best thing I have done in my army career.

Bernard Redshaw made to join the Team to get his plaque!

Six of the seven soldiers on the course were selected for trg and have now begun trg with the team.

PREPARATION FOR TRAINING CAMP 06

For many years, the Team has trained at RAF Sealand near Chester. This year RAF Sealand is closing and RAF St Mawgan, in Cornwall, kindly stepped in to offer us a trg facility. Before we go there, the new team members have been practicing their newly learnt skills on the Triumph Tiger 750s. Unfortunately during his first week trg, **Sig 'Elbow' Sowiak** decided that he was going to be the first team member of the year to pay a visit to A+E after falling off during trg. He came back that evening, arm in sling, and a fractured elbow. The members in their second year have been learning how to reverse ride, some the hard way; **LCpl Matty Bladen** seems to be strangely attracted to the lone tree up on the airfield.

On Valentine's Day we were visited by SORLS and asked to put on a short display to the potential officers. This was the first taste of a public show for the new team members. They all performed extremely well, and all those watching gratefully appreciated the show. **Cpl Mal Cooper** and his mechanics have been extremely busy in the bay, servicing all the Triumph Tigers. He hasn't been helped by the fact that the team members in trg keep falling off, and breaking them!

The team said goodbye to **Major Bernard Redshaw**, in true White Helmet's style. **Bernard** was presented a White Helmets plaque in thanks for all of those flexible deadlines for the Wire Magazine.

Now is the time to start thinking about getting your application in to come on the selection course in November 2006, where we select riders for trg for next year.

2007 will be the 80th Anniversary for the Team. Sitting in your room next year thinking "I wish I had..." is not the way to live life, take the challenge! Details about the Selection Course can be found in SOinC(A) PD 204, held in every Orderly Room, or available on the MOD Intranet. Or call 94371 2365 (01258 482365) for an informal chat about what it takes to be a White Helmet.

BLANDFORD GARRISON SUPPORT UNIT

CO	**Lt Col RC Young**
2IC	**Maj JW Mackay**
GSM	**WO1(GSM) NR Jennings**

Blandford Garrison Support Unit (BGSU) was formed on Mon 30 Jan 06, under the command of **Lt Col Rab Young**.

The unit primarily comprises of elements from the former Blandford Support Squadron (the Headquarters Squadron of 11 Signal Regiment), and is tasked to provide an infrastructure of support, for all Units and Departments within Blandford Garrison, in support of **Brigadier JA Terrington**, the Garrison Commander.

In addition to the Departments below, BGSU also controls the MPGS and MGS, the Medical and Dental Centres, along with a number of other smaller Departments and Posts.

The total staff comprising approximately 200 military and civilian

Lt Col RC Young, CO BGSU with his GSM, WO1(GSM) NR Jennings

personnel.

QM (GENERAL) DEPT

QM	**Lt Col WJ Drain**
RQMS	**WO2(RQMS) MCD Yendell**
GCWO	**WO1(GCWO) PA Manship**

Whilst the regular workload is constant, the QM(G) Department's workload has been dominated by the planning for the forthcoming 'Super MAC' (Multi Activity Contract). Congratulation to **WO1 Al Manship,** on his recent selection for commissioning, and I am sure he will be able to bore the Officers' Mess in Bulford, about how many windows, how many dog bins, and how many square metres of car parks there are in Blandford Garrison.

MT

MTO	**WO2(MTO) Lilburn**
MTWO	**WO2(MTWO) TR Tatler**

A very warm welcome to **WO2 Billy Lilburn**, who has recently arrived to take over from **WO2 Leigh Crossing**, who has played a blinder by being posted as RSM to JSSU (Cyprus), best of luck to you and your family **Leigh**. Finally welcome to **Sig Dean Lunn**, who joins us after a lengthy period of rehabilitation.

LAD

OC	**Capt AF Lawrie**
ASM	**WO1(ASM) M Mancell**
Gene Sgt	**Sgt J Curley**

The LAD bid a fond farewell to **WO1(ASM) Mike Mancell** who soon leaves the military, after serving his 22 years, a sad loss for the military and in particular, the LAD, who will miss his golfing prowess greatly.

GAO

GAO	**Capt (Retd) M Nevill**

Rumour has it that **Capt Nevill** has been off work for the past 3 months. The truth is however, that he has been hidden behind the hundreds of OTT packs, which envelop his office (at least that's what he tells us anyway).

Elsewhere, the workload of the primarily civilian staff continues at a constant rate. Farewell and best of luck to **Mrs Claire McCrone** who leaves us to go on maternity leave, and then

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

HEADQUARTERS

CI	**Lt Col Charles H Turner**
SIO	**Mr Kevin Mather**
SL	**Mr Robin Cooper**
DSM	**WO2(SSM) Bob Lawrence**

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES GROUP

OC	**Maj Noddy Baugh MBE**

TECHNICAL TRAINING TROOP

OC	**WO2(FofS) Brown**
Trg Manager	**Mr Gary Smith**

The Tp started off the New Year with a bang! Implementing BOWMAN Level 2 Maintainer courses, which will be delivered from February 06, as well as normal course commitments and daily troop administration. The Tp got together for a Gurkha curry night to bid farewell to **WO2(FofS) Steve Brown**.

This function went extremely well, lots of beer, an excellent menu and a very big thanks to **Sgts Raj** and **Prithi** (and families) for making it happen. **Steve** is posted on promotion to 14 Sig Regt, as the Regimental Foreman.

The Tp wishes him all the best in his new appointment, and a very big thank you to all that he has achieved during his tenure, including being the Tp OC and **Maj Noddy Baugh's** technical whipping boy.

Some more goodbyes to make, **Sgt Richy Salter** has left us for the delights of 33 Sig Regt (V) and a life of Ptarmigan maintenance, also to **Cpl Sally Hubble** who is leaving us for the delights of civilian life.

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to **Sgt Rajkuma Malla** and his family who have joined us from Brunei and to **Cpl Emily Grigsby,** who joins us hot off the T1 press, straight into action as a BOWMAN Instructor.

BOWMAN OPERATING TROOP

OC	**Capt(Tfc) P Tonks**
Trg Managers	**Mr Andy Jesson**
	Mr Graham Reynolds

The Tp is commanded by **Capt Phil Tonks**, who departs in April 06 for the delights of 30 Sig Regt, and already his key jogging partner, **Capt (Tfc) Jimmy James** occupies the hot seat, as our new resident expert on all issues. The key HIO training managers, **C2s Andy Jesson** and **Graham Reynolds** support them.

OPERATOR SECTION

After the formation of Command Support Division, which was detailed in the last edition, Op Sect has continued to deliver trg, to all the Class 3 RS Op and Class 1 RS Op Upgraders. The last 3 months have been a fairly busy period, but nowhere near as busy as those units deployed operationally. December was packed with the usual round of seasonal events with the troop supplying good support to the annual Officers *v* Seniors rugby (grudge) match, with tries from **SSgt Russ Ezard** and **Sgt Steve Riste**. This was followed by a visit to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess by the officers, who made good use of the hospitality afforded them. Unfortunately, as the year ended, the Tp said goodbye to **Mr Keith Reynolds**, who dons his wet suit to join Course Design at *RM Poole*. We then battened down for a well-deserved Christmas break.

On 4 January 2006, the Tp returned full of gusto (mince pies and turkey) and raring to commence trg. With so much to look forward to, it was a shame we had to say farewell to another IO, **Mr Dennis Hamilton**, who left us, with a jaunty step, to join those nice Navy fellows at *HMS Collingwood*.

2006 sees RSS commence conversion to the complete BOWMAN Gambit, although not until October. The detailed transition has started, however, and will cause major upheaval for the next 18 months. The trg eqpt is arriving, 11 out of a total of 41 platforms

so far. This eqpt is essentially a mock-up of the rear cargo area of a Wolf Land Rover, fitted exactly as an operational Rover would be, with VHF, HF, HCDR, UDTs, GPS etc. These will provide the practical trg platforms for the new ICS Op fraternity and others.

Unfortunately at the same time we lose 2 civilian instructors, we also loose one of our key military players on promotion, congratulations to **Corporal Dave Nix**, who is moving to greener pastures.

BOWMAN SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT SECTION

The Section would like to say hello to **WO2 Cordery** from 238 Sig Sqn, **Sgt Paul Howe** from 21 Sig Regt, our new Section OC, resident Royal Marine, **Capt Lawry Hembury** RM and would also like to extend a welcome to **Mr Rick Extance**, who returns to RSS and doubles our IO community in the Section. Both **WO2 JC Cordery** and **Sgt Paul Howe** are now fully fledged BOWMAN Systems Managers, and have been thrown into the deep end instructing the new BSM courses.

The Section has been quite busy since its report in the last issue of *The Wire*, with a BSM course running each month and now an RSO course, starting as we go to print. Unfortunately, our Xmas function was cancelled because of an unscheduled course requirement for BOWMAN System Mangers on Op HERRICK, however this did not stop us enjoying the Xmas spirit. For those of you who have passed through the Section in the past year, **Mr Jerry D'Alquen**, is still blowing all students' minds with his vast wealth of knowledge. Being on the receiving end of **Jerry's** instruction, is now politely known as "being jerried".

We would like to congratulate **WO2(YofS) Andy Smith** and his wife **Simone(YofS Simone)** on the birth of their new baby boy, **Finleigh Marshall**. Shortly we will be saying a fond farewell to **Andy** as his 22-year career comes to an end. **Simone** still has a few to go and is forcing him out to work. Good luck in your job search **Andy** and best wishes to you, **Simone** and the children for the future.

DEPLOYABLE SYSTEMS GROUP (DSG)
- by Sgt Paul Hampson

OC	**Maj Tony Urwin**
OC	**Capt J Balfour**
WO CNR	**WO2(YofS) Hutchinson**
WO Trunk	**WO2(YofS) Fowler**

As always, since the last article, it has been a busy period for Command Support Troop with the completion of trg for Troop Commanders' course TC 63. This trg culminated in their final assessment on EX MERCURY CHAIN. The ex proved to be a challenging, and thoroughly enjoyable, period for the subalterns. This was most evident, when **2Lt Hunston** became geographically embarrassed, when she managed to guide her Trunk Node in the wrong direction down the A35. The upshot was the civilian police having to block the road to allow a U-turn.

Members of the Tp have recently taken part in the Tough Guy challenge, an 11-mile race through mud, water and over assault courses. **SSgt (YofS) Rogers** completed the race in a very respectable time, but **Cpl Adie Hosking** didn't even make the transport, crying off claiming he had "bird flu" or something very similar.

The Tp has recently bade farewell to **WO1(FofS) Matt Duff** on his commissioning, and celebrated with **SSgt(YofS) Dave Rogers** on his selection for promotion to WO2. Another member of the Tp to leave is **Sgt Lee Shackleton,** who goes on posting, after spending 4 years instructing on the Yeoman's courses.... to the Yeoman's course. Hopefully he won't be giving his former colleagues a hard time over the coming months. At least he shouldn't get lost finding the classrooms.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) T Henry**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC	**Capt G Osterveen**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) K Overton**

THE TRUTH ABOUT SYSEX *- by Sig Hickey*

Systems Exercise is the final ex in the Basic Area Systems Course. Ex Trg Tp, formally Sys Ex Tp, conducts it. The ex is 2 weeks in duration. Week 1 is "hands-on", where the exercising course familiarizes itself with all eqpt prior to deploying on to the tactical and testing phase.

The course, ASBR 05/003, started the first week enthusiastically. This was the first time we had got our hands on the eqpt in the field. We had a few teething problems, such as trying to connect coax's, with dust covers still on, and a certain individual attempted to raise a scam twelve, without using a pump. On the final night we played a game of hide and seek with the DS. The 2 individuals who were caught first would have to do a double shift on guard. They would also have to sleep in a poncho, instead of a nice warm tent. Week 2 put everything we had learnt into practice. It was during this period all the theory lessons, coupled with the practical handling, came together. We suddenly understood how it all worked collectively, and how individual dets worked together. However, we started off not entirely sure of ourselves, or our plan, in the overall picture. We forgot a few things, did our drills in the wrong order and did plenty of things, we should not have. The culmination of months of hard work to complete the course, was now coming to an end. By the time we got back to the SysEx garages, we were all pretty tired. The focus was now on our graduation, and we were all eager to see our families. The presenting officer was the Regimental Colonel, **Col Ewbank**.

He talked briefly about himself, and gave fine examples from experience, about being a soldier and a tradesman in the Corps. He put all the qualities expected of a soldier in the Royal Signals into perspective, and explained how we were now part of a team which works extremely well, and is respected throughout the world. **Col Ewbank** explained to our families, friends and those graduating the importance of integrity and comradeship. At the end of the graduation ceremony, **Col Ewbank** presented each individual graduating with a TRF, and a graduating certificate. Best field soldier was presented to **Sig Hall** and best academic soldier was presented to **Sig Storr**. The graduation ceremony went very well and the families and friends in attendance were extremely impressed with the day. We all look forward to our first field posting to put in to practice all that we have learned at Blandford and we will hopefully become valued assets to our future units.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj I Carter**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) P Coates**

TOUGH GUY 2006 *- SSgt Hounsell*

Each winter a thousand or more willing men and women come and take on the challenge of the *Tough Guy* competition. Having watched it, you have to be mad. The morning starts, when a

number of very warmly dressed men make there way to the lakes and smash the ice, yes ice! A fleet of Red Cross volunteers, ambulance men and women and highly trained psychotherapists arrive. I presume somewhere someone will notice that all the asylums in the land are empty and that the inmates are at the start line in the rural village of Pattingham. Ahead is an 11 mile cross country course. Sound easy?

Under normal circumstances it would be easy, if it were a nice trot through the woods with leafy glades to look upon. But this is Tough Guy, so first, the competitors were subject to seven miles of lung busting uphill slalom...did I mention that it was ankle deep in mud? When each runner had finished that, they then went on to Stage 2 of the Sunday morning saunter. This is the obstacle stage. Along the four mile route there were huge numbers of cargo nets and ropes that needed climbing, a twenty foot wall that needed vaulting, but the problem was that when you got to the top of the wall, you were pushed off by others trying to climb up. Many of the crazy were injured here but the professionalism of the medics saw that they were treated in quick fashion. Then there was a raging torrent filled with obstacles, met with vigour and, I imagine, disbelief, but still they plodded on.

This was nothing compared to the next section. Each runner had to dash through water filled ditches that had bales of straw and metal wire on either side...oh yes, the bales were on fire and the wire had currents of muscle twitching electricity running through it. As they neared the end, hundreds of wet, numb and befuddled people fought there way up a twenty-foot hill, where they had to stop, as a bottle neck of people had built up. As they waited, they watched the people in front jump off a 20 foot platform into the lake, with the freshly broken ice. After swimming across the lake, they had to crawl and then walk out of the water, to start a half-mile run to the finish. The organisers made sure that the last four hundred yards was uphill, to complete the torture.

Just watched it and I know how hard it was, so I would like to salute the four Phase Two Trainees from Iron Troop, who finished the race, as a team, in 2 hours and 6 minutes, they were **Signallers Pichilingi, Stanton, Farrell** and **Penfold**. Each one of these Trainees showed what determination and a sense of teamwork can achieve. A role model for everyone - young and old.

TWO VIEWS OF THE HARROGATE CUP BOXING TOURNAMENT
- by Cpl McCall of 1 Sqn and Cpl Richardson of 3 Sqn.

THE 1 SQADRON BOXING TEAM

We started trg for the Harrogate Cup in September 05. **Cpl Mac McCall** and **Cpl Daimian Chorlton** started us on a vigorous trg cycle, consisting of early morning starts 06.00hrs every weekday and sessions every evening until 22.00hrs. The Sqn Team started with 25 Phase 2 soldiers, who all thought they were the next Lennox Lewis. Over the following weeks, the Team dwindled down to 15. There were some characters, with the likes of **Sig Raj Saund** – who thought he was Amir Khan, **Sig Jai Leonard** – who called himself the Merseyside Bomber, and of course, **Sig Pacino Roshanaie** – who would have boxed, but was posted to Leconfield just before the event.

In the prelims in December, **Sig Leonard** won his middleweight bout but next up in the same category was **Sig Lunn,** who put on a fine display but lost the bout. **Sig Saund** managed to scrape a win in the welterweight category, but **Sig Burford** forgot everything he had been taught, and lost his bout. **Sig Motherwell,** in the light welterweight category, produced a fine display and won for 1 Sqn.

The semi finals took place on the next day and yet again the boxers put on an excellent display. **Sig Leonard** put on another cracking display, winning by a KO. **Sig Motherwell** boxed his heart out, but was unlucky to lose. **Sig Randy Thomas** in the light welterweight category, who had been given a bye in the first round, boxed very well and won his semi final in a hard fight. **Sig Saund**, seemed to be getting better every time he boxed and he won his semi, putting him through to the final. **Sig Royale**, who had also had a bye, in the light heavy weight category, lost in a close contest. In the light heavy weight bout, **Sig Stevenson** fought bravely, but lost by majority decision.

On 8 Dec 05, the Harrogate Cup boxing final took place. **Sig Spencer** boxed well and took victory in the first round - his opponent withdrawing through injury. **Sig Thomas's** fight could have gone either way but unfortunately he lost after a tremendous effort. **Sig Saund** boxed extremely well and he deserved his win. In the next contest, **Sig Leonard** boxed a sensational fight and won his 3rd fight of 3. In the female category **Sig Carlton** boxed for 1 Sqn. It was a close fight, but unfortunately, she lost her match.
The last fight of both the evening was an exhibition fight in the super heavy category. **Sig Kamara** was boxing for 1 Sqn. He was exceptional, knocking his opponent out in the first 20 seconds of the first round. This ended the Harrogate Cup competition.

Tough Guy 2006: The crazy herd plods on looking for mud to crawl into!

THE 3 SQUADRON BOXING TEAM

After 4 months of rigorous trg, the night we were all waiting for was here. Approximately 40 people started training, however less than half made it to the tournament. Our trainer and team captain **Cpl Andy Fu** told us we would sweat blood and tears, and much blood we did see, my nose in particular! I wanted to be involved in the boxing, prior to coming to Blandford and knew it would be tough.

It was, however, even tougher than I expected! We originally started trg by doing PT 3 mornings a week; this soon rose to 5 mornings and **Cpl Arthur Daley** pushed us to our limits. Once the numbers had whittled down we began skills trg in the evenings with **Cpl Andy Fu, Cpl Stav Angelidi** and **Cpl Paul Richardson**. Once we had all learned enough skills it was time for sparring! This was when the lightweights could use speed against the heavyweights... or so we thought!

The night of the prelims arrived and first up to fight was **Sig Steph Turner**, who won her fight but due to injury was unable to compete in the final. I was next but lost on a majority decision. On the night of the Final, we were well represented with 4 boxers competing: **Sig George Best, Sig Gaz Mawhinney** and **Sig Tom Gillbard**. They all won their fights and the trophy. **Sig Gaz Mawhinney** received the best boxer award after a skilful display of boxing. All boxers were invited to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess for a few well deserved drinks and this brought an excellent end to a great experience and a memorable evening.

MILITARY LEADERSHIP GROUP (MLG)

OC	**Maj M W Ruddock** R IRISH
SSM	**CSgt GM Rowan** A&SH

Since the last report from MLG much has changed. The group has moved out of Comd Trg Div and is now under the wing of 11 Sig Regt. MLG retains responsibility for delivering Junior and Senior Command Leadership and Management courses, TA Cpls and SSgt Courses and the Royal Signals Leadership Course. The Master at Arms, **Capt Alan Brown** APTC and his team of P&RT instructors, now form a tp within MLG. The Regtl Trg and Tasking Wing, delivering CMSR refresher training to Phase 2 trainees and managing the day to day employment of those soldiers awaiting trade trg or undergoing driver trg, has also joined the Group.

Maj Mike Ruddock assumed comd of MLG during September, following the departure of **Maj David Halsall** to civilian life. Our SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Paul Coates** has been whisked away to 2 Sqn 11 Sig Regt leaving **CSgt (Pipe Major) Gordon Rowan** to fill the gap, in addition to his SQMS role and very extensive piping commitments. In November 2005, **Capt Tony Barry** arrived to take up the post as 2IC.

Our Main Effort remains focussed on the delivery of CLM trg to both Junior and Senior NCOs. Both courses continue to evolve and we believe we are getting things right in delivering trg, that thoroughly prepares our students to take up their first appointment in a new rank. An area that is of constant concern to us is the lack of preparation, of a significant number, of course attendees. In order for the MLG team to fulfil its mission to develop students' Command Leadership and Management skills we need them to arrive on the course, with a positive attitude and with practiced basic battle skills and drills; there is little time to spend revising the basics. For those students that are FE, and will be undertaking all of the practical Operational CLM trg, personal fitness is essential. All must be prepared to take part in some very robust leadership development exercises, in a competitive environment, and be ready to carry all of their personal field eqpt during the ex phase. Students must be battle fit on arrival, if they are to do themselves justice.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

OC	**Maj M P Parke**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) O Reed**

ATR LICHFIELD A SERGEANT'S PERSPECTIVE
- by Sgt Lucy Mason

I have been Tp Sgt of Mather Tp, 1 Sqn at ATR Lichfield for just over 8 months and am just over half way through my second CMSR; it has been a busy but very rewarding time. The job itself has many challenges; as well being responsible for standard Tp Sgt's administration for both recruits and permanent staff.

There is also a certain amount of instructing to do; you can be on the ranges one day, teaching on the trg area the next morning, and be in drill on the square that afternoon. So flexibility is paramount. Within 3 weeks of arriving at Lichfield, I had a troop full of recruits to administer. My Tp Comd, **Lt Ian Kirk**, was posted in on the day our first troop of recruits turned up, and so it was a case of us both hitting the ground running. We also had to retain a lot of information, within a short period of time, to ensure that the trg team was ready to turn 30 civilians into soldiers.

The recruits here come from all sorts of backgrounds, far more diverse than I can remember from my own trg. Within the first troop, there were three commonwealth recruits, some who had A levels, and one who had a degree; so you have to be able to deal with people on different levels. Welfare issues are as diverse as the recruits; some come from stable family backgrounds while others barely had a roof over their heads, before joining the Army. The Common Military Syllabus for Recruits (CMSR) is a 12 week course at present, but is soon to increase to 14 weeks. The programme itself, combines all aspects of soldiering, including an introduction to AT, which gives recruits the opportunity to canoe, hill walk and rock climb.

There is also a Realities of War trip to Ypres and Dunkirk. This is an excellent trip, and really brings home to the recruits what it means to be a soldier. I came to Lichfield expecting a challenge, and it is safe to say that it provides one; every day being different. If you are a Sgt with some military qualifications I would definitely recommend ATR Lichfield as a posting. The job satisfaction and diversity is brilliant and there are many opportunities for sport and AT, which are on par if not better than any field Army unit.

CO's FUN RUN - *by Cpl C Pretorius*

The 'chase the turkey' event took place on the morning of 16 December, and over 300 people participated. The run started with synchronised disco dancing, in the disguise of warm up exercises, headed up by the PTI staff.

The brave turkey (**Sgt Murphy** in disguise) had a head start of about ten minutes, before the hordes were unleashed. It was a valiant effort from the turkey, but this near to Christmas, the odds weren't in his favour. There were two runs taking place at the same time; the 1 mile fun run, and also a 4 mile cross country for the best runners out of the present intake of recruits. I am pleased to report that the winner of the 4 mile run was **Sig Barnes** from Digby Jones troop. The prize-giving afterwards was headed by those crime fighting superheroes **Lt Col Welch MBE** (Superman) and **WO1(RSM) Marshall** (Spiderman).

The prizes for the fancy dress were awarded as follows: 1st Prize **Capt Smith** as a very realistic old lady complete with saggy stockings, 2nd Prize **Spr Atkinson** and **LCpl Lowerson** as Lou and Andy from Little Britain, and 3rd Prize **Cpl Pretorius** as a gimp (he borrowed those jeans from **Christina Aguilera**) and suffered frost bite on his bum.

But a few other people, and costumes, need to be mentioned; **Major Parke** demoting himself as Capt Caveman, **WO2(SSM) Reed** as a tasty Swede, ironically **Lt Kirk** as Captain Kirk boldly going where no man has before (well not in those trousers anyway), **Capt Griffiths** as a Fruity Christmas tree, the Red Nose Reindeer from **Cpl Ebdon** and **Cpl Mason**, and lastly **WO2(SSM) McGachy** as a panto cow. As you can imagine there are just too many to name individually, but all made the effort and looked great.

Following the prize giving there was a service held at St Georges Church and then the evening was rounded off by a 3 course meal in the all ranks cookhouse, which saw all the Officers and SNCOs playing host to the other ranks.

EXERCISE SNOW DRAGON - *by Sgt S Rowbottom.*

On Friday 20 Jan 06, EX SNOW DRAGON 06 sparked into life. The Regt Ski Expedition began with 33 members of the permanent staff boarding 3 of LDV's finest minibuses, and attempting to find some sort of comfortable position, for the next 12 or so hours. The first leg of the journey took us from ATR(L) over to Javelin Barracks (Bruggen), and passed quite smoothly. On arrival at Bruggen, **Capt Lyndsey Griffiths** briefed us on the accommodation, and reminded us that the drive to Zellamsee, Austria would continue at early o'clock the next morning.

The 3 minibuses arrived at Zell am See just after 18.00hrs and we were unpacked, and ready to go out, some 60 minutes later. Once the briefings had been given, most members chose to try out the local night life. As soon as **WO2 'Ollie' Reed** had regained some of the personality he lost during the minibus journey, the night got into full swing. This culminated in **Sgt Richie Catchpole** performing a headfirst leap, into what looked like a snow drift, but was actually a fence in disguise.

The first day's skiing began after breakfast, and conditions could not have been better. The previous day's snowfall had measured 45cm and snow was still falling lightly. The CO's group wasted no time, taking in every available 'black' slope, whilst the beginners group, led by **WO2 Andy Panting** began on the nursery slope. Some members of the group picked up the snowplough quite quickly, others found that the 'Egg' position was a much more 'Airborne' way to go about things. By the time it came to après ski at the Carousel, it became apparent some people were already suffering from fatigue and stiff limbs, but this was soon overcome by the regulation dose of glühwein, whilst discussing the days heroics on the slopes.

The rest of the week continued in a similar fashion, with outstanding snow conditions (reported to be the best in 90 years). Highlights included **Sgt Nick Lean** demonstrating to his advanced intermediate group, how to correctly fall off of a chair lift (twice!), and **Sgt Richie Catchpole** managing to pile headfirst into the only piece of yellow snow for hundreds of metres. **Cpl Daz Jones** continued to punish himself on his telemark skis, and buried him self a number of times, especially during the offpiste runs.

For the final day, the group was given the opportunity to ski on Blades. This provided plenty of amusement, especially for those who had not skied on them before. The day was spent learning to pirouette and jump like a pro (almost). **Cpl Clint Pretorius** proved himse truly 'airborne' on the half pipe, when he attempted to jump out of it at speed, and consequently disappeared down the side of the mountain, with his feet above his head.

The final night was spent by most, just sharing a few quiet drinks (and then some loud ones) in the local bar reviewing the best moments of video footage taken from the week.

All in all, a fantastic week was had by everyone and I'm sure I speak for everyone in thanking **Capt Lyndsey Griffiths** and the rest her team for their massive efforts to make it such an enjoyable week.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT BASSINGBOURN

A YEAR IN THE JOB OF CSM AT ATR BASSINGBOURN
- by WO2(CSM) Dougie Icke

There are few jobs for a Royal Signals Sgt Maj that can be as challenging, and rewarding, as CSM Kitchener Coy at ATR Bassingbourn. The many different capbadges that belong to your Coy, from your instructors to your recruits, makes the job that bit more special. There are a small number of retained Royal Signals posts at ATR Bassingbourn, which include CSM Kitchener Coy, CQMS Kitchener Coy, 2 x PI Sgts, and currently 4 Sect Comds. There is also a Royal Signals PI Comd at ATR Bassingbourn, and we are very lucky to have a Royal Signals RSM. The remainder of staff are mainly Infantry, RLC or RE, but there are other cap badges, you will work with.

In Kitchener Coy, we train both adult and junior Phase 1 recruits. The trg programmes are 12 and 17 weeks respectively, however this is due to be extended by 3 weeks in the future. In Kitchener Coy, we have 6 x Trg Pls, each with a PI Comd, PI Sgt and 4 Sect Comds. The trg programme is extremely busy, with plenty of exs, ranges, lessons, AT, etc. The chance to develop yourself, or the people who work for you, or are being trained by you, is amazing. Both the instructors and recruits work very long hours, to ensure that all the trg, in a busy trg programme, is conducted in a professional manner. The instructors also get involved in hobbies and sports on some weekday evenings. As I mentioned, there is a great chance to develop yourself, especially working with different capbadges. For myself, the Coy Comd is RLC and the 2IC is Inf. Everybody I work with, either the other CSMs, PI Comds, PI Sgts and Sect Comds are a different cap-badge, and have different ways of doing business. It is amazing how easy people work along side each other, and how their different skills and attitudes, can often complement each other. The instructors have a strong loyalty to each other, due to the fact that they are constantly working hard, to meet the requirements of the pl trg programme. They must constantly be at their best, if the trg being delivered is to be of a high standard. You only have to observe a Final Ex or a PI Comd's Revision Day to see the benefits of being an instructor amongst other capbadges.

The final attack that Kitchener Coy did on the recruits' final ex in December 2005 would give readers an insight into how trg is delivered at ATR Bassingbourn and the quality of the instructors. After 4 days in Brecon, in subzero conditions, each recruit fired and manoeuvred through enemy positions that took the best part of 2 hours to clear, and was in effect a Company attack. Each pl echeloned through a valley, using the river as cover, attacking enemy positions, and the final pls were lucky to continue the advance, up a long, steep re-entrant. There were casualties and ammo replens going to and from the CSM and the PI Sgts, as well as demolitions for realism, with smoke and tripflares. The previous night the recruits had been practicing Sect Attacks at night, with two OHF Live fire guns. There is no creeping excellence for the recruits, as the Sect Comds guide them through the enemy positions, so that they can get stuck into firing and moving, using cover, etc., but the experience for the recruits and the instructors is extremely valuable. The recruits' administration in the field had to be at its best in the cold conditions; the instructors had to be not just on top of their own, but looking after all the recruits they were responsible for. There was lots of patrolling, recce's, NBC, First Aid; as well as interest lessons, and practices such as ambushes and map reading.

It does not matter what capbadge the instructor is. If he is hardworking and enthusiastic, he or she will do well at ATR Bassingbourn, and as well as teaching recruits, will learn a lot about themselves! One Sect Comd, who has just left Bassingbourn on promotion, was AGC(SPS), who arrived at Kitchener Coy with very limited military skills, other than his Skill at Arms course. With lots of hard work and enthusiasm, he managed to become a very efficient Phase 1 military instructor. Whatever your rank, there is always the opportunity to improve time management and administration, due to the busy schedule. From a previous tour as a PI Sgt at ATR Bassingbourn, I have observed Royal Signals Sect Comds posted back to Royal Signals Regts and Sqns from here, and seen the difference the experiences and responsibilities that they have encountered, has made. Many of them have gained promotion, as a result. I must add, however, that it is essential that the right people volunteer, or are encouraged to volunteer, for a posting as a Phase 1 instructor. A potential instructor needs more than a Skill at Arms qualification to be a successful instructor; he needs to have the right attitude to trg recruits, and the hard work that goes with it. Considering that an instructor will at the least be a Sect Comd, he needs to have the ability to lead a Sect! Volunteers who have experience in Cambrian Patrol, Infantrytype courses, Royal Signals CLM, etc, will find themselves in a better position to instruct. As a PI Sgt, you will be busy teaching recruits drill and bayonet-fighting to name but two, and of course carrying out all PI Sgt tasks in the field and administration in camp.

For myself, as CSM Kitchener Coy, the experiences have been both challenging and rewarding, both in camp and in the field. You have a major role with regards to discipline within your Coy, and also in the planning and the conduct of the trg of recruits. One of the highlights of 2005, was the Regtl Pace Stick Competition, which was won by Kitchener Coy, with myself driving the team. **Cpl Gaz Davies** Royal Signals, a Sect Comd in Marlborough Company team, after many weeks of practicing, dropped his stick on the day and won't thank me for mentioning it, so I won't. A month later, I found myself driving the Regimental Pace Sticking team at the World Championship Pace Stick Competition at RMAS, which was a great experience! The organisers of the competition only tell you who came first and second, so we took it we probably came third!

ATR Bassingbourn Pace Stick Team at RMAS; WO2(CSM) Dougie Icke on the left

There is not much more to say. Basically if you are a JNCO or SNCO. who enjoys all aspects of military trg and think that you would enjoy being a Phase 1 instructor, then look in the direction of a Phase 1 trg establishment, and if you are looking to challenge yourself in a busy multicap badged environment, then ATR Bassingbourn is the place to be!

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj CM Vaudin**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Spiers**

The past 2 months have seen significant change in the unit structure of 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213), as well as a huge increase in the responsibility and scope of our mission.

In line with optimising ICS support to Op BANNER, the Sqn has taken over responsibility for many of the roles previously carried out by HQNI and 15 Sig Regt. India Tp, TM Tp, CDA, NCC and COMMCEN have all now come under the Horseshoe banner, bringing an additional 110 soldiers, to swell the ranks. Despite doubling in size, and increasing from 2 Tps to 5 Tps in the space of a few short weeks the Sqn has maintained the pace and op commitments, that are standard in NI. We welcome all the newcomers to 39 Bde and look forward to a hectic, but rewarding year, with a good balance of work and play.

ALPHA TROOP

OC **Lt Parkes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Staff**

Due to normalisation and down sizing of troops in NI, elements of 233 Sig Sqn have amalgamated with 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn to form the new and improved 213 Super Sig Sqn. As part of this, A Tp has the NCC. At the NCC, we control all eqpt faults associated with military personnel across province, this includes distributing to outside agencies, tasking the FRTs to go to inspect, and repair the eqpt themselves, and general management of the faults. The recent changes have seen the 39 Bde Syscon merged with the old 15 Sig Regt NCC to form a new capability.

Cnce the movement of Syscon's radios and folders across was complete, the RS Ops could relax as most of the work actually fell to the Techs and Riggers. They spent many an hour stuck up a mast, fitting antennas, or hard wiring in cables to the Syscon desk. All credit to them; they did work hard to get the job done on time and without them, it would have been a lot more difficult. The old Syscon ops are all a bit upset at the loss of Sky TV, and will have to get used to the limited channels that Freeview can offer. This seems to be the only major issue arising from the change, so it has to be seen as a very successful op.

After a quick re-shuffle of the desks, trying to find the space to integrate the Syscon Systems, we are all a bit cosier and are getting used to the new look A Troop. Still early days, but we are already noticing the difference in the workload. The hierarchy is taking great interest in the new venture, with lots of high level visits taking place throughout the changeover period.

BRAVO TROOP - *by Sgt Gilchrist*

OC **Lt Northridge**
TP SSgt **Sgt Johnston**

With the official change of control taking place on 1 February 06, TM Tp was re-designated B(Bravo) Tp, in order to come in line

with the restructuring process, that is taking place in 213 Sig Sqn. Despite re-structuring the Tp to meet the extra responsibility of providing 1st Line ICS support to the 39 Bde AOR, the day to day life in the Tp has not changed considerably.

The workload is steadily increasing, but all challenges are being met head on. The future is bright for the Tp, as the 'work hard – play hard' ethos of Bde life is hitting home to many of the junior soldiers. The opportunity for deploying 'on the ground' in support with the infantry for the marching season, is greatly increased and this has been met favourably. Although the pace of life will be fast, time will still be found to get the guys away on AT. Already, exs in Devon and Bavaria are being planned by the Tp and articles on these activities will soon be seen heading towards *The Wire*.

INDIA TROOP – BUSINESS AS USUAL
- by WO2(Supvr IS) Fagan

Tp OC	**WO2 (Supvr IS) Bill Fagan**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Si Kenny**

This has been a very busy period for the 'Indians', with an awful lot going on in all aspects of our Tp life. Most notably, we have officially left 233 Sig Sqn and 15 Sig Regt behind, and been heartily welcomed into the fold at 39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213). This transition has gone very smoothly, and the move of ICS assets over to the Bde has had no real impact on our daily routine, apart from the introduction of Battle PT on Friday afternoons (Thanks Ma'am!)

Another recent change has been the fair amount of personnel, who have either been posted or have newly arrived, into the Tp; so many we couldn't possibly name them all. What we can say is goodbye to all those leaving us – thanks for all the hard work and welcome to all the 'newbies'. Our last major change is to our future working practices. India Tp goes back some 20 odd years, in one form or another, and for the first time in our history, there is a strong rumour that shift work will come to an end, and we will migrate to 'normal' working hours...whatever they are.

EX MERCURY GLACIER AND EX SNOW JACK
- by LCpl Gorthy and LCpl Joughin

On 18 November, the 4 finest snowboarders and the 4 finest skiers in 39 Inf Bde set off from NI to take part in the Royal Signals and Divisional level camps. The boarders were **WO2 Sheard**, **Sgt Walton**, **Cpl Moffat** and **LCpl Joughin**. The skiers were **Cpl Smith**, **Cpl Willis**, **Cpl Allan** and **LCpl Gorthy**. The team set of from Ireland, heading for our night stop in Germany, where members of the team indulged in the local refreshments and nightlife. After a 48 hour mini bus journey to Kaprun in Austria, the team arrived at the luxurious Michelin star hostel, Club Kitzsteinhorn.

Week 1 began with technique and race trg. Both skiing and boarding teams had excellent tuition from the Ripstar and Signals instructors. After a couple of days boarding, **Sgt Walton** was complaining about his new boots being uncomfortable; the problem was solved however, when he decided to wear them on the right feet. **Cpl Moffat** had his trainers go missing during Week 1, but later discovered he had left them in Inter Sport, when buying his new snowboard boots. After a week of trg and creaming in, both teams were ready for Week 2.

Week 2 for the boarding team began with seeding races, and was followed by slalom, giant and then dual slalom. The boarding team performed well, finishing as the first placed UK unit and fourth overall. Of particular note, was **Cpl Moffat** in the dual slalom, who lost narrowly in the semi final. Week 2 for the skiing team began with further trg for slalom and giant slalom.

The team got most of the exercise from the long walk they had to endure to get to the starting post. By the end of the week the team was ready for seeding races. **Cpl Allan** had performed well, so he flew up the rankings for a great starting position for the beginning of Week 3. Overall the team was in a comfortable position, for the beginning of Week 3, Race Week.

Week 3 was the time that the skiers and boarders said bye to each other, as the boarding team headed for the Divisional camp and the skiing team stayed in Club Kitzsteinhorn. Week 3, for the skiers, was all about individual and team competition. The team were performing well through the week, but tragedy hit as **Cpl Willis** injured herself on one of her fast slalom races, and had to pull out of the competition. The 3 remaining members of the team carried on, and performed well especially **Cpl Allan**, as he continued to go up the ranks and end up in the top 25 out of a 100 skiers. Overall the team had done well.

Week 3 for boarders was the big competition, as they would be facing the best boarders in the Army. The races were similar to the previous week, with the exception of the boardercross event. A catastrophe hit mid week when **WO2 Sheard** was clipped by a little girl, on the beginner slope and broke his wrist in two places. This was his second injury in 2 years at the Corps camp.

The team now faced an uphill struggle, with a man down. However they battled on regardless, and finished in a creditable position, above some major Army teams who were at full strength. The team could have achieved greatness, if it wasn't for the last gate on the run, which consistently caught out **Sgt Walton**. Eventually team 39 returned to Northern Ireland with their heads held high after a successful three weeks.

The boarders held them highest, after a convincing trouncing of our neighbouring Royal Signals unit in NI (no name to be mentioned). Oh and **LCpl Joughin** found out he'd been boarding for 3 weeks with fractured ribs on the return to Northern Ireland.

EX OLYMPIAN FINN 17-20 JAN 06 *- by LCpl Jo Lee*

EX OLYMPIAN FINN was a female sports development course held at Thiepval Camp, Lisburn. The course was designed to introduce and develop basic level skills trg, in a number of Army recognised sports, and was open to all female officers and soldiers of NI based units.

We began the week with a little bit of bowling, which gave us ladies a chance to do what we do best, and chat to find out a bit about each other. This was before our introduction to water polo. Everyone's legs felt it, especially after the 'egg beating' drill, or as **Cpl Kelly Sharratt** insisted on calling it 'egg whisking'. This was followed by the introduction to football. **Cpl Jones** didn't quite know what he had let himself in for, when he volunteered to teach us, and the drills we did seemed to have us all laughing, more than dribbling, as we tried to master the art of headers and chest passes, with mixed success. The following day, with a few aches and pains from football and "egg beating" we started our full day of hockey adventures. After hours of balls flying anywhere and everywhere, we managed to get enough control to have a game. The competitive streak in us all took hold, and we had a tiring but good match.

Moving into Thursday we were introduced to rounders. Obviously, most have played this in school, but there is a lot more to it than I once thought, so we were taught the basics: throwing, catching and finally the rules, of which there are many. In the afternoon, we moved into the leisure centre for **WO1(RSM) Lindsey Spiers** favourite sport; volleyball, a sport the majority of us have never played. We started with a vigorous warm up and some basic ball drills, which took some of us a while to get to grips with. Once the rules were explained, we then began a game which proved interesting, when trying to convert the idea and logic (dig, set, hit) into practice.

On Friday, we were back in the pool to sharpen up swimming techniques, and for the coach to have another go at finishing us off. We managed to survive (just) and went straight into rugby

that afternoon. We managed to learn how to pass the ball and finally understood that the ball has to be passed backwards, but how you ever get to the other end of the pitch to score a try, is still a mystery.

After a very physical week, we thought we would treat ourselves to a night of indulgence at a local restaurant for the end of course function.

As the girls had been working hard all week, we decided to have a couple of small prizes to recognise those whom had stood out during the various sports. **Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts** kindly volunteered to present them.

The Best All Round Sportswoman award going to **Cpl Katie Hammond** from 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218), and the **Most Improved Sportswoman** award going to **Cpl Marie Oxley** from 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (213).

We finished the night with a lovely meal and enjoyed a few drinks, with the full intention to carry on drinking, but we all went home quite early as the week's events finally caught up with us.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj AJ Parsons**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) D Sheerin MBE**

ALPHA TROOP

EXERCISE WINTER SHAKEOUT was a tp level ex aimed at revising and enhancing existing infantry skills amongst the Tp. The ex was held at sunny Magilligan trg area, during what was surely the finest January weekend there in history. On arrival at Magilligan, it was straight into tactical mode, where we were issued with our kit, briefed, and then quickly sent on our way to our bivvy areas in patrol formation. During the ex, the sects concentrated on their patrol skills, en route to several checkpoints, equally spaced over the area.

It was in the interest of the sections to reach these checkpoints, if they wanted to be warm and fed. My sect, with not a farmer amongst us, are now familiar with the difference between a bull and a cow, and the mess they leave behind, and the mess we nearly left behind, when it started to square up to us. The Sunday was concentrated on a round robin, consisting of First Aid, CTR skills, weapon handling and command task stands. These were taught by **SSgt Vickers**, **Sgt Berry**, **Sgt Marshall** and **Cpl Jones**, in preparation for the grand finale, which consisted of a CTR of the terrorists' hideout, at the very farthest point of the range. The culmination of this bonding session, ended in a stretcher race, in which **Maj Parsons** decided it was a good idea to give them a hand and the rest of the DS followed suit.

Congratulations on **Cpl Jimbo Walker** and **LCpl Kat Beaver** on their promotions. A special mention goes to **Sgt Chris Puzey** for his map reading lessons and to **Cpl Lee Peacock** for going beyond the call of duty (who said stores are for storing!) Thanks also to **Sig Jim Keery** and **Sig Scott Marshallsay**, who spent most of their time sniffing around the DS for small sums of money, and to **SSgt Sowden**, who even at the final stage of the ex, still looked immaculate - that drill course has done him well.

BRAVO TROOP

As the Sqn returned to its working routine after the break, it was not long before an inter-tp football league was set up. One of the first matches being played was, Alpha Tp taking on Bravo Tp. It soon became apparent who was the better team, as Bravo Tp destroyed their opponents. The referee lost count of the score-line in sympathy! We would like to welcome **LCpl Hawley**, **Cpl Cook** and **Sgt Stephenson** to the Tp and also wish a fond farewell to **Sgt Meredith**, who is on the brink of completing his 22 years. Best wishes and good luck for the future **Paul**.

QM DEPT – RETURN OF PRESENTATIONS

The disbandment of 218 Sig Sqn is planned for September 06. We would like to offer anyone who has donated presentations to the Sqn, the chance to reclaim the piece that was presented. Where possible we will ensure that items are returned to their donors.

For further details please contact:

Sgt Jeanne,
8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218),
Ballykelly,
BFPO 802 or ATN: 9491 36962,Civ: 028777 20962

EXERCISE BILLTONG FINN

EXERCISE BILLTONG FINN consisted of a hiking and kayaking exped to South Africa, for 10 personnel from 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218). After a soul-destroying 10-hour flight, we landed in Johannesburg and started touring down the East Coast of S Africa.

Our first stop off was in the Drakensburg mountain range for a 5-day hike, which turned into a run for **Cpl Carlos Walker** and **Cpl Claire Vogel** after annoying a very deadly snake.

On Day 3, **Cpl Andy Murray** came running out of the toilet very flustered shouting "SNAKE!" At first we thought he was referring to his manhood, but after further investigation it was discovered that he had met the world's fastest striking snake, the Puff Adder. We then travelled to Namibia, for a 6-day kayak down the Orange River.

It was hard work right from the off, but most satisfying of all was when the only kayak to capsize belonged to **Lt Reid** and **WO1(RSM) Sheerin**; we then placed bets on whose kit would travel the furthest down river. **Lt Reid** won.

After all the hard work, we enjoyed some R and R in Cape Town, which included some shark diving. While receiving the initial brief, we were told that we might not see any sharks, just as a Great White jumped out of the water. It then occurred to us that we were about to get in a cage, with these monsters.

We were not overly concerned as we had a sacrificial lamb in the form of **LCpl Al Coakley** who couldn't swim due to a bad shoulder, so if anything went wrong, we only had to swim faster than him. We also took a journey up Table Mountain, so we had the opportunity to enjoy the fantastic view.

We also sampled some of Cape Town's night life which led to some very adventurous nights. On one occasion, **Lt Reid** found out the hard way that South Africa's crime rate is so high, after all his admin was stolen from him at gunpoint. Fortunately, the thieves realised that they couldn't handle his admin, because there is too much of it, and promptly returned it to the police. Finally, many thanks to **Lt Alex Reid** for organising such a challenging and enjoyable exped. I think the shark diving memories will live with us all for some time.

NEWS FROM THE GULF

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

OC	**Maj A E Percival**
RSM	**WOI(RSM) D J Smith**

SQUADRON OPERATIONS

Ops Offr	**Capt E M Swift**
Bde FofS	**WO2(FofS) R Cleminson**
Bde YofS	**WO2(YofS) K Heaton**
BOW YofS	**SSgt(YofS) R White**

The Ops team have had a very productive and successful period. The Iraqi national elections presented very interesting challenges, as personnel and eqpt had to be moved all round theatre to provide comms coverage for the Battle Groups, as they in turn moved into new locations. There were planes, helicopters, road moves and kit swapping as eqpt was repaired and distributed. It was certainly a very busy time, but come Election Day, all comms were in and our aims were achieved.

Capt Swift

Since then, the team has been kept busy with many diverse taskings, including Iraqi comms trialling, changes in the BOWMAN plan and continuous SYNERGY taskings. The Bde Yeoman, **WO2(YofS) Kev Heaton** was selected for promotion to WO1, and our BOWMAN Yeoman **SSgt(YofS) Rob White** was successful on the SSgt to WO2 board. Many congratulations to both for their well deserved promotions.

EUPHRATES TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt N Streetly**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt N Elliot**

All our departments remain very busy. The Bde RADCON shift workers have worked hard to cope with all the traffic from the ground call signs. This is a particularly difficult task. Once the R and R plot began, we found ourselves with fewer and fewer people on shift. Our Immediate Response Operators (IROs) have all been deployed, at some time or another, to assist the Battle Groups with comms challenges. The election period was particularly busy, with all IROs being deployed and the nets busier than ever.

The COMMCEN continues to be a hub of activity, and the team coped well without one of their shift commanders, **Cpl Dolan**, who disappeared for three weeks to attend a selection course at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. She was successful and was invited back to attend further potential instructor selection courses.

The Tp's PTIs, **Cpls Howells** and **Henderson** have had a very busy time recently. Alongside organising the Tp's PT sessions, they have been running a potential PTI cadre. Due to work commitments, those taking part in this have had to use their own time to undergo heavy trg and fitness sessions, under the watchful eye of the PTIs. After completing fitness trg early in the morning, they carry out a full day's work, before meeting in the evening to prepare lessons for the next day. Very well done to all involved.

On the technical front, the tech departments haven't stopped over the last few months. The workshop crew have had personnel deployed to all provinces, North and South, to assist in repairing faults with the deployed comms systems. Sometimes they end up deployed for longer than originally planned, as transport restrictions saw personnel stranded for several days – just ask **Sgt Smith**!

Tech Power

Our resident fitness freak, **SSgt Brown** continues to think of ways to test our teamwork and fitness. This time, he organised a burden retrieval competition, which saw Sqn teams completing a gruelling cross country course, retrieving various items on route. By the time we had finished, we had collected breezeblocks, spare wheels, track link, a water jerry can and a road wheel. It was a very challenging and tiring event, but we are pleased to announce that the mighty techs finished first overall!!

TIGRIS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt A D Rea**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt J Giddens**

Tigris Tp has achieved a great deal over the last few months. Our deployable HQ, both armoured and wheeled, have been continually maintained to high standards, with the comms kit being frequently tested on ex. During one particular ex, we turned Sqn HQ into the Alt Bde HQ, all within the space of 2 hours, proving our capability for the Bde staff.

Our Special Tasks FFRs, re-rolled to HQ vehicles and back again, have been equally busy. With the crews limited in numbers due to R and R and other deployments across the AOR, everyone has been working very hard, often 7 days a week. We have been involved in Iraqi comms trialling, assistance with the elections and providing support to some of the ground units.

Our ground multiple has been very active, re-supplying our out-detachments, and assisting to move personnel and eqpt around Southern Iraq. During one particularly eventful outing, the route up to the Rebro site had become completely waterlogged. All the Snatch vehicles became completely bogged in and one was damaged beyond immediate repair. **SSgt Giddens** had command for the day, and kept everyone safe whilst they made

HQ FFRs

Stuck!

the best effort possible to extract the vehicles. After a few wet and cold hours, and some help from another call sign, they extracted the vehicles and limped back to Basra Airport.

On the SYNERGY side of things, the elections and other deployments have taken their toll on the vehicles, and 2 of the detachments have been sent back to the UK for some well-needed TLC. Of the remaining 2 detachments, one continues to provide comms from Um Qasr, while the other remains in Basra Airport at high readiness.

When not involved in comms or multiple taskings, we turn our attention to trg. Now whether that is fitness or military trg, you can be sure Tigris Tp will participate fully. We entered 3 teams in the latest TELIC trophy event – the burden retrieval. Each member of the Tp who took part, finished the event in high spirits and the competitive rivalry with the other departments was evident throughout. We also used a relatively quiet couple of days to take part in a bayonet range organised by **SSgt Giddens** and **Cpl Dolan**. We are highly unlikely to use our bayonets whilst deployed in Iraq, but the range was designed to channel pent up aggression, as well as testing fitness and teamwork. It was an emotional day for all involved!

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRA

QM	**Maj SF Lawes**
RQMS	**WO2(RQMS) A Wyatt**
MTWO	**WO2 B Revell**

Everyone in the JSUB section, here in Iraq, are rapidly approaching the half way point in the tour. To date, the section has found itself involved in some great tasks, from supporting the FBI, to looking after the administration requirements of the Prime Minister, Jim Davidson and Katherine Jenkins.

Knit one....

Over the past 2 months, we have seen a large turn over of the individual augmentees that provide the vital backfill, not only to us, but to all of our units on tours all over the globe. In true style, we in JSUB like to have a farewell function to say our thanks to these fostered Desert Rats! The functions will normally be on a budget lower than a badger's wine cellar, and involve games made up by the various departments. Lessons learnt thus far – never let the Driver Linemen organise a quiz; it will only end in tears! Never let the RQMS select one of the physical games; it will also end in tears.

The MT section, of over 50 strong, completed in one month nearly 8000km of road moves in their 3 allocated SNATCH vehicles. **Sgts Law** and **Topping** are tenderly caring for the vehicles. **LCpl Dickinson** continues to be the font of all knowledge on the civilian, £25,000 fleet of Landrover Discoveries, running continuous, driver-training packages.

Sgt Craig Chilvers has moved into the world of logistics and close support. He is now cleaning the toilets in the Div HQ; welcome to my world springs to mind!

The QM Department had a visit from the LSI team. The guys had worked extremely hard on the accounts, which of course helped them sail through the inspection. **LCpls Jordison** and **Ndegwa** had practised the fine art of delaying and distraction tactics, until it was perfect. On a given signal, they would throw in a one liner, that could distract even the most proven accounts inspector! **Cpl Andy Humble** used the usual tactic; going for a cigarette every 5 minutes.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OPERATORS DEPLOYED
– by Cpl Joe Howell

During the period of the Iraqi elections in December 2005, **LCpl Maynard** and I were deployed. to provide a communications link with the Maysaan Province Provisional Joint Operations Centre (PJOC), in the city of Al Amarah.

Our journey started at Basra Air Station, our home for the tour, where we tested all the eqpt to be used during the week long deployment. This included TACSAT and BOWMAN HF man pack radios, along with Kipling, to provide HF Data and the supposedly, man portable Dial-up I-Net data eqpt, which came in 2, very easy to carry, 30kg metal boxes - and we were to take two complete sets (!).

After a bumpy ride in a Hercules and a ground escort by Challenger 2 Tanks, we arrived at Camp Abu Naji. We were given a briefing on the rules of the camp and taken to the Sqn's Rear Link Detachment. This is commanded by **Cpl Hopkinson,** who showed us to our accommodation for the next few days.

After several days' testing the kit, we were soon set up in the Ops Room at the PJOC. Once all the eqpt was set up inside, we then had to venture up onto the roof to erect our antennas. While we were doing this, the local Iraqis on the streets below were protesting against something that had been on television, about one of the political parties involved in the up coming elections. It made us realise how important the week was to the average Iraqi. Luckily it all passed without incident and we were soon back inside, and talking to Bde HQ on I-Net and TACSAT. HF comms proved pretty tough to establish and would remain so over the next couple of days, despite my best efforts.

Election day itself started with numerous occurrences across the city, to which local police and the Iraqi Army were called. News came through of an attempted rocket attack on Camp Abu Naji, and an explosion somewhere in the city earlier that morning. Neither incident caused any casualties, so all was well. With the I-Net set up for the SCOTS DG Watch-keeper, to send continuous reports about the progress of the elections, the day was pretty quiet for us. More explosions in the city kept us alert, as we moved into our second night and then, as provisional election results came in, the city came alive with celebration fire. The sky was alight with tracer rounds, flares and fireworks, going off all over the place. As the city was supposed to be under curfew however, the police quickly moved onto the streets to disperse the crowds, and soon some sense of normality was returned.

All in all the deployment went well. Other members of the Sqn also deployed to the PJOCs in Muthanna Province and Basra City respectively, and I think we all did a worthwhile job, in helping ensure that secure comms were available to allow the progress of the elections to be reported accurately, to those concerned at Bde HQ.

BURDEN RETRIEVAL – *by Lt A Rea*

On Sunday 15 Jan 06, members of 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) took part in an endurance test as part of their TELIC Trophy event. The event took the form of burden retrieval, and is used to

simulate carrying supplies to the front line. It is a leadership and teamwork ex designed to test even the fittest of soldiers.

You can carry it this way...

The Sqn split their Tps into teams of 8, and lined up at the start line on the fresh Sunday morning. At ten-minute intervals, they set off along the 5km route, stopping at different points to collect various burdens.

First, was some track link from an armoured vehicle, then a breezeblock, followed by a large tyre. By this point, the teams were already beginning to feel the pain, as they had begun the race in full kit, including combat helmets. The day way getting hotter and the sweat began to pour.

By the time the halfway point was reached, the teams were carrying three heavy items between them, the shins were burning and the grunts of pain and frustration could be heard for miles around. Still the teams pushed on, faces skewed up in determination and every muscle in the body stiff in agony. They all knew they had to do as they ought and not as they wished!

or you can carry it this way

Finally the finish line drew near and the cheers of the onlookers could be heard, spurring the teams along the final stretch. With screams of encouragement from the comds, and pure drive and emotion, the teams tumbled across the finish line, their cargo dropping on the ground. During the race, the 6 items recovered were so important to the teams. At the end, they were just lumps of metal and concrete to be forgotten about.

The event was a test of endurance, mental strength, leadership and teamwork. It was a complete success and everyone who started, not only finished, but also seemed to enjoy it! Sqn 2IC, **Capt Jane Squires**, who took part in the event commented: "The teamwork displayed by all was excellent and really proved that we are all of one company. Despite our sore backs and aching arms, we thought through to the finish and pushed on over the course."

The aim Is to finish!

A JOCS OP PERSPECTIVE - *by Cpl Scully*

Exciting times were to be had in the JOCS Café this month. The JOCS servers have been misbehaving, due to a problem with the comms. The constant running up and down the stairs to the server room is benefiting us all no end. The light jog up to the room, is now known as the "Green Mile". The Tiger Team; **Sgt Record** and **Cpl Scully** (yes, me!) have been seen 'doing the conga', down the narrow corridors, well into the wee small hours as we battled to bring the system back in, before the GOC woke up. **Sgt Record** did not even have time to celebrate his birthday! The fight for comms is proving very real. **LCpl Watson** has been on R and R during this period of IT unrest, and happily missed everything.

There is currently a race on, to see who can consume the most chocolate within the Café. The NAAFI (dependable provider that it has been) ran out, but ably assisted by **LCpl Warbuton**, I managed to get some, airlifted all the way in from the guys at the Basra Palace, proving the old adage "It's not what you know, it's who you know."

Although you might not consider us frontline fighters, we are all comparing our scars at the moment. I managed to nearly knock my teeth further into my head, after falling over a mislaid breezeblock, outside the camp gate. **LCpl Warbuton** proved she could fly (yet again!), after taking a dive in PT and taking off a good few layers of skin from her legs. **Sgt Record's** liking for domesticity has extended to ironing his hands (as you do), leading to third degree burns, and what looks like a touch of leishmaniasis, thrown in for good measure (Just kidding! it was more like second degree burns!).

LCpl Warbuton and I are also competing, to see who can work the most nights without any sleep, and have now taken to wearing ear defenders to drown out the racket, from the busy (and loud) contingent, that is Tigris Tp.

Cpl Scully and LCpl Warburon

The Bde HQ Locally Employed Civilian (LEC) escort duty, which we have the pleasure of once a week, continues to be an interesting and entertaining experience – at times they bring a whole new meaning to the word 'inefficient' (One to hoover, one to hold the hoover cable, four to watch!). **LCpl Warbuton** and I are constantly explaining why we have not yet married, despite the fact that, according to the LECs, we are ancient! One of the LEC's wanted to know if we could get him some diet supplements, and I said I could do one better and had him running up and down the stairs. The poor guy was shattered. Speaking of PT, it has been cancelled this week, due to the PTI cadre course, that is currently being run by out resident PTIs. Now we'll see if people's self-motivation is still there. The BPFA in two weeks time will tell all!

Life goes on as usual in the JOCS café and as we are now over the hill, the run to the end of the tour is now in sight!

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

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

The premier Armd Div Sig Regt has once again been hard at work, deployed on ops in Iraq and the Balkans, and participating in some exciting sporting activities.

EXERCISE PIPE DOWN - *by 2Lt Anderson*

I first heard about the Divisional Ski Championships the Friday before I arrived in Herford, after a phone call from an officer asking if I could ski. The answer had been yes, but I had only been for three days. The reply I received was that it didn't matter, I would only be a reserve, and not really competing. I should have smelled something fishy!

On Monday 9 January, I arrived at the Regt for my first day in the Field Army, and on Tuesday, I left for Les Contamines, all good so far. On the bus. I met 2 of my teammates, **Sgt Robertson**, and **Sig Bell**. **LCpl Day** would join us later as he was instructing at the REME lodge. It turned out they were all very good skiers, with a lot of experience, and they were hoping to make the Army Championship. After an eventful arrival, we finally got up the mountain to start our trg, and it was time to show the experts what I could do. Luckily they all skied down first, to stop and watch me, so they didn't see me try and remember how to turn right; I was determined not to snowplough! It turns out, I was slightly better than they expected, but it was dawning on me by this stage, that I may be a little out of my league, and my comfort zone may well have been left in Blighty. We trained for two afternoons and a day, which in hindsight may not have been enough for myself, but you work with what you get. After a day off on Saturday, it was time for the seeding GS.

I had been assured that I would not be the worst; but the quality of the field this year was very high, so I was told. The events soon followed on with the individual GS, followed by the team GS on Tuesday. Things were going well for 1(UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt. **LCpl Day** was skiing very well, and heading for the top twenty seeds, and **Sig Bell** was moving up the rankings. **Sgt Robertson** felt he should have done better, but as I was to find out, this would be a recurring theme; he still finished in the top 15. The competition was on.

Next event was the downhill race, preceded by 2 trg days. It snowed heavily for one night and one day and so downhill trg became impossible. We found out the hard way, that slalom trg was a bit tricky. I ended the day looking like a slush puppy! However my learning curve continued the next day, as I learnt about downhill racing. I'll not forget! Standing at the top of a mountain looking down, knowing that at points you are going to take off, like it or not, and that a fall could be at speeds well in excess of 50 mph. Then there was the issue of stopping, as I found out, breaking one of the skis trying to stop before I hit the fence, much to the amusement of some of the other racers.

i failed to survive the trg intact, after 'dobbing out' massively towards the end of the course. I was out of contention with a knee and ankle injury. However the team continued to do well, and things were looking pretty good for going to the Army Championships. The Slalom was next in line, and this was followed by the Super Giant Slalom to finish the championships.

The team came 6th overall out of the 18 teams, with **Sgt Robertson** finishing well in the top ten, and **LCpl Day** finishing 21st; so both went on as individuals to the Army Championships. **Sig Bell** unfortunately just missed out, finishing 55th. On the plus side though, I discovered that a bad day on the slopes is definitely better than a good day at work.

THE DINING OUT OF THE RSM - *by 212 Sig Sqn*

The main social event of the calendar for the first part of the year, was the dining out of **WO1 Bruce**, prior to his turning to the dark side, (commissioning that is). That said, prior to that date, he has been given the honour and privilege of leading the Corps forward as the Corps RSM, (who's the daddy)! We all know he is ideally suited for this post.

The RSM and his guests were duly piped into the mess, by two pipers from the band of the Corps Pipes and Drums. This set the tenor for what was to be a thoroughly outstanding farewell dinner- and rightly so. The meal itself came as no great surprise, haggis aplenty.

We were treated to an after dinner speech by **WO1(SSM) Martin Wood**, the RCWO, who managed to organize a superb presentation. This revealed some deep, thought provoking images, which obviously had not been seen by the Commissioning Board or the PVRO's department! For the first time ever, we witnessed the RSM, 'Dripping like a knackered fridge' or 'Sweating like a Liney on a spelling test'! It's astonishing to see exactly what **Pamela**, his better half, has been subjected to over the years! After this rousing and thoroughly entertaining period, we settled down, in great anticipation of the RSM's farewell speech. He did not disappoint. As usual, all members and guests present were captivated. It was certainly a momentous occasion and wonderful for the RSM to have shared it with members of his family.

Outside the Mess, the RSM bade farewell to the Regt on the parade square, where he was presented with a gift, from all members of the Regt. All that remains is for us offer our best wishes to the RSM and **Pamela**, and acknowledge the fact that the Regt's loss is the Corps' gain. A truly dedicated and professional soldier, of whom we certainly haven't heard the last!

211 SIG SQN BAGHDAD TP - by *Lt Hugo Evans*

Baghdad has a 'last days of Saigon' feel to it. If one day, a great film maker, or any film maker for that matter, should decide to depict the life and times of 211 Sig Sqn on OP TELIC 7, then it would look like a cross between Apocalypse Now and Porridge. Simply picture the OC finding her seniors, sunbathing naked on a roof by the Tigris, as Blackhawks drone overhead. The British Support Unit, or Castle Greyskull, or simply The Castle (a la Kafka), is a bubble, projected into the city, like the 'restaurant at the end of the universe'. Certainly, you need a space ship to be assured of reaching us. The only thing harder than actually

getting here, is getting back out again. Not that you'd want to, for apart from seamless comms, we provide regular bingo for the international community in the kidnap capital of the world.

MISU NOTES - by *Lt James Macrae*

While the mid-tour point has come and gone, MISU have been as busy as ever, both on and off duty. With personnel being whisked away from their comfort zone, due to a mixture of organised, and forced, job swaps, there has barely been time to notice the sub zero temperatures. While the wind chill factor may have forced the mercury levels to -20°C, the work rate has been significantly higher.

The last 2 months have seen the unit braving the Balkans winter weather, to establish their reputation in BLMF as the sporting gladiators, they undoubtedly are. As part of the BLMF Xmas festivities, tournaments were held for football, volleyball and unihoc, and naturally, MISU entered a team in each. Despite their best efforts, the volleyball and unihoc team were eventually defeated, however the football team stormed to victory, earning a 500 prize, and universal acclaim from the British and International contingents.

Not to be outdone, the Kosovo Sigs Det entered a KFOR-wide bench pressing contest, where **SSgt Robson** strolled away with first prize, after benching twice his own body weight! However, they were less successful in the football, getting soundly beaten 6-0 by the Portuguese! Sporting events aside, the Sqn kept in good cheer over Xmas. On Xmas Day itself, in time honoured tradition, the junior ranks were served dinner in the Officers' Mess by the Officers and Seniors. A good time was had by all, and only one or two vegetables were thrown, despite encouragement from the OC, **Maj Lee Keily**. Afterwards it was back to the MISU lines for games organised by **Cpl Matt Burton** and **Cpl Iain Good**.

Several members of MISU managed to escape from Banja Luka in December, by going on a battlefield tour to Sarajevo, organised by **WO2(SSM) Steve Tresidder**. It was a good opportunity for members of the unit to gain some background knowledge as to why EUFOR peacekeepers are still present in Bosnia, as well as providing a chance to visit the PX! More visits are planned for the future.

More recently, BLMF has hosted several celebrities, who were visiting as part of the organised CSE calendar. Models **Lucy Pinder** and **Michelle Marsh**, along with footballer **Chris Waddle**, were treated to a cup of tea and a fine display of table football in the unit lines. Later that evening, MISU cemented their reputation as the best sub unit in BLMF, when **Sig Ibbotson** took third place in the X-Factor competition, displaying a singing voice, that would have make Elvis squirm in his grave. Unfortunately, some members of our team have had to return early. We have said goodbye to **Capt Joe Docherty**, who has unfortunately had to leave theatre, after suffering a nasty broken leg, and also to

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj Mark Tivey**
SSM **WO2 Leask**

SENIOR BRITISH MILITARY ADVISOR FORWARD DEPLOYMENT

On 2 July 05, an 8 man sig det from 2 Sig Regt, deployed in support of the Senior British Military Advisor (SBMA), **Maj Gen Riley DSO**, and his staff. Following a memorable overnight stay at TDA 4 in Basra, the detachment arrived at Camp As Sayliyah in Qatar, which would be our home for the next 5 months.

The SBMA provides the US Central Command and its Comd, with British input on ops throughout the AOR. The SBMA deployed from the main HQ in Tampa to the HQ at Camp As Sayliyah, in support of the forward deployment of US Central Command Staff.

Following a short plug up phase, the det became responsible for providing CIS and close support to the SBMA Staff. In addition, we also provided "Hurricane Cover" for the Main HQ in Tampa, during the hurricane season.

Despite being the only British Forces stationed in the Camp, we were keen to make our mark; and on the sporting front we achieved a great deal of success.

The OC, **Lt Craig Whittley**, led from the front, winning the Camp Biathlon with **Cpl Kirkwood**, **Sig Anderson** and **Sig Flood** putting in some excellent performances during the monthly 5km run.

Corporal Rigamoto represented the coalition rugby team in the tri series tests, against the Aussies and Doha Rugby Club.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

The last few months have been as busy as ever. The SLE Tp has assumed their R1 tasking, while Herrick Tp is saying their final farewells, before a couple of months in Afghanistan. EX NORDIC SHIELD in Norway, towards the end of last year, involved all members of the Sqn who were not already warned off for ops.

No one has been left out of a busy, but hugely rewarding couple of months. It looks like more of the same in 2006, with the arrival of the TT2.0 CORMORANT dets and the assumption of the JLCC support role.

MY FIRST OVERSEAS EXERCISE - *by Sig Bikash Gurung*

Once all the arrangements had been made at South Cerney, on Sunday 7 November 05, we flew to Norway to take part in the very first overseas exercise of the CORMORANT system – EX NORDIC SHIELD 05. The ex was a multi-national trg ex, where 214 Sig Sqn provided the CORMORANT network for various components of the Combined Joint Task Force HQ.

The whole ex was carried out in Oreland Main Air Station, Norway. After setting up the dets and tentage, the CORMORANT system was soon up and running. I was working in the Land Comd Component, which was a very busy section all the time. The CORMORANT system was set up inside and outside the hangars. Besides providing a constant CORMORANT network, some of us managed to visit historical places, go skiing, go fishing and other activities. The Real Life Support Unit and our Norwegian hosts arranged music concerts, dance shows and bands in the CPX club, for all those off shift. The cold days of Norway were soon to end, as the countdown started for Christmas leave. By 17 December, we completed loading the CORMORANT assets back in the ISO containers.

Overall, it was an enjoyable 6 weeks and it has been a great learning experience for me, working with the CORMORANT experts during the exercise. I feel I have brought back huge experience, which I will be able to use on future CORMORANT deployments.

HERRICK TROOP - *by Lt Damien Corcoran*

Herrick Tp formed on 1 October 05, and has spent the pre-Christmas period in preparation for a January deployment to Afghanistan. The trg has seen all members of the Tp deploying to the four corners of the UK, on special to arm courses. Anyone that remained was subject to a number of impromptu, physical fitness sessions, courtesy of the Tp Comd. Aside from a gruelling STA course line up, and an excellent OPTAG package at Shorncliffe, the tp has had a couple of smokers and an essential 'bonding' day at the local laser quest. The det had a very interesting journey to Afghanistan; from York to Brize and then leaving there, with the intention of an overnight stop in Cyprus. However the inflatable life raft on the outside of the aircraft had other ideas. A quick overnight stop was needed in Pisa, before returning to Brize, and hence to York for a few days, pre-tour R and R. After a further 24hr delay at Brize, they took off again, with quick stops in Cyprus and Basra, before finally arriving in Afghanistan. Although they were not at all relaxed and refreshed, they were, nevertheless, raring to go!

Troop Smoker in Pisa

SPEARHEAD LAND ELEMENT - *by Lt Sarah Panting*

On 1 December 05, our Tp finally took on the mantle of Spearhead Land Element (SLE) CIS Tp, supporting the 2LI BG. We took on this very high readiness tasking from 30 Sig Regt. Viking Tp is the first troop, within 2 Sig Regt, to take on such a role and as such, we've been blazing the trail for all those who will come after us. The months leading up to the handover were busy, and fraught with tension, as the Tp worked hard to test and commission all the SLE circuits over the new bearer: a CORMORANT CLASp over TALON Satcom. This new era of SLE CIS provision has upped the available bandwidth from 512Kb to 2Mb. Under the experienced eye of **Sgt Richie Brown**, the operators and technicians worked late nights, and over several weekends, to engineer links in, and to learn the tricks of the trade, which would finally become SLE SOPs. We deployed on EX LOYAL LEDGER with 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt Army Fwd HQ for their introduction to CORMORANT, and ours to BOWMAN, as it happened. Away from the distractions of the garages in York, **Sgt Brown's** team worked wonders, and even got comms in a record 4 hours!

Once the circuits were commissioned, it was time to prepare the soldiers themselves for high readiness. Not as easy a task as one might expect, with people going off on courses and missing ITDs, but we achieved it just in time for EX FIRST FLIGHT, the HQ LAND SLE validation ex held at JAMC South Cerney. The Tp did the Regt proud, once again, and was requested as a demo for the vehicles, 'best prepared for air movement!'

After another couple of weeks, it was time to travel to Gamecock Barracks, to officially sign over the SLE capability from 30 Sig Regt. They were sad to see it go, but after all our preparation time, and the hours we had put in, we felt our turn couldn't come quickly enough. Now, we just have to sit and wait for the phone call....

Lt Will Mawby hands over the Spear to Lt Sarah Panting and her troop at Gamecock Barracks

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Dave Duggan**
SSM **WO2 Hunt**

It has been a busy period for 219 Sig Sqn with the arrival of 8 new CORMORANT installations in the second week of January 06. The Systems Acceptance Test is continuing in earnest, and being run concurrently with the Battle Camp, the recovery of personnel from Op HERRICK 2, SBMA Forward (Qatar) and the roulement SBMA Rear (Tampa).

The Sqn would like to say farewell to **Cpl Langford**, **Cpl Clarke**, **LCpl Perry** and **Sig Fox**, who will all be sadly missed.

SQUADRON BATTLE CAMP - *by Sgt Latham*

The Sqn deployed on a 7-day Battle Camp, to exercise and defend Rype Village in Lydd Camp in Kent. The Battle Camp was a 5-day, Field Firing ex based around a tactical Command and Control scenario, in the recently independent state of Penwithia. After a long journey, a Tp of 219 Sig Sqn arrived at Fort Richmond and settled in, before the briefings and the ex scenario

began. From leaving the briefing, they were straight into the thick of it almost immediately, as even as they left the briefing hall, a crowd of the local Penwithians were out to give the visiting soldiers abuse, for being in their town.

The next morning, the ranges and activities began, starting with some PS & PO trg, then the March & Shoot and moving target ranges, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. **Sig Anderson** gained the top score for the March & Shoot and **Sig Moon** got a perfect score on the moving targets. As the week progressed, the ranges become increasingly more tactical and linked into the scenario.

The Tp, as a whole, performed excellently on the FIBUA range and was the only Tp to engage and destroy all the enemy. The last night of the ex came to a head, with various serials throughout the evening, leading to the final riot. With all the build-up trg we had done, the Tp performed well. It culminated in a successful end to the ex on the ranges, and 'Law and Order' was restored in Penwithia.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj D M Stoter**
SSM	**WO2 Pritinarayan**

After a well deserved stand down, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn is now on very high readiness state (R2) for NRF 6 deployment. We are currently preparing for EX RED TRICORN, due to be held over the period of 9 – 17 February 06, in support of 3(UK) Div, before deploying out on EX KEY FLIGHT I in March 06.

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

246 Gurkha Sig Sqn bade farewell to **Maj Ade Clewlow** and family on 16 December 05 and has received **Maj Mark Stoter** as the new OC Saheb wef 9 January 06. Just before Xmas, the Sqn has also had new 2IC, **Capt(QGO) Nirmal Bhattachan** relieving **Capt(QGO) Krishnabadur Gurung**, to be the Gurkha Major of Queen's Gurkha Signals.

EXERCISE ALLIED WARRIOR

- by Cpl Pravakar Rai

EXERCISE ALLIED WARRIOR was held from 14 November to 12 December 05, in Montijo Airbase in Portugal. This was the very first big exercise of this kind, which involved staff officers from the NATO countries preparing for the forthcoming NRF-6 commitment. The main aim of this ex was to allow NATO to test the capability of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, in order to achieve NRF-6 (NATO Response Force) certification. The build up started from 14 November, and the staff officers arrived in theatre on 1 December. There were 3 main HQs set up in theatre: Land Command Component HQ (LCCHQ), Joint Force Air Component HQ (JFACHQ) and Deployable Joint Task Force HQ (DJTFHQ). The responsibility of 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt was to build the LCCHQ, and to provide the life support for the staff officers.

246 Gurkha Sig Sqn was made ready to support 3 (UK) Div in providing comms using the newly introduced CORMORANT system. The capability of CORMORANT was tested to full, during the pre deployment Bde test ex, EX LOYAL LEDGER. Kowloon Tp were tasked to provide the CORMORANT support for LCCHQ, which is the prime task of 3 UK Div. 101 Log Bde was supported by Sek Kong Tp, and 19 Lt Bde by Island Tp. After a successful comms ex, we flew to Portugal, while the comms eqpt went by ship. A day after our arrival, we started our job. First we had to establish the satellite link using TALON satellite eqpt. Next, was to put the CORMORANT system through TALON. We provided digital and analogue services to staff users, and data links for the JOCS. Apart from that, we were also interfacing with other NATO subscribers, like IVSM. There were more than 300 staff officers in LCCHQ, working under the command of **Maj Gen Sheriff CBE**.

We had very challenging role to play, as we were the backbone of the 3 (UK) Div comms infrastructures, for the support of the multinational staff officers. The control of the comms ex was conducted through the LMC and RMC in theatre. Once we got everything up and working, we had less to do, so we got a chance to visit Lisbon. To maintain the morale of the soldiers, there were organised R and R packages to different places, like Benfica Stadium, a Port and Wine tasting, a coastal walk and mountain biking.

EXERCISE ALLIED WARRIOR was very successful. Now we hope that we get the chance to deploy elsewhere with NRF 6 commitments.

Members of Kowloon Troop, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn during the exercise

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col A G Hill**
RSM	**WO1 MJR Wakeling**

We are delighted that the Regt 2IC, **Maj Andy Knott**, was appointed MBE in the New Year Honours List – congratulations Knotty! Warm congratulations also go to **CSgt Griffin** and **CSgt Cooper** on the award of MSM.

IN FOCUS – THE REGIMENTAL RECRUITING TEAM (RRT)

The RRT was very pleased to host a visit by the Regimental Colonel, **Col John Ewbank**, in February. Not that he needs recruiting – he is already a 'lifer'! Rather, **Col John** was up to see how our RRT is pulling in the crowds, just about everywhere they go. The team led by **Sgt Will Browning** and **Cpl Sarah O'Reilly**

Two potential recruits (in the middle of the shot)

demonstrated the Linesman's Challenge, with the help of **LCpl Ches Crossman** and **Sig Leanne Knott** who posed as very convincing young potential recruits, complete with long hair and too much lip. Of course, not every day spent in the RRT is such fun, but most are! The role of the RRT is to attract the very best recruits to the Royal Signals, in competition with other Corps. This involves frequent trips to schools, colleges, recruiting events and open days. Positions come up quite frequently in the team – if you fancy giving it a go, then contact the Regt 2IC. Sorry Colonel, only the under 30s need apply!

EXERCISE REEF DRAGON - *by Cpl Greenham*

Ex REEF DRAGON was a 'live aboard' diving expedition to the Red Sea, which took place in January. With our Egyptian crew, and our delightful dive guide, **Maria** from Essex, we lived aboard the '*Panorma Sharm*', crammed in like sardines. The guys paired up to share their shoebox cabins, apart from **Lt Richard Warmington,** who pulled rank as exped leader, and took the honeymoon suite.

The first couple of days of diving focussed on the Ocean Diver qualification, under the guidance of **Capt Steve Harfoot**, **Major Mark Harris**, **WO1 Al Keen** and **Capt Dave Sheridan,** the advanced divers and instructors for the exped. Each day began early, with a first dive before breakfast, another before lunch and one in the afternoon. The food was always excellent, providing you could get to it before **Sig Allerton**! Over the week we dived

Lt Warmington looking through a small crack

the shallow reef around Ras Katy, then on the site of an old sailing ship called the *Dunraven*, which hit Beacon Rock,after the Captain put the 2IC in charge - it would never happen in 3 Div! We also dived 'Small Crack', where huge Napoleon Wrasse, with incredibly large lips, lurked

If 'Small Crack' wasn't funny enough for you, it was off to 'Shag Rock' next, to dive the wreck of the *Kingston* and after that, the *Thistlegorm*, sunk in '41, and still guarding its cargo of very rusty rifles. The wrecks of the *Ghiannis D* and the *Carnatic* were last to be dived, and it was here that the oxygen guzzlers like **LCpl Swan**, completed their Sports Diver qualification, after carrying out rescue (and cocktail making) drills on the nearby beach. In all we knocked up 20 dives each, on this excellent exped.

BOB SKELETON – THE ARMY WAY! - *by LCpl Cartwright*

In the beginning, God made ice. Man decided to slide on ice, hence the invention of the Luge and Bob skeleton. Skeleton racing can be traced back to 1884, when privileged Brits formed a tobogganing club, racing head first down an icy road, from St Moritz to Celerina, Switzerland. Sometimes known as 'a tea tray on rails', the skeleton sled is actually a very sophisticated piece of engineering, fabricated on a steel frame, with a composite pod and a steel saddle that holds the rider. After a sprinting run up of 30 metres, the athlete adopts a face down, head first riding position. Gravity then takes over. With speeds approaching 135 km/hr, and with no brakes or steering devices, and a journey stretching up to 1.5km, you need to think twice before hopping on board. So why did I get involved in this? Because the local bowls club were full of course!

LCpl Cartwright prepares for take off

My first ride on a 'tea tray' was in 2002. Since then, I have competed all over Europe, Scandinavia and America, representing both the Army and Great Britain, and I am ranked 4th in GB. Most recently, I have just returned from the British Bob Skeleton Championships, which took place in Igls, near Innsbruck in Austria, sponsored in part by the Regt. Following some very snowy trg days, 8 women competitors were entered in the British Bob Skeleton Championships. Together with **Lt Gemma Metherell** RLC, the remaining competitors were GB Internationals who train full time, competing on the World and Europa Cup circuits. Overall, I achieved 5th place, with a first run of 58.52 secs and a second run of 58.56 secs.

However, I was ranked third fastest push, with a personal best of 5.80 secs. This was good enough to be selected as reserve for

the Europa Cup in San Moritz. In short, my Regt think I'm mad, which I might well be, but so long as I keep my 'tea tray', I don't care.

REGIMENTAL ALL RANKS DAY – 15th DECEMBER
- by Lt Duncan Reader

Christmas came early for the Regiment last year – 10 days early to be precise. After a manic final term, we decided to celebrate with an unusual cocktail of festivities, promoting sport, AT, and eating, all in the same day; something for everyone there then!

In traditional fashion, the day began with Gunfire at 07.00 hrs. From here the 4 sqns broke down into their respective teams, for a morning of inter-sqn sports competitions, organised by the QMSI, **WO2 Rab Lundie,** and **Lt Vanessa Shipley**. For those nursing early Christmas hangovers, the pool took no prisoners with a combination of individual 2 length races, and 4 x 1 length relay races covering the main strokes. After some closely fought races, 202 Sig Sqn seized first place, as they did again after a 'bare knuckle' hockey competition. In the main gym, the basketball competition was under way, with teams sweating it out in 20-minute games. 222 Sqn achieved a convincing victory, winning all their matches.

Following Christmas lunch, the focus moved back to the gym where the respective sports OICs had organised stands to advertise their sports. Ranging from winter sports, through to sailing and shooting there was something to interest everybody; even the hairy Cambrian Patrollers got a look in. On the Martial Arts stand, two very short Karate Instructors showed that size isn't everything, when throwing much larger soldiers around. It also gave our own Regt's black belt, **Maj Knott MBE**, an excuse to beat up the new subalterns.

Next it was off to the Christmas Carol Service, in order to freshen up the lungs before the evening party. With a considerable subsidy from the PRI fund, the whole Regt was able to enjoy a fantastic spread of food and entertainment accompanied by their 'special friends'. There was a witty introductory speech by the CO, which got a resounding reception, largely due to the cheap drinks. Thereafter it was down to the serious business of forgetting the waistline, and dancing to Abba. It was good to see the Junior Officers make the first, embarrassing, forays onto the floor. Organised by **Capt Richie Bell**, with a supporting cast including **CSgt Griffin**, **LCpl Clare Fielding** and the Regimental Chefs, it was surely one to remember.

EXERCISE ALLIED WARRIOR *- by LCpl Chris Wilson*

206 Sig Sqn's deployment on EX ALLIED WARRIOR started slowly, after some slight problems with the transport. On arrival

QMSI Rab Lundie and his 'Gel Boys' relax after the CO's Cup

in Montijo, Portugal, Mons Tp jumped straight into action building the Land Component Command HQ (LCCHQ). As usual the job was finished with ease and lightning speed. Normandy Tp were then left to carry on with the day to day running of the LCCHQ, and Mons Tp were allowed to relax for 3 days, with a spot of mountain biking.

Sadly the weather was against us, and as hard as it was, being dragged round by **Lt Rachel Thompson** and **WO2 (SSM) Chay Hook**, through a monsoon, we were actually the lucky ones – Normandy Tp were left trying to stop the Durable Rapid Assembly Shelter (DRASh) from flooding, only days before the 3(UK) Div Staff were due to arrive! After a couple of days rest, and some 30 shopping centres later, Mons Tp went back to work, to pick up the pieces that had been left behind by Normandy Tp!

The ex for us consisted mainly of running the LCCHQ, with occasional days out to a museum, more shopping centres and Benfica Football Stadium. Towards the end of the ex, and to the bemusement of the locals, **Cpls Tony Gallagher**, **Gina Shipley, Ronnie Cuthbert**, **Mac McCarthy** and **Sig Dandy** found time to relax on the beach and swim in the sea! EX ALLIED WARRIOR finished for 206 Sig Sqn with a record 12-hour tear down, a few beers and much deserved praise for all involved.

After returning to the UK, and settling back into life in sunny Bulford, **Cpl Kenny Kennedy** and myself were told we had to return to Portugal. We took part in the ceremony for the Spanish and Italian hand over of the NRF flags, with GOC 3(UK) Div, **Maj Gen ARD Shirreff CBE**, representing the British Army.

Farewell to **Maj Ken Bailie** R IRISH who is leaving the Army after 37 years, much of it spent with 3 Div Sig Regt as OC HQ Sqn. We will be sad to see the 'old man' go, because we feel he is now more Royal Signals than Royal Irish. Well done **Ken**, you finally made it from the trench to the telegraph!

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

The start of 2006 has seen 7 Sig Regt fully reintegrate after last year's ops in Iraq and the Balkans, take a quick Regtl photograph, then undertake final preparations and trg for ops in Afghanistan, over the next year. 2006 and 2007 will see almost everyone in the Regt deploying to Afghanistan; the first wave out being based on a reinforced 231 Sig Sqn. Recent weeks have seen Elmpt Station buzz, with over 1,000 officers and soldiers completing their OPTAG trg, and any visitor to the Mighty 7th, is caught up in the whirl of ISOs being loaded, individual kit being issued, and trg, trg, trg for more ops. These *Wire* notes capture the other activities that are still ongoing in the Regt, as well as highlighting the experiences of the first soldiers from the Regt to have returned from ops in Pakistan, supporting the Afghanistan out load.

KELLER KNEIPE *- by 2Lt Thewlis*

Young Officers of 7 Sig Regt were privileged to visit a 'Keller Kneipe', strictly translated as a 'Cellar Pub' but in reality more like a formal society gathering, early this February. Magnificently hosted by **Lt Col Fuchs** of the German Reserves, the evening consisted of a classic hunting meal, followed by a traditional German Korps night. German Korps are an integral part of university life for Germans, and form a unique element of their

culture, with many similarities to mess life evident in the format of the evening. Held in a traditional cellar environment, festooned with pictures representing Korps activities, such as fencing, the atmosphere contributed perfectly to the evening, especially with a Union Flag upon the wall!

Keller Kneipe Supper

The early part of the evening was dedicated to formal speeches, interspersed with traditional Korps songs, representing the variety of Korps present. The atmosphere soon became more relaxed, enabling us to chat more freely with our hosts and other guests. With an age range of eighteen through to eighty, there was a vast array of both military and civilian experience and knowledge to draw upon. It is not often that one finds oneself opposite a U-Boat veteran on a formal exchange visit these days!

The British contingent were made to feel thoroughly at home, and we would like to thank all those present, although sincere gratitude must deservedly go to **Lt Col Fuchs** and his family for their gracious hospitality, throughout the course of our stay. Indeed, it was with great pleasure that the Regt was able to return the favour in part, by inviting them to Burns Night the following weekend. Having now had a taste of a 'Keller Kneipe' it has certainly whetted our appetite for more, and we very much hope to get invited back for another experience of the German Korps tradition in the future.

TWO MONTHS ON OPERATIONS IN PAKISTAN
- by Cpl Glen Lyon

One lunchtime, on a chilly November day, the Regtl Ops Officer informed me that **LCpl Ben Griffiths** and I were to deploy to Pakistan within the next 3 weeks, in order to support the RLC, as they set up the Sea Point of Disembarkation (SPOD) for Op HERRICK in Karachi. We started preparation for our deployment, which included nipping back to UK, to train on some of the eqpt we would use in theatre.

Once prepared, we were attached to 17(Port and Maritime) Regt at the end of November. After we swapped our combats for outdoor clothing we boarded an 8-hour flight from Heathrow to Karachi. Much to our disappointment however, we had to stopover in Dubai en-route. Arriving at Karachi International Airport late in the morning, we were pleasantly surprised by the warm weather, after experiencing the start of the British winter. Living in Pakistan turned out to be a real culture shock for both of us, the road system is chaotic, with right of way going to the driver with the loudest horn, and the food is a lot different from Pay As You Dine. We soon got to work establishing and maintaining a rear link to the UK for the RLC, in their Convoy Marshalling Area (CMA), where all the vehicles and ISO containers move through before going up country towards Afghanistan. To date, the CMA has processed hundreds of vehicles and over a thousand ISOs for Op HERRICK. This deployment has given me a wealth of experience on how it all works, and the opportunity to visit Pakistan was a real eye opener.

OPERATION ABELIAN II – SUDAN *- by Capt Peter Brierley*

The British Military have a somewhat chequered history in our former colony; **General Gordon** met his grisly fate in the capital city of Khartoum, in 1885. Although I had no idea when the last British soldier or officer served in the Sudan, I was determined not to follow in Gordon's fateful footsteps!

The current humanitarian crisis in Darfur, led to the EU undertaking an assisting action for the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS). In conjunction with this, the UK has contributed approximately £20M of aid, predominantly in the form of vehicles, but also in personnel. Consequently, on 16 July 05, I boarded a flight bound for Addis Ababa and the African Union (AU) HQ in Ethiopia. The AU HQ is the representative body for 52 African states, and while I was waiting for political clearance and theatre induction, numerous Heads of State including **Mugabe**, **Mbeki** and **Zelawi**, visited the HQ.

Onward to Al Fasher, my home for the next few months. In an attempt to simplify what is an extremely complex issue, Darfur, a region the size of France, is inherently poor. The region was marginalized by the protracted North/South conflict, and did not appear to benefit from the subsequent peace process. Settlers fight with nomads over scarce resources, the Government of Sudan sponsored militia (the Janjaweed) are indiscriminate in their violence, the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) oppose the Government forces, and against this backdrop, tribal, ethnic, intra-faction and clan hostilities continue. In Darfur alone, some 1.6 million people have been displaced from their homes and approximately 300,000 killed. In order to implement an African solution to the problem, the African Mission In Sudan (AMIS) was born. As the size of the problem became apparent so did the need for AMIS to grow. Currently AMIS is a force of 7731 troops and Civilian Police (CivPol).

My role, as part of the 8 EU Officers component, was to advise and assist AU officers, in order to ensure that J4 planning for the mission was realistic and achievable. The first tranche of 658 vehicles were complete in theatre by mid-August and the receipt inspection process initiated. During this period, I visited the other 7 sectors, utilising the Canadian sponsored Mi 8 helicopters.

Capt Pete Brierley (second from left) with the EU Component

Life in Al Fasher can best be described as austere! Arriving in the rainy season, the tented camp was destroyed twice, and the office accommodation regularly flooded. Eight civilians were killed in Al Fasher, as flash floods washed structures away. When not raining, the temperature regularly topped 40 making all activities challenging. As the staging location for troops arriving in Darfur, Al Fasher was constantly over-populated. The infrastructure designed for 350 personnel, regularly catered for in excess of 600. The limited facilities were therefore regularly unable to cope with demand, and for once, not living in the vicinity of the ablutions was a blessing rather than an inconvenience! There was however always plenty of rice and meat (generally goat) to go around, be that breakfast, lunch or evening meal!

Conditions aside, life was always challenging and interesting. The multi-cultural, multi-national environment made for some passionate interaction, not least in the tent I shared with an Italian and Egyptian. The EU contingent included a Canadian Naval Cdr and Army Maj, a Swedish Air Force Lt Col and Maj, a Hungarian Army Capt, a US Marine Capt and a RLC Maj. The local composite security force consisted of soldiers and police from Rwanda and Gambia, both of whom were very friendly and professional. Additional troop contributing countries included Senegal, South Africa and Nigeria. Any nationalities not mentioned were represented in the many CivPol, UN staff and NGOs in the region!

A truly memorable experience and one I consider myself extremely fortunate to have participated in. As for the success of my venture, I avoided **Gen Gordon's** fate and consider the AU are now well en-route to establishing the personalities in post, who will continue the mission when the EU contingent depart. For the immediate future, the EU assisting action in Sudan will continue into 2006 and I will return to Elmpt Station, where preparations for the forthcoming Op HERRICK/ISAF deployment are well underway.

LADIES SPONSORED BASIC COMBAT FITNESS TEST (BCFT)

On Sunday 4 December, a team of 19 ladies from Elmpt station successfully complete a sponsored BCFT in 1hr 55min and 41secs for charity. The BCFT consists of an 8 mile march carrying 15kg to be completed between 1hr 55min and 2hrs.

The ladies had previously completed 6 trg sessions under the supervision of **Sgt Jackie Herbert** in order to prepare them for this arduous, and totally unfamiliar, activity. The sponsorship received is going towards a place in the London Marathon, in support of Help the Hospices, a charity that provides support for terminally ill adults and children, over 95% of whom are cancer sufferers. Team Captain, **Sophie Rathie**, the driving force behind the whole event, will be running the London Marathon on 23 April 06 and hopes to have raised at least double the minimum entry fee of £1500. Families and friends supported the team, throughout the event, and after a quick cool down session, everyone retired to the Village Green for refreshments and a charity raffle.

The Ladies BCFT Team

FOCUS ON THE REGIMENTAL TRAINING WING
- by Capt Yogi Cauldwell

A very successful Regtl Battle Camp and further potential ops were the catalysts to a complete change of focus towards trg. The CO's philosophy of 'On Ops or Trg for Ops' was used to model the new trg regime. Every Friday (yes, every Friday!) is a Regtl trg day, rotating Military Skills, Battle PT, Trade, Inter Sqn Competitions and CO's Challenge. ITDs are conducted as battle exs. Although a little emotional at times, the sessions have been imaginative and interesting. More focused trg has been delivered to 231 Sig Sqn in the shape of an IS exercise, designed to assist with their preparation for the imminent deployment to Afghanistan.

231 Sig Sqn on IS Ex

WO2 Spike Cawley has introduced a highly effective progressive fitness package that has produced some excellent results and very imaginative and challenging competitions…and shows why the APTC are always high on Christmas card lists. "All four corners of the airfield…GO" is a shout we are now all well prepared for.

All the routine stuff has continued; range packages, pre-CLM, guard trg, induction courses, cadet visits, school trips, trade crammers, trade courses, OPTAG trg (not routine, but it feels like it now), haggis hunting trg; the list is long and fantastic. And, just so we didn't get bored, we were delighted to have visits from the SOinC (A) **Brig Thomas**, the new 1 Sig Bde Comd, **Brig Pope** and the House of Commons Defence Committee.

Our recent and projected activities are just as good. Regimental SAAM has just been completed; a wet, but successful day for 231. Next in our crosshairs is the Station Cadre Course, 50 soldiers on a two-week intensive military course.

QMSI introduces Sig Lock to the ground

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col SJ Vickery**
RSM **WO1(RSM) J Reid**

EX DRAGONS CHASE 2006

EX DRAGONS CHASE 2006, the Regtl Patrol and Shooting Competition, took place between the 7 – 10 February 06 at SENTA. Its aim was to promote aspects of military trg, both collective and individual, within all sqns and enable the Regt to best identify, and select personnel, for the Cambrian Patrol and Lanyard Trophy Competitions and Royal Signals CORPSAAM. It also allowed validation to take place on all the pre-deployment trg that is being conducted in the Regt.

True to form, SENTA lived up to its reputation of having its own eco-climate and while for the previous month, it had been basking in glorious sunshine, albeit cold, when Trg Wing arrived, so did the rain, fog and freezing conditions. There were 7 stands, consisting of; CBRN, Ammo Burden, Urban Op, Mines, Foot Patrol, Vehicle Patrol and CASSIM. In between the stands was a 35km tab in full CEMO. Seven teams of 5 took part in the competition, starting at different stands and part of the event. The teams were harboured up in woods, during what turned out to be a vicious night of rain and freezing winds.

After the gruelling tab and demanding stands, the teams completed the event in good spirits and were harboured up at various farms, to wait for the final day of the competition. This took the form of the Whitehead shoot and a falling plate competition, with the points from the shooting proving to be extremely important to the overall results. It proved to be a perfect day for shooting, with no wind or rain. The shooting was co-ordinated by **Capt Greenwood** and **SSgt Tye**, and the competitors produced some excellent times for the falling plate.

The overall event was won by HQ Sqn, with both the A and B teams winning their respective groups. 237 Sig Sqn came a close second to HQ A and although they lost a man due to injury, worked extremely hard to push HQ Sqn. 237 Sig Sqn A Team also won the shooting competition, with 226 Sig Sqn A Team winning the Falling Plate. **Lt Parish** was heard to say, during the Falling Plate quarterfinals, that he was now tired and wished he and his team would stop shooting so well.

The event tested all who took part and it was a pleasure to see the professionalism being shown by the competitors. **SSgt Peace** ran and co-ordinated the whole event. Sadly this was his last for the Regt, prior to posting. The Regtl Trg Wing and all the usual suspects, would like to wish **SSgt Peace** and his wife **Julie** all the best for the future.

HQ Sqn A and B teams winners of the Patrol Competition Cup

DISBANDMENT OF COMMS TROOP *- by 2Lt Seaton*

It is with a heavy heart that we must report the demise of Comms Tp, HQ Sqn at 14 Sig Regt. I took over as OC Comms Tp at the beginning of November last year. The Tp's role was to provide the Regt's Comd Net in times of war and ex, and to maintain and man HQ Sqns' vital vehicles. We did this, not only for the HQ Sqn chain of command, but we also provided box body containers for 226 Sqn during ex or on ops. It was decided in early January, that due to current and future op commitments, the Regt could no longer justify the manpower the Tp required. Therefore, on 30 January 2006, the assets were divided amongst the three field Sqns, and Comms Tp is now nothing but a memory to all those associated with it. Good luck to all members of Comms Tp in their new Sqns.

BRIGADE COMMANDER'S VISIT

As the only EW Regt, we entertain a steady flow of visitors, keen to see our eqpt and learn more about our modus operandi. On 17 January, the new Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig PJ Davies**, visited the Regt. Although this was only just after Christmas leave, the Regt took no time in preparing a day of visits for the Brig. He was treated to a display of our current capability, with the SCARUS eqpt, as used by SLE and LEWT, the INCE of Romeo Tp and armd Odette platform. The Brig also visited the EW Trg Team, and learnt of future plans for trg when Soothsayer comes onto line.

The Oz WO welcomes Brigadier Davies

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON *- by Cpl Matthews*

OC **Maj CN Cooper**
SSM **WO2 I Conlan**

The Sqn is going through an very busy period, due to the deployment in the near future to Afghanistan. Personnel are being deployed on various exs and courses, in order to prepare for Op HERRICK 4. 640 Tp personnel have completed BOWMAN courses, medic courses, Landing Point Comd courses, and the All Ranks Briefing Days (OPTAG) at Lydd. LEWT Tp is currently on EX HERRICK EAGLE, supporting 16 Air Asslt Bde. Romeo Tp is currently on ex supporting 237 Sig Sqn with the NRF commitment, and Support Tp has deployed various personnel on 506 courses at Blandford. The Sqn would also like to congratulate **SSgt Janvier**, **LCpl Lister** and **Sig Taylor** for successfully completing their jumps course, and **2Lt Harris** on completing P Coy. The Sqn would also like to congratulate **Lt Parish** on coming 3rd in the Regtl orienteering.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

A warm welcome to: **Sgt Cowlard**, **Sgt Roberts**, **Cpl Thorpe**, **Cpl Hudson**, **LCpl Lewis**, **LCpl Hardy-Beer**, **LCpl Hashmi**, **LCpl Kemp**, **LCpl Sjekok**, **Sig Donoghue**, **Sig Biernis**, **Sig Underhill** and **Sig Thomas**. Goodbye and best of luck in their new posts to **Lt Parkes**, **2Lt Harris**, **Sgt Birch** and **Cpl Robson**. The Sqn would also like to congratulate **Sig Keylock** on the birth of her baby boy, **Thomas**, and **LCpl Fear** and his wife **Jodi** on their marriage.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj PR Flavell**
SSM	**L/WO2 MA Jobson**

Christmas Day saw our troops living on camp, awoken with gunfire for breakfast. The married personnel were shipped in, and everyone took breakfast, in their relevant messes. The main event of the day was a Christmas service, attended by the whole Regt at St David's Cathedral. After the service, Christmas dinner was served to all the JNCOs, by the senior members of the regiment; not an entirely civilised affair thanks to some 'banter' between the armd and non-armd Sqns. Nevertheless, the whole day was very successful.

To start 2006, the Sqn completed a two-day range package organised by **Sgt Gleave**. The shooting was particularly good, with the Sqn achieving the highest first time pass rate on the APWT in recent years. Well done to **LCpl Cobb**, who achieved marksmanship standard and **Sig Harvey**, who did not miss a single target. Fitness takes a high priority in our Sqn, and recent successes reflect this. **LCpl Kingsley-Hughes** was placed 1st female in Regtl orienteering, and in the same event **Sig Reynolds** and **LCpl Levey** also finished in the top three in their relevant categories. In the Regtl squash competition, **SSgt Pengelly** and **LCpl Bates** were placed 1st and 3rd; and finally in our own inter-tp football tournament, V Tp, captained by **LCpl Gill**, was triumphant.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SG Scott**
SSM	**WO2 KN Smith**

EX MOUFLON PATROL

On 4 December, 245 deployed on a sqn trg week to SENTA. We started the week with PT at 06.00hrs, which wouldn't have been so bad if it hadn't been minus five degrees. This didn't seem to bother **Sig Balharry**, sporting the smallest pair of shorts anyone has ever seen.

The first 2 days involved our sects patrolling tactically around SENTA, via checkpoints. Our first, and most memorable, stand was **SSgt Butler's** 'conduct after capture' lesson, where he demonstrated the shock of capture. **Sig Holmes** will never look at a brew kit the same way again. Other stands included NBC, first aid and map reading, which turned out to be quite a useful lesson for a few people.

We had a nice early start on the last day. Nobody minded, thinking we were going home. **SSM Smith** must have forgotten to tell us that we would first be tabbing up Pen-Y-Fan. **LCpl Devy** and **Cpl Margetson's** spirits never seem to be dampened though, and on finishing the 9km tab, our week was finally over and we could go home for a well-deserved rest.

CHARITY FUN DAY

On 13 December, 245 Sig Sqn conducted a charity fun day in Haverfordwest town centre, in aid of Sylvia Davies, a local woman, diagnosed with a brain tumour and facing medical bills in the region of £160,000 that her insurance company will not pay. Organised by **Cpl Bentham** and **Cpl Donnelly**, the day consisted of a variety of events including car washing, tombola stand and a 'find the key for the lock', with a small portion of the Sqn out collecting on the street at the same time.

The highlight was the wheelchair-racing tournament, running throughout the day. The winners of this were **LCpl Thompson** and **LCpl Brown** who completed their last race in seasonal Mr and Mrs Santa outfits. The day was a massive success and in the end, we raised in the region of £2000, with other large donations coming in from local companies, all with a little help from 245.

CHRISTMAS FUNCTIONS

All ranks met up for the Sqn function at Haverfordwest Rugby Club. Highlight of the night was the raffle that saw **SSgt Butler** in his element, playing game show host, with prizes up for grabs including a GPS, a PSP, an MP3 player and a holiday voucher. The night was one to remember, as everyone was very merry and festive, and as the evening drew to a close, we finished off in good 245 tradition with the whole Sqn singing along with the band. A very big thanks to **Sgt Arundel**, **Cpl Mouncher**, **LCpls Kelly** and **Hoszowskyj** and **Sig Smith** for organising the event.

XVI 16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Jase Goldsworthy**

OPERATIONS, FORCE PROTECTION IN AFGHANISTAN
- by 2Lt Osterloh

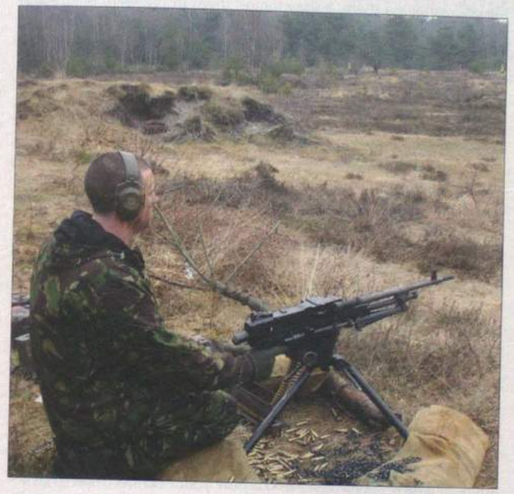
By the time this is in print, 16 Sig Regt Gp will have deployed to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK and ISAF IX. Our mission is to provide CIS close sp to HQ ISAF and 4 Regional Comds, an augmented support to HQ Sp Gp (HSG), and a NETCEN, in sp of combined Joint Forces . Among its tasks in theatre, 16 Sig Regt is also to provide 2 Force Protection Platoons (4 multiples), to bolster ARRC Sp Bn's Force Protection Sqn. This Sqn is comprised 170 Pioneers, from the RLC and also the TA. **2Lt Osterloh** (SNCO - **Sgt Morrison**) and **Lt Jim McMillan** (SNCO - **Sgt Watt**) will command the 2 signals platoons.

The ARRC Sp Bn Force Protection Sqn will be relieving an Italian Force Protection Coy, whose AOR is roughly 5 sq kms around Camp ISAF, in Kabul. Based on the role the Italian unit have had, it is believed that the new force will be rotating between camp security, QRF duty, patrolling, vehicle checkpoints and other related tasks.

Owing to the unique nature of this mission, especially for Royal Signals soldiers, a vigorous trg package was created, in which all Force Protection units were taken from basic individual live fire and movement to live vehicle anti-ambush drills, culminating in a confirmatory ex on Salisbury Plain.

One of the two platoons has already completed a week's live firing package on the well-equipped Haltern Ranges, which feature an array of electronic targets and ranges. Here they progressed, from individual fire and movement and moving targets, up to live sect attacks. They also participated in a spectacular live, night ambush and a very exciting 'section in defence' shoot, in which the professionalism and aggression became evident. DS were particularly pleased with the effort, and learning which the Signals soldiers displayed, and it was satisfying to watch the young leaders in the Platoon, starting to shine on this steep learning curve.

Although there is still a busy trg regime ahead, and pre-deployment administration continues to hot up, the 16 Sig Regt Force Protection platoons are well on track to deliver the required operational effect in theatre.



Live firing – training for the Force Protection Platoon

554 people will deploy in total from the 16 Sig Regt Gp, which is made up mainly of 16 Sig Regt soldiers, but also elements of 7 Sig Regt. The deployment will be led by **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**, who, when addressing his troops stressed the need for leadership, professionalism and Values and Standards whilst on operations in Afghanistan. The soldiers of 16 Sig Regt Gp are well trained, and ready to face the challenges facing them, as they get ready to deploy to Afghanistan.

BOXING *- by 2Lt Dave Phillips*

The 1 Sig Bde 2006 boxing tournament, involving 16 Sig Regt, 7 Sig Regt and ARRC Sp Bn promises to be an extraordinary event, for all those involved. The tournament is high on many people's priority lists, not least the competitors and coaches of the 3 teams. At the time of writing, the 16 Sig Regt team has decreased its numbers to a select few, who have shown the determination to stick with it. The trg so far, has seen **LCpl Stu Hodge** being told to put weight ON. **Cpl Andy Naylor** and **Sig Worthington** have been training in plastic/PVC suits, in order to lose weight. Both were very upset when told they could not keep the suits for the weekend. The one thing that all boxers do have in common, is the motivation to keep going at trg, especially if it involves punching the only officer on the team.

For all involved, the long days of runs, circuits and sparring at the hands of **WO2 (SSM) Batley** will have been worth it, on 2 March. It is only then that the benefits will be realised, as the concussion or hangover wears off, and life can return to normal or to the garages, in some cases.

The boxing competition will send the 3 units involved off on deployments on a high, after a night of controlled aggression, determination, and courage. All attributes that will be required through out the impending tours and careers of all involved.

LCpl Hodge in the ring

THE LEICESTER TROPHY AND THE CO'S CHALLENGE 2006 *- by LCpl Luck*

Throughout the year, 230 Sqn, 255 Sqn and HQ Sqn have battled it out on the sports field, to win the Leicester Trophy. As the Regt's deployment to Afghanistan grows ever nearer, it was decided the trophy would be presented earlier than normal, and a fresh sporting year would resume once the Regt returned next year.

The question of how to conclude the Leicester Trophy, and achieve maximum participation, was answered by the new QMSI, **WO2(QMSI) Marc Corner**. A CO's Challenge of Battle PT was conceived, which would promote aggressive team spirit, and test the soldiers both mentally and physically. What better way to conclude a competition with such high standing, than with a military orientated casualty evacuation. The task had to be very tough and the course arduous!

Each Sqn fielded three 15 man-teams, each made up of 14 soldiers and 1 officer. Each team had to carry an 18 stone "casualty" on a stretcher, load the casualty on to a Land Rover for a vehicle push, and complete a squadded run to the finish line. The teams were set off 3 at a time, in 5-minute intervals. The sect comds took charge, negotiating the teams over the sandy terrain of Hill 60 trg area, as a squad. In some cases, the very heavy casualties proved too heavy for some of the stretchers, which broke. This challenged comds, and one team was forced to improvise by tying their combat jackets under the casualty.

Casualty evacuation by 230 Sig Sqn in the CO's Challenge

The last team over the line, showing the most strength and determination throughout the whole course, was 230 Sig Sqn Team 2, headed up by **Lt Foot**. This team was at a disadvantage from the start, as it had to put the stretcher down in the water during the river crossing, to deal with a real casualty. This made the stretcher by far the heaviest of the day. Regardless, they still finished with a very respectable time.

Although HQ Sqn Teams 1 and 2 were placed 1st and 2nd in the CO's Challenge, 255 Sig Sqn emerged as the overall winners of the Leicester Trophy competition. This made **WO2(SSM) Maylett** very happy and **Sig Dang** lifted the Trophy for a very noisy 255 Sqn.

NORDIC SKIING 2005-06 - *by Lt McMillan*

16 Sig Regt represented the Corps at the 1 Div Championships in Les Contamines, France, and then qualified for the Army/GB Nordic Skiing Championships, held at the Olympic Stadium, Ruhpolding. Accompanying the team were three individuals; **Cpl Connelly** from 11 Sig Regt and **Sigs Milson** and **Tate** from 7 Sig Regt.

The season began in late November, and within the first few days, it was apparent to the novices what they had let themselves in for. It quickly dawned on **Lt McMillan** and **Sigs Cridland, Howland, Meredith** and **Williams** that this was "skiing uphill", and it was going to test their limits of endurance. **SSgt Pavier**, whose 18 years of experience in the sport make him somewhat of a "Veteran", was able to lend his experiences to the novice team. The arrival of **Sgt Maj Morrison** for some dedicated coaching was crucial, as his motivation for the sport was key in getting the group up "Pier Gint" (a 2km stretch of continuous ascent) on a daily basis. At the Div Championships, the team performed above expectations. The trg had paid off with the team qualifying comfortably. **SSgt Pavier** won the overall men's title and **Cpl Connelly** won the female competition. A creditable performance at the Army/GB Nordic Skiing Championships resulted in a top 20 finish. **SSgt Pavier** achieved 3rd in the British Biathlon Union ranking, and 3 individuals were selected for the Great Britain Development Squad!

OFFICERS GO-KARTING

It soon became clear why the Regt 2IC, **Maj Tim Wood** chose to task the subbies with organising an afternoon of go-karting for the officers of 16 Sig Regt. Initially, he made the excuse that it was a chance for the officers to get together, informally, before being dispersed across the landmass of Afghanistan. But the underlying reason quickly became apparent...he is a go-karting "anorak".

As an enthusiast, the 2IC used his appointment to position himself on the front of the grid, which gave him an advantage over his competitors. However, his careless lines and crude pedal control in the third and final race, allowed **Lt Jim Osterloh** to breeze past him, and take the lead.

While the jostling for the top honours went on at the front, other racers adopted different approaches. **Lt Sarah Bill** and **Capt Mark Crinnion** decided that the front cars would think twice about overtaking them, if they forced them to part with bits of their car, as they went past. This tactic was met with reasonable success, but the officials were not pleased.

The padre, of course, set an example and was not drawn into this road rage. Instead, he decided to drive a safe race, counting on the reliability of his engine to take him to the front, while the others wrecked their engines.

Unfortunately, in the middle laps of the final race, an unexpected corner positioned itself carelessly in his way, and the track was permanently altered, for the worse. It was a fun afternoon that brought out a healthy competitive spirit in the officers. Although next time we book into the racetrack, it will have to be under another name.

CHANGE OF STATION COMMANDER

The responsibility of Elmpt Station Comd has been passed between the COs of 16 and 7 Sig Regt. **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE** has been Station Comd for the past 15 months. During this time, he and his team have been the driving force behind the Station Development Plan, which has produced new facilities, such as a new station gym and a new youth centre. There have been up-grades in facilities at Wildenrath, the Windmill Club and the swimming pool.

Meanwhile, Project PUMA has improved married quarters in both Javelin Barracks and Wildenrath. In addition, he and his team have been dedicated to the environmental issues of the station, from protecting wildlife, to planting trees and the cleaning up of aviation fuel tanks left by the RAF. Soon to deploy on operations, he has now handed over his duties to **Lt Col AR Blackwell**, CO 7 Sig Regt.

22 SIGNAL REGIMENT

SO2/QM	**Maj T Smith**
Regt FofS	**WO1 K Scaife**
RQMS	**WO2 RD Heynes**

INTRODUCTION

It is a great honour to be able to report that the 22 Sig Regt is to be reformed as part of the Future Army Structure.

On 4 January 2006, the Regt's Early Implementation Team (EIT) began the long, and potentially rocky, road of preparation prior to receiving the Regt. The EIT is located within the confines of RAF Stafford, just off the M6 and one mile outside of Stafford town centre.

Both the road and rail networks support the town well extremely well, and it is geographically well placed within the UK. The town centre is relatively small and compact, with modern shops, which provide good facilities for families, and the single serviceman.

THE CHALLENGES FOR THE EIT

The composition of the EIT makes it well suited to the tasks of producing in barracks infrastructures and CIS, as well as the broader aim of developing the overall battle winning capability for the Regt. Initially, the Regt's role will be as a General Support Reinforcing Regiment, equipped with PTARMIGAN and CNR communications, but it will be equipped with FALCON in the future. The Regt has a readiness date of 1 April 2007 and its role will develop to provide area and access communications to various formations, including the Joint Helicopter Command and the ARRC.

Identifying the future operational role and shaping the equipment provision to suit the Commander's vision will be a key task at this early stage. Integrating into the current RAF infrastructure will also be a challenge, requiring liaison at all levels, to ensure that the Regt is formed in a timely and effective manner. Issues that must be tackled head on, are those associated with

accommodation, working environments, training facilities and station amenities.

The Implementation Team will assemble in April 06, under the command of **Lt Col N Fraser**. The Regt will consist of RHQ, HQ Sqn and 3 Field Sqns (one of which will be a QGS Sqn). The manpower for 22 Sig Regt will be drawn from many Royal Signals units, to reach a strength of approximately 570, including 40 REME personnel Now that readers know we exist, we will endeavour to keep the Corps up to date with progress!

A SHORT REMINDER

When it disbanded in 1993, 22 Sig Regt was one of the three Sig Regts that supported 1 (BR) Corps. 7 Sig Regt was the 'Corps Forward' Regt, 22 Sig Regt was the 'Corps Rear' Regt and 14 Sig Regt was the Corps EW Regt. 22 Sig Regt's role was to supply the Corps with trunk comms and a rear link back to the Rear Combat Zone. 22 Sig Regt was, for many years, based in Churchill Barracks in the small German town of Lippstadt, between Gutersloh and Soest.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) McGaw**

TRAILWALKER (UK) 2005 – *by Capt Nirmal Gurung*

Trailwalker (UK) is an annual charity event, organised by the Queen's Gurkha Sig Regt in aid of Oxfam (GB) and the Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT). 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 321 civilian and military 4-man teams took part. The event is a sponsored 100km walk/run from Queen Elizabeth's Park, near Petersfield, to Brighton Racecourse, via 10 checkpoints manned by Queen's Gurkha Signals (QGS) personnel.

Trailwalker began as a trg ex for members of the QGS stationed in Hong Kong in 1981. It was then adapted to raise much-needed funds for the GWT, and in 1986 Oxfam (HK) became involved along with HSBC to increase sponsorship revenues. It has grown into a world-renowned event, raising £2 million for charity over a single weekend. With the return from Hong Kong in 1997, the QGS moved to Bramcote.

Almost immediately, work began on organising a Trailwalker (UK), preserving the key elements of the original, i.e. 4-man teams and a 100km route. 1997 saw the first Trailwalker (UK) take place along the South Downs Way. The following year 147 teams entered and raised £43,256 for the GWT.

In order to increase sponsorship revenues, Oxfam (GB) was invited to assist in the organisation of the event in 2002. Their involvement saw Trailwalker (UK) go from strength to strength; 150 teams raised £45,566 in 2000, whilst GWT benefited £220,800 from the 2004 event. An initial payment of £210,000 was guaranteed from the 2005 event, during Heroes Reception in London in October 05.

Over the years, Trailwalker (UK) has become a victim of its own success and has had to adapt to cope with the increasing numbers of participants and their support vehicles. Trailwalker (UK) 2005 saw a number of changes being made for safety reasons and to reduce congestion at the checkpoints along the route.

Originally 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn ran Trailwalker (UK), but as team numbers have gone up the resources required have outstripped the abilities of a single sqn. It is now jointly run with Oxfam (GB), with 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn taking the lead. In all 342 QGS personnel deployed on the ex, to support 321 teams, 1284 participants and over 350 vehicles driven by the teams' support crews. There were three starts: at 07.00hrs, 09.00hrs and 11.00hrs. The first team to cross the finish line were from QOGLR, in a time of 10 hrs 42 mins 18 secs. They were closely followed by the RGR and the first QGS team came home third.

Trailwalker 2006 is scheduled to take place on 15 – 16 July 06, and will remain an arduous 4-man team event, which requires endurance, physical stamina and team effort from start to finish. Prior team trg, sp and administration are equally important for successful completion of the course. Young or old, man or woman, all are welcome at the event. Visit the website for more information: www.oxfam.org.uk/trailwalker

SILVER 501(E) UNVEILED BY 30 SIGNAL REGIMENT
– by Capt Marc Bentley

A very special piece of Corps silver was unveiled at a Regimental Dinner Night on 3 November 2005. A model, in silver, of the Vehicle Satellite Communications 501 (Enhanced) (VSC 501(E)) had been commissioned by the Officers' Mess 30 Sig Regt, in order to commemorate the service of the equipment with the Regt.

The inspiration for the piece came in 2003, from the then CO, **Lt Col PF Vingoe**. Funding was raised from 30 Sig Regt Officers' Mess Silver Fund, the Royal Corps of Signals Heritage Fund and a generous donation from Thales Land and Joint Systems (successors to Racal). **Mr Mark Munson** crafted the piece to a design conceived by the current CO, **Lt Col Warne**.
The piece depicts a typical det deployed in the desert, in recognition of the first operational deployment of the 501 on Op GRANBY in 1990, when it was deployed to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The Silver VSC 501(E) commissioned by 30 Sig Regt

Following this, the 501 has seen operational service all over the world, and this is represented by the view of the globe in relief. Either side of the globe, there are dedication plates; on the right hand plate are the ops on which the VSC 501 has been deployed, while on the left, there is a short history of the VSC 501(E) and the commissioning of the piece

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JHN Harrington**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Surje Gurung**

Congratulations to **Lt(QGO) Narayan Bhandari** on his recent promotion to Capt(QGO). **Lt AD Morris** also led his Cambrian Patrol team to success, managing to achieve Bronze, a great achievement for the Sqn and the Regt – SHYABASH.

SUPER SIGNALLER COMPETITION 2005
- by LCpl Debendra Gurung

250 Gurkha Sig Sqn 'Super Signaller' Competition was held on 28 September 05. This year it was organised and run by **Sgt Jasprasad Ale** and his team. Almost all the sigs in 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn took part in this competition. The aim was not only to decide who was the best Signaller, but also to give an opportunity for all the sigs to show their trade experience, leadership and military skills.

The demanding competition began with a No 2 Dress inspection, under the eagle eye of **SSgt Churchward** and **Sgt Jasprasad Ale**. **Sig Ghanendra Rai** had the best turn out from the dress inspection. We were then off to the classroom, for tests on general knowledge, military skills, CBRN, BCDT, Recognition, trade knowledge and weapons. A webbing check and Weapons Handling Test followed. After all these various assessments, there was a surprise awaiting us, an Individual Combat Fitness Test! **Sig Shankar Gurung** came in first place with a fantastic time of 10 Min 45 Sec.

At the end of the competition, the prize giving was held in the Himali Club, followed by a curry supper in the presence of **Maj Harrington** and **Capt(QGO) Mahendra Limbu**. Every competition has to have a winner, and this year's 'Super Signaller' Competition winner was **Sig Sunil Gurung**. The first runner up was **Sig Vijay Gurung** and the second runner up was **Sig Bhesh Gurung**. Well-done **Sunil**! Let's look forward to 'Super Signaller 2006'.

EX KHUKURI ESCAPE DRAGON - *by LCpl Pandu Tamang*

EX KHUKURI ESCAPE DRAGON was a Sqn AT and shooting camp, coordinated by **Sgt Somras Tamang**, which took place in, and around the Penhale Trg camp area. The ex was designed to give the soldiers a bit of relaxing AT, as well as to enhance their shooting skills. Having arrived on Monday afternoon at Penhale Trg Camp, the Sqn were divided into 2 groups. Both went through the AT and the shooting package in turn, with each event lasting a week. AT included rock climbing, mountain biking, coastal walking, surfing and coasteering.
SSgt Churchward was IC for rock climbing, and his enthusiasm

Don't know yet what will happen to us in a minute - anyway have a great smile

and humour ensured that all the guys enjoyed the day's package. The soldiers also had the opportunity to try mountain biking. The bikes were hired locally and under **SSgt Giles's** supervision, the guys set off going upwards and upwards, before finally going down hill. At the end of day, the soldiers returned tired but they enjoyed the beautiful scenery on the way. Next on the agenda were the beaches around the coast of Cornwall, which offered ideal conditions for surfers. We were given a well-instructed lesson, which was very worthwhile, before heading off into the big waves. The last part of the AT package was a coastal walk led by **SSgt Dev Megighotane**.

SSgt Amrit Gurung was the range RCO who took the boys through the shooting phase, which included zeroing for the first day, followed by moving targets and pistol firing. For some of the guys, this was the first time they had touched the 9 mm pistol.

During the exercise, we were privileged to have a series of visitors including the CO and RSM. This was followed by **Maj(QGO) Hitman Gurung MVO** (GM QG Signals) and **Capt(QGO) Yamkumar Gurung** (G/Adjt QG Signals). Overall it was an excellent ex, with everybody thoroughly enjoying themselves and looking forward to next year's ex.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj D Parkinson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Eastman**

30 SIG REGT ALPINE SKI TEAM - *by WO2 (YofS) Barker*

For the last five years the Regt has only had a snowboard team, so it was decided to redress the balance and form not 1, but 2 Alpine teams to compete this winter.

On arrival in Austria the teams were streamed into groups and began 3 weeks race trg, culminating in the Corps Championships in the fourth week. It soon became obvious we stood a good chance in the competition, as there was a lot of experience in the team, but as always we would have to see what happened on the day.

The first day of race week was an anticlimax, as bad weather meant that the conditions were too dangerous. Luckily the next day was clearer and battle commenced. The racing was very competitive, and the overall standard throughout the Corps camp was the highest in many years. Despite this, the Regt still secured an outstanding result with **Cpl Angie Fewster** making a clean sweep of the female individual competition, and the A Team winning both the Slalom and the Giant Slalom events, giving 30 Sig Regt the combination gold, and the honour of being the Corps Champions for the 2005/2006 season.

30 Sig Regt Alpine Ski Team, Corps Champions for 2005-06

After Christmas, the team deployed to France for the LAND Command Championships. The competition was a lot stiffer and we found ourselves up against Army skiers, who were clearly setting the pace! Despite this, the squad still produced some excellent results, winning 10 medals. The most notable of which was **Sig David Triplett**, who in his first season of racing, ended the competition seeded 26th; and also secured the Junior Alpine Combination Gold.

Of the 8 members of the squad who entered the championships, 5 were selected for the Army competition. With the success of the experienced skiers, and the upcoming talent, next season should firmly establish the Regt on the Alpine scene.

TOUGH GUY - 29 JAN 06 – *by Lt Sarah Goldsmith*

It was with great anticipation that a team of 9 personnel from 256 Sqn assembled for their last hot meal, before heading out to Wolverhampton for the *Tough Guy* Competition. Headed up by **Sgt Jim O'Mahony**, the 'Nutters' consisted of **Capt Becky Jacques**, **Lt Sarah Goldsmith**, **WO2(YofS) Adam Barker**, **WO2(FofS) Paul Meyer**, **SSgt Nige Howard**, **Cpl Richie Horsburgh**, **Sig Maggie Magil** and **Sig Wayne Latham**.

Tough Guy is, as the organisers describe it, a "physically challenging, mentally demanding, fear inducing, visual spectacular". The course consists of a 6.2 mile run to the start of an almighty, mud soaked assault course, culminating with the *Arctic Plunge*! Horror stories were quickly put aside, as the adrenalin began pumping, with the cannons initiating the start. The first arduous hurdle was the 'Slalom', a series of tight twisting zigzags across the hillside. By the third zigzag the pain was intense and there was nothing you could do, but keep going. The team met up at the start of the main obstacle course, to help each other round.

After going down the first A frame, what looked like plastic strips soon induced fear, as many got an electric shock from them. You have never seen soldiers hit the deck so quickly! It was also encouraging to see the fire brigade on hand, by the burning hay barrels, which competitors had to haul themselves over. The course was all going well, until plunging into the ice cold mud, followed by a 40m swim; divers were on hand to haul those that got paralysed by brain freeze! All team members crossed the finish line and became the Tough Guy or Girl they had set out to achieve. It proved to be an extremely enjoyable event and all competitors were in good spirits throughout.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JS Hiorns**
SSM **WO2(SSM) MacPhee**

EX NORDIC SHIELD

During November and December 2005, Foxtrot Tp deployed on EX NORDIC SHIELD in support of Joint Task Force HQ.

The Tp, working at their normal speed, managed to complete the JTFHQ build in a week, with plenty of time for **SSGT Doe** to sit around drinking brews and smoking, while watching **SSM Fudge MacPhee** dig trenches.

The weather, as expected, got worse and after several days of walking on water, and bailing out the tents, as if we were on a sinking ship, the decision to tear down and move was made. Within two days we had finished rebuilding in the new location, where we hoped we were going to be free from buckets and bailing.

The JOCS team, **Cpl Reynolds**, and Cormorant team, led by **Cpl Houghton**, relaxed while the hard working team, **Cpl Mal Barron's** crew, set about getting dirty in the swamp, taking down the tents. Endex couldn't come quick enough. Morale was getting as low as the winter daylight in the Arctic Circle and made even lower by the Norwegian chef's belief that a good Sunday dinner consisted of a bowl of rice pudding!

Finally Endex was called, with the highlight of tear down being an hour-long, combat snowball fight, complete with leopard crawls and air assaults. Congratulations to **2Lt Barr**, **WO2 Cade** and **WO2 MacPhee** on their promotions.

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

CO **Lt Col SL Streete MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGrail**

Following the re-alignment of RHQs within 2(NC)Sig Bde, the Regt welcomes 5 (QOOH) Sig Sqn. It is with sadness that the Regt says farewell to 94(BY)Sig Sqn, who became part of 39 Sig Regt (V) on 1 Feb 06. Best wishes for the future are passed on to all ranks.

5 (QOOH) SIG SQN

OC **Maj Ruth Empson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Robbie Hall**

It has been a busy, but enjoyable summer for us, starting off in July with our Annual Camp, EX HAKIN HUSSAR, down in sunny Pembrokeshire, and finishing with a week at Regt Annual Camp in Warcop in September. July, August and September also saw a variety of Sqn members partaking in recruiting activities, ranging from Job Fairs, to summer fairs and raft races and a very enjoyable day out at the Festival of Flight at Blenheim Palace.

Blenheim, of course, was the ancestral home of our most famous member, **Sir Winston Churchill**. Our thanks are also due to **Mr Harry Staff**, the Oxfordshire Yeomanry historian, who put on an excellent display of memorabilia. Thanks to **Harry** for the bacon butties! Well done to everyone whose unstinting support continues to sustain the Sqn recruiting efforts.

In August, a number of the Sqn passed through Gap Trg, well done to **Sig Burgess**, **Pte Hone** and **Sigs Machin** and **Wragg**. We also took a weekend out in August, to say goodbye to **Robbie**, with a gentle walk on the South Oxfordshire Ridgeway, with some useful map reading lessons thrown in, from the **SPSI SSgt Don Garner**, a 70's night social, followed by a hot CFT, the next morning. Thanks to **Sgt Mark Belcher** for another ITD tick in the box.

Well done to all those who passed driving qualifications on Regt Annual Camp: **Sgts Paul Milner** and **Claire Goodwin**, **LCpl Nick Thompson**, and **Sigs Julie Gilmore** and **Darryl O'Sullivan**. We began EX HAKIN HUSSAR in full flight - in the form of a heli lift from Castlemartin to the departure point, St Justinians, on a stunning part of the Welsh coast.

Here we started an arduous 2-day hike, across 30km of rugged, challenging terrain. It was with visible relief that the Sqn reached the campsite, where they spent the night, and only **Lt Orr** felt the need to add to the day's activity, with a dip in the breathtakingly cold sea at Newgale beach.

The day had taken its toll, and Monday morning saw several pulled muscles and aching bones. Those who carried on the walk

5 Sqn with taxi waiting to depart – note Sig Wragg's green complexion already!

were not disappointed; the view of the sea from the hilltop path was fabulous and some were rewarded with the sight of seals frolicking on the rocks far below.

"As a few of us have never been on a helicopter before, it was a great experience, even for **Sig Wragg**, who was very apprehensive, but smiles all round and thanks to **SSgt Garner** for that.
Following this, in our various groups, we started our coastal exped. 15 miles later, with the bonus of blisters and aching limbs, we all managed to arrive safely at the campsite. While we were enjoying our BBQ, the weather changed to rain. A trip to the pub was now essential.
The following morning, we were up by 07.45hrs to complete the rest of the coastal challenge and after a few more hours of walking we ended up at St Brides. I think a well good time was had by all, even with the aches and pains along the way"

- by L/Cpl Penfold

Tuesday was bleak and rainy, however, and we concentrated on ITDs. **Cpl Morris**, **Maj Empson** and **Sgt Milner** coached the groups through First Aid, NBC and APWTs. Despite the uninspiring weather, several members of the Sqn managed to shine and **Maj Empson**, **Lt Orr** and **Sig Gilmore** demonstrated their admirable skill on the ranges, achieving impressively high APWT scores.

SAILING ON LAND AND WALKING ON WATER

The following day, we abandoned combat 95 and donned wetsuits, as headed, once more, for the coast. Coasteering was a sport new to most of us, but it was tackled with characteristic alacrity. The guides issued buoyancy aids and wetsuits, and led the group to its first challenge, a vertical climb into a cave! Much swimming and coastal climbing followed, but only **Captain Cornick** had cause for concern, when for a few seconds, he believed himself to be pursued by a shark. Next came what was, for some, the most exhilarating moment of coasteering, the opportunity to jump off a 20ft cliff.

Sgt Sharon Scutt gets the hang of land yachting on Brawdy Airfield

The other half of the day was spent land yachting. After some upturned vessels and plenty of sound effects from **Sgt Scutt**, the Sqn warmed to the sport, and the final race became distinctly competitive. However it was **Sgts McNulty** and **Taylor** that discovered a hitherto untapped talent, reaching breakneck speeds and turning round slalom cones, on one wheel.

"My group started off doing land yachting. Here we rocked up to the location to be briefed, and then tried to assemble the yachts. My first attempt saw me face first into the tarmac. Several screams came from **Sgt Scutt**, as she too lost control of her yacht. After mastering the skills the group was split into 3 teams and we raced each other up and down the runway, which saw the officers cheating and **Sgt Goodwin** having a rather rough crash, but she still managed to pick herself up and finish."

- by L/Cpl Morris

Thursday was strictly business, as the Sqn devoted its time to the Sqn Main Effort, recruiting. Some very imaginative stands depicting an orders group, a comms mast and sect attacks were set up, under the guidance of the Sqn YOs. Everbody acted as willing models for the photo shoot, with **L/Cpl Butt** taking a leading role. We now have some excellent photos for recruiting purposes and, what's more, we also got the Sqn splashed across the local rags on our return.

On the Sqn's last day of AT, 3 options were on offer; riding, deep sea fishing and dinghy sailing. The riding group were treated to canters along the beach, and jumps in the forest, on a variety of good-natured Welsh Cobs. **Cpl Morris**, as one of the most proficient riders in the group, was given a spirited grey that caused her no problems until he fell, taking her with him! Meanwhile the dinghy sailors were being given a run for their money, with **Lts Brumfitt** and **Curtis-Rouse** sailing their vessels at an incredible angle, often with the end of their masts nearly dipping in the sea.

LCpl Paul Greenaway gets nasty with some sand

Annual Camp was concluded with a Sqn Mess Dinner held at Picton Castle. Our thanks to **Col John Bridgeman DL**, our Hon Col, for making the long journey down to be at the dinner. It was excellent to have him with us. The Hon Col kindly presented **Sig Julie Gilmore** with the award for Best Soldier on Camp – well done. A superb evening was had and it rounded off a very successful and enjoyable week. Last, but very definitely not least, we thank **Capt Dai Jones** and **SSgt Don Garner** for organising the Ex and making it all happen so smoothly.
As part of their long journey down to Pembrokeshire, the Sqn also dropped in on the 'Turning of the Pages' Ceremony at Christchurch on the 2 July. **SSgt Mark Taylor** was leading for the Sqn, so it seemed appropriate for a select few of the Sqn to turn up in support. It was also a great opportunity for the Sqn to appreciate the ceremony and to learn more about the QOOH history.

5 Sqn outside Picton Castle – even the SQMS is smiling

Our thanks to **Col Tim May**, Chairman of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry Trust for the extra sherry for the toasts – much enjoyed by all. We would also like to thank **Maj Julian Webster** for his kind donation of photos, from 5 Sqn's special comms days in the 70's. These are excellent to have in the archive.

Finally, we say a fond farewell to **SSM Robbie Hall**, after so long in both the Regular Army and with the TA. You will be sorely missed – especially on the sports field, but also for your strong ability to get the best out of people. **Robbie** has taken the plunge and immigrated to New Zealand. We wish you and **Tina** and **Steph** all the very best for your new life down under. Stand by for a visit!

Another farewell also to our outgoing PSAO, **Capt Bob Sheldon**, who retires at the end of this month, both he and our new PSAO, **Capt Carl Jelfs**, have been HOTO-ing in the last 2 weeks. Our enormous thanks to **Bob** for all his stalwart support, good sense and hard work over the last 12 years; a fuller report of his farewell will be in the next issue.

Congratulations also to **WO2 Judith Phillips** on promotion and also to **Cpl Lisa Green** and **LCpls Darren Kidley** and **Kerry Butt**.

41 (PLK) SIG SQN (V)

OC	**Maj John Kendall**
SSM	**WO2 Ian Mackay**

EX COLD START - *by Cpl Warren O'Driscoll*

After 10 years in 31 Sig Regt (V), I can honestly say that exs such as this, are a rare occurrence. This year's ex was held in Longmoor's FIBUA village

We were shaken out, into 2 Platoons, each with 3 sects of 6 to 8 men. Somehow I copped it, as sect radio man. **Cpl Chris Hunter** stepped up for IC, **Sig Gayle Wise**, 2IC, and **Sgt Simon May**, **Sig Michelle Critcher** and **Sig O'Neal Shand**, all made riflemen. Before we had any idea of what was going on, explosions rocked the SF base, and we found ourselves up to our eyes in blood, guts and casualties (I guess that's BFAT out of the way then). The night ticked away with guard and QRF, and after a civilized breakfast, the sects moved through a round robin of trg which included: FIBUA, riot shield and baton trg, fire and manoeuvre and a petrol bomb alley. We were also threatened with the experience of trg with numerous night vision aids, foreign weapons, a 432 APC and a Gazelle helicopter, but as usual, this honour only went to the press, DS and a set of cadets. Once the trg was over, we moved back into the routine of QRF, guard and admin.

The fun really started later when all the sects got deployed to a public order dispute (we were earlier briefed that it was not to get violent at any point, as cadets were taking part.). Another great bit of intelligence – I think not. I arrived at the scene to see an alley pelted with potatoes; the noise was immense. My shield came in handy, as potatoes deflected from the front, rained down on us in reserve. I don't know how the DS judge non-violent, but this was anything but. The "public" were not cadets, but some rather oversized individuals, who were intent on causing as much harm as possible to our guys behind the shields. As the tired (or should I say the completely battered) were changed over with fresher faces, you could see the war wounds - blood dripping from people's hands, limping and shaking men passed me as moved forward. Finally it was my turn to stand in the shield front line. For the first time I could imagine what it would be like to take part in a real situation. Noise and confusion ruled, as seniors and officers barked contradictory orders at us. I could barely see through my seamy, sweaty visor, but I could see that the three guys to my right were so knackered; they were no longer able to respond to any orders. After the rioters fled, the bloodied, bruised, battered and knackered extracted themselves back to the SF base for more routines.

In the dark early hours of Sunday morning we assembled; checking ammo, weapons, house breaching equipment and radios (typical Signals - loads of radios, but only half a dozen working). 'H' Hour started with the thudding of GPMG's, our sect was the first into the buildings, paving the way for the rest of our platoon. For the next two and a bit hours, over 100 soldiers fired off nearly 30,000 rounds, whilst plastic and powder explosions shook the houses around us. Again confusion reigned, as the smell and smoke of cordite and sulphur filled our lungs and eyes; our ears rang with weapon fire, the echo of explosions and the barking of fire control orders. **Sgt Simon May**, followed our every move, constantly reloading our empty mags. A slight lull in the fighting occurred as, unbeknown to us, the enemy sat down for breakfast! The lull gave us a chance to move forward towards our objective, just before it all erupted again, and we charged the last of the enemy.

After 'End Ex' was called, we all gathered for the usual "You have all done so well" speech. Everyone's face was covered in a huge grin from ear to ear. All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable and well-organised ex. Hopefully, I will not need to wait another 10 years for the next one.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC	**Maj Anthony Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 Jim Paine**

Recruiting has been the main effort down at Eastbourne, for the last couple of months. All the hard work has paid off, with 16 new recruits having been attested in November alone. The Sqn now stands 92% recruited, which is a great achievement. We look forward to the amalgamation, within 56 Sig Sqn, of 884 Tp in Brighton, in line with our new role in supporting the SE of England. With the new structure of 31 Sig Regt, and our close

support role for 2 SE(Inf) Brigade, all these troops will be surely needed. Indeed Comd 2(Inf) Bde paid the Sqn a visit in late November, to see what we can offer him. Much work lies ahead of us. We await keenly the final details of our full role, and the eqpt we will receive.

Another visit, this time by the Mayor of Eastbourne, as well as an Officers' and SNCOs' dinner at the Sqn, have once again kept our Master Chef, **WO2 Steve Howell** a very busy man, and as always a real asset to the Sqn and Regt.
We look forward to the Lord Lieutenants of East and West Sussex presenting numerous, military awards to the Reserve and Cadet Forces, which will be held at our TA centre in early December.

LONDON CENOTAPH PARADE

Twenty-seven soldiers from 31 Sig Reg (V) had the honour of representing the Territorial Army, in front of the Royal Family and veterans at Whitehall, for the National Act of Remembrance. Getting everybody properly dressed and drilled, fit to be seen in front of millions on TV screens round the world, was no mean feat. Finding greatcoats and Royal Signals buttons, as well as peak caps and ammo boots, is hard for a regular unit, let alone a TA one. Thanks to our QM, **Capt Harry Kemp**, it eventually came to fruition. Four weekends of rehearsals with former Guards depot instructor, **CSgt Phil Walton**(now SQMS at HQ Sqn), got us knocked into shape, and it was an immensely proud and humbling experience. Many thanks to the SVWO **WO1 Matt Cahill** for stepping in at the last moment when **WO2 Paul Curless** had to pull out due to a RTA injury. The SVWO had only just recently become a father; so taking that extra time away from home was much appreciated.

We welcome former **SSgt Shane Higgins** to the Sqn. After completing his 22 years of colour service, he arrives to take over the recruit trg cell. His years of experience as a military skills instructor, will be of great use to the Regt and Bde Trg Team. We also welcome back **LCpl Gareth Hulin** after his tour of Iraq. **Sig Leigh Ashton** also arrived back from Basra, safe and well, and our other Sqn chef **Pte Steve Jukes** is due back at the end of December. We also welcome all the new recruits to the Sqn and hope their time in the Royal Signals is a long and pleasurable one!

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

COMMON PURPOSE 2005

The Regt hosted another successful day for the Common Purpose graduates, one of whom happens to be the CO **Lt Col David Sixsmith**. The initiative is designed to make local business leaders, and those in positions of authority, aware of the issues in the Tees Valley. The programme consists of a seminar, or visit on one day every month, for a year. The visits and study days are designed to improve the local community; the last of which was hosted at Brambles Farm TA Centre before graduation.

Veronique, an organiser for Common Purpose, thanks the CO for hosting the last seminar of the year

MEDAL PARADE

During the final weekend of the year, 7 members of the Regt were presented with their Op TELIC Medals. It was a proud moment for the recipients, 4 TA soldiers and 3 Regular soldiers, who should all be justifiably proud of their personal contribution to Op TELIC. To date 52 TA Officers and Soldiers have deployed on Op TELIC, in support of the Regular Army.

The medal recipients flanked by the CO and RSM, SSgt Love, SSgt Leach, Cpl Kenny, SSgt Durnell, Cpl Pountain, A/Sgt Heap and Cpl Wilson

TOUGH GUY - *by Sgt Luke Hitchen*

Tough Guy is a gruelling, cross-country race through the Staffordshire countryside, over, through and under a series of obstacles, including tunnels, mud, water, fire and electricity. Four members of the Regt attempted Tough Guy 2006 despite numerous warnings from those in the know "Never do the winter one...", "Never again, I nearly died...". We almost believed these warnings, so we did not know exactly what to expect. As a result, there were some nerves at the start, but we were keen to get amongst it. The whole event was tiring and gruelling, but good-humoured and friendly with it. There was always a helping hand to drag you out of the clinging mud. Over 1200 people didn't finish the race, so it's not for the faint hearted. Our team of four, **SSgt Martinez**, **SSgt Patterson**, **Sig Benton** (attached from 216 Sig Sqn) and I raised sponsorship money for Zoe's Place, a local children's hospice and the Army Benevolent Fund. If anyone is interested (and has the bottle) you can enter as a team, or individually, through www.toughguy.co.uk.

TOUGH GUY final hill

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj Steve Wayman**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Harkin**

OLD SOLDIER RECEIVES AWARD

Sgt Bruce Bassett from HQ Sqn was presented with a silver plate to mark his 25th Annual Camp with the Regt. **Sgt Bassett** enlisted into the Royal Signals in February 1962, and is still going strong.

This is an incredible achievement for him, and oddly enough he has been around longer than the Regt itself, as he was one of the founder members when it was formed in 1967, he was presented with the plate by the CO in front of the Regt at the end of EX LOG FOCUS. The inscription read "15, 938 days and still counting", the total number of days he has been a member of the TA.

The CO presenting Sgt Bruce Bassett with his award on completion of his 25th Annual Camp

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Keith Williams**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

MEDAL AND AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Congratulations to **SSgt(FofS) Eastwood** for receiving his Op TELIC Medal, **Capt Keith Holdstock** for receiving the bar for his VRSM and **Cpl Malloy** upon receiving his VRSM. Well done to **SSgt Mark Alexander** and **SSgt Frank Mason** on being awarded Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant's Certificates in recognition of their hard work.

Sharp Shooters: Sgt Gary Openshaw is the smug one on the left, alongside WO2 Stimpson and Sgt Ross

Sgt Openshaw recently competed in the Netherlands International Shooting Competition, gaining a fantastic 4th position overall, and he was also a member of the Regt team which gained 2nd place in the Diemarco.

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Simon Smith**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CA Phillips**

SQUADRON HOSTS REGIMENT CELEBRATIONS

The Sqn stood down for Christmas, after the usual end of year party – any excuse for a few beers, a buffet, and for **Sig Andy Clark** to play with the Sqn disco kit. Thanks to all who planned the event, particularly the PSAO **Capt JJ Wilson**, who as usual made sure everything was in the right place at the right time. **Sgt Micky Jemmett** and **Cpl Iggy Paterson** organised the raffle, and the Regt's new recruits came along to the event and won most of the best prizes. Some bad planning there, so next year they'll be restricted to one ticket each!

SEARCH FOR HONOUR GUARD

The Sqn is due to host Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Durham's Awards presentation in late February, and work is in hand to train up a suitable honour guard. Guard Comd, **Sgt Gary Fletcher**, was heard to mention that he'd have the guard up to scratch if he had to march them round day and night, until the event (and could the OC mention it on his next CR?). The jury is still out on whether this will encourage an honour guard to volunteer. The Sqn welcomes **Sgt Jim Harrison**, who joins us from Balado Bridge.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Denning**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Hunter**

CHRISTMAS VICTORY

The Regt Christmas Weekend provided the perfect opportunity for the Sqn to show off their prowess. The fun weekend was organized by 50 Sqn and provided a number of amusing, and arduous team events. **Cpl Kenny** and **Cpl Pountain** proved adept at the inflatable jousting, and **Sgt Ross** demonstrated that any golf practice helps, when you are trying to hit a ball into an up-turned umbrella! The final event was the head-to-head assault course race. When the scores were totted up it appeared that the 90 Sqn teams came 1st and 2nd, keeping up our winning tradition. We said goodbye to our **SSM WO2 Stimson**, who has moved into the RQMS(V) job, and he watched the CO promote his replacement, now **WO2 Hunter**. Having only just welcomed **Lt Usher** to the Sqn in the last issue we are now wishing him the best of luck on his tour in Iraq.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

A RUGBY TACKLE

Returning to trg after the long Christmas break, always presents a shock to the system, as it takes a while to get motivated. To be hit with a series of inspections, while still recovering from the celebratory excesses, was just too much of a rude awakening, and it felt like being rugby tackled by all fifteen players and the ref. The Regtl team descended on the Regt's most extreme outpost, on its Eastern boundary to practice their inspection techniques. They proceeded to scrutinise every procedure, raging from G1 administration through to G8, and our management of the civilian staff and budgets et al.

G9 was left to another day presumably to await the next CCRF exercise. On reflection, this rather rude awakening allowed us to shake off the cobwebs, review our procedures very early in the New Year and placed the Sqn in a strong position to prepare for the dreaded RSIT inspection, after a gap of almost 2 years. Spirits re-invigorated, we set about the preparations with a vigour not seen since annual trg, and despite a shortage of key skills and trained personnel, all installations were subject to intensive technical checks, 1st Line repairs and detachment maintenance.

This followed a plea by our resident regular tech **Sgt Colin Bentley** to all Sqn members, to overcome their fear of maintenance and make that special effort to attend and work together as a sqn team. For 2 weekends, leading to the RSIT, this was the case and it was tremendous to see the SCRAT Tp, led by **Capt Alan Lunn** and **SSgt Ken Barker**, freely giving aid to the manpower-strapped CENTRAL Tp, to ensure they too were ready for the RSIT inspectors. **Cpl Pete May**, our most experienced CENTRAL Det Comd, supported by **LCpl Jethro Towers** and other members of the SCRAT troop, literally worked their socks off and, because of their hard work, achieved an inspection report that was a vast improvement on 2004. Now we are confident that we have the green light for the ECI inspection. Did someone mention SHEF – now where did I put those risk assessments?

The cheque presentation to the County Air Ambulance

Staying with Rugby, just for a little while, the beginning of the New Year ended on a high note with a visit from the County Air Ambulance Trust on 7 Feb. The Midlands has one of the most efficient helicopter medical services available in the UK, providing a life saving service, which is entirely funded by charitable support. **Mr Mark Edwards**, one of their pilots, gave an excellent and eye-opening presentation to all TA soldiers attending trg. They were so visibly impressed that £225 was raised during the evening and a cheque for that amount was presented to the trust by the OC **Maj Tom Jeffries**. Well done Rugby!

RECRUITING DRIVE

The recruiting surge appears to be holding, with a steady stream of recruits appearing at the doors of all Sqns, many of which now have day workers, entirely devoted to recruiting. This has had a marked effect on the Regt strength, which has now reached a level not seen for some years. Our main efforts though, while maintaining a strong recruiting profile and presence locally, are now being diverted to supporting Midland Soldier, which is a major TA recruiting event that takes place at RAF Stafford on 11 March.

This has allowed some inventive recruiting and publicity measures, where Scout Groups and other Youth Groups are being actively targeted, together with 6th formers and Uniformed Service Groups at local colleges. Many inducements have been offered to get them to the recruiting event, not least free transport, and a free lunch, together with a guarantee of many fun hands on activities.

Sgt Adrian Proffitt and his team ready to deploy to meet the Scouts!

Here we hope to filter many potential recruits onto the Regtl books, both before, and after the event. Publicity in generating TA awareness, and also the importance of the TA to the local community, has proven once again to be a key measure in achieving our targets, balanced with activities on the ground.

All of this has been reflected in local press reviews and radio interviews throughout the Regtl area, giving us the crucial free publicity required to recruit. **Sgt Adrian Proffitt** from Rugby, who is a postman in civilian life, is one of the Regiment's most active recruiters and together with other recruiting team members, has been busy courting the support of heads of careers in schools, and visiting local community groups who meet the age criteria for recruiting into the TA.

He has been joined by **SSgt Aaron James** a newly arrived SPSI serving with 58 Sqn in Newcastle and **SSgt Brian Wilson** an SPSI serving with 48 Sqn in Birmingham, who have both combined their extensive SPSI management and trg duties with recruiting. Elsewhere in the Regt, **Sig Claire Rawlings** who works as a civilian with 95 Sqn has shown herself to be a natural recruiting successor to **2Lt Izzi Boden** while **Lt Penny Mell** continues to ensure that HQ Sqn, based in Coventry, is kept up to strength.

Meanwhile on the recruit trg side, that mean machine **WO1 Terry Douglas** is maintaining the passage of recruits through the trg system, in the course of his excellent and productive trg weekends, and regularly runs combined trg, induction and continuation weekends to cope with the numbers coming through. **Terry**, who has a keen sense of humour, always keeps his eye on the ball and when **Sig Tracy Bennie** and **Pte Debbie Hill** reported for trg during the last Swynnerton weekend in January, he was quick to spot the humorous potential, and captured the glorious moment on photograph!

Caught on camera at Swynnerton, Sig Tracy Bennie and Pte Debbie Hill

New to the recruiting fold we also discovered, to our pleasant surprise, an aspiring England Rugby Player (for the girl's team I hasten to add) in **Sig Amie Smith**, who recently joined 95 Sqn in Shrewsbury.

We all wish her the best of luok in this endeavour, and hope that her TA trg gives her the additional impetus required for selection to this special team. I'm sure she will at least be released from her recruit trg to attend the Army v Navy match at Twickenham on 6 May. Finally to all of our new recruits reading this article, welcome once again to 35 Sig Regt and we hope your time with us is mutually beneficial, profitable and enjoyable.

DON'T LOSE TOUCH, JOIN THE TERRITORIAL ARMY

Remember, 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
Newcastle under Lyme

We can use your technical, communicating and administrative skills as well as offering an attractive financial package based on your regular salary and 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 web site – www.35sigs.mod.uk or email 35sigregt- rhqraowo@tanet.mod.uk

MOBILISATION

The Regt has continued to provide a steady flow of volunteers to augment the Regular Army, in all areas of operations: Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Kosovo. This is a reassuring feature throughout the TA, which explains why there is no need at present for compulsory mobilisation. Shortly we will be sending our second augumentee to Afghanistan, in the shape of **Cpl Wink Watson**, who deploys in early March to either Kabul, or the Helmand Province.

Wink, who is no stranger to op tours having served in both Bosnia and Kosovo, was however surprised to see how much local interest had been generated in his deployment to Afghanistan. He found himself the subject of a special feature on Sky local news.

Now, instead of receiving an amateur dramatics award for his performance, he is dreading the repercussions of having to stand around in the HQ Sqn bar before he deploys! Elsewhere, 89 Sqn will be saying farewell to **Sgt Simon Kavanagh** and **Sig David Field** who are both deploying to Iraq in February and March. **David** was originally earmarked to carry out postal duties and considered this to be probably the most dangerous 'postie' job in the world before, much to his dismay it has to be said, he was switched to driving duties instead.

Our support to Op OCCUUS has not diminished and continued with **LCpl Griff Munden-Griffiths** and **LCpl Jason Allison** both from 58 Sqn, deploying with the composite sigl sqn, while **Cpl Chrissie Castle** from HQ Sqn is busy packing her bags for a tour in Kosovo, at the end of Feb. To all our augmentees, have a safe and enjoyable tour of duty! E Bluey's will be flying your way, once you are settled down, to keep you in touch with everything that is happening back in your home location.

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

No sooner had the board results been filed away, than the Regt(FofS) **WO2 Kev Peters,** received his posting instructions to 30 Sig Regt. Happily before he left he set up the new Regtl Web site and found a willing volunteer/webmaster to take it on. Also

moving on is **Sgt Tony Thirlwell**, just back from Iraq, and now posted to 12 Mech Bde. To Civvie Street, we have said farewell to **SSgt Dean McKenzie** on retirement after 22 years dedicated and exemplary service. We do however hope to welcome him back soon, as **Dean** wishes to join the TA. Posted in, we have welcomed **SSgt Aaron James** to 48 Sqn and **Sgt Colin Ramsden** to RHQ as the training PSI, and finally, **Sgt Mark Archer** as 89 Sqn's new Tech.

36th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col M Smith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KD Gratrick**

EX KWAZULU TIGER SELECTION WEEKEND 20-22 JANUARY 2006 - *by SSgt Sally Howson*

This was the second weekend for nominated personnel, hoping to be selected for an exped to South Africa. Having arrived, late Friday night, we departed onto the Snowdon Mountain Range on Saturday morning. Albeit we couldn't set off until there had been a frenzy of activity in the accommodation, by the Derby/Davies twins making the big decisions of the day: what should I - shouldn't I take, what should I wear, does my bum look big in this etc.

We were split into 3 groups and dropped off at various drop off points.

Group 1 was ably led by **LCpl Tom Burke**. Having 'bagged' (we've even learnt the lingo!) 4 peaks and 2 mountains, we thought it was time to descend our last peak, down to the Snowdon café for a mug of hot chocolate, but the 'mountain goat' decided that there was still time to 'bag' another. I have since found out that it is a bit like train-spotting, so that was another one for Tom's black book – the spotter!

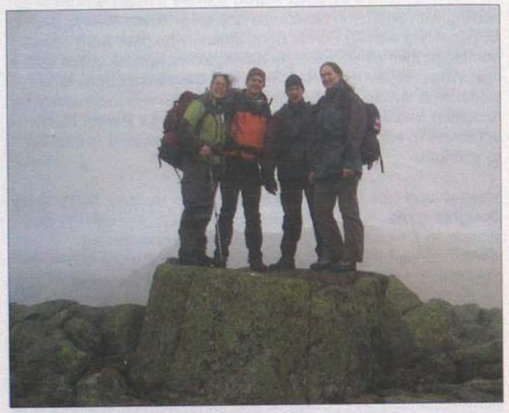
Group 1 on Saturday

Group 2, led by the TM – **Maj John Howell-Walmsley**, scaled Mount Snowdon via the Cribgoch scramble. Most notable events of the day appear to be the helicopter rescue of a nearby climber. This group produced the quote of the weekend – "One wrong footing and your dead!" (**Sig Jane Derby**).

Group 3, led by the Adjt – **Capt Cath Stevens**, did a Grade 1 scramble up on to Carnedd Dafydd (sounds like something from Little Britain!). The only feedback from this group, was that they fed a raven some jelly babies!

Saturday night was spent down the local, sampling some of the local brews, and indulging in the typical squaddie debate of "my group did more than yours, our scramble was the hardest, we walked furthest etc."

Sunday, and after a swap round of leaders, my group went off with **Capt Stevens**. She briefed us that we would be doing a cheeky little scramble up Glyder Fach.



Top of Glyder Fach on Sunday

Having had to get the safety rope out 3 times, seeing the colour draining out of my face, completing contortionist movements (you need to be 5'2" to understand), and after getting back 3 hours late, **Capt Stevens** finally conceded that the guide book might be slightly misleading, as to the difficulty of the ascent.

SSgt Sally Howson

LCpl Tom Burke had obviously run out of room in his black book, as his lot only 'bagged' one peak, and **Maj John Howell-Walmsley**'s lot only completed a scramble over Tryfan before returning back to base.

This was a very enjoyable weekend. Some enjoyed the participation, some enjoyed the achievement, and most were taken out of their comfort zones. Some realised that they would rather cook a mountain goat, than be one! (**Pte Sammes**!).

45 (EASTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M McKenzie-Bell**
SSM **WO2 N Back**

Sqn time has been spent on a range of skill and capability building exs over the past few months, with notable events, such as the Sqn led HF ex in November, and further development of our IT skills.

EXERCISE HERMES SKITTLE, a long-range HF ex, marked the end of November, using locations around the South and East of England. It was a bitterly cold period, but fortunately a good deal of preparation had been done to convert our GS Land Rovers into remarkable good HF dets – complete with borrowed shelters, heaters and cooking facilities. The operators, many of whom were doing this for the first time, learned a huge amount about HF comms.

November also saw Sqn strength rise, for the twentieth month in succession, and the enlistment of **WO2 Tara Pun** (ex-Gurkha Signals). We believe he is the first Gurkha to join the TA.

The Sqn strength now stands at 116, and means we are now having to hold soldiers over establishment, for the first time in many years. Well done all those involved in recruiting and retention.

Having finished with our Euromux eqpt, we look forward to exercising in our new role, building on the skills learned over the past few months, and becoming fully operational by 31 July 06.

LCpl Smoker on Ex HERMES SKITTLE

February and March will be very busy months, but we have managed to squeeze in a formal dinner and an all-ranks social, we are calling 'Colleywood Oscars'. Watch this space for photos next time.

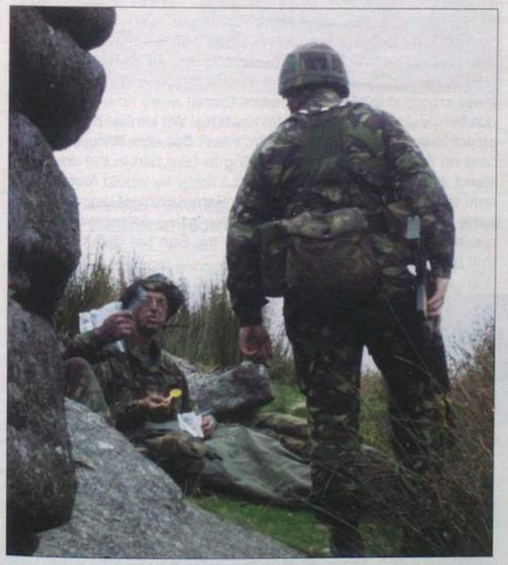
37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Symmons**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Bathgate**

53 (W) Sig Sqn (V) took part in a Military Skills weekend, under the guidance of **Sgt Thomas**. On Saturday, the morning began with tuition from **Sgt Thomas** and **Lt Barbara**, regarding the compilation of eqpt lists, and how to efficiently process orders. Then after lunch, it was off to the trg area at Carwent. The first lesson was a Battlefield Lesson on Section Battle Drills, given by **LCpl Davies** in preparation for his Detachment Commanders Course in February. This went well, apart from me falling over,



Cpl Thomas making himself at home

but that is another story! Then it was Mine Field Clearing, under the guidance of **WO2 Nash**. This was valuable trg for Sqn members, who might be faced with the same challenges, on future ops. The day ended with a drive back to the TAC in Cardiff, in the form of a Nav Ex with minibuses, which was devised by **Lt Barbara**. It was interesting trying to negotiate narrow country lanes in a large minibus; I think he forgot that we aren't all rally enthusiasts!

Sunday was back to Carwent for NBC trg with **Sgt Flaherty**. Then **Sgt Thomas** instructed us on contact drills in two parts. The first part as a 4-man foot patrol and the second, as a vehicle patrol. All this was also valuable trg for those of us going out on future ops.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj K Metcalf TD**
SSM **WO2(SSM) R Francis MM**

EX PUDSEY BEAR

67 Sig Sqn did their bit for Children in Need and decided to do a sponsored Land Rover pull between our TA Centres, from Stourbridge to Stratford. This happened over the Friday and Saturday, collecting money over the 37-mile stretch. Once again, the sqn was out in force to take part, and raise money for a worthy cause. Well over a thousand pounds was raised, and many a blister paid for it. The food and dink on the Saturday night upon completion was well earned and gratefully received. The SSM put a lot of hard work into organising the event and it all went very well.

The fund raisers of 67 Sig Sqn enjoying a well earned break!

Into December, and the main focus was EX HOAR FROST, the annual Sqn Christmas ex which includes the Christmas party. On Friday night we had an air ambulance brief, in Stourbridge. This was a very interesting brief, and **Sig Michael Swann** even thought about making it one of his numerous jobs. The next day was the day of the party, but not before everyone took part in a

NavEx over the Midlands area. Split into teams, the soldiers had to cover certain points and answer questions accordingly. Depending on the answers to the questions, the odometer reading upon completion, and the time taken, a winner would be decided. During this **Sig Wong**'s team managed to clock nearly twice as many miles as any other team. This was not the way to win! After a warm shower and change of clothes, the function kicked off with a carol service. This was where the entertainment started, with **SSgt Adie Sims** volunteering for a solo of 'Once in Royal David City'.

No matter how hard he tried, SSgt Sims didn't quite make the grade for X Factor

Every one expected the PSI to have the voice of an angel, or something like it, but this certainly wasn't the case. His solo was easily on par with some of the bad auditions on X Factor. Cue the whole Sqn, either in stitches or cringing. During the meal it was announced that **Sig Andrew Bob Simpson** won the Haycock Sword of Honour for this year. This award is given to the best junior soldier throughout the year. Well Done **Bob**. The night went well and after the meal many a beer was supped. A special mention has to go to **SSgt John Warney Phillips** for coming dressed as a winning member of The Ashes team.

93 (EAST LANCASHIRE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Capt N Reid**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) G Small**

First off, hellos and goodbyes. We'd like to welcome **Sig Butler** safely back from his 8-month tour of Iraq. As for the goodbye's, well more accurately – see you in 6 months, **Cpl Makepeace**, **LCpl's McDermott**, **Williams** and **Cook** are all off to Bosnia, and we wish them all the best, whilst out there. For those that have stayed, it has been a very busy time with the movement of assets within the TA. Eqpt being made ready for it's move, and more importantly, us getting ready for our big move, administratively that is, to 38 Sig Regt (V). All this, and still fronting a more than capable team for the CO's Challenge. All through the competition, it was a close run thing between 96 Sig Sqn (V) and ourselves. 96 Sig Sqn (V) did end up the victors, but that should not detract from the valiant effort put in by our team. This was reflected by a well deserved, second place. Whereas on the evening's entertainment, the team showed their vast knowledge, by winning the quiz by a whole, clear point. Well done all those who took part in the competition, and everyone walked away having learned something from the weekend.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

January was looking to be a fairly tough month for all, with a few strenuous weekends scheduled in the calendar. The first of these was a rather unattractive shake out, after the Christmas and New Year indulgences, which came in the form of Lanyard Trophy trg across the Brecon Beacons. With 23 people attending from the Regt, this meant that the best could be had from the weekend. The morning started with a trip to the Storey Arms, where we would begin our 'stroll', but not before a bit of a warm up from our Sqn PTI's. Then the troops were split down, into groups of sixes and sevens, and set off at 5 minute intervals in the direction of Pen-Y-Fan and on to the Roman road the other side. The pace was by no means record breaking, but the aim was purely to get people used to walking with weight – about 20lbs this time – and to get a feeling of the sort of team, we can expect to put out on the day. There was a water stop and lunch stop at the turn-around point, but people were reluctant to hang around too long – not because they wanted to get walking, but because everybody was getting cold just standing around. They might have been a little happier to stay longer, once they started the climb up Jacob's Ladder, which proved to be quite tiring! The return to the Storey Arms was made that little bit better, by the presence of the burger van – cheers guys – and the sight of the mini-buses. Everyone was now more than ready to put 5 hours of walking behind them, get showered, and hit Brecon for a night out. A light PT session in the morning, just to loosen up the legs, rounded off a really good weekend. So a big thanks to **SSgt Mick Robinson**; we now look forward to the next trg weekend in March.

The second weekend of the month was our Sqn Mil Skills weekend, to get the Sqn ready and in the correct mindset, to go out and win Champion Sqn the following weekend. This involved a nice stay at Yardley Chase Trg Area on the Friday night, prior to a round robin of stands, all day Saturday. The stands consisted of an NBC stand run by **SSgt Mick Robinson**, a First Aid stand run by **Sgt Judy Dunn** and a driving stand with background activities run by **WO2 Dave Neale** and **Sgt Jo Kellard**. All stands were really different, and it helps to show the troops that these stands don't follow the same format every time and they can be great fun, if not a little exhausting. We almost broke a key player in our Champion Sqn team, when **Cpl Jim Wingfield** fell hard on the comd task, when waiting to take part in the driving stand, but being a fellow technician, I knew he would recover in time to feature in Vixens Challenge. Saturday night was spent back at the TAC, with the aim of getting some detachment preparation done on Sunday – luckily the Sqn bar didn't hamper that plan whatsoever, or did it?

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col AD Smith MBE TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Simcock**

REGIMENTAL SKIING - *by Capt Ian Walker*

Twenty members of the Regt recently went on a skiing trip to Bad Oberdorf in Bavaria, Germany. They skied the slopes of the Oberjoch area, with all participants achieving the Basic Ski Proficiency (BSP). Eleven of the individuals were complete novices, and for many, the trg provided them with their first experience of AT with the Army. The soldiers received MTDs for the 5 days of instruction on the course, making the experience affordable, for even the most junior soldier.

The troops also had a day off when some opted to do a little sightseeing, while the hardcore element chose to ski the Fellhorn.

Over the week, the participants got quite used to finishing the day in the Sport-Alp café at the base of the Islerbahn. The locals within the café were particularly amused by our habit of penalty press-ups, enforced by our instructor **WO2 Andy Medley**, at the rate of 10 for each fall.

The Regt intends to repeat the ex next year, and once more the week will be aimed at novice skiers and junior members of the unit.

LCpl Dave Gaughan getting Some Air

The 'Survivors' on the last day on the Fellhorn (l-r) Sgt Nevill, Lt Clay, Capt Walker, Sig Rowell, Sig Douglas, SSgt Honeywood

BRITISH ARMED FORCES MOTORING ASSOCIATION (BAFMA) EXERCISE RICKSHAW RAMBLE – OCTOBER 2005

This was the first rally for a newly established team, of **SSgt Bedford** and **LCpl Watkinson** to take part in. After arriving late on Friday night, it was straight to bed because on Saturday, we were on the parade square at 07.00hrs for Scrutineering; this is the process where our Land Rover was given a good technical going over. At 09.00hrs, we received our briefing by **Lt Col (Retd) Birrell**, who is the executive secretary of BAFMA, and following this we made our way to the start point.

The Competition included 5 events. First, was the Scatter, where different value checkpoints have to be visited within an hour. As we overran a little, we dropped some points on this stage, and after this we were lying in 19th place overall.

The next stage was the Day Trials, which is an off-road course, navigating between 10 gates, set out with canes. We felt a little disadvantaged, as our Land Rover was the long wheel base version, which made the manoeuvring a little more difficult than some of our fellow competitors. Not that we are bad workmen blaming our tools of course!

Extreme Orienteering was the next discipline to tackle. The orienteering card is attached to the passenger's visor cover and then you are given 8 points to visit in 45 minutes. The skill is all about navigation and driving. The first thing we did, however, was nearly get stuck in water, but we managed to get out - JUST! The rest of the course went well and we managed to finish 4th overall, which was a good change of fortune.

Night Trials followed a similar format to Day Trials, but with 4 courses to navigate with 10 gates on each course. Clearly a depleted carrot ration had an impact, as we finished this stage in 28th place in a field of 30.

The final event was on Sunday – the Sequential Scatter. This involved visiting 11 manned checkpoints, in order, within 60 minutes. We improved our position on this event by collecting all 11 points with 15 minutes to spare.

The entire performance resulted in a commendable 11th place overall, but more importantly, we achieved the accolade of coming 1st in the Beginner Category. This can be attributed to skill, judgement and our lucky Racoon Hat! This hat earned us the nickname of Beaver Boys.

BAFMA EXERCISE ROADMASTER – OCTOBER 2005

We entered 4 crews, the drivers name first and navigator second:

Crew 1	**SSgt Bedford, LCpl Watkinson**
Crew 2	**Cpl Magas, Pte Rowell**
Crew 3	**Pte Stokes , LCpl Hill**
Crew 4	**Sgt Bedford, Sgt Ross**

Crews 1,2 and 3 made up our Team entry and Crew 4 was the female team.

There were 80 crews, from all branches of the Armed Forces, entered in the Roadmaster Challenge. As always, the first call was the scrutineering by REME. Once more, it was based on getting the least amounts of points, as each point represented a penalty. Following our briefing the competition began.

After booking in, the crews were given car positions to start. Crew 1 were awarded 14th, which is high for a novice crew. The first task was to plan your route, and mark up the maps to get to all the checkpoints. This route included hairpin turns, steep descents down banks and numerous other geographic challenges. Crew 1 and Crew 3 received no points, no failures, i.e. perfect rounds.

Next came Sequential Scatter - a 60 minute timed event. We had to drive around each location and record the letter on the gate, entering it onto our time card. Crew 1 once again completed this, with no points and no failures.

For Safari 1, we were issued with an aerial map, marked with a route. Although the route was not a challenging one, the difficulty lay in the fact it was not to scale and being an aerial photograph, a lot of the detail you would expect from a map was missing. Crew 1 and Crew 2 both got clear rounds and no failures. A pattern was forming and pride of accomplishments growing.

Moving on to the next Challenge, Day Navigation. This consisted of 2 parts – both involved transposing your route onto a map and driving the course within the allocated time frame. Once more, Crew 1 had a clear round and no failures.

Scatter 1 followed very soon afterwards. As with Rickshaw, the teams had 60 min to complete a course of 30 points to visit. These could be visited in any order and therefore the navigator was responsible for ensuring the quickest and most effective

route was selected. Crew 1 and Crew 2 both had an excellent round again, with no failures and no points. Safari 2 commenced and the crews found themselves with a hand drawn map, not to scale and a time card to record their time. Once more both Crew 1 and Crew 2 finished with clear rounds.

Eight Aerial Challenge was the second aerial challenge, and again had a time limit of 60 minutes. For the first time during the competition Crew 1 picked up 15 points.

They had been running at joint first position, so the pressure was on. As day turned to night, the Night Navigation section began. Having plotted their routes onto a 1:25000 map the crews set off. All of our crews suffered on this part, with no clear rounds recorded, but they were still determined to succeed.

The 10th section was Scatter 2. Planning and driving skills were now tightly honed and both Crews 1 and 2 both completed clear rounds again.

The last event was made up of 6 Trails of 10 gates. Crew 1 once more completed with no points and no failures. All that remained was for the judges to announce the final placings.

Out of the 80 Crews that entered in the competition, and bearing in mind that ours was classed at Novice, Crew 1 walked away with a very commendable 4th place, and indeed were only 1 point off joint 3rd. The final positions were as follows:

Crew 1	**SSgt Bedford, LCpl Watkinson**	4th position
Crew 2	**Cpl Magas, Pte Rowell**	14th position
Crew 3	**Pte Stokes , LCpl Hill**	56th position
Crew 4	**Sgt Bedford, Sgt Ross**	59th position

In addition the following were awarded:

3rd Placed Team	**S/Sgt Bedford, LCpl Watkinson, Cpl Magas, Pte Rowell, LCpl Hill** and **Pte Stokes**
4th Placed Beginner Crew	Crew 2: **Cpl Magas** and **Pte Rowell**
1st Placed Novice Crew	Crew 1: **SSgt Bedford LCpl Watkinson**
Best Royal Signals Crew	Crew 1: **SSgt Bedford LCpl Watkinson**
Best TA/Reservist Crew	Crew 1: **SSgt Bedford LCpl Watkinson**

After collecting our trophies, the Colonel making the presentations asked if we were tired of coming forward to collect them!

The 38 Sig Regt Rally Squad with their trophies

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JS Adams**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Tucker**

ALL CHANGE!

As with many units within 2 Sig Bde, 39 Sig Regt has recently undergone considerable change, losing two Sig Sqns and gaining a new one. The second weekend in January was the point at which the Regt bade farewell to 5(Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars) Sig Sqn, to whom we wish all success with 31 Sig Regt and to 47(Middlesex Yeomanry) Sig Sqn, who are off to join 71 Sig Regt. Best wishes to both Sqns for the future!

The subalterns at the farewell dinner to 5 and 47: Lt Carter (front row second from left) will clearly miss his friends more than most

HEADQUARTERS (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj RR Loveridge**
SSM **WO2 Simpson**

EX WESSEX WARRIOR 1 - *by Capt (QM) PJ Smith*

EXERCISE WESSEX WARRIOR 1 was designed as a low level military trg ex, to teach basic skills to the newer members of the Sqn, and refresh the skills of the "Old and Bold". The Sqn deployed on Friday night and went straight into preparing for a convoy move, to Hullavington airfield. This saw the Sqn moving in packets, with the Foden recovery vehicle, on loan from the Monmouth REME, bringing up the rear. An interesting route followed, care of the MT **Sgt Kerry Hill,** and it left the Sqn wondering just how many times you could cross over the same motorway!

Saturday morning we started straight into trg after a filling breakfast from our chef, **Cpl Colin Nattress**. The first activity was vehicle camouflage and concealment, under **Sgt Tim McCarthy**. This gave rise to a photo opportunity with the 2I/C climbing to the top of the hanger, only to discover the Sqn had disappeared! Vehicle reversing, and off road driving, were next on the agenda, under the auspices of the **AQMS (V) Graham Peet**. Vehicle Check Points and searching were carried out under the watchful eye of **Sgt Gray**, whilst the driver **Cpl Polly Parrett** seemed to enjoy his truculent acting part. With the OC and SSM both giving lectures, it became time for the lights and noise demonstration, organised by **Cpl Polly Parrett**. Everyone was amazed at the SVWO **WO1 Dickie Lee's** repertoire, including his nearly lifelike owl impersonation. Reversing and manoeuvring at night, under the AQMS's guidance concluded the trg for the day, and all retired to take part in the evening's quiz organised by the RQMS (V). This was won by **LCpl "Nanny" Nash's** team, which included the 2I/C and the Tiffy, **SSgt Kev Pritchard**, and was hotly disputed by the SQMS, **SSgt Oliver**.

The junior leadership trg activities started on Sunday morning, with some of the old and bold making up team numbers. The **RQMS (V) Jayne Tuck** was in one of the teams and appeared puzzled by some of the novel solutions tried, some that worked and some which were less than successful. However a good time was had by all and all the tasks were completed in time.

LCpl Nash promises he won't drop it

Sgt's Gray and **Williams** gave the last demonstration of the day, which involved showing the younger members of the Sqn the versatility of the Foden recovery vehicle. Under supervision, our medic **LCpl Nash**, was allowed to control lifting an abandoned car on the airfield. An obligatory range stew followed and then the return to the TAC.

The junior leadership training produced some interesting solutions to the tasks in hand

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Walker**
SSM **WO2 Allen**

A DATE WITH THE MAYOR AND MAYORESS...(PITY ABOUT THE 13 MILES IN BETWEEN)

Members of 94(BY) Sig Sqn, **Lt Sara Barnes** and our resident medic, **Pte Nerys Pearce**, completed the Wokingham Half Marathon recently, after receiving a rousing send off from the local mayor, **Councillor Iain Brown**. The pair ran for the Sqn and to raise funds for charity. As one of the few service contingents in the event, throughout the route they had lots of support. The Sqn also had the recruiting marquee up and running, which became the favourite place for spectators to shelter from the rain.

At the finish line, the local concern for our 2 runners continued, with the Mayoress asking "where the 'army girls' were?", just as they turned the final corner. Both received a well-deserved "big hug" from the Mayoress at the end. And who was that mystery ex-Berkshire Yeomanry OC, who didn't receive a hug, but did receive a very good time in the race? Being a member of the Bde Staff must have made him a mite bashful...

The Sqn is now looking forward to the Reading Half Marathon, where the weather is usually much better. But will we get a kiss from the mayor?

Lt Sara Barnes and Pte Nerys Pearce ready for the off at the Wokingham Half Marathon

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

ANNUAL LYNX 2005 - *by LCpl Clarke*

The second week of this year's annual camp in September, saw 1(RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) head for sunny Cyprus to join the members of the Sqn, who had already been out there for the previous week taking part in the Sqn's comms ex.

The first couple of days were spent on the 300m gallery and 25m pistol ranges. Firing the pistols was a new experience for a number of the Sqn members, and to make it a bit more interesting, there was a competition to see who was the best shot. After some very good shooting from a number of the Sqn members, the 'best shot' award went to **LCpl Baldwin**, who only dropped 4 shots on the APWT and scored highest with the pistol.

There were a number of Sqn members who would do anything to get out of the midday heat, but the most creative excuse has to go to **LCpl Quantrell**, for managing to release her recoil spring (whilst cleaning her rifle) into her eye brow, and requiring a stitch from the medics.

The CCU staff assisted us on the second full day on the ranges, enabling us to carry out live fire and manoeuvre drills. This was an exciting opportunity for many of us, who have never before tried anything like it.

Unfortunately **LCpl Cole** on sea sentry, suffered with seasickness, and used some interesting voice procedure to inform range control of her predicament.

AT was then the next part of the excitement. There were a variety of choices including; parachuting, SCUBA diving, water sports and even obtaining your powerboat licence. This was the opportunity for many to try out new and exciting experiences, which perhaps they would never have had the opportunity to try, especially at such a discounted rate. It was enjoyed by all.

The Sqn would like to thank all the range staff who helped us on the range days, and also all those who made the AT activities happen.

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

PROJECT SEAFIRE - EXERCISE FIRST ROCK

Another successful deployment was conducted by 856 Tp 81 Sig Sqn (V) to Gibraltar in the later part of September 2005. The main event was preceded by a recce and the deployment of an advance party.

RECCE

Key personnel from 856 Tp deployed to Gibraltar from 11-16 July on a 5-day recce for Project Seafire – Exercise First Rock. The detachment comprised of **SSgt Tony Blatcher**, **SSgt (FofS) Andy McEvoy**, external planner **Sgt Ritchie Forster** and for military tg liaison, **SSgt Tom McLeish**. The aim of the recce was to ensure that all preparation and advance administration was activated for the full troop deployment during September/October 2005. Accompanying the recce team was **Major Tony Jenkins** and **WO2 Dave Laverie** from CPO who were looking at long term in theatre project planning.

Various projects were surveyed at locations in and around the rock, which CPO will be considering for future deployments over the short to medium term. The nature of these projects will include structured wiring, fibre and external copper work packages and are to be tackled by 81 Sig Sqn (V) and elements of 10 Sig Regt.

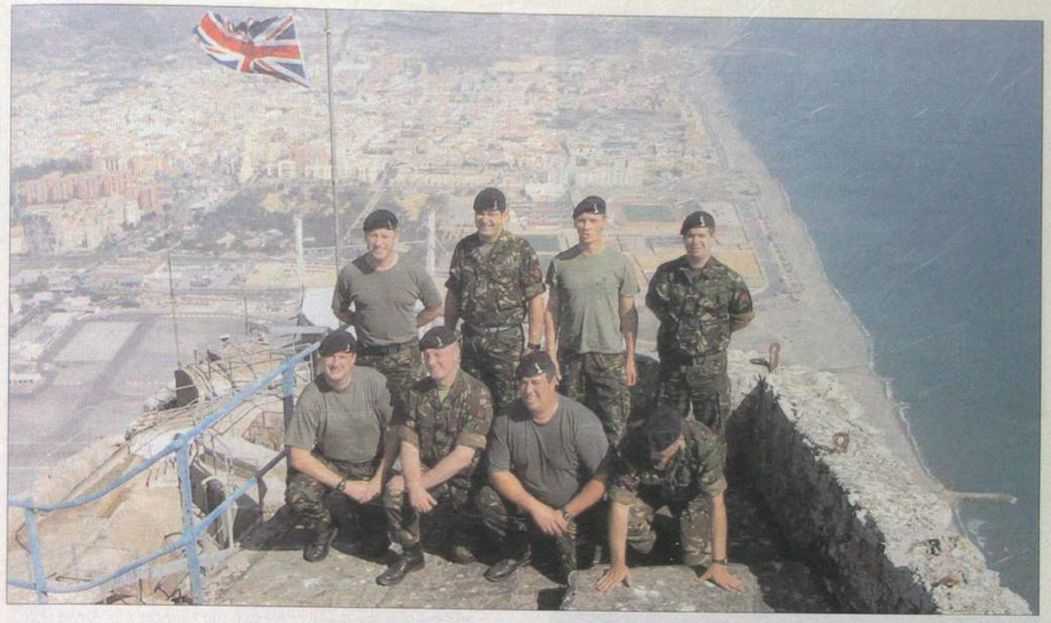
The recce was not without its own problems in that two of the team members' luggage did not arrive in Gibraltar with them. However, after numerous phone calls and the services of a courier company, the luggage did arrive two days before the team were due to depart. That aside the team were excellently hosted by DCSA Gib (2) / 642 Sig Tp – **Capt (ToT) Colin Hamilton**, **WO2 (FofS) Dickie Dickinson** and field liason **Sgt Scott Tomblin**.

ADVANCE PARTY

Eight members of the Sqn, deployed to Gibraltar on 26th September 2005. Led by **SSgt (FofS) Andy McEvoy** and **Sgt John Vincent**, the advance party immediately set about on a team building exercise with their host unit by paying a visit to Gibraltar Town Square. After a good time was had by all, it was on with the main effort which was to prepare all elements for the full Tp project detail. The tasking was the installation and termination of 2km of 48-core composite fibre optic cable from JOC test point to South Mole test point.

This was a complex project, due to the cable having to cross both military and civilian areas, which raised numerous health and safety as well as access issues. **Cpls Ritchie Bannister** and **Robin Sanderson** dealt with all administration, stores, tools, transport and related issues, while the SNCO's set up the project office and delivered supporting documentation.

The team did well in dealing with the first week and the challenges it presented. These included more "lost" luggage, a damaged cable drum and the unannounced arrival of a nuclear submarine, which prevented access to the harbour mole. Fortunately, contingency plans had been build into the project



On top of the Rock – Sigs O'Brien, Vincent, Cane, Howard and Barnes, Cpls Bannister and Sanderson and SSgt McEvoy

detail, and coupled with great flexibility and organization on the ground, the project was still achievable.

The advance party even managed to take part in some PT sessions in the form of kayaking – a first for some, that resulted in much laughter and a rather wet and cold experience for the unfortunate Foreman of Signals. The opportunity also arose for military history appreciation, in the form of a visit to some of the key comms sites, within the tunnel complex of "The Rock".

MAIN PARTY

Thanks to the solid groundwork done by the advance party and the flexible approach, the main party, led by **Capt Seb Phillips** and **SSgt Tony Blatcher**, were able to complete the project, despite several "unforeseen curveballs" coming their way. The success was in no small part due to the first class support from the hosts, and in particular **Sgt Scot Tomblin**. The Tp were also lucky to receive a visit from both Comd 2 Sig Bde; **Brig M Lithgow CBE** and CO 10 Sig Regt, **Lt Col PW Glibbery**, accompanied by our smiling PSAO **Captain Tim Craven**, during the project. This was a great opportunity for 81 Sig Sqn to demonstrate how TA soldiers can effectively plan and execute difficult projects, alongside their regular counterparts. After the guests were briefed, they were taken on a tour of the project and invited to get some hands-on experience, in the art of fibre jointing.

The "work hard, play hard" ethos of the sqn was once again implemented with a cross border excursion to Fuengirola, for a little well deserved R and R. Fortunately identities were concealed to protect the innocent, by donning fancy dress costumes. Apart for some difficult questions by the border police on their return, no major diplomatic incidents were reported.

856 Tp had a tremendous time in Gibraltar, achieving their objective, and building good working relationships with their regular counterparts. Their thanks go to their hosts at 642 Sig Tp for making their stay such a good one.

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

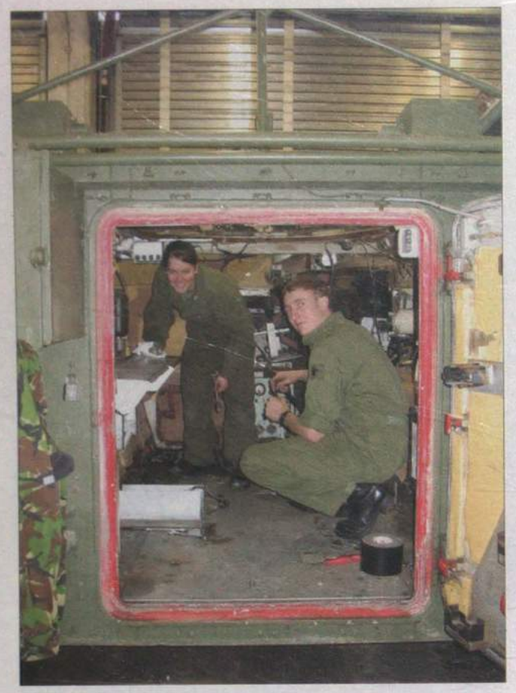
OC **Maj John Townsend**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Chris Lloyd**

After a long 3 week Christmas break, all members of 204 Sig Sqn returned to work, with renewed vigour. The post-Christmas PT programme has already been implemented with the RSM, **WO1 Chris Lloyd**, scheduling a BPFA for the first week back in work, much to everyone's delight.

The next couple of months see the Sqn being extremely busy, preparing all the vehicles for BOWMAN refits. The Sqn is also running a Junior Leadership Cadre on Haltern trg area in February, as well as going on EX PRAIRIE EAGLE in Poland, in March. The Squadron ski team has competed in EX PIPEDOWN, the football team in various league matches and the cross-country team at both the Divisional and Army championships. All in all, it is going to be an extremely busy start to the year, but one that will bring many challenges.

BOWMAN HITS 204 SIGNAL SQUADRON

The programme for stripping the vehicles for their BOWMAN conversion began with a vengeance on Tuesday 10 January, and the troops haven't looked back since. A lot of the cabling, and Clansman communication systems have to be removed from both the 43 series armoured vehicles and the wheeled vehicles, to make way for the eagerly awaited BOWMAN refit. **Cpl's**



Sig Townsend and Sig Potter hard at work

Thomson and **Walker** have been heading up the process for Papa Troop, which has seen the troops garages converted into a highly organised waste ground.

They have set up an excellent system, stripping the vehicles, cleaning them and, under the watchful eye of the REME in the LAD, assisting with servicing. The motivation of the teams involved has been excellent and has meant that the Sqn has been able to prepare all vehicles, which have now been delivered to Ayrshire Barracks, for the refit process.

We expect to get all vehicles back at the start of April and have BOWMAN courses scheduled for April, May and June. Everyone is looking forward to finally getting their hands on the BOWMAN kit and seeing what it can do.

In the absence of the vehicles we have had a Board of Officers, enabling the organisation and co-ordination of the Clansman disposal process. Both troop stores have been extremely busy, but under the control of **LCpl's Buxton** and **Ramshaw**, and the watchful eyes of both troop seniors, the process has been going smoothly.

EX PIPEDOWN

The winter season has seen 204 Sig Sqn ski team gain valuable experience in alpine skiing and racing. The team attended the Royal Signals Corps Ski Camp in Kaprun, Austria for 3 weeks, prior to Christmas leave. This was an excellent experience and gave the skiers and snowboarders a good insight into racing, as well as providing valuable tg from excellent instructors. There was great improvement amongst the skiers, with **Cpl Shackleton** being the highest placed at 37th.

The greatest improvement, however, was shown from **Sig's Herbert** and **Bahr,** who with their 'no fear' attitude, showed that you really can learn to ski and race to a good standard, after just 3 weeks.

204 Sig Sqn Ski Team: Lt Nicklin, Sig Herbert, Cpl Smith and Cpl Shackelton

After Christmas leave **Lt Nicklin**, **Cpl's Smith**, **Shackleton** and **Sig Herbert** travelled down to Les Contamines, in the French Alps, for the 1 UK Armd Div Championships.

The standard of the competition was absolutely excellent, and the skiing conditions were outstanding. The 10 days of racing were a really good experience and all the team are keen to compete again next year, and will definitely be a force to be reckoned with then.

204 SIGNAL SQUADRON WIN THE THORNE TROPHY

2005 was a truly outstanding year for sport within 204 Sig Sqn. Teams have been competing in the following events; football,

Sig Townend receives the Thorne Trophy from Comd 4 Armd Bde

cross-country, athletics, sailing, skiing, netball, basketball, as well as taking part in a multitude of AT activities.

As a consequence, the Sqn has been awarded the Thorne Trophy for the Divisional Minor Unit that has achieved the highest standards in sport in 2005.

The achievement of this trophy can only be attributed to the sporting determination of all Squadron personnel, coupled with the dedication of the OC and RSM to sport for all. The trophy was awarded to the Sqn by the **Brig Deverill**, Comd 4 Bde and was received by **Sig Townend**, who having recently arrived from Blandford is the most successful, junior female cross-country runner in BFG.

With the cross-country team currently at the Army championships, and the football team in the final of the Minor Units Cup, there will no doubt be more 204 sporting success stories in the coming months.

Finally we have to say good-bye to two main Squadron personalities, **Capt Alex Hutton** and **WO1(FofS) Tosh Leyland**. We wish them the best of luck in their new posts and hope they stay in touch with all of us at 204.

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

BATTLEFIELD TOUR (14-18 NOVEMBER 2005)
- by Cpl Phil Stillie

The Officers, SNCOs and Cpls of the Sqn embarked on a battlefield tour of XXX Corps' advance to Arnhem in 1944. We set off in good spirits at 05.00hrs on the Monday morning for a 14 hour journey to JHQ in Germany.

The mood was good and a merry tone was set for the entire week, because of some lively entertainment provided by **Sgt Dawson** and the velvety tones of **Cpls Grimes** and **Westerman**.

With a full programme of events planned, we set off the next morning for Holland. Some of the highlights of the first day included the Dutch National War and Resistance Museum, the start point for XXX Corps advance to Nijmegen, and the Bridge at Nijmegen itself. **Lt Whillis** and **Cpl Megraw** provided some excellent presentations.

On the second day, we visited Arnhem and toured the landing sites around the town, and Arnhem Bridge. **Maj Greenacre**, an Army historian, treated us by sharing his breadth of knowledge of the area.

The last day of the tour took us to Oosterbeek. This, in my eyes, was certainly the highlight of the week. The tour was capped off by a visit to the Airborne Museum where **Sgt Porter** was certainly in his element. This was followed by a memorial service at Oosterbeek cemetery.

All in all everyone on the tour had a great week. We all certainly learned something new about what our predecessors sacrificed for us.

EX YOUNG PANTHER (6-10 FEBRUARY 2006)
- by Sig Andy Thompson

This year's JNCO cadre course started with a gruelling Gun Run, to weed out whoever was not physically capable of being on the cadre course.

The enthusiasm was high from the start, and the Gun Run showed that almost everyone was up for it, and desperate to shine. It certainly let us know that it was not going to be the easiest of weeks.

We deployed to Barry Buddon, later that Monday afternoon, in the back of a Chinook helicopter. Although it was a fairly smooth ride, overall, **Sig Wilkes** felt the need to use his sick bag. This set off a chain reaction through the troops, as stomachs were emptied into sick bags, up and down the cabin.

We spent the first night in a conventional harbour area, and moved onto the ranges on Tuesday. The Platoon tried their hand at a pistol shoot and a moving target shoot. Let's just hope that the enemy stay still in real life!

This was followed up by a truly gruelling, wet assault course. The collapse of morale occurred after the assault course, for those of us who had no spare, dry boots.

After several night patrols, and 'in-depth and informative CTR's', the time had finally come for a Platoon attack. **Sig Wilkes**, who had been nominated as Platoon Comd, had to formulate a plan of attack. He left the job of getting the Platoon fired up for the assault to his Platoon Sgt, **Sig Burgon**. **Sig McArthur**, **Sig Flintoff** and myself were appointed as Sect Comds.

The assault on the objective went well. The most difficult obstacle was a heavily padlocked gate, which guarded the entrance to the objective. After much effort to lift the huge gate off its hinges, we realised the padlock was in fact a zip-tie!

There was lots of noise and bangs and enthusiasm throughout the assault. The tab back to the secure location was fairly tough, and each section really had to work together as a team to get everyone back as one.

After a drink in the bar on Thursday night, we all slept well. A pair of Merlins flew us back to Catterick on Friday morning. The flight was smoother than on the Chinook, but I doubt if anybody actually remembers it, as everybody was asleep.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the course and thanks must go to all the DS. Special congratulations must go to **Sig McArthur** who was awarded Top Student.

HARROGATE VISIT ON 11 FEBRUARY *- by Sig McArthur*

On Saturday 11 February approximately 70 potential signallers from Harrogate Foundation College descended on Gaza Barracks, the home of 209 Sig Sqn. They came to see presentations from numerous Royal Signals units, including 216 Sig Sqn, 264 Sig Sqn, 30 Sig Regt and 2 Sig Regt.

A variety of stalls displayed an array of assets, ranging from SATCOM to Fwd and Main HQ's. The mission we had been given, was to inspire the recruits who were set to join the Royal Corps of Signals. **Cpl Kibble** led the task at hand, aided by **Sig Dan Condon**, **Sig Thayne**, **Sig Canning** and myself.

Just as concentration started to diminish, and the recruits' eyes began closing, **Lt Whillis** jumped into the foray to give a morale boosting talk about Op tours. He explained that the Corps was still required to carry out patrols, and infantry style duties.

This certainly revived interest in the recruits.The recruits gave us good feedback at the end of a successful day, and the members of A Tp, who assisted in the stand, certainly enjoyed themselves.

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt P Hodgkinson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Barrass**

Over the past few months Sabre Tp have had an exceptionally busy period. With troops deployed all over the world including exciting exercises in Malaysia, Norway, and the Black Mountains. The Christmas season saw all of the usual parties and football matches, and a great time was had by all. If the first PT session after Christmas leave was anything to go by, it appears that the entire sqn had a very relaxed time over the festive period.

Postings out have been fast and furious, and its time to say goodbye to **LCpl Shacks Shackleton**, **Sig Billy Bremner**, **Sig Vats Vatu** as well as **LCpl 'Buzz' Burrell**. It's also time to say hello to our new arrivals, including **LCpl Hughes** and **Tyler** - Welcome to the Troop! The next few months will see Sabre Tp saying goodbye to all of its vehicles for a few weeks, then hello to some new, and sparkly green BOWMAN eqpt.

BENGAL TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt A Eros**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kelly**

It has been a busy couple of months for the Tp, as everyone has been getting ready for BOWMAN-isation; stripping out vehicles and preparing for courses. A few of the luckier members of the Tp went to Austria, and competed in EX MERCURY GLACIER 9. We have also had a lot of hellos and goodbyes.

We say goodbye to **Cpl Albino Gibson,** who is re-trading to IS OP and leaving for 16 Sig Regt, **LCpl Dava Harmison,** who is off to play sneaky at 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt and also **Sig Jim Machin,** who is off across the water, on promotion to LCpl. We also say hello to **Sgt Woodrow** from RADEX troop in Blandford, **Sig Weller** from 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt and finally **Sig Marshal** straight from the factory.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp OC **Capt Webb**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Hunt**

Since the return from EX LION SUN, Support Tp has been busy settling back into the routine of life in barracks. **SSgt Hunt**, **LCpl Key** and **Sig Pierce** recently returned from Norway, where they provided life support to the Bde HQ who were involved in EX NORDIC SHIELD. **Sgt Challand** was tasked with getting the MT ready for BOWMAN-isation, LSI and the ECI, which are all around the corner for Support Tp. **LCpl Kingston** has recently returned from a public order course, and now seems to think that he is a qualified ninja! **Cpl Macleod** has not been seen for some time, apparently she is hiding behind the UNICOM terminal, trying to get to grips with the UET. **Sig Keenan** and **Sig Wood** are both beavering away, preparing for their Class 3 to 2, under the beady eye of **Sgt Munslow.**

The LAD are trying their hardest to get the ageing 'panza' fleet up to scratch, ready for BOWMAN installations, which is of no concern to the chefs who are rarely seen anywhere else other than the hot plate. The tp has bid farewell to **Cpl Whetton** and **LCpl Shaw**, and welcomes **Sig Arbon** (from the factory) and **Cpl Britton**, who has joined the tp on promotion, all the way from Bengal Tp! Finally, a warm welcome to **Cpl Hinder,** who has taken up his post in the kitchen.

EX NORDIC SHIELD - *by LCpl Prest and Sig Aitken*

On 30 October 05, 10 members of 215 Sig Sqn deployed to Orland Air Station, Norway. We were pleasantly surprised to find that it was actually warmer than back in the UK. Unfortunately, the good weather didn't last long and the cold harsh Norwegian weather soon arrived. Whilst on the ex our job was to set up the Land HQ in preparation for the arrival of the Staff Officers, and to man a 24hr Comms Centre.

The Norwegians obviously had experience in dealing with the British Forces, as after only a few days, a tax-free bar had been set up. And only a few days after that, the 'CPX Club', which was also tax free and provided live entertainment every night, was established. Despite the extortionate prices, we still managed to get down into the local town, and experience some Norwegian nightlife, and crazy dancing.

Hard work on Nordic Sheild

Dealing with the weather conditions in Norway, in late November and December, was very tough, especially where the eqpt was concerned. We all had a good laugh when, one morning, the boys from 2 Sig Regt woke up to find that one of their satellite ground stations had blown away, in the previous nights gale force winds.

All in all, the ex went well and the different bits of kit worked well together, if only after a little gentle persuasion from the operators. I believe from the cheers of the Staff Officers, that we also won the battle scenario, fantastic! After a few weeks of that extra LOA and LSSA, we were all pleased to land back in the UK, in time for Christmas.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 9 - *by Lt Alex Eros*

EX MERCURY GLACIER 9 was the Royal Signals Ski Race Camp and Championships 05, held in Kaprun, Austria. The team, consisting of **Lt Eros**, **Cpl Turner** and **LCpls Wallace**, **Squires** and **Rowe** left for snowy Austria, in the early hours of the morning, in their newly acquired Landrover Discovery's. They had every gizmo you could imagine, heated seats, voice recognition, automatic rain sensors and as with all things the Army touches, it broke. Thirteen hours into the journey, we lost one of the vehicles, due to a faulty petrol gauge, which added another 7 hours onto the journey time.

Week 1 of the skiing started off with **LCpl 'Kamikaze' Squires** deciding to test his fellow team mate, by crashing into him at Mach 10. **LCpl Rowe** awoke to find himself being bundled onto a stretcher and taken to the nearest hospital. Week 2 started off slightly better, with heavy snowfalls during the weekend and the first few days of the week. The downside was that it reduced the visibility to almost nil, and covered the slopes in a deep powder. Fun yes, but not the best for racing in. Week 3 saw people heading off for the weekend to Salzburg, browsing the Christmas markets, and sampling the local glühwein.

Before we knew it, everyone was dancing and drinking to Irish music, sung in an Austrian accent. The arduous week ended with the Seeding Giant Slalom Race. The pressure seemed to get to the team, and only 3 out of 5 finished the race. **LCpl Wallace** creamed in impressively, ending up in hospital with a couple of torn muscles and **LCpl Rowe** crashed out on the last gate. **Cpl Turner** was going so fast, when he finished the race, that he continued through the barrier for about 20 meters without his skis, which were still in the finish area.

Week 4 was Race Week. On Monday the visibility was so poor that for safety reasons, the committee decided to cancel the races for the day. Luckily, they managed to book a lower alternate slope, with better weather conditions, for the rest of the competition. This new course, however, brought its own problems, being smaller and flatter than hoped. The times between the top racers were very small. However, we did manage to secure 3rd place in the Team Giant Slalom, by seconds. **LCpl Rowe** also managed to take the individual 1st place in the Slalom, and overall champion skier for the Camp. We are now looking forward to next year, where we hope to retain the prizes we have won and gain some more of the gold.

I do miss Tidworth!

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC **Maj D Worden**
RSM **WO1(RSM) A Gill**

The end of 2005 brought with it the end of readiness trg for the Sqn. 2006 will undoubtedly bring it's own unique challenges; some expected and inevitably some unexpected. What is certain is that the New Year marks the beginning of a high readiness period under the NATO Reaction Force (NRF 6) banner. The New Year also brings with it a farewell to **Lt Pete Wright** who leaves us for 1 Sig Sqn in Milton Keynes, we wish him well in his new job and hope it is as fulfilling as his time with us.

EX RED TRICORN

No sooner had the mince pies settled, than we were in preparation for an ex, this time with a difference, no Staff Officers. This gave us the opportunity to stretch our wings and push in slightly different directions. The ex was split into 4 phases; the first being the PACEX Phase 2 was where comfort zones were stretched as the operators were deployed around the country as two vehicle clusters.

The Ops team kept them on their toes with relentless pressure, forcing them to react to various realistic scenarios, ranging from contacts to NBC attacks. Congratulations to **Cpl Stu Codack**, how he managed to do that to a FFR and trailer, God only knows. By the end of the second week some weary operators turned around their eqpt ready for the deployment on Monday morning.

Phase 3 concentrated on the establishment and defence of HQ locations, the RSM put together a sterling trg package for the first 2 days, giving instruction on defending a Comms site, duties of a sentry and QRF, to name but a few. All the trg was put into practical use, as the trg wing staff plus help, probed defences and conducted attacks on isolated dets. Many lessons have been learned from the experiences gained, perhaps the main one is that although as Royal Signals soldiers, our core business is communicating, we may never take our attention from basic soldiering skills.

Week 3 rolled into Week 4 and Phase 4 in which our Sqn joined the much larger 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt led EX RED TRICORN, our role as the logistic sp element put into practice, as the comms ex continued, with the passage of LogReps and ReplenDems over the ComBAT system.

The UN/NATO scenario around which the ex was written culminated in the Sqn locating itself at a railhead, defending ourselves from IEDs, insurgents and even mortar attacks. All in all it was some valuable trg and a base from which we can build in the upcoming EX VIPERS VENOM in April.

CORP ANNUAL WINTER SPORTS EVENT

Early Saturday morning, the 6 intrepid ski gods from the Sqn packed our minibus and set off on our eighteen-hour drive to Austria. After watching The Wizard of Oz countless times and the combined efforts of **Lt Wardle**, **WO2(FofS) Campbell** and **Cpl Hopkins** who actually drove, we finally made our destination.

On Monday morning, we made our first visit to the glacier and had a chance to shake off some of the cobwebs from legs that hadn't skied in anything up to a year. By the end of the day, with most of the available slopes conquered, we returned to the lodge feeling rather impressed with ourselves and decided that we earned an after piste beer. The next morning, however, the

bubble burst. As we joined our ability groups, it dawned on us that this was no holiday on the slopes and that we didn't know very much about racing.

The tuition however was excellent and it wasn't long before we skied the slopes as if we were born to it. Each afternoon, we were given free ski time when I decided, along with **Sigs Homes** and **Stratton**, to give King of the Hill a try, i.e. from the top of the mountain to the gondola. This was promptly renamed the thigh burner challenge, though the timings did improve as the week progressed. As the penultimate week passed our confidence grew with our group finally mastering gates and the smooth carving needed to turn at speed. We approached race week buoyant with our newfound grace on the piste.

At last the wait was over, along with the trg; this was it. We began with a warm up and moved into a seeding race. Our times were better than expected with some good positions earned by **Cpl Hopkins** and the OC, **Maj Worden,** who joined us on the last day of trg.

Throughout the week, there were many stories of glory and tragedy as positions were lost and won, but every day still ended in smiles, as is always the case when it is the taking part that counts.

Finally massive thanks from those who attended must be given to the organisers and instructors without whose effort (and patience in some cases) this event would not have been possible.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj J P Hazlewood**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Storey**

SQUADRON CHRISTMAS PARTY - *by 2Lt Hunt*

On Tuesday 13 December, the Sqn held a formal Christmas bash at the Wald Hotel in Paderborn. The dress was Black Tie, which was a welcome opportunity for the ladies to don their best party frocks, and for the men to look dapper in their smart suits. Perhaps taken slightly too seriously by **LCpls Hetherington** and **Joyce,** who hired a top hat and tails for the occasion. **LCpl Hetherington** seemed to be in the mood for splashing out as he paid 200 euros for a very small teddy bear in a charity auction, it must have been the good wine!

LCpls Hetherington and Joyce dressed for the party!

Although it was a sit down meal, it was a buffet style affair, with plenty of good traditional German food to go round. Though **SSgt Ward** was definitely seen to have more than his fair share of the pudding! The opportunity to burn off those inevitable extra Christmas calories followed with a performance from a live band. Described as a cross between Boyzone, Aha and Bros. Needless to say, there were some interesting moves on the dance floor to complement the interesting music: becoming even more outrageous when the Disco began! The ladies were definitely showing up the men on the dance floor, despite a good effort from **LCpl Dickinson** and **Sig Marshall**, reliving the memories of their dance off in Berlin, just a few weeks prior. It was a great night, and an ideal way to celebrate the end of a successful and busy year, and to welcome the start of another challenging year for the Sqn. The work of the committee, headed up by **SSgt Dunbar** was greatly appreciated and they are commended for the success of the night, which was testament to their hard work.

CROSS COUNTRY - *by Sig Farigu*

On 11 January, the Sqn sent a male and female team to compete at the BA(G) Cross Country Championships, hosted this year by 28 Eng Regt in Hameln. The route was extremely hard, and even though the start and finish were colocated, it seemed to have more uphill stretches than downhill. It was about minus four degrees Celsius, and the vast majority of the already uneven track, was covered in compressed snow, making the going even harder. To quote **LCpl Cunningham** "It was nails!". The team did well considering the lack of trg due to the Sqn's busy timetable. In the ladies' 7km race, **2Lt Hunt** came 10th, **Sig Haberfield** 29th and **LCpl Madgewick** 36th. Our first male in the 10km race, was **2Lt Maben** in 81st, shortly followed by **Sig Farigu** in 102nd place.

Winter Cross Country

Two weeks later, the Cross Country team was in action again, at Race 7 of 1(UK) Armd Div Cross Country league, held on our home turf in Gutersloh. This 10km route should have been easy, as it is completely flat and covers the same area that we use for

PT. However, the fact that it was snowing heavily and there were numerous icy patches, made it more arduous and treacherous than anyone expected. The Cross Country team is now looking forward to the final three league races of 2006 and the long summer break.

OPS OFFICER'S LEAVING FUNCTION - *by 2Lt Maben*

To mark the occasion of Ops Officer, **Capt Hannah Stoy's** departure, the Sqn Officers and Warrant Officers enjoyed a day of skiing on the slopes of Winterburg. An abundance of enthusiasm and snow made for perfect conditions. Tuition was the first item on the agenda as for some, **2Lt Hunt**, skiing didn't come naturally. **WO2(RQMS) Pollitt** utilised his Ski Instructor's qualification, which ,coupled with patience and a sense of humour, ensured that the falls for said beginner were not quite so frequent, or as painful! After a brief pause, for a much needed hot chocolate and traditional Currywurst and chips, **WO2(YofS) Plant** proved that he 'still had it' with many a speedy run and minimal falls.

The afternoon saw success, when an anonymous subaltern managed to complete more than one whole run, without rolling down the slope. Meanwhile, the `professionals' of the group were staging their own jumping competition, which although closely contested by **WO1(RSM) Storey** and **Capt Stoy**, the OC, **Maj Hazlewood** was clearly `allowed' to win! An eventful return journey in the snow, expertly driven by **Lt Griffiths** was followed by a meal out in the local town of Gutersloh. Obviously the day's activities had worn everyone out and so it wasn't a late finish, but a great day overall. The Sqn wishes **Hannah** every success in her next posting as Adjt 16 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE SNOW WARRIOR - *by LCpl Wildman*

At 06.00hrs, on a cold Monday morning, 5 members of the Sqn were fortunate enough to be deploying to Bavaria, southern Germany for a 10 day skiing package. Skiers of all abilities are catered for in the disciplines of ski touring and alpine (downhill). On completion of the ex, personnel receive an award based on their ability: Basic Ski Proficiency for beginners and Advanced for the more proficient skiers. Although it can be a long 10 days of crashes and falls, before reaching the required level. As proven by **LCpl Brown** who found himself in the Advanced group, which was painful, if not challenging.

However, the instructors used their own skills, to produce something similar to a skier out of him! Incidentally, he wasn't the only one to reach a high level of proficiency, eventually! Both **LCpl Noakes** and **Sig Stock** achieved the Advanced qualification, producing some impressive falls along the way, though not half as impressive as **Sig Lewis** who managed to break his shoulder! Apart from this unfortunate incident, a thoroughly fantastic time was had by all, a successful exercise.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS WING (DIGBY)

OC **Lt Col Whimpenny**
Wing WO **WO2(WWO) Duggan**

EXERCISE ICARUS VENTURE

The opening of the e-mail entitled 1 Sqn EX ICARUS VENTURE sent numerous groans and moans around the set room. Some, however, **SAC Laney Lealand**, **Cpl Nick Goss** and I, were actually looking forward to a weekend of doing something different; **Cpl Goss**, because he likes guns and loud bangs and **SAC Lealand**, for the sheer experience.

It is a rare occasion for RAF personnel, particularly here at Digby, to play soldiers, apply the delights of green and brown to our faces, and fire rounds away from the 25m range, which is used here at Digby for the RAF equivalent to ITDS.

The ex or Battle Camp (a very scary word for the RAF) ran from 3 – 11 November 05, with each watch taking part in a two and a half day programmed period, with the day workers filtering in to each phase. However prior to this, and in preparation for the exercise, the whole Sqn had to pass the APWT. This was another new experience for some of the RAF. For ourselves in OCS and B Watch, we were blessed with a not too cold winter's morning on Saturday 5 November, when we left Digby at 08.30hrs, and headed off into the darkest reaches of Norfolk to the trg area.

On arrival at Wreatham Camp, we were shown to our rooms; most unexpected! We even had windows and heating! Many were expecting a night under the stars, but alas, we had to endure the comforts of a barrack block. Next, we had a quick tour of the camp, lunch and then straight into the first lessons on handling the GPMG. This was followed by weapon handling tests and a 'chat' (?) about Battle Shock. The next lesson proved to be all important. Despite a good effort from some of our RAF counterparts, putting together webbing did not prove to be one of their strong points.

The evening activity for Day 1 was attending the bar, but unfortunately, much to **Sgts Babs Woodhouse** and **Sue Beford**, **Cpl Goss's** and **JT Bradly's** disappointment, the kit list only mentioned a tracksuit and not civilian clothing. This took the four of them on a minor night manoeuvre ex to the local Tesco's clothing department. Jeans for only £3.00, Hmmmmmm, nice!

Sunday morning started with an early breakfast, before we drew our weapons from the armoury. The usual thing, SLR, AK-47, MP5, Remington Shotgun! We then mounted our tactical mini-bus, to venture out into the trg area. We started the morning with camming-up or face painting, as some would call it, leaving **CT Andy Goodwin** to take it as an excuse to turn into the Incredible Hulk. From this point on, the real fun started; fire and manoeuvre in pairs, with plenty of blanks thrown in for good measure. We moved onto section fire and manoeuvre drills, and then anti - ambush drills. Again, we did our best, with bodies flying all over the place and blanks 'competing with shouts of 'Prepare to move, MOVE!' and 'Safety catch, pouch, move!'
After a lesson on battlefield casualty drills, we were sent to find a

Enjoying anti-ambush drills

casualty in two Land Rovers. It didn't take us long to find **Sgt Jim Hobson**, the casualty, lying in a field with a severely bleeding leg and burnt hands. After we moved forward to deal with the casualty, we were ambushed and a firefight ensued. Apologies to **Sgt Hobson**, who was roughly man handled into the back of one of the Land Rovers, with his legs still hanging out, but we were trying to help, honest. With bodies crammed in the Rover, we moved to a safe area to be de-briefed. **Sgt Hobson** did admit that he would have survived, but he also

asked if anyone had some pain killers for his head.

The afternoon was spent going through pairs fire and manoeuvre on the IBS range using blanks, as we had no range wardens to conduct the live shoot. This was an exciting range, with us coming under fire and reacting to it.

The adrenaline was flowing, as were the blanks out of our weapons. As a concurrent activity, we were shown how to strip and make safe an AK-47, and some of the finer points of the alternative weapons we took with us. As a final part to the day, we went through basic prisoner handling and conduct after capture. Most interesting, but definitely not something I would want to have to do for real, unless I was taking the prisoners.

As we packed our gear together and cleared our weapons, the heavens opened and we got soaked, but at least we had finished for the day. We headed back to the barracks through the downpour, with our mini-bus ploughing through puddles that ducks would have happily swam in. Weapon cleaning and scoff was next on the agenda before retiring to the warmth of the bar for the medicinal beers and inevitable war stories.

Our last day was basically a crescendo of noise. LSWs and GPMGs chattering away, with the unmistakable pop of the SLR in the background. As the noise rose, so did the mountains of brass. Our gentle firing grew with confidence, as mag after mag was spent. Everyone had an unforgettable experience that day. A beautiful sunny day with the smell of cordite, why couldn't every Monday be like this?

As the tired souls of B Watch and OCS climbed back on the bus, with the smell of gun oil lingering, we started the journey home. What a weekend! We experienced new things and saw new sides to people. We would like to thank all the DS for their time and patience. And I speak for all in1 Sqn, when I say 'thank you and when are we doing it again?'

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO **Lt Col CJ McIntosh**
RSM **WO1(RSM) LS Crossing**

HANDOVER OF REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR

In February, we bade farewell to **WO1(RSM) Shaun Cook**, wife **Belinda** and family after 22 years service. The Unit wish him and family all the success for whatever the future holds. He was replaced by **WO1(RSM) Leigh Crossing** and family, on promotion from the RSS.

RSMs handing over

WILKINSON SWORD OF PEACE AWARD

In January, Joint Service Signal Unit (Cyprus) was awarded the Wilkinson Sword of Peace for the year 2004, for its valuable contribution towards establishing good and friendly relations with the inhabitants of the local community. The award was more special because this was the last ever sword of peace to be awarded by Wilkinson, as they have closed the sword making factory.

The Chief of Defence Intelligence, **Lt Gen AP Ridgway CB CBE**, visited Cyprus to present this major award. JSSU Cyprus achieved the award, as a result of following the CO's 3 tenets that underpin Unit extramural activities: fostering good relations with both Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities; raising money for worthy causes at home and abroad; enhancing recreational facilities for Service and Civilian families.

A major project that exemplifies the first principle has been the Unit contribution to the Nadir Orphanage in Famagusta, in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). This initiative involved military and civilian personnel, working to refurbish and equip a local orphanage. Encouragingly, this included Greek Cypriot staff, under a British military lead, working on a project benefiting Turkish Cypriot children. This work was recognised from both sides of the border, and is seen as one small example of re-building trust in this divided community. A view acknowledged by both the TRNC Minister for Health and Social Aid and the Larnaca Community Church.

HQ SQUADRON

OC **Maj Terry Crane**
SSM **WO2 Gaz Middleton**

EXERCISE TROODOS SKI

It was a dead certainty. Even though it was Cyprus, at the end of January every year, the heavens open and snow lands on Mounts Troodos and Olympus. Not the longest ski runs in the world, you may think, but a 'ski run' nonetheless. And with temperatures in the high teens at lower altitudes, the potential for having a bright, warm morning walk along the beach, followed by some skiing in the afternoon was a possibility.

Unfortunately for HQ Sqn, their plans for AT, consisting of 4 groups from across the Unit having two and a half days skiing each, was looking like a non-starter. The first group managed just 3 hours of skiing in that time, but all was not lost. A backup plan of 5-a-side football, climbing at Episkopi, and including bowling and a touch of go-karting were enough to keep the demoralised troops slightly happy. Group 2 were lucky – almost the complete two and a half days were spent on the slopes, but the final two groups had to accept thawing snow for some of their time. Nevertheless, the troops had a good time. Some got more skiing/snow boarding than others, but that's not what AT is about. It was 'down time'; working and playing as a team and basically enjoying themselves. Roll on next year!

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM **Maj Chris Hymas**
RQMS(T) **WO2 Lee Linton**

Congratulations go to **SSgt Gaz Sinclair** on his selection for promotion and a welcome is extended to **SSgt John Webber** from 40 Sig Regt (V) and **Cpl Clancy** who joins the Trg Wing from 8 Inf Bde.

1 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner**
SSM **WO2 MacDonald**

The last few months for the Sqn have been relatively quiet, less the odd movement in and out from all the three services. Of particular note we bade farewell to **WO1(Supvr Rad) Daz Winfield** on commissioning; **Daz** leaves us to take up his temporary appointment as 2IC HQ Sqn with 14 Sig Regt. In his place, we welcome **WO1(Supvr Rad) Sean Clark** from Digby.

COOMBER CUP 05 – 1 SQUADRON REIGN VICTORIOUS

The Sqn won the annual, much coveted Coomber Cup trophy in December, after a year's hard slog over numerous sporting events. The Coomber Cup was started by the parents of **Cpl Nigel Coomber** who died sadly, while taking part in a unit cross country race in 1988, when the Unit was then known as 9 Sig Regt. **Cpl Coomber** was a big man, who represented the Unit and Army at rugby and his parents sponsored the Coomber Cup, as a way of preserving his memory. As such, after the amalgamation of 9 Sig Regt and 33 SU (RAF) into the Joint Service Signal Unit, the Unit remained committed to preserving **Cpl Coomber's** memory by continuing the Coomber Cup. Each quarter of the year sees a different spread of events, ranging from individual sports, such as tennis and badminton, right through to full team sports such as cricket, football and rugby.

2 SQUADRON

OC **Lt Cdr Neil Bassett**
A/SSM **SSgt Ian Dickinson**

A quiet period over the Christmas break, we bade a short farewell to **Sig Clare Pugsley**, who is off on detachment to Iraq for a 10 week period. We also welcome **Cpl Brian Gault**, on promotion from CCU to head up the Line Section.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Dennis Weir MBE**
PSAWO **WO1 John Farrell**

ALLIED COMMAND OPERATIONS TACTICAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME - *by Maj Jez Bailey, SO2 G2, Staff Pool*

When I moved from 34 Sig Regt (V) to JSSU(V) last year, I was told that membership of this specialist unit would give me the opportunity to undertake unique training, not normally offered to main stream TA units.

The Allied Command Operations Tactical Leadership Programme (ACO TLP) is an organisation, formed under a Memorandum of Understanding between 8 NATO nations. The objective of the TLP is to increase the effectiveness of allied tactical air forces, through the development of leadership skills, tactical flying capabilities, mission planning and tasking capabilities, and conceptual and doctrinal initiatives. TLP is based at Florennes Air Force Base in Belgium, and experienced personnel, from the member nations, staff its 3 operational branches: Academic Branch, Concepts and Doctrine Branch and Flying Branch.

So why, you might ask, did I attend a course designed for "allied tactical air forces"? Well, JSSU (V) is now a Tri-Service Specialist Unit, which started out initially as a TA Unit (5 Comms Coy (V), but has now opened up its doors to RAF, RN and RM personnel, hence the name change. As part of my career development, I

TLP EW Course 2006-1

had attended the excellent All Arms Land Forces Electronic Warfare (EW) course held at RSS Blandford and when I heard that ACO TLP offered an equivalent air orientated Basic EW course, I jumped at the chance to attend and broaden my EW knowledge and understanding.

Travelling with the other UK delegates from JSSW (Digby), the Air Warfare Centre (AWC) and 8 Sqn. RAF Waddington, the UK was well represented, with 8 out of 31 participants.

The course offered the chance to rub shoulders with our NATO allies, both old and new, and there were attendees from Belgium, Denmark, Poland, Holland, Germany, Norway, Hungary, Spain, Italy and the United States.

Imagine my thoughts on Day 1 of the course, when I found out that I was virtually the token Army representative, apart from a couple of German Army Helicopter pilots. During the initial introductions by the course, I found myself sandwiched between a German F-16 pilot and American AWACS pilot – the only thing I had ever flown was a Node Command and OSC!

The course itself was run by **Lt Col Neil Banik**, USAF, ably assisted by members of the Academic Branch, from the UK, US, Holland, Germany and Italy.

The standard of the instruction was excellent, and considering the majority of the instructors were briefing in their second language, quite mind boggling.

The course briefly reviewed electromagnetic, radar and pulse Doppler principles before dealing in depth with Electronic Support Measures, Electronic Counter Measures and Electronic Protection Measures. EW force packaging and coordination of the ECR, Prowler, F-16C-J and Compass Call were discussed in some depth. EW associated subjects were covered, including:

Anti Radiation Missiles - HARM and ALARM
Fighter and SAM EW update
Air-to-Air Tactics in an EW Environment
Lowering the Radar Cross Section
Directed Energy Weapons

The end of course EW ex certainly focussed the mind with Effective Isotropic Radiated Power, Field Intensity, Burn-Through Ranges and Jammer Pods being the order of the day – we had come a long way in a very short time.

Having said all of the above, it was not all work and no play on the course. We managed to socialise on a nightly basis with our NATO colleagues, culminating in a visit to Leuven (the home of Stella Artois). The least said about this trip the better, but a number of the UK delegation now know that it is not wise to mix copious amounts of Stella with Jagermeister, as the consequences are 'colourful', to say the least!

The course closed with a number of participants' presentations, including **Lt Col Banik's** B-52 brief, the Germans highlighting their new "Tiger" Attack Helicopter, the Hungarian presentation on the Gripen Fighter Aircraft, and the Norwegian brief on 717 Sqn.

Highlight of the week for me, was clambering all over one of the Belgian F-16s, based at Florennes, and realising that if I wanted to be a fighter pilot, I needed to shed at least 3 stone – not in this lifetime I think!

An excellent week which provided us all with an increased knowledge and understanding of the whole electromagnetic spectrum, and how best it may be exploited in joint air ops. For those graduates of the RSS's All Arms Land Forces EW Course, I encourage you to broaden your EW knowledge base and attend the TLP EW course.

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY

The DCSA was created in 1998 and comprises a team of over 5,000 military and civilian personnel, working in various Directorates and Integrated Project Teams (IPTs) at numerous locations worldwide. The DCSA Royal Signals contingent are therefore well travelled, exercised and deployed.

DIRECTOR OPERATIONS

EX NORDIC SHIELD 2005 - *by WO2(YofS) Lane*

EXERCISE NORDIC SHIELD 05 was a joint deployment to Orland Air Station in Norway. The exercise saw JTFHQ 1 deploy, in medium scale, with the subordinate Land, Maritime, Air and SF component comds.

WO2 (YofS) Gaz Lane deployed in support of the initial in-theatre build phase in mid November. Initially, Orland Air Station enjoyed the same weather as every other military establishment, lots of rain and high winds, with the resulting complications for satellite stability. The remainder of the DCSA Joint Netcen team deployed 2 weeks later in the form of **Maj (TOT) Phil Cooper** and **WO2 (FofS) John Sutton**. The facilities on the Air Station were also of a high standard and enjoyed by all.

A number of visits took place, including **Col Grogan**, Contingent Ops with **Lt Col Brand**, SO1 Operations and Paradigm services, who visited on the worst weather day of the whole exercise, with high winds and a very heavy snow, resulting in a near whiteout at times.

The deployed DCSA team were able to offer valuable assistance to the HQ staff and the J6 community providing the comms networks. After winning the battle, all the DCSA personnel flew back to the UK on 16 December, in time to do the last minute frantic Christmas shopping and take some well earned leave.

Major Phil Cooper and WO2 (FofS) John Sutton, WO2 (YofS) Gaz Lane and Capt Rick Carley

DIRECTOR OF CHIEF TECHNICAL OFFICER (DCTO)

OP HERRICK DEPLOYMENT - *by WO1(FofS) Duffy*

When a request for comms advice was received from 62 Works Gp RE, I was deployed on Op HERRICK to Kandahar as the DCSA/PJHQ J6 advisor. The scope of my task was to provide comms advice to infrastructure design teams for all UK bases in Southern Afghanistan. I was attached to the Engineering Sp Sect, providing advice to the HQ elements and the Infrastructure Design Sect, 519 STRE.

This advice included strategic and tactical comms site design, internal HQ build layouts and power requirements for all UK Military and commercial systems currently in service. I was surprised at the amount of detailed planning that goes into site builds by the Royal Engineers (I never knew there are so many different types of stone!), and now appreciate that J6 advice at an early stage can save many hours of frustration and hard work for them in later build phases.

Included in the Prelim Ops Staff, **WO2(YofS) Muz Murray**, from DCTO in Blandford, has landed in Kandahar to act as the J6 Battle Space Manager (BSM). He is currently working very hard to establish the BSM post in Southern Afghanistan.

DCSA CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

EX GRIFFON CHALLENGE - *by Sig Griffiths*

It kicked off on Sunday morning with an ACFT, to determine an equal strength in sects, followed by some demanding comd tasks, an appreciation and an introduction to map reading.

After our last meal in the cookhouse for a week, we received an extremely riveting lesson on orders by **Lt Price**, which had the optional extra of getting your head dunked into a cold bucket of water, if fatigue overcame the excitement and you fell asleep. The next 2 days were the learning phase of the ex, where new skills were learned and practised.

The duties of Sect Comd and 2IC were passed around, giving even the quietest of people a chance to command and make decisions. The ex phase started on Tuesday night, with a monster of a tab, lead by **SSgt Torry Torrington**, which was said to separate the men from the boys. The never-ending uphill struggle, proved to be extremely demanding. The slog up brought out good teamwork and saw the Army and RAF work as one, to help the slower members.

The next day saw the introduction of our favourite task, 'Stag Duty', and some tactical patrols and recce's. That night our sleep was interrupted by a very noisy attack on our harbour area and we had to bug out. At this point it was every man for himself, as some made their way to the ERV, with boots on their head, and helmets on their feet. After a head count at the ERV, we noticed a few people were missing. People on the second week would like to thank **Sig Sleepy Moore** for sleeping through the attack and **Cpl Connell** for setting off his own trip flare, and getting lost in a quarry, resulting in a tactical patrol back to the harbour area to retrieve them.

The next day we had casevacs and building assits, whilst on patrol, followed by another demanding tab down to the truck. At this point, our Bergens were left on the vehicle, resulting in a very cold night, with little warm kit. The team bonding was questionable at times, as some people got very close and cosy, to keep warm. It was also a surprise that **SAC Thompson** didn't compromise our position as he snored to his heart's content.

After a cold night, the final asslt was upon us. Explosions and flares started, and all hell broke loose, as **Cpl Jock Taylor**, **Cpl Knocks** and **Sig Jackson** opened fire on us. The sections advanced through the village, with the utmost aggression and gave birth to a few Rambo's in the process.

We knew the objective was taken, when we saw **Cpl Jock Taylor** walking out the door gasping for air, due to the severe amount of smoke used. The hostage was rescued and Endex was called. We were then greeted with chocolate and hot drinks from the officers, who had been observing the attack from a safe distance.

Awards for 'Best Endeavour' went to **Cpl Connell** and **SAC Hayes**, and 'Best Field Student' went to **Sig Ollie Josephs** and **Sig Hargreaves**.

In my opinion the exercise was very well structured and demanding and we would like to thank all the DS and people who helped to organise it. The Army and RAF relationship has been brought closer than ever before with both forces learning much about the others way of life and role. We all look forward to next years if it follows the same pattern.

WALKDOWN 2005 - *by Cpl Aggersberg*

Nearly 300 runners, riders, and event staff gathered in Episkopi gymnasium at 5am, Saturday 12 November, for the 2005 Cyprus Comms Unit Walkdown. Despite the early hour of the morning, a sense of anticipation filled the air as the competitors began the registration process. For **Sergeant Shuggie White** and the rest of the Walkdown Committee, this was the culmination of months of planning and preparation, now it was time to deliver!

The CCU Walkdown, in its various guises, is now in its 23rd year and remains as popular as ever. This year's event, having been expanded from 60 to an incredible 94 teams, was the first to be run as a charity event. The Pan Cyprian Welfare Council, which provides critical services for families, north and south of the border, will be one of the main beneficiaries this year.

CCU Walkdown Winners

With their details verified, personal kit checked, and the vital food and water collected, the 94 teams of 3 were ushered onto the awaiting buses for the journey to the start line at Platres Trout Farm high up in the Troodos Mountains. It was a very cold but bright morning, as the teams massed together at 07.45hrs. As many teams discussed routes and tactics, others made the most of perhaps a final photo opportunity, before they began the long and arduous journey ahead.

The Walkdown is approximately 18 miles, depending on the choice of route and map reading skills. While many of the assembled teams had designs on winning the competition, most were there for the experience, the enjoyment of taking part, and the incredible sense of achievement that completing this event brings.

At 08.00hrs, the teams set off on their long and winding way to the finish line, located at JR's Club in Episkopi Garrison. 'Ladies Wot Lunch' was one of the first teams away, and despite an impressive initial burst of pace over the first 50 yards, managed to be overtaken by 8 other teams within the first half-mile! With the teams starting at 30-second intervals, everybody involved had cleared the start line in 50 mins.

At 11.06hrs, an amazing 2 hours 45 minutes after they set off, the 'CCU Runners' were the first to cross the finish line. From this point on and all through the afternoon, one by one, the teams crossed the line and made their way to the bar for a well-deserved drink. It was here, in the CCU Families Club, packed with competitors, support staff, and well wishers that the OC CCU, **Sqn Ldr Shaun McLaughlin** began the presentation of the prizes.

Sgt Shuggie White wishes to thank all the committee members and volunteers for all their efforts in making this year's Walkdown a huge success. As a committee, we would also like to thank everybody who gave up their time to help us out on the day. We hope to see you all again next year.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

OC	**Maj Steve Whytock MBE**
YofS	**WO2(YofS) Pete Emsen**
FofS	**WO2(FofS) Si Crowther**

HQ IMATT

Comd Driver	**Cpl Scottie Maskell**
Duty Signaller	**LCpl Cas Cassidy**

THE ROLE

During the past few months, the JCU has undergone many changes, not least a reduction in Military Advisors to the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). The team of advisors now consists of only one officer, a Yeoman and a Foreman of Signals, with the Yeoman post shortly to be fully embedded within the RSLAF. The main aim for the advisory team is to give guidance and assistance to the RSLAF JCU, enabling them to function as an independent organisation, whilst providing robust and reliable comms throughout Sierra Leone.

JCU Advisor, Maj Steve Whytock MBE with CO JCU, Maj Jusu (RSLAF) hard at work!

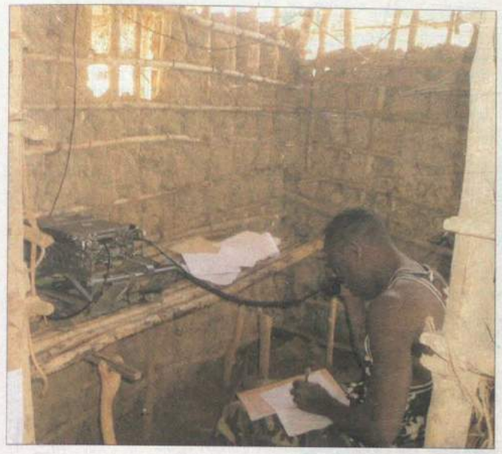
The JCU is responsible for the delivery of comms throughout the RSLAF; this is a major challenge anywhere, even more so in the African Continent.

As advisors, periodic checks are made of installation throughout Sierra Leone, covering monthly distances of up to 3,000kms over some extremely arduous terrain. The visits enable the team to understand the logistical problems sustaining reliable comms throughout the country, and provide an insight into some technical repairs, that would make any FofS turn grey! Each visit 'up country' is an adventure in itself, with the team becoming extremely proficient in vehicle maintenance...or rather breaking them!

Typical 'up country' road conditions

JCU advisors also have a secondary task of supporting comms assets, held within the IMATT(SL) HQs and deployed IMATT houses. This includes ensuring the smooth running of the LAN, ensuring the 'white fleet' radio systems are in working order and the deployment and installation of VSAT terminals to 'up country' IMATT locations.

This has proved extremely demanding over the past few months. Needless to say the team have become extremely proficient at being system administrator and VSAT technical experts.



Sinkunia Radio Room

KAMBIA JCU RADIO OPERATORS

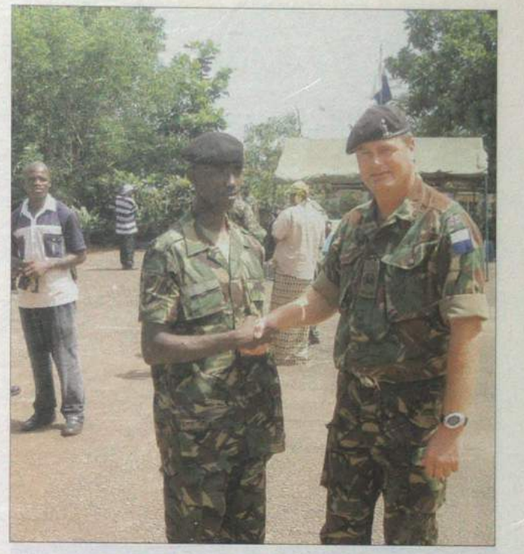
HAIL AND FAREWELL

In May, there will be a change in personnel within the JCU, with the FofS **WO2 Si Crowther** due to be replaced by his brother, **WO2 Dave Crowther**, which is sure to cause immense amounts of confusion within the organisation. It will also see the departure of the very last Royal Signals YofS, **WO2 Pete Emsen**, who will be departing on promotion to 1(UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt. Also to note, is the departure of **Lt Col Campbell-Black** who left in early February for HQ LAND to be replaced by **Lt Col Richards**, as the SO1 Infantry Advisor to 4 Bde RSLAF, proving that the Corps is very diverse in its postings!

B3 RADIO OPERATORS GRADUATION DAY

On a hot October morning (a Saturday no less!), 29 members of the RSLAF JCU successfully completed a B3 Radio Operators Course, and in traditional military fashion, a parade was conducted to celebrate.

A week prior we were all duly informed by the CO that it is 'tradition' for members of IMATT(SL) to donate prizes.....and for the advisor to deliver the end of course speech. With military band playing, and the families of those successful present, a very memorable day was had by all.



Yeoman congratulating B3 Top Student

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The JCU has seen a remarkable change over the past few months, with the procurement of Data over HF equipment from Barrett radio systems. The first courses have been completed, and a number of operators are now conversant in its use. The deployment phase of this project is currently ongoing, whilst a reliable sustainable power system is being developed; however the initial trial of the eqpt has proved to be very successful. Another IMATT(SL) sponsored project is the construction of a new Trg Wing. This is scheduled to be complete in time for the next B3 Radio Operators Course, and will enable the JCU to deliver courses in state of the art facilities (West African).

We are looking at decorating the Trg Wing with Royal Signals memorabilia; all donations are very welcome, ensuring that the Corps really leaves its mark in Sierra Leone. Any donations should be forwarded to the IMATT JCU Advisory Team.

NATO COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS SCHOOL

CO	**Lt Col (Tfc) N H Colville**
RSM	**WO1 K Read**

NATO COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS SCHOOL (NCISS) - *by Sgt Ian Fincham*

NCISS provides trg support for all NATO units, and has a throughput of approximately 2,700 students per year.

The courses are heavily geared to practical training, and offer 56 different technical and operator courses.

The School staff consists of approximately 90 personnel, comprising a mix of military and NATO civilians. The UK, USA, Italy and Germany, are the major contributors, but other nations have vacancies on the Peace Establishment. The Commandant, **Col L Borfiga** ITAF has recently taken command, and our own **Lt Col N (Gus) Colville** is the Chief of Training Branch, with a staff of 45 civilian engineers and military instructors. The RSM fulfils the appointment of School Warrant Officer (SWO),

The UK element of the school consists of thirteen UK personnel, 1 Royal Navy, 5 Royal Signals and 7 RAF.

The Corps element includes **Lt Col Gus Colville**, **WO1(RSM) Kev Read**, **SSgt Keith Dwyer**, **Sgt Ian Fincham** and **Sgt Jimmy Scott**.

There are also 2 other Royal Signals personnel serving with the Multi National Electronic Warfare Support Group in Anzio, **Sgt**

WO1(RSM) Jim Alger hands over to WO1(RSM) Kev Read

David Hill and **Sgt Byron Marshall**. The RSMs changed over on 25 November 2005 and the School said farewell to **WO1(RSM) Jim Alger** after 24 years dedicated service to the Corps.

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

The UK element of NCISS hosts an annual parade of remembrance, for the sacrifices made by British and Commonwealth troops in all wars. Parades are held at two military cemeteries here in Italy: the Commonwealth and Beachhead cemeteries in Anzio. These two cemeteries are the final resting places of 3059 British and Commonwealth troops, who sacrificed their lives in the Anzio landings and subsequent actions. The UK element paraded outside the Base to board the coach that would take us to the Anzio Beachhead cemetery, where the weather was exceptionally kind, with bright sunshine and a cool 15 degrees. On arrival, everyone, including representatives from Canada, the United States and a number of civilians, travelling from as far afield as USA, were given some time for reflection inside the cemetery before the parade commenced. **WO1(RSM) Jim Alger** brought the parade to attention, before handing over to **Lt Col (Gus) Colville**.

We had the rare honour of a presiding chaplain, **Lt Col Keith Bretel** RACD, the senior chaplain for Germany, a trumpeter from the US Navy in Naples and a Royal Signals piper in the form of our very own **Sgt Jimmy Scott**.

The parade was particularly poignant, as we were surrounded by the graves of 2032 soldiers, seamen and airmen who gave the ultimate sacrifice. The CO, chaplain, RSM, trumpeter and the piper then made their way to the Commonwealth cemetery to lay a wreath of remembrance in an abridged ceremony. The event concluded with a buffet lunch at the Oasis Club in the School grounds.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

NCISS hosted a Change of Command ceremony on 13 December 2005, during which command of NCISS passed from **Col S Palombi** ITAF to **Col L Borfiga** ITAF. The guest of honour for the ceremony was **Lt Gen Ulrich Wolf** GEA, Director NATO Communications Services Agency (NCSA), our tasking Agency and Peace Establishment Authority (PEA). This was a very colourful event with a distinctly international feel.

Amongst the nations represented were Italy, UK, USA, Germany, Spain, Greece, Netherlands, and Canada in addition to numerous

Sgt Jimmy Scott piping in the outgoing and incoming NCISS Commandants

Members of the NCISS – Remembrance Day Parade

local dignitaries including the Mayor of Latina and the head of the regional Caribinieri (Italian military/civil police). The personalities were piped in and out by **Sgt Jimmy Scott**, and this was much appreciated by the international audience.

However, the civilians and foreign military representatives were not prepared for the traditional vocal bombardment launched by a British Army RSM in the form of **WO1(RSM) Kev Read**, who brought the parade to attention, in true British Army style, much to the detriment of everyone's eardrums. **Lt Gen Wolf** handed over the NCISS standard to **Col Borfiga** and the ceremony was concluded by speeches from each of the major dignitaries. At the conclusion of the ceremony, everyone retired to the Officers' Mess for a buffet lunch and refreshments.

OTHER UNITS

628 SIGNAL TROOP

OC	**Capt K Grice**
Tp FofS	**WO2(FofS) Taff Ceaser**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Randy Randerson**

INTRODUCTION

Since October 05, soldiers from this unit have been involved in 2 separate operational deployments, to Pakistan and Afghanistan, a major NATO exercise to Lisbon, and winter adventure training in Austria. For most of November, the unit of 1 + 57, were on the ground in : Portugal, The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Not bad for one of the smallest units in the Royal Signals.

In the latter half of 2005, we were stood up, as CIS providers, to cover the NATO Response Force (NRF) 5 commitment for Joint Command Lisbon (JCL). When the images of the Pakistani earthquake filled our TV screens, we came very close to deploying as a unit in support of JCL's Operation Swift Relief. In the end, 5 soldiers did deploy, with **Sgt Paddy Henderson** and **Cpl Mick Sutton** filling key roles in the 1st NATO Signal Battalion's (1 NSB) TAC Fwd HQ. **Cpl Tony Blackburn**, **LCpl Marco Barelli** and **Sig Matt Catto** joined German Deployable Communications Module (DCM) Alpha.

PAKISTAN - *by LCpl Marco Barelli*

On 14 November 05, the 3-man SATCOM team departed Elmpt Station, en route to Maastricht Airport, to join their German DCM Alpha colleagues. The 11-hour flight in the Herc was emotional, to say the least, stopping in Baku, Azerbaijan for a refuel, then onwards to Islamabad, Pakistan.

On arrival, the DCM Comd, **Capt Michael Mensching**, greeted us. We had a quick tour of what would be our base of operations, right next to the helicopter landing area, then straight to our accommodation, aptly named the Heaven Inn (Motel type), which was anything but heavenly!

Next day we set up all the eqpt, which was much like a more compact and modern CGS, contained within one tent. As the SATCOM team found out, our dish was being jammed by airport interference, and had to be relocated.

The local workers rapidly managed to get the accommodation tents up and running, meaning the staff officers could move out of their 5 star hotels onto the air base. As you can guess, it wasn't without some chuntering!

German DCMA from 1 NSB with detachment from 628 Sig Tp

All in all, the setup went smoothly, but once the initial attraction of helicopters landing and taking off fizzled out, their nuisance became apparent. Huge dust storms were created, covering everything and everybody. Top marks go to the US Chinooks for consistently landing within 50m! Highlights were a flight with the German Army's HEER medium transport helicopter to the affected area in Kashmir to help with the distribution of aid. This proved to be an eye-opener, helping you appreciate what the effort at base camp is actually for!

Driving in Islamabad is not for the faint hearted. Although the roads are signposted, and shotgun wielding police were stationed every 200m, the 3 lane Islamabad highway usually turned into a 6 lane free-for-all, making 'undertaking' the rule, rather than the exception.

Although this was quite a short mission, it provided unique challenges, such as deploying with brand new, largely untested equipment and working through various language barriers. Overall, however, the deployment was a success, and a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Our thanks go out to the German DCM A for their hospitality and professionalism.

PORTUGAL

While involved in the planning for Pakistan, **WO2(FofS) Taff Ceaser** found time to design a CIS solution for EX ALLIED WARRIOR 05, the major NRF 6 preparatory ex that involved elements of 3(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt and 2 Sig Regt. He deployed with an advance party of British and Danish soldiers from 1 NSB and prepared the ground for the rest of Comms Gateway Shelter 2 (CGS 2) under the command of **Sgts Dave Sawyers** and **Dave Shilton**. **Capt Grice** had the role of Signal Support Group (SSG) Comd for that ex, and had a surprise visit from JCL's Comd, **Vice Admiral 'Boomer' Shuffelbeam**, which was nice...briefing a US 3 star Naval Aviator, with more fast jet, carrier night landings (TOP GUN style), than I've had hot dinners was a cinch, honest.

As each NATO member had 'their JCL man on the ground, life was at times a little challenging. But patience is a virtue, and a calm voice with the gentlest of prods, works wonders, with all but the French. I must mention the RAF High Wycombe friends, **Flt Lt Dave Hardy** and **Sgt Alex Knowles** for finding the strength and sense of humour, for daily work in their Anglo-French HQ. Mention must also be made of our hosts, the Portuguese, for the most outstanding welcome and hospitality. Without good relations here, our month in Portugal would have been trying in the extreme.

AFGHANISTAN
- by Sgts Paul Creeley, Steve Boyd and Cpl Liza Neary

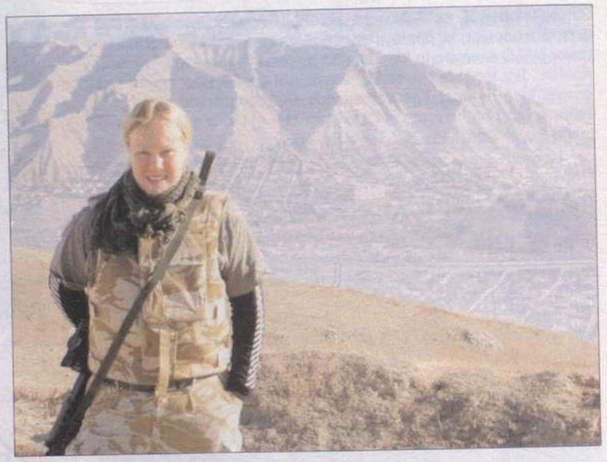
Sgt Creeley, **Sgt Boyd** and **Cpl Neary** made up part of a 2nd Line Sp team in HQ ISAF, Kabul, along with 9 Italians and one Belgian. Our mission was to provide 2nd Line Comms sp to all of the 12 Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), located around Afghanistan. This entailed travelling to various sites; to fix, relocate or install comms eqpt.

One of our tasks was to assist the Germans install Psyops antennas at two locations, by installing V Sat for them. Being the V Sat specialist, **Cpl Neary** led the mission. The convoy consisted off an impressive 29 vehicles, and travelled north over the Salang Tunnel, which I believe is the highest road for vehicles in the world. Ten hours later, we arrived at location, quite sore to say the least! We managed to get comms in within 2 days, bearing in mind it took 1 day to erect the 30m German antennas, everybody was happy.

The next mission was a bit more interesting, as we were dropped off at a Brit PRT, when we were supposed to be at the new, but not yet built, Swedish PRT. A great big camp, with nothing but 4 pod tents in the middle, for sleeps. Not surprisingly, we had everything in and working in 6 hours. Looking forward to getting back to HQ, we were slightly disappointed to find we had to stay in a tent, with no heating and no lighting for the next 3 days, waiting for a flight back. That said, it was a great experience and an enjoyable mission!

Meanwhile back at HQ ISAF, **Sgt Creeley** and **Sgt Boyd** continued trouble shooting and maintaining comms to the 12 PRT sites around Afghanistan, which involved extensive work on the telephone, and frequent visits to the PRTs.

Christmas proved to be a testing time for the 2nd Line team, as we experienced the biggest V Sat outage, in the history of ISAF. It was rectified 5 days later when we realised that it had been switched off. (Only joking). It turned out to be interference from a German welfare dish, which had recently been installed. Having gained permission, the 2nd Line subsequently turned the dish off, which meant that none of the German troops could ring home.... Oops!!! 2nd Line are now required to travel in armoured vehicles to the German camp, for obvious reasons, giving **Sgt Creeley** an excuse to were his rank on his flak jacket. It has been an eventful and enjoyable mission but let's be honest, 4 months was enough and we all agreed it was time to go home.



Cpl Liza Neary, ISAF Winter 2005

AUSTRIA - *by Sgt John Davies*

Due to operational commitments, the 628 Sig Tp Snowboard Team comprised 2 novice riders and one senior rider this season: **LCpl Kevin Ford** from 1 NSB, **LCpl Denise Swift** from DCSA(G) and **Sgt John Davies** from 628 Signal Troop. In the Corps Championships, **LCpl Ford** earned a well deserved 3rd place overall in the novice category, and **LCpl Swift** had an outstanding 2nd place in the female category, that also included female senior riders. **Sgt Davies** won the veterans' category, and came 4th place overall in the Corps event, earning him a place in the Royal Signals Team for the Army Championships. 628 Sig Tp came in a very respectable 6th in the Corps Championships.

The final week proved the most testing of all, with all 3 of our 628 riders pitched against the best snowboarders the British Army has to offer. **LCpl Ford** was placed 3rd in the Army novice dual slalom, **LCpl Swift** won best Army female novice, by winning the dual slalom, giant slalom and coming 2nd in the boardercross. The HQ ARRC team, comprising **Maj John Seddon**, **Sgt John Davies** and **Cpl Mark Jones** won an outstanding 2nd place in the Army team event. The Royal Signals Team earned themselves a 3rd place overall, in what was to be one of the most

Royal Signals novice and senior teams at the Army Championships. Sgt John Davies is far right

competitive years for Army snowboarding so far. Well done to all the teams, and we will hopefully see you all next season.

CONCLUSION

The alert reader among may recall that two more countries were mentioned in the introduction: Germany and The Netherlands. Based in Elmpt Station, we are supported by the ever present rear party, ably led by **SSgts (SQMS) Barny Barnett** and **Bill Owen** AGC(SPS).

Javelin Barracks lies on the German – Dutch border, and with 1 NSB HQ in Maastricht, about 50 minutes away, we have been known to partake in an outing, from time to time.

Maastricht is one cracking night out, I promise you. That makes six countries.

In January 2006, 10 Tp members deployed to Afghanistan, in the role of 2nd Line PRT Support to ISAF. Apart from this deployment, 628 Sig Tp will have a rather less hectic 2006, as we relinquished NRF 5 at the end of December 2005.

We will have the time we did not have in 2005, to compete at the Corps SAAM, and perhaps enjoy a sports afternoon clay pigeon shooting.

628 Sig Tp remains a challenging and rewarding place to gain some combined arms environment experience in the NATO arena and do a spot of travelling.

UNITED KINGDOM SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATIONS COURSE

UKSFCC number 02/005 drew to an end in November 2005, after almost 6 months of hard work, by both students and trg wing staff.

The efforts of the Special Forces Communicators came to fruition, at the end of the Military Trg phase of the course, when the students were presented with their berets and belts.

In May 2005, a total of 57 students formed up to attempt the UKSFCC, to try and become a member of the SF fraternity. Candidates for the course came from a variety of backgrounds, which confirms that the "no previous communications experience" message is reaching the Tri-Service community. Non Royal Signals soldiers, who started the course came from the Royal Engineers, the Royal Logistic Corps, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force. Four officers also started the course, and 3 passed the relevant phases needed.

However, the high standard needed to pass all phases is evident, by the final number of candidates who actually received their berets and belts.

The main areas of failure for this course, were the comms phases; where 4 soldiers dropped out and the physical aptitude phase,

where there was a further loss of 28 men; 6 due to accident or injury. Personal preparation, in both these areas, needs to be paramount when preparing for this career course.

The 14 signallers who completed the course came from:

2 Sig Regt
7 Sig Regt
10 Sig Regt
14 Sig Regt
15 Sig Regt
16 Sig Regt
18 Sig Regt
21 Sig Regt
30 Sig Regt
4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn

A total of 2 officers, 8 operators, 2 technicians and 2 driver/electricians passed the course. Eleven of these had previously been on one of the several briefing courses, run annually by 18 Sig Regt Trg Wing.

This high pass rate of personnel, who had prior experience of completing a briefing course, highlights the benefits of completing such a course.

It is a great achievement for those individuals to join 18(UKSF) Sig Reg as a SF Communicator.

However, the end of 2005 saw no abatement in the work carried out by the Sig Trg Wing, in continuation with course 01/006.

The experience of these soldiers will be spread among the Corps, when they attend career courses, or join the recruiting presentations carried out by the unit.

Finally, the course is not impossible to pass. Filling out of the application form is probably the hardest part! These can be found in SOINC (A) PD 206 available through your courses clerk, or alternatively you can contact 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt's Recruiting SNCO on 94475 2493 for details.

UNITED KINGDOM LANDING FORCE COMMAND SUPPORT GROUP (3 COMMANDO BRIGADE)

CO **Lt Col PS Cameron OBE** RM
RSM **WO1(RSM) RS Harper** RM

CETUS 06

CETUS 06 is 3 Cdo Bde's winter deployment to Norway, which this year will last for 3 months. This is the period when the Bde hones its winter warfare skills, on Land and in the Littoral environment. This allows personnel to continue to operate in temperatures down to minus 30 degrees centigrade, heavy snow and ice, and with only 2 hours of daylight.

Cam Whites – we love the snow and we love to ski

We arrived back from Christmas leave on 3 January, which only left a few days to do any last minute packing, before the flight out to Norway on 7 January. Myself (**Alfie Davidson**) **Cpl Dave Allen**, **Cpl Charlie Brown** and **Cpl Wayne Tutty** arrived safely in Asegarden Camp, just outside the municipality of Harstad in the county of Troms, Northern Norway, deep within the Arctic Circle. **Sgt Phil Chadwick** arrived about 2 days later, having been delayed in RAF Lyneham with engine trouble, and as a result had to find the nearest Tesco Store, to buy a complete set of civvies including shoes, so that he could go out on the town.

COLD WEATHER SURVIVAL COURSE

As **Cpl Dave Allen** and I had completed last year's Cold Weather Warfare Course, all we had to do this year, before we could go out into the field, was the Survival Course or more commonly, the Refresher Course.

This started on Monday 23 January, and initially consisted of a day and a half of lectures on mountain safety, cold weather injuries and avalanches, before deploying into the field, on the Tuesday afternoon.

We were dropped off just short of our first location, so we could don skis and Bergens for the small yomp into location. Once in, we put up the 10-man tents, cotton wigwams, and then went off for a night ski tour. The highlight of the night in the tent, being an hour 'candle-watching', to ensure the candle doesn't go out.

On Day 2, we pulled pole, a half-hour evolution to collapse the tents, and with day sacks we went on a ski NavEx to the next location. After a few scenic climbs and descents, we arrived in location at about 11.30hrs and proceeded to put up four-man tents. Once that was done, we grabbed some scran, before going out into the field to do some ski trg.

After about 3 hours of that, it was back to the tents for some admin time and some hot scran, before we had to attend the next evolution, which was a noise and lights demo. After the demo, it was back out into the field for some more ski trg. We eventually got our heads down at about 22.00hrs, but what with rain, snow and wind battering the tents, no one got much sleep.

On the Thursday morning, we pulled pole at 07.15hrs and moved to our survival location by BV, where we would be building brushwood bivvies. Unfortunately the BVs couldn't go all the way, because of the ice, so we had to yomp the last few kms carrying Bergens and 4-man tents, trying our best not to cream in.

We were glad of the extra ski tuition after all. After some initial survival instruction, we proceeded to begin building our brushwood bivvies. It was a long drawn out process, but the hardest part had to be collecting and cutting the firewood.

Hands were red raw by night's end, just so we could have a nice fire all night long. It was then onto the evening meal which consisted of chicken, fish and vegetables, all of which had to be dispatched and cooked in various ways.

This hot scran was gratefully consumed, as the temperature quickly dropped to minus 8 degrees Celsius. Even with a roaring fire, we were still chilled to the bone. Morning could not come quick enough, and when it did, it was out with the fire, down with the brushwood bivvy, and on with our kit for the yomp down the icy hill to the BVs.

We were soon back in Asegarden camp, where we had a final brief on the exercise and some hot scran, before the majority of us got our heads down for some well deserved sleep.

Chadders creams in – on Pusser's planks, having not quite mastered his turns

BURNS NIGHT SUPPER

The RSM wanted to hold a Burns Night get together in the mess when out in Norway. So the brief before we left the UK, was for everyone to get some tartan from somewhere, as he wanted us to be wearing home made kilts. As you can see from the photo's the Signals members came up trumps.

WO2(FofS) Brett Palmer, Sgt Alfie Davidson and Sgt Phil Chadwick ready for the gathering

COLD WEATHER WARFARE COURSE

WO2(FofS) Brett Palmer, **Sgt Stu Wilkinson** and **Cpl's Charlie Brown**, **Paul Lomas** and **Taff Morris** were the lucky ones this time around, and so with some nervous excitement, the guys turned up on Monday 23 January, ready to begin. Monday and Tuesday consisted mainly of lectures on mountain safety, cold weather injuries, duties of a tent group comd, as well as demos of how to put up the 4-man and 10-man tents. Their first foray into the field came on Wednesday, when they deployed to Harstad ski slope, to begin some ski trg.

It hadn't snowed much in the time we had been out here, which was about 3 weeks, so the ski slope itself was pretty, much ice.

Thankfully, most of the guys' first taste of skiing with 'Pusser's planks' went relatively well, except (there's always one) poor wee **Cpl Taff Morris**, who on his first run, went down the slope, fell over and snapped his ankle in a few places.

A quick trip to the local hospital later. and now he's back in the UK with his feet up, thredders that he's not on his novice course. Having made it through the first 2 weeks, **Cpl Charlie Brown** has had to bow out with an ankle injury, and so will have to console himself with the fact that he will have to go through the whole process again in two years time, as next year we will be in Afghanistan.

Hopefully his ankle will be OK for his CLM, which starts at the end of March. The rest of us successfully completed the ice breaking drills on Saturday 4 Feb and, as I write, are now deploying into the field, for the final tactical week.

They will finish next Saturday with the Novice ski race, which will take place on the ski track just across from camp.

HELLO'S AND GOODBYE'S

This time round we say farewell to **Cpl Dave Allen** who leaves us for his Class One. All the best and hope to see you in the mess in the near future. Congratulations go to **Cpl Pee Perkins**, who was awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List for his work with the 11 EOD Regt, on Op TELIC.

SPORT

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB OFFSHORE SECTION

The race team have been enjoying a well-earned winter rest before *SKYWAVE* is put back in the water, and the 2006 season commences.

Meanwhile, the club has been taking advantage of the availability of Joint Service yachts that are kept in the water over winter, in order to undertake winter continuation trg.

This trg is aimed primarily at those personnel, who are already Day Skippers and Competent Crew, and who wish to prepare themselves for the next level of qualification.

There is no fixed programme that each of the weekends must follow; each weekend is tailored to suit the individuals who attend, and proves popular for practising close quarter drills.

There are two Sail Training Weeks during the year, which then provide the opportunity for personnel to undergo further continuation trg, qualify at the next level or try sailing, for the very first time. The next Sail Training Week will take place 3 – 7 April 06, as this issue of *The Wire* is distributed.

However, if you have a spare week on your hands and want to see if there are any last minute vacancies, contact **Maj Helen Bosley** on Mil Tel: 95381 7196, Mil Email: HLW-BOWTAT8-SO2TL, Civ Email: helen.bosley@tiscali.co.uk.

Alternatively put the 25 September – 1 October 06 in your diary now, as these are the dates of the autumn Sail Training Week.

Unfortunately, Sail Training Weeks and Continuation Weekends can only be made available to serving officers and soldiers for insurance reasons.

MERCURY CHALLENGE 2006-7

Mercury Challenge, the Royal Signals Round the World Sailing expedition is progressing well and a dedicated Project Office is now fully set up in the Rutherford Building, Blandford Camp.

Demand for a berth on Mercury Challenge is high, but there are still a few spaces available, so if you are interested in the challenge and experience of a lifetime then submit your application now!

The Challenge 67 fleet is currently being worked on to ensure they are fit for ocean going passages. The impact on Mercury Challenge is we are no longer entering the Tall Ships Race, and Leg 1 may now be from Gosport - Canaries and Leg 2 from Canaries – Rio de Janeiro. It is hoped that there will be no impact on the legs after Rio de Janeiro, but log onto the website for updates!

www.mercurychallenge.mod.uk

All the planning is going well and two main sponsors and numerous other generous sponsors have been confirmed and will be announced in the near future. If you have any questions on any aspect of Mercury Challenge, then contact **Capt Rachel Thompson** or **Sgt MJ Holt** in the Project Office on 94371 5453.

ROYAL SIGNALS SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2005

The 2005 Championships were held, yet again, with the kind permission of CO 2 Sig Regt at Fulford Barracks in York. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly with the Corps commitments, turnout was a little down on previous years, with some noticeable absentees, both individual and unit.

However, the competition still managed to provide the inevitable surprises, upsets and immensely tired competitors, with many competing in over 5 matches in one day.

After the usual introductions, and claims of not touching a racket for several months, the competition got underway. If the first game between **WO2 Mick Davies** and **SSgt Guman** was anything to go by, it was going to be a long competition.

WO2 Davies was obviously a bit of a slow starter, and ended up being 2-0 down before taking the third game 10-8 and then going on to win the match 3-2. With another 5 setter taking place on the second court between **Capt Mick Swift** and **Cpl James Russell** (**Swift** to finally win 3-2) it was to be an hour before anyone else got a touch of a ball.

However, the remainder of the opening rounds went in accordance with the seedings, apart from **Capt Swift** finally losing out to **Capt Paul Downey**, in yet another five setter, to decide the quarter final. Unfortunately for **Capt Downey**, his reward was a match against the Number 2 seed **WO1(Supvr R) Ian Piears** who proved too strong for **Capt Downey**. In the top half of the draw, **Maj Dean Richardson** was taking everything in his stride and made comfortable progression to the final. This time it was **Maj Richardson** who proved too strong for **WO1 Piears**, as he went on to take the Royal Signal Championships for his second time.

The plate competition was a hard fought event all the way to the final, with lots of close and very competitive games. The final was to be between the two losers of the first round 5 settters, **Cpl Russell** and **SSgt Guman**. This time **Cpl Russell** was to come out on top and took the match 3-2 (9/0, 9/4, 5/9, 7/9 and 9/3).

As with the main competition, the Over 35 went according to the seedings, with the final between **WO1 Piears** and **SSgt Dhir**. After already taking part in (and losing) the main competition final, **WO1 Piears** did not want **SSgt Dhir** to settle into a long rallying game, and quickly managed to take this final 3-0.

With a very strong team, 2 Sig Regt managed to capitalise on their home advantage, and yet again comfortably retained the team championships. JSSW (D) were runners up, also for the second year running; eventually proving too strong for both 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and 15 Sig Regt.

Despite the reduced numbers, the competition proved to be a success and allowed valuable court time and selection of the following Corps team, who were to compete in the Corps Championships the following week: (see the next issue of *The Wire*)

Maj Richardson (HQ 2 Med Bde)
Capt Bason (RSS Blandford)
Capt Swift (Blandford)
WO1(Supvr R) Piears (JSSW (D))
SSgt Dhir (2 Sig Regt)

SSgt Gallagher (2 Sig Regt)
Cpl Russell (39 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn)

The Royal Signals Championships for 2006 will be in November and will probably be held at Blandford.

If anyone wants further details on any squash matters and competitions then contact any of the above.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER 9 – ROYAL SIGNALS SNOWBOARDING

- by SSgt D Graham

The 7th Royal Signals snowboarding championships were held at the resort of Kaprun, Austria between 20 November – 3 December 05. This year, 65 people competed in the main and novice events.

As usual, the first week of the ex was dedicated to tuition, provide by Ripstar Snowboarding Europe. Ripstar has been trg us since 1998 and provides the best trg of any Corps within the Army. Managing director of Ripstar, Sjeord Rimmerick, a former World Cup FIS racer, says "working with the Royal Signals is a real pleasure and it is the one his instructors look forward to each year." An addition to the administration team from last year, was **SSgt Fisher** of 10 Sig Regt, who worked tirelessly to help the smooth running of the camp and to make sure all personnel on the slopes were in good spirits.

During trg and race week, we saw the emergence of some new riders, who have never attended a MERCURY GLACIER before. After last year's disappointment at the Army Championships, it was decided that all trg and race courses would be improved, and made harder. This was a popular decision and most people liked the extra challenge.

As the sport becomes more popular within the Royal Signals, the general standard improving, and this year was no exception, with the top 10 places in the main events, being separated by only a few seconds. During the week, there was the odd surprise and not all the top riders got their own ways all the time. The week's racing was rounded off by the main event, the dual slalom. Normally, this event has some very close racing and surprise results, with the top riders racing head to head with those lower down the rankings.

The CO HQNI and 15 Sig Regt kindly presented the prizes. Overall main event winners were:

1st – **Capt M Smith** (16 Sig Regt), 2nd – **LCpl Sturman** (7 Sig Regt) and **LCpl Bramell** (7 Sig Regt).

Novice winners were: 1st – **SSgt Alford** (20 Armd Bde), 2nd – **Capt Irwin** (10 Sig Regt) and 3rd – **LCpl Ford** (AFNORTH).

Female winners were 1st – **Sig Deeley** (14 Sig Regt), **LCpl Swift** (DCSA) and **Sig Turvey** (16 Sig Regt).

Veteran category winner was **Sgt Davies** (628 Sig Troop), showing that even being near pension age, does not stop you snowboarding to a great standard.

Overall team winners for 2005 were 7 Sig Regt, keeping the trophy for the second year running, followed closely by 16 Sig Regt.

Congratulations to the following individuals who were selected to represent the Corps competing in the Army Championships:

SSgt Graham (15 Sig Regt), **Sgt Davies** (628 Sig troop), **LCpl Bramell** (7 Sig Regt), **Sig Marshall** (7 Sig Regt), **Capt M Smith** (16 Sig Regt) and **Cpl Perry** (15 Sig Regt).

LCpl Brammel from 7 Sig Regt in action

With the popularity of the sport within the Royal Signals increasing year on year and the enthusiasm of the soldiers, the future of the sport is looking good.

EXERCISE SNOW JACK - DIVISIONAL AND ARMY SNOWBOARDING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Div and Army Snowboarding Championships were held at the resort of Stubai, Austria over the period, 3 – 21 December. This year over 150 people competed in the main and novice events.

With good results from the Royal Signals Championships, there was a high level of optimism, and hopes of better results at this year's Army competition. Disciplines for both competitions were Slalom, Dual Slalom, Giant Slalom, Slope Style and boardercross. The latter being a race against 4 other riders, over a 500m course of banked turns, jumps and rollers.

During the Div Championships, the competitors were split into 2 groups, UK and BFG Divs. The UK Div had 60 competitors and BFG Div had 35. Only Unit teams and individuals compete at Div level. Units from the Corps to compete were 30 Sig Regt, 15 Sig Regt, 213 Sig Sqn, 628 Sig Tp, 7 Sig Regt and 16 Sig Regt.

Due to constant poor weather during these championships, only the seed races, slalom and Dual slalom, were completed. Some selected results were **SSgt Graham** (15 Sig Regt) 5th overall in UK Div, **Capt M Smith** (16 Sig Regt) 3rd in BFG Div and **Sig Marshall** (7 Sig Regt) 6th in BFG Div. There were other commendable results from **LCpl Bramell** (7 Sig Regt) competing in his first season, finishing 8th in the BFG Div. Top team results were 7 Sig Regt finishing 3rd overall in the BFG Div and 15 Sig Regt finishing 5th overall in the UK Div.

The second week of the competition was the Army Championships. This competition merged all the competitors from both groups, minus those that did not qualify. Again the weather was poor, and visibility not perfect for racing. Because of this another 2 days were lost. In total around 1m of fresh snow fell within a 48hr period.

It was decided to race both the novice and senior races on the same day. This caused a bit of an administration problem, with not enough course setters, but never ones to shun responsibility, the Corps team helped out, and set the novice course. Not only was the course better than the senior one, it did give the Corps some good PR with the committee!

As the weather continued to be poor, it was decided to scrap the slope style event in favour of running the main boardercross race, (much to the disappointment of our resident freestyle gurus – **LCpl Bramell** and **Sig Dugmore**).

Other results by individuals were **Sig Marshall** (7 Sig Regt) finishing 14th in the Army GS, **Cpl Perry** (15 Sig Regt) 20th in the Army Dual slalom, **SSgt Graham** 7th in the Army GS and **Sgt Davies** 22nd in the Army GS. Because the weather was still poor, it was decided to only race the top 16 in the boardercross. This was a huge disappointment, as most of the Corps team had finished just outside the top 16. Only **SSgt Graham**, **Capt M Smith** and **LCpl Marshall** took part, only to be eliminated in the first round.

In the novice contest there were good results from **Sig Dugmore** (16 Sig Regt) finishing 3rd overall, and **LCpl Ford** (AFNORTH) in 4th. In the novice female event there were good results by **LCpl Swift** (DCSA) finishing a magnificent 1st place, **Sig Chaplow** (15 Sig Regt) 3rd and **LCpl Briggs** (15 Sig Regt) 4th. The emergence of these individuals proved that there is good strength in the Corps for future years.

Overall the Corps team finished 4th behind the AMS, REME and RA. This was not a bad achievement, as many of the other Corps teams have individuals who are regular Army standard riders. The future goal for the team will be to break into the top 3, and get 3 people into the Army team.

HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

Do you like to try new sports? Are you up for a challenge? Do you want to be part of the fastest growing Corps sport? If so we are looking for novices, intermediates and Units to take part in EX MERCURY GLACIER 10.

If you want to get involved, and find out more information on anything to do with Corps and Army snowboarding, OIC's and individuals can contact **SSgt Dom Graham** (15 Sig Regt) on 9491 63525 or **SSgt Andy Fisher** (10 Sig Regt) on 94382 5702.

Sig Marshall in the Div Dual Slalom

SPECIAL SECTION - ROYAL VISIT

FROM YOUR MUSEUM

- by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters, Museum Director

Curator	**Mrs Stella Ancell**
Attendant	**Ian Foulkes**
Archivist	**Tim Stankus**
Business Manager	**Adam Forty**

Your Museum continues to thrive and we were privileged on 9th March, to have our Colonel in Chief, **HRH The Princess Royal**, officially open Operation SECRET WAVES which is explained below.

The visit commenced with her meeting **Col(Retd) Cliff Walters** and all members of the Museum Staff.

Col(Retd) Colin Cunningham, Members of the Millennium Commission and the Dutch Contractors were met on the display

HRH The Princess Royal formaly opens Operation Secret Waves with Col (Retd) C Cunningham

Adam Forty explains Secret Waves

site. **Her Royal Highness** took the opportunity to test the new interactive exhibits.

HRH The Princess Royal is presented to the Millenium representatives Mrs J Donovan and Mr B Alexander

The Millenium Commision were represented by **Mrs Judith Donovan** and **Mr Bill Alexander**. The contractors were represented by **Mr Wilfred Van Brunschopt** and **Mr Steven Schacken**.

2005 was another good year for us, with increases in visitor numbers and a lot of progress made on care of our collection, much of which is not on show. A lot of this progress was made possible by our many volunteers, providing us with invaluable assistance, along with the employees of the museum shop.

Ian Faulkes introduces HRH The Princess Royal to staff shop employees Magie Kilbright, Ericka Hunt and Jayne Quinn

Lt Col(Retd) Pat Soward has worked tirelessly to ensure that his team of weekend volunteers have staffed the Museum every

weekend and bank holiday from February to November: This is a fine achievement. He has now passed this responsibility to **David Walker**, but we are very grateful for all the effort that he has put in over the past 15 years; what is more he and **Maureen** continue to be weekend volunteers themselves.

We are also grateful to our happy band of weekday volunteers: **Ken Hadfield**, **Mike Butler**, **Tom Ditch**, **Jim Lewington**, **Martin Skipworth** and **Robin Painter**. If you would like to join us don't hesitate: your Museum needs you! Finally, I would like to thank the Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training (SATT) who have been assigned by 11 Sig Regt to assist in the Museum on a daily basis. They have assisted in a wide range of tasks, not least of which is the project to digitize our records, index lists, accession registers and library.

In total this has been in the order of 15,000 entries and it has brought us into the digital era. Moreover, it underlines the abilities of our new recruits. In this respect I would also like to thank **WO2(FofS) Andy Soward** for his software support.

We now look forward to the new tourist season with great enthusiasm as Operation SECRET WAVES is activated.

DEPUTY EDITOR MEETS HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL

My memories of meeting our Colonel in Chief, **HRH**, **The Princess Royal**.

Earlier this year I was asked if I did or did not wish to meet **The Princess Royal**. This was not a tough decision, the answer was yes. I would be amongst the eight groups of HQ SOinC(A) staff, who were allocated time to be presented to **The Princess Royal**.

The day before the visit, we had a dress rehearsal, and were instructed in the correct etiquette and protocol. We rehearsed our responses, a bow or curtsy for ladies, whichever was comfortable, and a bow for the gentlemen. Next was a polite hand shake, followed by "Your Royal Highness". After that, our response was to be short and succinct and completed with "ma'am". I was in such confusion, as I was ready to perform my curtsy, but now I was allowed to bow, that did throw me off my stride. Some of the ladies did decide that it felt right and comfortable to curtsy. Now we had the tools and were prepared for the big day.

The day dawned and I had nerves from the start. The first decision was what to wear - most women's dilemma. Once the outfit was decided upon, next came make up, hair and clean teeth. All this before I even got to work.

When I got to work I found comfort in the knowledge that I was not the only one with nerves. I then had to dodge the rain from my office to the Officers' Mess, to be ready in my position for the presentation; this was made achievable by accosting *The Wire* Editor, who very kindly provided transport to the Officers' Mess. We all gathered and waited patiently for the light lunch, which was to be provided for us.

The light lunch helped stop the audible stomach grumbles and embarrassment. Then the band piped up and we knew that **The Princess Royal** was soon to approach.

The Princess Royal was very pleasant and extremely knowledgeable of T*he Wire* and how it works. I was completely awe struck and in complete admiration of the vast area of knowledge that she retained about *The Wire* and its workings. She then moved on to the remainder in the group. I thought that my nerves could settle down now, as **The Princess Royal** talked to the group as a whole and then I heard "*The Wire*" and my heart moved from its normal resting place to my face, and I found myself involved in a selective conversation with connections to other members of our group.

The Princess Royal had ascertained that they do in fact work together in particular ways. She certainly kept me on my toes.

Op TELIC Medal presentations, Maj Manikumar Rai RGR, Cpl Neil Heritage and LCpl Aron Young

The Princess Royal and myself deep in conversation

Cliff Walters Greets The Princess Royal at the museum

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM - OPERATION SECRET WAVES

Inside Operation Secret Waves

- by Col (Retd) Cliff Walters, Museum Director

The Museum has recently commissioned a new and exciting facility. Operation SECRET WAVES is a state of the art, interactive, computer based, series of displays in the Museum. It was formally opened by HRH Princess Royal on 9th March 2006.

The total project cost was £240K, of which £180K was funded by the Millennium Commission, from a fund specifically for science related projects: the remainder was from Corps and Museum funds.

The Contractors for the project were Northern Light Codesign Ltd of Amsterdam. The Project Leader was **Col(Retd) Colin Cunningham** and **Adam Forty** was the Project Manager.

The aim of the project is to enhance the educational and entertainment content of the Museum, in a manner that befits a Corps of the modern Army. The target age group concentrates on the build up to GCSE from 11 years onwards. It has particular educational value to schools, colleges, ACF, CCF and families, but has interest value to everyone from age 10 upwards.

The display is about 15m by 4m and looks like the inside of a military vehicle. Within the vehicle, there are 9 interactive elements, which together explain the history of the technological development of military comms and the association with civilian comms. This is achieved by using discreet bands of the electromagnetic spectrum at each of the elements.

The display starts in the front of the vehicle, with a video introduction and a virtual drive. This introduces the visitor to the subject matter, which is explained in detail in the eight computer based, interactive elements in the rear of the vehicle, which we have called Command Posts (CPs). Seven of the CPs explain Early Visual Signalling, Telegraphy, Telephony, HF radio, VHF radio, Satellite communications and Fibre Optics.

The Project Team posing before the grand opening by HRH The Princess Royal

CP8 ties the whole experience together and gives live internet access to appropriate sites. There is a considerable amount of supporting material in the form of handbooks, display boards and manuals.

This is an innovative and exciting project which is the largest single advancement since the Museum was opened by our Colonel in Chief on 9 July 1995.

It has injected new life into the Museum and has offered the opportunity to broaden our appeal considerably.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Maj Gen AH Boyle CB

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RHQ Royal Signals
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Membership Secretary
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e-mail: rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk

General Secretary and Treasurer:--
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 **John Ackerley** has succeeded **Bruce Graham** as Hon Secretary of the Harrogate Branch. **John** can be contacted on 01423-520317. Our thanks go to **Bruce** for his sterling work over the past years. **Doug Piper** is the new Secretary of the Torbay Branch and can be contacted at; "Berachah", Langford Rd, Honiton, Devon EX14 1QA. Our thanks go to **Bob Thompson** as he stands down as Chairman and Secretary.

I was privileged to be invited to the Northern Ireland Branch 50th anniversary dinner at 40 Sig Regt (V) on 3rd March. During the proceedings, the Master of Signals presented the branch with its new standard, for which **Maj Noel Johnston** (Branch President) had generously paid the branch's half of the total cost from his own pocket. **Noel** and **WO2 Ian Wolfe** (Secretary) were presented with well deserved Honour Membership of the Royal Signals Association by the Master.

Lost contact photo gallery The RSA "Lost contact" web page, by which members may seek the whereabouts of former friends in the Corps, must by now be a familiar service to our members. It is now proposed to add a little bit extra to this service.

Most members must have old photographs of them and their pals during their time in the Corps and wonder what happened to the persons in the shot. RSA Members are invited to send their photo by e-mail to Assn HQ at; rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk along with any relevant details, such as the location and date of the shot etc. Photos should not be sent by post as we cannot guarantee safe return. Also required is the reply contact that you would prefer (e.g. e-mail or tel no). If you haven't got Internet facilities (or a scanner) why not ask your local RSA branch, your local library or Internet café. Initially we would allow one photo per person per month until we see how the service pans out.

Reunion The annual reunion will be held at Blandford over the weekend 1 & 2 July 2006. Full details are on our website; www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa If you haven't got Internet facilities and wish to attend, contact Assn HQ for a copy of the instructions (which includes application for vehicle passes and meals).

New Life Members A warm welcome is extended to the following new Life Members:

Rank/Name	Service	Branch/assn/Unit
Sig Gary Crawford	1998-02	
WO2 Michael Walton	1983-01	
Musn Norman Twigg	1972-74	
LCpl Steven Garratt	1977-88	
LCpl Jim White	1961-68	Rotherham Branch
Sig Keith Taylor	1996-00	
Lt Brian Bennett	1955-57	
Capt John Dove	1942-60	
Sig Stephanie Barron	2005-date	Eastbourne Branch
WO1 Peter Woodward	1971-96	
Cpl Linda Richardson	1983-05	Aberdeen Branch
Maj Morna Strachan	1973-date	Aberdeen Branch
SSgt John Telford	1961-83	
LCpl Denny Paterson	1986-96	
Sgt Kevin Roberts	1979-03	
Cpl Matt Crawford	1994-date	Bedford
Sig Eric Rainbird	1942-47	Bedford
SSgt Steve Gill	1982-06	
LCpl Jodie Barker(Wilmot)	1996-06	
Cpl Paul Robinson	1984-06	
Cpl Stuart Mead	1991-date	1 (UK) ADSR
Sgt John Blackman	1964-89	
Sig Sam Smith	1943-47	
SSgt Adam Harvey	1988-date	59 Sig Sqn(V)
Sig Jack Church	1945-48	
WO1 Tony Cartwright	1962-02	
LCpl Gavin Rigg	1988-95	
Sgt Bryan Fraser	1957-68	
LCpl Brian Robinson	1957-60	Southport
Capt Claire Cassidy	2000-06	7 Sig Regt
Sgt Paul Webster	1988-01	
SSgt John Pickett	1984-date	East London/36Sig Regt
Pte Frances Turnbull	1963-66	Carlisle
WO2 Steven Griffiths	1982-05	
Capt Tony Manktelow	1982-06	
Capt Daz Newton	1981-06	
Brig Gordon Hughes	1966-06	
Sgt Chris Gibbins	1978-02	
Sig Charlotte Pedley	2004-06	
Maj Anthony Woolaston	1977-06	
Col Ian Thomson	1970-99	Southport
Lt Helen Voce	2000-date	
SheffieldSSgt Adrian Garner	1978-03	
WO2 George Farrar	1979-02	
Sig John Higgins	1957-59	Dorset
Cpl Allen Ellis	1959-61	
Sig Jeff(Spider) Whatley	1966-71	
Sgt Dino Farrell	1973-93	
LCpl Roger Livesey	1999-05	
Cpl Arthur Horton	1939-46	
LCpl Simon Johns	1994-02	
LCpl Sharon Johns	1994-02	
Cpl James Wainwright	1978-02	
Sgt Steven Bennett	1988-97	
Sgt Paul Knight	1983-date	11 Sig Regt
Sgt Michael J Smith	1986-date	11 Sig Regt
Sgt Dave Rowan	1959-68	Newark
Cpl Allan Deeming	1970-92	
WO1 Joe Fairbairn MBE	1970-06	Aldershot
Sig Derrick McDonald	1958-60	
SSgt Paul Gorman	1978-02	
Cpl Anthony Bracken	1977-87	
Lt Col Paul Glibbery	1982-06	
Capt Gary Johnson	1977-06	
Capt Chris Holland	1993-06	
WO2 Gary Steel	1982-06	34 Sig Regt(V)
Col Paul Vingoe	1985-06	
Cpl Tony Swift	1979-94	
Lt Col Nick Borrill	1981-06	
SSgt Kevin John-Allen	1984-06	
Sig Reg Sheppard	1945-46	East Kent
Sig Arthur Fray	1947-49	Air Fmn Sig Regt Assn
Sgt Hugh McLean	1978-02	Glasgow
Capt Paul Lewis	1982-06	238 Sig Sqn
LCpl Dave Lambert	1975-89	
Cpl Spencer Willson	1982-89	
LCpl Paul Hadfield	1992-02	
Sgt Gordon Paterson	1971-93	
SSgt John Jackson	1966-99	
Cpl David Smith	1967-92	
Sgt Ian McKnight	1986-04	
Cpl John Trotter	1951-58	
Sig Alan Hughes	1950-52	
Sig Ben Stroud	2001-06	
Sgt Bob Garlick	1984-06	
SSgt J Bledman-Alleyne	1979-99	
Cpl Les Beagen	1940-46	Eastbourne
Cpl Dave Scurrah	1996-01	
Sgt Michael Davies-Morris	1982-06	
Cpl Ian Garner	1999-date	1 Bn MI

DONATIONS

Mr R Waldron	£10.00
Mr G V Thomas	£10.00
Southampton Branch RSA	£40.00
Robert Waldron	£12.42
Certa Cito Lodge	£20.00
Ken Wills	£20.00
Collection in memory of Hywel Thomas taken at the Ansbacher Carol Service	£387.44
Donations in memory of Mr Ivan Hoath	£735.00
Jack Wilderspin in memory of Col Bill Renton	£20.00
Huddersfield Branch RSA	£100.00
Tayside & Fife Branch RSA	£28.00
Lincoln Branch RSA	£50.00
Exmouth Branch RSA	£100.00
John Auger	£250.00

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary: **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

The Branch Annual General Meeting was held on 8 January, at our favourite watering hole for these occasions, and the Marine Hotel in Tankerton once more did us proud when 62 Members arrived. The formal business having been completed, and **Mr Alan Austin** having been elected, to swell the ranks of the Committee, we enjoyed an interesting talk by **Mr Peter Cuckow**, the Association Membership Secretary, who had somehow found time, together with his wife **Sheila**, to be our guest. The usual delicious lunch followed, after which **Mrs Marion de Rose** held her raffle, which netted a profit for the Branch Funds of £128.00 which will eventually go towards the sums given to our charities of choice.

Various Members suffered from a selection of ailments, which then called for the visitations by the Welfare Member to **Mrs Clare Sunnocks**, **Mrs Marjorie Riggs**, **Mrs Jean Rider** and **Mr Gordon Alexander**. They were not healed, but were left a little happier.

A goodly number of Members are due to attend a performance of Cinderella on Ice, at the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury, later this month. As this will be later than the date for submissions to *The Wire*, there will be more of that event in our next notes.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman **Audrey Grainge**
Secretary **Dick Grainge**

The branch continues with a busy activity programme. The annual Christmas dinner and AGM was well attended, and a great success. This year's venue was Brambles Farm TA Centre and was enjoyed by all. We have also had a number of bus trips, with the members enjoying days out, including a beautiful day at the Forbidden Gardens in Leyburn. Our standard bearer, **Mr Mick Little**, has been very busy parading the standard at the VE Celebrations at Eden Camp and at the memorial service for **Mo Mowlam,** the late MP for Redcar and Cleveland.

Mr John Grainge, a very active member of the Branch, was honoured with his 50 year certificate, at the monthly meeting held at Brambles Farm TA Centre on 26 January 06.
The award was presented by the RSM, **WO1 Paul McGarry** on behalf of the RSA. John joined the Royal Navy in 1943 and then transferred into the Royal Signals and served with 16 Independent Para Bde in Germany as a Wireless Sgt.

He also saw service in Malta, Suez and Cyprus before being demobbed in 1956. He followed this with 5 years service with the TA and has been a member of the RSA ever since.

A member of the branch was honoured with a nomination in the Queens Birthday Honours List. **Maj (Retd) Mary Nicholson MBE** was presented with her medal by Prince Charles on Thursday 8 Dec 05, for her dedicated service to Cleveland Army Cadet Force.

This was a very special day for Mary, and we are very proud of her achievements and are honoured to have her as a member of our branch.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Hon Sec **WO2 (YofS) I Wolfe**

Once again we start our article on a sad note. **Mrs Rebecca Atkins**, wife of our long standing Member **Norman** (known as Tommy) **Atkins BEM**, passed away after a long illness. The Branch Officers and Members offer their heartfelt sympathy to **Norman**.

At our January meeting, we had a most unusual and interesting talk by **Mr Graham Evans**, assisted by **Richie Gillam**, of the "Irish Great War Society". The subject was "The Uniforms and Kit of World War 2".

Mr Evans brought with him a vast collection of items of every description relating to WW2, and dressed up both himself and **Richie** to good effect, bringing it home to all present the hardships those men, particularly in the frontline, had to bear.

Mr Evans has obviously spent a long time researching his subject, and indeed in managing to collect such an array of items. I know that should anyone reading this in Northern Ireland like to have such a talk, **Mr Evans** would be glad to hear from them and our Hon Sec **Ian Wolfe** will pass on any request.

Today's date is 12 February, and by the time you read this it will be April so our 50th Anniversary Dinner on Friday 3rd March, will be well and truly over and we will all be sighing with relief. At the moment, however we simply hope we have all the essentials covered and that there are no last minute hitches.

Our main concern is that our important cross-channel guests are well looked after, from arriving at the Airport, to their overnight accommodation and until leaving again for home. Our tickets are selling quite well as are our ballots. We are most grateful to those cross-channel Branches who have sold ballots for us.

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.

NEWARK BRANCH

Chairman **Mr FC Dixon**
Secretary **Mr FC Dixon**

The Newark Branch holds its meetings in the local RAFA club. Several other groups also hold their meetings there and their regimental plaques are all displayed in the clubroom. We decided that it would be appropriate that our plaque should be amongst them.

Pictured is our President, Maj (Retd) Ray Vasper, presenting our insignia shield to Mr J Cooper, Chairman of the RFA Association Branch Newark.

SHEFFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Moss Elliott**
Secretary **Ron Simmons**

2006 began with a presentation to **Walter Whiteley** of a framed citation, signed by the National Chairman of the British Legion, for his meritorious service. The Branch Vice President **Col Ken Taylor** made the presentation.

The area chairman of the British Legion, **Mick Haywood**, also presented him with a poppy badge, which I am sure he will wear with pride. **Walter** is always top of the list for collecting the most money for the poppy day appeal. Walter spends two weeks collecting at the Meadowhall shopping Mall in Sheffield, and his dedication to the task is admired by all. If you go there in November take plenty of change you won't get past our **Walter**.

We still have the same team operating in Sheffield. **Moss Elliott** is still Chairman, although he goes travelling with his camper van to Spain each winter. Vice Chairman, **Bill Verity,** ably covers his absence.

The next event will be our annual dinner in June, and our Honorary Quartermaster, **Joe Hodgson,** will be overseeing the details. Hopefully this year, it will be as successful as usual.

We are ever grateful to Newcastle Branch for allowing Sheffield and Rotherham to share their coach to Blandford; this arrangement is mutually beneficial to all concerned, as transport costs are always the main problem. The northern area branches, namely: York, Darlington and Newcastle have shown great initiative in organising their own reunions for Area 1 branches, which have been much appreciated by those members, who find attendance at the Blandford weekend too much of a strain.

In August, Sheffield and Rotherham provide the stewards for the Bakewell Show in Derbyshire. This is an arduous duty, but is carried through with the usual cheerfulness that Corps members are famous for. '**Begone Dull Care**!' This 2 day event starts at seven in the morning, and does not close 'till six, a long day for most of our members, especially those who need wheelchairs. Our deputy for this event is **Cec' Williams** who has to liaise with the show committee.

If any RSA members attend this excellent show, we can be found at our campsite and feeding station, by the river. The weather for this event seems to lurch from torrential rain to blazing sun, or foot rot to sunstroke.

In September, we make our annual trip to London to see a show and visit our friends at Uxbridge Naval Club. On the Sunday morning we attend the Governor's Parade at the Royal Hospital Chelsea where it is always good to renew our continuing friendship with the In Pensioners and members of the West London Branch.

Finally, we are ever grateful to 38 Sig Regt for their support, in allowing the Branch to use their premises at Manor Top. This relationship now goes back nearly forty years.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr D Anderson**
Secretary **Mr S Bland**

On Saturday 12 November 2005, a party from the branch, attended the Lord Mayor's Show in London, and the weather was

kind to us. It was nice to see the parade from such a good vantage point and the floats were of a very high standard.

After the parade, we went to "The City Pipe" and were royally entertained with a lovely lunch, where the "Freemen" made us most welcome.

The branch Christmas Dinner was held at the Croydon Bowling Club, on Thursday 8th December 2005. We had 43 diners for the occasion, which is our highest number since our formation. This was excellent, as the meal was superb and everyone really enjoyed themselves. Some dancing, which everyone joined in, completed the evening, and our thanks went to the Bowling Club for their hospitality.

George Weller, Mary Cadd, Chairman Doug Anderson, Maureen Anderson and Branch Secretary, Steve Bland

TORBAY BRANCH

Chairman **Dougie Tait**
Secretary **Doug Piper**

It is with sad regret we report the sad loss of one of our long serving members, **Mr WR (Dick) King**. **Dick** served from 1939 – 1966 and will be sorely missed by his surviving family and his fellow Branch Members.

After the festive season it is time at the branch for the AGM. This year, at long last, after much screaming and shouting, **Mr Bob Thompson** finally handed the reigns of the chairmanship to **Dougie Tait** (still the youngest member). Our sincere thanks go to all the outgoing committee for their dedication and support to the branch.

There are also a few other notable appointments:

President **Mr Ken Lakeman**
Vice President **Mr Bob Thompson**
Entertainment **Mr Alan Martin-Brown**

The branch now looks forward to the spring and summer when hopefully we will have a few outings, including the reunion weekend in July, which will be once again the highlight of the calendar.

The branch meet at the St Marychurch Conservative Club, Manor Road, St Marychurch, Torquay on the first Wednesday of the month at 2000hrs, all newcomers welcome. Contact **Doug Tait** on 07795425285.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Mr R Miller**
Secretary **Mrs J Knight**

The Branch came to life in the usual fashion with the great Christmas Party, epitomised by the three stalwarts, **Henry Holman**, **John Stephenson** and **Dusty Miller** parading before the 'Christmas Tree', in seasonal headgear.

Henry Holman, John Stephenson and Dusty Miller

Our Ladies Section provided us with a scrumptious Christmas buffet, served in the interval of the Christmas Draw.

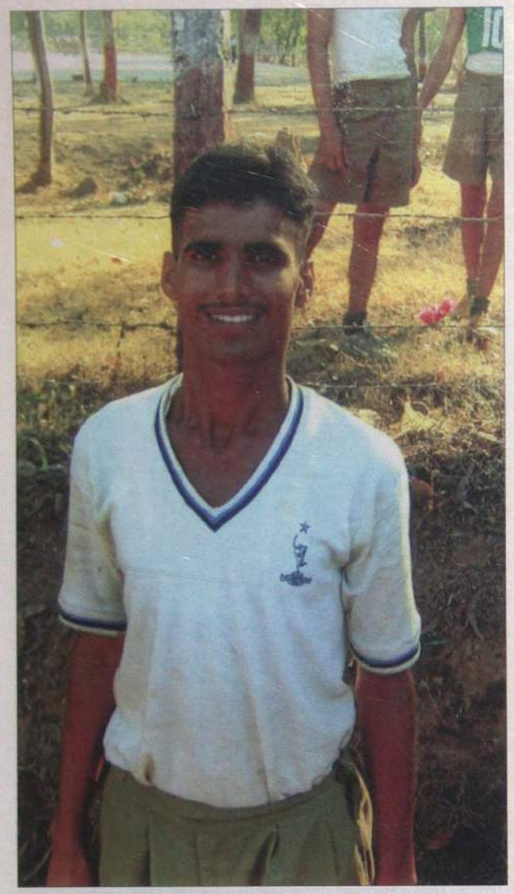
This has become the custom, as since the inception of the draw some years ago, our members have given so freely, as to require a break for refreshment before exhaustion sets in. This year, **Di** and **Ed Murphy** organised the draw and **Henry Holman,** the 'Christmas Tree', from which **Mrs Joyce Bullock** won the star prize. Throughout the evening, more than a hundred prizes were distributed.

We appreciate the hard work of our Chairman, **Ron (Dusty) Miller** of the Celtic Fringe, the Committee, the Ladies Section and many of our Members, all of whom contributed to a very successful evening.

BEVERLY EX BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

Whilst on holiday in Goa, India, we were travelling back from a visit to a waterfall, when we passed a military establishment and I saw young recruits with a "Jimmy" on their singlets. I made the taxi driver stop so that I could take a photograph of a young



recruit. He stood so proudly to attention for me. He belonged apparently to 3 Trg Regt, Indian Signals, near the city of Margao.

After 2 weeks in South Goa, we moved up to the capital, Panjim. On our journey we passed another building displaying "Jimmies". I found out that this was 2 Sig Trg Regt, and decided to pay them a visit.

We were taken into a secretary's office, and explained the reason for our visit. When the Adjt heard that I was an ex-boy, he called us in immediately.

We were given tea and had a long chat with him. He explained that they have a "Raising Day" on 15 February every year and every unit celebrates this. He said the CO would like to meet us and we were taken upstairs, where we were greeted, very cordially, by **Brig K A Cariappa** and treated with the utmost courtesy.

The first thing that the Brig said to me was that he would like to confiscate my straw hat, which has the Corps colours and the RSA badge.

He went on to explain that they have 4,562 recruits in trg. The recruits used to be taken in at sixteen and a half, but the age has been raised to seventeen and a half, due to an international ruling.

The Army is very important in India because of all their borders and they often have to deal with areas of unrest. The Army has over a million soldiers.

Brig Cariappa presents Indian Signals Corps tie to Tony Hull

Brig Cariappa very kindly presented me with their Corps tie and also a copy of The Signalman, their magazine which is equivalent to *The Wire*.

MALTA/LYBYA ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mr R Andrews**
Secretary **Mrs P Andrews**

Were you in any of the following?

3 GHQ Egypt or 1 Inf Div Sig Regt Libya

234 Sqn or 235 Sqn Malta or Malta Sig Sqn

Tripoli Sig Sqn or 219 Sig Sqn Tripoli

25 Armd Bde Sig Troop Tripolitania or 245 Cyrenaica Sig Sqn

Benini or any units in Libya. Regular or National Service.

Partners welcome to come and join us for our 13th reunion in Daventry, Northants 1/2 September 2006.

Contact Roy Andrews 01227 264551

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

JAMES POTTON

I am looking for a picture of **James Potton**. He was an only child and enlisted on his 18th birthday, 7/4/1936. He completed his training at Catterick Camp, and was posted to Hong Kong between 6/9/1937 and 23/9/1940. He married **Josephine Maher** (a Portuguese girl) in Shanghai on 2/7/1940.

He was posted to Singapore 24/9/1940 and then posted missing on15/2/1942. He was a prisoner of war in No2 Camp, Thailand.

He was then reported missing at sea, in autumn 1944 when a Japanese ship, conveying prisoners from Thailand to Japan sank on 21/09/1944. He was then recorded as killed in action at sea.

If anyone remembers him, or has a photograph of him, **Mrs Olga Bright** would be very grateful for any information. She can be contacted on 016977-2373.

MAJOR CHARLES LEWIS AND MAJOR WATSON

Alexander Barnes is seeking the whereabouts of **Maj Charles Lewis** and **Maj Watson,** Royal Signals from NATO Op Teamwork/Bonded item in Norway 1976.

Please contact **Alexander** at Alexander.barnes@us.army.mil if you can help.

LOCATING OLD COLLEAGUES WO2(SSM) ANDY FULLWOOD

Recently logged onto the Royal Signals web site for old times sake. What a very enjoyable couple of hours I had!! One link I read with interest was that of locating old colleagues.

I would be very grateful if you could assist me to locate the following old colleagues.
I left the Corps in 1997 from 16 Signal Regiment in Rheindhalen Germany.

The persons I would like to contact are:

Major Colin Whitaker - OC 1 Sqn,1 Div Sig Regt 1992 – 1993.
SSgt Les Allen 259 Sig Sqn, Cyprus,1987 – 1989.
W02 (FofS) N Baugh 8 Sig Regt, Catterick 1984 – 1985.
Capt (ToT) Frank Running 259 Sig Sqn, Cyprus, 1987 – 1989.
WOI (RSM) Carl ClarkDarby - RSM, 1 Div Sig Regt, 1992.
WO1 (RSM) Steve Toms - RSM, 16 Sig Regt July 1993 – 1996.
WO1 (RSM) Dickie Bird - ex W02, 16 Sig Regt 1995 – 1996.
Sgt Marian Zarr - 16 Sig Regt 1993 – 1995.

Your assistance is appreciated.
Contact:

Mr Andy Fullwood
16 Hill Hay Close
Fowey. Cornwall
PL23 1 EN

Home: 01726 832164
Mobile: 07900 162522
e mail: Andy. Fullwood@Fluor.com

SEARCH FOR 1940's ATS POSTER GIRL - MARY CATHRINE ROBERTS

We have been asked to help a former member of the Corps find out more about a member of the ATS, who was featured on an ATS Poster in the 1940's.

He has found correspondence from her in his family papers and has seen a copy of the poster in the Imperial War Museum. He is keen to know whether anyone else remembers **Mary Cathrine Roberts** and knows where she is now.

Please send any information you have via **Peter Cuckow**, RSA Admin Offr, Blandford Camp, Dorset, DT11 8RH.

CORRESPONDENCE

VIRGIN VILLAS

Edward Toole is looking for anyone who can provide him with a photo of Virgin Villas, which was the Sgts Accommodation block at Catterick 1955-57. Call Ed on 0161 485 6326 if you can help.

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

Maj (Retd) Mike Ham

He was a fine RSM of 4 Div Sig Regt in Herford, between 1958 – 1962. Not only did he excel in his Regimental duties, but he also ran a most happy and successful Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess, which was the envy of all around, before he went on to even greater things.

Mike is not too well at the moment, and as a privileged member of that Regiment and its Mess during those well remembered times.
I would like, on behalf of all those other ex-Mess Members of that period., to wish him well and send our best wishes to **Ruth**, his wife, during these difficult times.

Donald Crisp Ex-Romeo Troop

FAREWELL BALADO BRIDGE

- by Capt CP Gill

"So just where is Balado Bridge?" has been a familiar cry cross the Corps. But worry not, for after 28 February 2006, you need no longer ponder on one of the great mysteries of our time. On that day, the keys to the site of the Corps's only permanent Satellite Ground Terminal (SGT) in the UK will be handed over to Defence Estates, and it will cease to exist.

That apparently unremarkable event will bring to an end an association, which dates back more than 20 years, between the Royal Signals and a small, friendly Scottish community. Perhaps more poignant, however, is that it will bring to an end an association between that local community and the military, that extends back to the 1930s. At that time, the Government built RAF Kinross, which was also known as RAF Balado, to prevent confusion with RAF Kinloss on the Moray coast.

It was an outstation from Grangemouth, as part of 81 Group and provided an Operational Training Unit, 58 OTU, which was later rechristened as 2 Tactical Exercise Unit, on 17 October 1943. 58 OTU was responsible for training fighter pilots to fly Hurricanes and Spitfires, and most of the Polish pilots who flew in defence of the UK during the Second World War, were trained there.

Indeed to this day, we have had a number of sightings of a ghost, said to be that of a Polish Wing Commander, whose aircraft crashed returning from a training mission during the war. Immediately after the war, RAF Balado turned its attentions to scrapping Fleet Air Arm aircraft and this continued until 1952.

The station remained open until 1957, acting as a base for light aircraft and gliders. During the war there was also a POW camp nearby, to house Italian and German submariners. That location

is now a motorway service station. After the war, the area was retained by the RAF and a heavy HF Tx/Rx station was established, as part of Strike Command's early Cold War comms systems. That system was then replaced by ACE High, which is now long defunct.

Many of the masts remained in situ, until the building of the NATO Satellite Ground Terminal F17 began in 1981. As the radome was built around the 14m dish, the local community were not particularly happy at the appearance of the "Golf Ball", but as its demise grows closer, many are already mourning the loss of what has become, without doubt, a real landmark. The construction work took more than 3 years to complete, and then a period of intensive testing saw the station become operational in 1985.

It was opened formally by HRH Princess Anne on 26 April 1985. In addition to the main site, there was also a Line of Sight relay at Cullaloe Hill, near Cowdenbeath, linking F17 to the Joint Maritime Coordination Centre (JMCC) at Pitreavie, near Dunfermline. The JMCC closed in 1996, which meant the closure of Cullaloe Hill, and the site was handed back to the Forestry Commission in late 2002.

Over the last 21 years, Balado Bridge has formed part of a large network of NATO SGTs, all of which supported static NATO HQs and maritime units. At its peak the network consisted of 21 SGTs spread across the NATO area from Canada and the USA to Iceland, Italy, Turkey and all across central Europe. UK had 3 NATO SGTs; one in Gibraltar, manned by the Royal Navy which closed in Feb 2004 and the other is still in use at Oakhanger, manned by the RAF.

Not all NATO SGTs were designed for maritime support, but F17 was one of them, and when fully tasked was capable of supporting 6 inter-static links (each bulk encrypted) and 3 maritime links. In more recent years, the RF network has been overlaid by a baseband network using MAXIMA bandwidth management equipment (BME).

NATO SGT F17 was re-tasked in April 2004 and we left the main network, in order to support ISAF in Afghanistan. That involved acquiring an American DSCS satellite, further to the east, and we changed satellite again in April 2005, when we moved over to SKYNET 4E. We continued supporting ISAF until 08 December 2005, when F13 in Turkey took over our role and we were ordered to close down. Since that date, the antenna has been placed in the stow position and the site has been stripped of all equipment and stores, for return to its owners.

The last act to be performed was the handover of the keys, witnessed by **Brig Bakke** (Norwegian Army), the Commander of NCSA Sector Northwood, our HQ over the last 21 years.

Many who have had some knowledge of Balado Bridge over the years, might have called it "Sleepy Hollow", but I prefer to think of it as a "Quality of Life" posting! Sadly, too many enjoyed it too much and didn't feel they could make the transition back to the "real" Army.

However what Balado Bridge has bred over its life, is a strong sense of belonging and affection. That was witnessed by the reunion party we held in September 2005, when a number of former unit members returned for one last look at the place. Some of those guys and gals were there right at the beginning of its life in 1985 and clearly still hold the place dear to their hearts. The longest serving member of staff, quite incredibly, is still there and will be leaving with me on 28 February.

Jean McKay-Salt was employed by Ford Aerospace, as they built the station in the early 1980s, and then in 1984, as the unit was handed over to the MoD, she became a civil servant and has been the unit cleaner ever since.

Jean witnessed equipment being brought in and installed, and she has recently witnessed my wrecking crew (**SSgt Mark Robinson** and **Sgt Taff Meaden**) and me ripping it all out again.

Also there at the death will be **Mrs Margaret Glancey** and **Mr John (Ian) Mathieson**, both of whom have also given long service to F17. So, if you ever wondered where Balado Bridge was, and were never quite sure, it doesn't really matter anymore. But if you are still interested to know, look up "*T in the Park*" on the web. We all enjoyed our free tickets over the past few years!

Otherwise if you are ever heading up or down the M90 between Edinburgh and Perth, leave at Jct 6 and head west for one mile. If by then the Golf Ball has disappeared, wind your window down and when you can smell the chicken farm you're there!

REUNIONS

HARROGATE APPRENTICES 56A AND 56B INTAKES

I am trying to organize a 50th Anniversary Reunion of all members of 56A and 56B intakes to coincide with the annual AOHA Reunion at Harrogate in October. This would take place at a suitable venue in Harrogate during the afternoon and evening of 7th October 2006, including a dinner.

If you are interested please contact **Lee Manley** on 01392 251620

LAST POST

Abberley - WO2 TA Abberley *Served* 1952/74 *Died* 28/12/05
Ayres - Sig AR Ayres *Served* 1943/46 *Died* 26/01/06
Bartlett - Lt Col D Bartlett *Served* 1962/94 *Died* 04/01/06
Burgess - Lt Col CD Burgess CB MBE *Served* 1951/70 *Died* ??/10/05
Burrows Col AT Burrows *Served* 1939/69 *Died* 03/01/06
Cooper - ? JH Cooper *Served* 1943/46 *Died* ??/06/05
Godfrey - WO1 BT Godfrey *Served* 1947/71 *Died* 31/12/05
Grant - Sig SM Grant *Served* ????/?? *Died* 10/01/06
Griffuths - Cpl RC Griffiths *Served* 1946/53 *Died* 03/02/06
Halnan - Capt K Halnan *Served* 1940/46 *Died* 06/02/06
Hancock - Maj Gen MS Hancock *Served* 1937/72 *Died* 16/02/06
Hodder - Cpl JW Hodder *Served* 1945/49 *Died* 15/12/05
Hounsell Cpl SG Hounsell *Served* 1940/46 *Died* 25/12/05
James - Capt WH James *Served* 1939/46 *Died* 10/01/06
Marriner - Sig RA Marriner *Served* 1951/53 *Died* 18/12/05
McKinnon - Sig J McKinnon *Served* 1942/46 *Died* 11/02/06
Oke - Sig WA Oke *Served* 1942/47 *Died* 12/08/05
O'Neil - Lt Col WH O'Neil *Served* 1941/?? *Died* 05/12/05
Piller - SSgt R Piller *Served* 1963/85 *Died* 12/01/06
Reaney - Cpl JJ Reaney *Served* 1944/48 *Died* 31/01/06
Richards - Lt Col AW Richards *Served* 1941/71 *Died* 02/02/06
Stamper - WO2 JM Stamper *Served* 1944/47 *Died* 24/08/05
Stanley - Maj DW Stanley *Served* 1942/83 *Died* 03/02/06
Stuart - Dvr D Stuart *Served* 1959/60 *Died* 20/01/06
Wellman - Lcpl DE Wellman *Served* 1945/48 *Died* 31/12/05
West - Cpl RO West *Served* 1961/72 *Died* 03/02/06
Williams - WO1 CH Williams *Served* 1948/83 *Died* 20/12/05

OBITUARIES

HANCOCK – Maj Gen Michael Hancock CB MBE

Michael Hancock was born in 1917 and educated at Marlborough College and the RMA Woolwich, where he won the Agar Memorial Prize. He was commissioned into the Corps in 1937. His first unit was 1 Div Sigs, but being a good instructor he was quickly posted to the School of Signals, and on the outbreak of WWII, to 151 OCTU as the one regular subaltern who knew about military matters.

In June 1940, he joined 2 Corps Sigs in France, but only for a few days before returning with the BEF to the UK. He then became Adjt of No 1 HQ Sigs in August 1940. From then until the end of the war he had a very chequered career holding no less then 13 different appointments, the longest of which lasted 10 months. He also served in the UK, USA, Canada, North Africa, Norway and India and with Armd, Inf and Airborne units.

In November 1942, he planned and took part in the landings near Algiers, of 78 Div Sigs, which initially provided comms for an American Div HQ and then raced eastwards into Tunisia with 78 Div. Near the end of the Tunisian campaign, he returned to the UK to attend the Staff College, at which he was later an instructor, served on the staff of 116 Force, HQ 21 Army Group and HQ Airborne Div. As GSO2 1 Airborne Div, he had the good fortune to lead the Div advance party into Oslo, the day after the war ended.

His appointment at the end of the war was GSOI (MO2) at GHQ India. Altogether during the war, **Michael Hancock** gained a very wide experience of all types of units, formations and appointments. He returned to the UK from India in 1946, but due to a serious illness was not fit for active duty for 18 months. From 1948 to 1958, he served at the Staff College, was Sqn Comd with 2 Inf Div Sig Regt in Germany, served twice in the War Office in MO4 and DCIGS, and then went out to Singapore to command the STC.

He then commanded 1 Div Sig Regt from 1958-60, after which he was detailed by the War Office to prepare a report on Signals Officers' Career Planning. In September 1960 he was promoted to Col as Col GS (MO2) at the War Office. From there he went out to Germany as CCR Signals 1 (BR) Corps in the rank of Brig, then to France as BGS (Ops and Plans) at SHAPE.

In 1967 he was Secretary of the NATO Military Committee and International Military Staff. In June 1968 he was promoted to Maj Gen as Chief of Staff HQ Far East Land Forces in Singapore. He returned to the UK in 1970 where he took up his last appointment as Vice Quarter Master General. He was appointed MBE in 1953 and CB in 1972. He served as a Col Commandant from 1970 to 1977.

Throughout his service, **Michael** probably held more appointments and gained a wider practical experience than falls to the lot of most officers. He was an officer of exceptional ability, having a very clear and quick brain and a valuable asset of being able to impart his knowledge and experience to others. For an officer who has held so many non technical appointments both on the staff and in field units he still managed to keep up his technical expertise.

His particular interests in the sporting field were gliding and sailing. His main hobby, apart from the Army, was sailing, in which he took an active part whenever time permitted. He was President and then Admiral of the Royal Signals Yacht Club.

Michael Hancock retired from the Army in 1972 and then served for 15 years as a Planning Inspector in the Department of the Environment.

He was also involved in other activities: Chairman and then Vice President of the Combined Cadet Force Association, Chairman and then President of the East Surrey Scout District, President of the Surrey Venture Scout Rifle Club, Chairman of the Surrey Scout Training Trust, Chairman and then Vice President of the local RNLI Branch, and also as a member of the Parochial Church Council.

BURGESS – Lt Col (Retd) CD Burgess CB ERD

Cyril Burgess was born in 1929 and was commissioned into the Corps in 1951 during his National Service. On completion of his fulltime service, he joined the TA in 21st SAS (Artists Rifles), with whom he served for 8 years, parachuting regularly and enthusiastically.

He then transferred in 1960 to what became 39 Sig Regt, continuing to parachute and serving in 4 Sqn, which he rose to command. He then became Second in Command of the Regt. He ended his TA service in 1970 with promotion to Lt Col.

He was particularly expert in the area of Special Comms, in which he had spent the whole of his TA service. He subsequently maintained a keen interest in the Corps in general and was in regular contact with the Special Comms Unit (TA) Association, of which he was an active member.

Although the TA played a large part in his life, **Cyril's** career lay in the Civil Service where, after long and distinguished service, he rose to the top of the Health and Safety Executive. For his very considerable contribution as Director of the Hazardous Substances Division he was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath in 1989.

Cyril was a genial and popular figure with a zest for living life to the full, a keen sense of humour and a fondness for walking in the great outdoors. Above all he was a devoted family man.

Cyril died in October 2005. Truly, an officer and a gentleman, he will be greatly missed and well remembered.

GALE – Lt Col AR Gale MBE QGM (Andrew) died on 20 November 2005.

Andrew Roger Gale was born in Winchester and educated at Marlborough Grammar School. After graduating from OCS Mons, he was commissioned into Royal Signals in 1967. Early postings in Germany gave him a professional interest in the German language.

He served in 3 Inf Bde in Northern Ireland, then at HQ SW District, Bulford, when the Firemen's strike of 1977-78 made heavy demands on the Army.

At the time of the Falklands War in 1982, he was deeply involved in establishing the Army comms cell at Northwood, and after the re-taking of Stanley, he was sent there to establish the Joint Forces Signal Unit. He was appointed MBE for these services in 1983.

In 1992 he completed a German linguist course prior to being posted as British LO with 1 (German) Corps. Subsequently, he was PRO for 1 (British) Corps, and continued at Bielfield when the HQ became that for NATO ARRC. He was then detached to prepare the comms plan British forces in the Balkans, then later as Defence Adviser in Ghana.

In 1997, during his Ghana posting, a military coup had gone wrong in Sierra Leonne, resulting in some 800 civilians taking refuge in a hotel in Freetown. Nigerian peacekeeping forces were

also involved, but the situation was highly unstable. The British High Commissioner had brokered a ceasefire with the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) to allow the civilians to be evacuated, but there was no guarantee that the rebels would honour the agreement. **Andrew** was despatched from to Freetown with a chartered Boeing 747 to render what assistance he could.

He found the situation there tense. Driving alone with a large Union Flag flying from his car, he visited the various AFRC and Nigerian positions, and having satisfied himself that there was a reasonable chance that the cease-fire would hold, set about making arrangements to evacuate the civilians. They were helicoptered in small packets from the hotel to the airport, whilst **Andrew** went from one armed group to another, continuing negotiations to ensure their safety. At no time could he be sure that the rebels would keep their word. As soon as the last group of civilians boarded the aircraft, he set it on its way, and swiftly boarded a helicopter back to Accra. For his courage and tenacity **Andrew Gale** was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal.

After his retirement in 2000, **Andrew** worked as a security adviser to a range of organisations in Africa and the Far East. He leaves his wife, **Christine**, two sons and one daughter.

RENTON - Col WDS Renton died on 24 November 2005.

William Dare Stuart Renton was brought up in Somerset, where his father was a doctor. He was educated at Marlborough. He was not good at games, but was awarded his school colours for shooting for three consecutive years. In 1939, he entered RMA Woolwich but within a week, war was declared; the 'Shop' was closed, and the Cadets were dispersed to OCTUs. In May 1940, he was commissioned into the Royal Corps of Signals.

To him, **Renton's** wartime service was a disappointment. He spent four years in the UK. In the summer of 1944, he was sent to India and posted to Special Force, better known as the Chindits. In 1945 Special Force was disbanded, but its signal regt was reformed into 34 Corps Sig Regt, to support the new formation being assembled to liberate Malaya.

The Corps landed in Malaya on 9 September 1945, with **Renton** commanding a radio tp. Noone knew what was going on in Kuala Lumpur, the capital, so the next day he was sent there with a radio det to report on the situation.

On arrival at Kuala Lumpur, he reported that the whole population appeared to have taken to the streets, and progress was very slow. By midday, he reached the building selected for Corps HQ. It had been sacked, as had many others. Some thirty minutes later, four staff cars drew up, and out stepped a galaxy of very senior officers, including **Gen William Slim** (later FM). There should have been a company of infantry and many supporting staff in attendance, but they had been delayed by the crowds. The General walked over to **Renton** and his driver, and told them that in a few minutes, Japanese Generals would arrive to sign the surrender of the Japanese Forces in Malaya. **Gen Slim** then directly addressed the driver, who carried a Stengun, with the words, 'If any one of them draws a weapon shoot him.' In the event, the Japanese behaved with great dignity. The infantry company arrived just as the VIPs left!

On returning to UK in December 1947, **Renton** was posted to the staff of SOinC(A) in the War Office. While in this post, the SOinC(A) selected him to go to Cambridge University, where he got a second class honours degree in engineering.

In 1956, while commanding 18 Bde Sig Sqn in Singapore, he received a Mention in Despatches for the Sqn's performance during the riots that occurred that year.

On returning to UK, he was posted to the School of Infantry, and from there, he went to command 28 Sig Regt in Germany in December 1961. The Regt provided comms for the NATO Northern Army Gp HQ, which was co-located with HQ BAOR. A British General held the joint command.

A few days before Christmas, the General informed **Renton** that for political reasons, BAOR had to hand over to NATO the responsibility for the logistical support of the Regt on 1 January 1962, but that NATO would have no financial cover for this new commitment until January 1963. Thus, for one year, the Regt would have no logistical support. The General hastened to add that pay, rations, clothing, medical cover and married quarters would remain a British responsibility. The General then dismissed **Renton** by saying, 'Do your best. Try to avoid a mutiny, but should you be in real trouble, I will do whatever I can.'

Renton's first problem was the maintenance of the barracks. In Germany, barracks occupied by German troops have always been maintained by the Municipal authorities. Accordingly, the barracks housing 28 Sig Regt were offered to the Krefeld Town Council, which promptly accepted them. For some reason, the only thing they could neither provide nor pay for, was the water supply. Fortunately, the Regt discovered that for many years, the British Authorities had been grossly overcharged for water, so **Renton** suggested that if he forgot to tell BAOR, perhaps the water company would forget to bill the Regt for a year. The water company were horrified at such an irregularity, but they agreed to adjust the water meters to charge one pfennig per hundred thousand litres.

The next problem was transport. The Regt had a large number of surplus dilapidated vehicles. These were sold, and the cash was used to repair the vehicles they needed to keep.

A much greater problem was the repair of specialised transport, such as command vehicles. These could only be repaired by REME, who were not allowed to accept them. This problem was solved by producing false sets of vehicle documents, which purported that the vehicles belonged to BAOR units. Eventually, this ruse was discovered, and **Renton** was threatened with arrest. Fortunately, someone in high places intervened, and he was told 'not to get caught again.'

Nevertheless, problems seemed endless. The simplest logistical matter became a crisis that could only be solved by some trick, fiddle, or fraud. The only bright thing was that British soldiers didn't suffer. Indeed, many of them genuinely enjoyed the situation, and produced some of the best ideas when it came to getting round or breaking the rules.

On relinquishing his command, he was posted to the Army School of Armoured Warfare as Chief Instructor (Signals). Two years' later, he was promoted Colonel and went to the Army School of Signals as Chief Instructor.

His last appointment was Director, CCIS on the Central Staff of the MOD. He was the first officer to hold this post, and almost the last. In theory, the task was to coordinate the various computer systems that all three Services were striving to develop for operational purposes, but the appointment was premature, and consequently lacked the necessary service support. **Renton** therefore concluded that as the job was impossible, he might as well retire (his successor did likewise).

By now he was a Fellow of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, and the Plessey Company offered him a job that suited him perfectly. His office was only nine miles from his home in Dorset, and he spent nine happy years with the Company. On his second retirement, be became a founder member of the North Dorset Housing Association. He leaves his wife, **Constance**; there were no children.

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THE Wire

June 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE wire

June 2006

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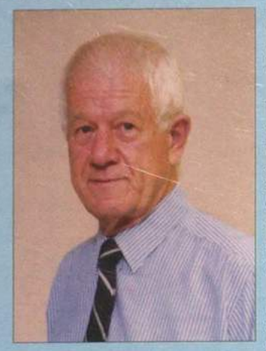
MASTER OF SIGNALS AWARD

It was reported in the April Edition that **Bernard Redshaw** had been awarded the Master of Signals Award. Since that date, **Maj Paul Murrell** has left his post as Director of Music and he too has been awarded the Master of Signals Award. Their citations are below:

MAJ (Retd) BERNARD REDSHAW



Maj (Retd) **Bernard Redshaw** assumed the post of Head of Publications in 2002. As Editor of *The WIRE*, he set about reinvigorating that publication by improving the magazine's layout, addressing the presentation and quality of articles and photographs, and actively increasing its circulation among the target audience in Royal Signals units worldwide.

This was no small undertaking, but **Maj Redshaw** was undeterred by the challenge and devoted considerable energy and determination to bring about his aims. He interfaced directly with the printers to ensure a first class product and undertook an extensive programme of visits to units in barracks and elsewhere, including combat zones, to gain an insight into the readership and establish links with authors. At his own expense he visited Royal Signals Association branches to communicate his plans for the publication, emphasising always his commitment to the highest standards of writing and the presentation and production of a worthwhile end product. As a result, he has become a well-known and popular figure throughout the Corps, thereby significantly strengthening the link between our soldiers and RHQ.

Maj Redshaw's success has been underpinned by a courteous but unswerving determination, an innate ability to get along with soldiers and officers of all ranks, and professional ability of the highest order. Coupled with his lively sense of humour, these qualities have been deployed to the significant advantage of the Corps, and have resulted in a regimental magazine that is among the best in the Army, with all the benefits for morale and esprit de corps which that entails. Throughout his time in Blandford, he has been an outstanding ambassador for the New Zealand Army and its Signal Corps, and has unofficially done much to maintain and strengthen the links between these organisations and the Royal Corps of Signals.

MAJ PAUL MURRELL

Maj Paul Murrell has served for five years as the Director of Music of the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals; the seventh Director since the Band's formation in 1924. He inherited a Band, weak in numbers and with limited musical horizons, a largely neglected Territorial Army Band, organisationally and culturally separated from the heart of the Corps, an embryonic Corps Pipes and Drums struggling to raise standards and integrate musically with the Corps Band, and the low morale that was the inevitable consequence of this combination of circumstances. Despite these problems, Corps musicians were fully committed to busy programmes of military and civilian engagements as well as support to a broad range of other events that brought the Corps into the public gaze. In short, he assumed a very busy appointment at the head of a high profile musical organisation not short on musical talent but urgently in need of re-generation.

Maj Murrell set about the task with the enthusiasm and characteristic robustness that we have all since come to know and respect. Having engaged with the Army School of Music to ensure the posting-in of high quality musicians, he quickly re-established a strong relationship with the Northern Band by including them in a wider range of Corps performances, and cemented a first class working relationship with the Pipes and Drums. In parallel, he instituted a demanding training programme to raise Band performance standards, paying particular attention to the professional development of individual musicians and their standards of dress, turnout and bearing. Within months if not weeks, the Corps Band and other elements of Corps music began to show signs of a polish and professionalism previously lacking.

Maj Murrell's impact upon the professional standing of Corps Music has been profound, and there can be no doubt that over the past five years the Corps Band and Pipes and Drums have gone from strength to strength, largely as a direct result of his direction. Performances are now marked by excellent standards of musicianship, energy, style and originality and enhanced by **Major Murrell's** easy informality, personal charm and excellent rapport with audiences. Plaudits have come from many quarters, and the CGS's recent endorsement of the Royal Signals Band as 'the best Corps band in the British Army' was particularly gratifying. However, the sheer enjoyment on the part of all audiences, whether military or civilian, is perhaps the most satisfying testament to the significant progress that has been made.

Maj Murrell has been a staunch supporter of the Corps and his loyalty throughout has been absolute. As one of the public faces of Royal Signals he has brought the Corps increasingly into the public eye, enhanced our reputation and played a significant part in maintaining morale in the face of an increasingly busy operational tempo. It is all the more to his credit that this has been accomplished against a background of manning constraints, restructuring uncertainties and budgetary issues. The result is a Corps Band of which we are inordinately proud, and which is recognised as being among the finest in the Army today. For these achievements and for his personal loyalty and contribution to a cap badge that is not his own, **Maj Paul Murrell** is awarded the Master of Signals Award.

OPERATIONAL HONOURS, OPERATIONAL AWARDS

Iraq	Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)	**Col IW MacKenzie** PJHQ
Northern Ireland	Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)	**WO2 PJ Howl** MOD CMC 4/5
Afghanistan	Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)	**Sgt R Maxwell** MOD CMC 4/5

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Deputy Editor Miss DS Haselden

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FRONT COVER

WO2(PM) **Rowan**, The Royal Regt of Scotland, and **Ssgt**(PM) **J Taylor,** 32 Sig Regt meet Her Majesty The Queen at RMA Sandhurst after the Sovereign's Parade on 12 April.

BACK COVER

Purple Fire – 243 Sqn of 10 Sig Regt on Anti Ambush Drill

SOME STORIES IN THIS ISSUE...

MORE NEWS ON CORMORANT...

2 Sig Regt provides an update on the successful deployment of Cormorant on more than one ex at page 172.

The reports on EXs KEY FLIGHT, KEY PHOENIX and RED TRICORN show that the Regt is learning very quickly and Cormorant is now well established.

TRANSFORMATION OF 10 SIG REGT...

10 Sig Regt has been moving to take a new role, with a focus on UK and Expeditionary Ops, in equal measure.

The capability is growing month by month, and with the creation of a Specialist Teams Royal Signals Sqn in April 06 and the transfer-in of the Electronic Counter Measures/Force Protection Sqn on 1 May, there is a lot to write about.

They have been given more space to report these changes and their report at page 179 is worth reading. There is no doubt that there will be much more from 10 Sig Regt in the future.

CORPS SPORTING ACHIEVEMENT...

There is a lot of sport in this edition. The notes from the units and those from Team Captains record another successful year for sport across the board.

I commend the efforts of the Nordic skiers described at page 225 and the Inter Corps Water Polo Champions at page 230. Included in unit notes, there are also reports of success for 2 Div Sig Regt as Army Squash Champions (page 172); 7 Sig Regt as Football Champions in Germany (page 177) and 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn in Football and Cross Country (page 210).

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Corps of Signals or the Ministry of Defence.

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EDITORIAL

I had decided to leave the writing of the Editorial until the very last stages of our in house preparation of *The Wire* for publication and it appears that this is actually most appropriate this month. I have heard comments from some, that in the age of table top publishing, the 6 week deadline we set for submission of articles before publication is too long. The point I wish to make is that if we want to cut that down, I need your help. I am addressing this to the writers, the compilers and collators who submit material for publication. My predecessor sent out good guidelines on the way to produce submissions for *The Wire*. If you have forgotten where you put it, or have never seen it, then you can find it on the web site: www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/ and follow the tabs to *The Wire* section. With the change to an 80 page, all colour magazine, I think these guidelines do need to be revised. The Corps is busy operationally and there is more to report. Units are training very hard to support operations and to accept the new equipments into service, and they too have more to say. There are also more and better pictures included with submissions. I want to include as much of this as possible in *The Wire*.

It might be useful for all our regular subscribers to have some idea of how we put *The Wire* together. We receive the submissions in hard copy, disk or e mail format and immediately store them in text and image folders for editing and manipulation. At this point, I do a quick editorial check of format, fonts, margins etc and check the quality of the images. I also scan the text for proper names of people and places and check the spelling. As my spell checker goes into overdrive when I open an article on adventure training in Wales or Patagonia, I have to reach for the atlas to check everything by hand. When I find the name of a person, which does not ring true, I have to go back by phone or e mail to the originator for confirmation. This all adds time, which can delay the whole process. It would be helpful if submissions from units printed the name of the CO and RSM at the top, as advised in the guidance notes. It would also be helpful if images were not embedded in the text. Having said that, submissions with embedded photographs, which are placed appropriately in the text with captions, are more than acceptable if they are accompanied by those same images, saved separately.

The next step is to consider each item carefully and apply the principles of format and style we use in *The Wire*. This may mean a heavy blue pencil has to be applied to articles which are badly written, too parochial, too long winded or which fail to make a point. Photos which are too small, poorly taken or more suitable for a good night out guide are discarded. Concurrently, **Dawn** takes the material that has been through the editing process and begins to load it on the publishing software. It is only at this stage that we can get a real assessment of the size the final article will be when it is published. I am pleased to report that we received an abundance of good material for this edition of *The Wire*. It was therefore with some concern that **Dawn** informed me that even after my swingeing cuts, the magazine was full to overflowing. Back to each submission and with more minor pruning; the deletion of a photo or two and cutting one major article, with great reluctance. At last, we have a magazine of exactly 80 pages to take to the publisher. You can help by being more selective in what you submit. The broad guidelines on how much space a Regiment or a Squadron can expect are in the guidelines. They are not likely to change much in the future. With that in mind, you could do some of your own pre-editing before submission; making your own decisions on priorities on text and images. Indicate by font colour or style, the key sections which you really want printed. I can use your own priorities, if I have to make cuts. This will be quicker than phoning or e mailing to discuss what can and cannot be taken out.

You should remember that the magazine includes not only the submissions from the units, the Sports Reports and the RSA Notes, but also the Movements Section, Lost Comms, Honours and Awards, Obituaries and Last Post. I am happy that with pruning and editing, I can publish all of this, within the overall limit of 80 pages. The sad thing is that I also receive historical articles or items of interest, which at the moment, I cannot publish. In the future, I would like to be able to include some of these miscellaneous articles and perhaps create room for more correspondence. I will address this in the revised guidelines, with a view to creating a little more space for these articles and letters within the existing space restraints. In the meantime, please follow the standing advice, and check your submissions for the basics, such as the spelling of proper names.

I have received constructive feedback, from several sources, about the use of abbreviations in articles. Some of these arise from organisations and force structures, which are new to many, and some are appearing as the Corps introduces new systems, such as BOWMAN and Cormorant. I am compiling a list of abbreviations and acronyms, as they appear in submissions, and my intention is to pass them to the appropriate authorities, who know what they mean, and get from them explanations, definitions and sufficient amplification to make them clear to the average reader. I will publish a glossary of terms and abbreviations in a future edition. My final point is to apologise to any readers who received a badly printed copy of the April edition. I am aware of poor printing on pages 86/87/158/159 and another batch where the pages have not been properly centred and therefore cut incorrectly. These were obviously faults at the printers and have been raised with them.

Alan Wallace

DEPUTY EDITOR

This edition of *The Wire* has been a challenge with the quantity and quality of your submissions, we suspect due to our full colour publication. We are finding more units participating and new units emerging, giving us an increase in your submissions. We now have more to choose from and that's a good thing. Thank you, keep it up.

As Alan has mentioned above please check the guidelines, which can be found on the Royal Signals web page under *The Wire*. http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/thewire/ If you keep a look out, you may even find a pdf copy of *The Wire* (this may be an older issue). This we envision is the future that *The Wire* will be going, trying to keep up with technology and advancements. We will publish more detail in the next issue and keep you updated on the progress of our on line availability.

Dawn Haselden

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, APRIL 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col NC Beacom	GOC Theatre Tp HQ
Lt Col DA Craft	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Lt Col ND Fraser	22 Sig Regt
Lt Col DG Halstead	Royal Signals/Int Corps MCM Div
Lt Col B Hewitt	NCSA HQ
Lt Col JRE Janes	DII FD CSDC
Lt Col MA Rough	Systems HQ SOinC(A)
Maj SA Donovan	Y List MCM Div
Maj LD Roddy	Y List MCM Div
A/Maj AG Jenkins	10 Sig Regt
Capt JS Balfour	22 Sig Regt
Capt IA Bangurah	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Capt RDDB Bennett	OCE HQ Land
Capt OJ Ford	J6 Div PJIO (UK)
Capt T Smith	22 Sig Regt
Capt GC Smith	RRS West Midlands
Capt WP Taylor	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn (200)
Capt IG Thompson	JSSU(D)
Capt IP Toft	JSSU (CH)
Capt PRG Tonks	30 Sig Regt
Capt EK Watson	16 Sig Regt
Lt SL Goldsmith	11 (CS) MI Sect 1 MI Bn
Lt WH Mawby	ATR Pirbright
Lt MS Skeet	ATR Lichfield
Lt JA Snelgrove	ATR Bassingbourn
Lt AF Wardle	ATR Pirbright
2Lt DG Atkinson	14 Sig Regt(EW)
2Lt NJA Cole	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(216)
2Lt JM Cunningham	30 Sig Regt
2 Lt AK Curtis	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2 Lt RHC Day	14 Sig Regt(EW)
2Lt ML Gray	2 Sig Regt
2Lt DI Hillhouse	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(216)
2Lt TSJ Hodgkins	7 Sig Regt
2Lt MS Johns	16 Sig Regt
2Lt PW Johnson	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt
2Lt CP Jones	2 Sig Regt
2Lt CR Knott	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
2Lt GC Lee	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(216)
2Lt PS Marshall	7 Sig Regt
2Lt RS Monk	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
2Lt AC Roach	16 Sig Regt
2Lt SC Storey	7 Sig Regt
2Lt PJG Wilson	1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt

OFFICERS, MAY 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col MP Llewellyn	AIO
Lt Col JD Forrest	OCE HQ Land (HQ MND SE)
Lt Col WD Niekirk	AG/Land Co-Location Team
Maj FER Whichelo	40 Sig Regt (V)
Capt RA Bell	Welfare Officer
Capt L Clark	32 Sig Regt
Capt JE Ellis	34 (Northern) Sig Regt
Capt JG Evans	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Capt JH Greenwood	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt EDL Maskell-Pedersen	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Capt PA Williams	Cyprus Communications Unit
Capt JC Wilson	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
Capt NJ Wood	SC and IS (Northwood)
Capt RJ Wymer	10 Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS, APRIL 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 RD MA Gilbert	10 Sig Regt
WO1 YofS MS Bentley	RSS
WO1 Supvr R IR Piears	1 MI Bn
A/WO1 RD LD Balmforth	7 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD CD Batley	16 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD MA Brown	11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD RD Burrows	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(228)
A/WO1 RD AC Fensom	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
A/WO1 RD SE Fidler	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD S Fleming	11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 RD TJ Ward	11 Sig Regt
A/WO1 FofS MP Riley	HQ Defence College of CIS
A/WO1 Supvr R MS Easterbrooke	PJHQ (UK)
WO2 RD P Coates	HQ Northern Ireland
WO2 RD M McDonald	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
WO2 RD MS Morgan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO2 RD CRP Stuart	7 Sig Regt
WO2 RD L Tobbell	2 Sig Regt
WO2 FofS N Kenyon	JCUFI
WO2 Supvr R J Porter	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO2 RD MA Bell	11 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD A Buchan	16 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD SJ Fardy	11 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD GR Mathieson	DCSA JSUC
A/WO2 RD AN Smith	21 Sig Regt
A/WO2 RD MA Tench	11 Sig Regt
A/WO2 Supvr R NM Beresford	MOD A Block
A/WO2 Supvr R RL Canale	HQ Northern Ireland
SSgt MD Barringer	30 Sig Regt
SSgt CD Deas	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
SSgt PW Griffiths	30 Sig Regt
SSgt AM Hyland	101 Log Bde Hq and Sig Sqn(261)
SSgt DG Rudd	22 Sig Regt
SSgt JM Simpson	30 Sig Regt
Sgt C Bentley	30 Sig Regt
Sgt PJ Foulkes	RSS
Sgt HP Heaps	RSS
Sgt RG Hickley	15 Sig Regt
Sgt M Local	JSSU Digby
Sgt LA Lyon	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt RWM Maxwell	RSS
Sgt IM Nichols	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt G Norris	7 Sig Regt
Sgt PJ Parton	2 Sig Regt
Sgt GO Prydie	RSS
Sgt JR Samuel	RSS
Sgt GP Scott	12 Mech Bde HQ and Sig Sqn(228)
Sgt G Sunderland	10 Sig Regt
Sgt R Widdison	30 Sig Regt
A/Sgt KA Rawlings	RSS

WOS AND SNCOS, MAY 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO 1 RD JR Raybould	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn

A/WO 1 RD CD Symonds	11 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 YofS RM Dilnot	2 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 YofS P Emsen	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 1 FofS D Clarke	16 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD SA Alexander-High	DISC Sp Unit
WO 2 RD SM Lithgow	21 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD AP McBean	16 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD A Morris	19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO 2 RD KP Overton	UOTC Exeter
WO 2 RD RP Shields	34 Sig Regt (V)
WO 2 FofS MD Arundel	DCSA (G)
WO 2 FofS NJ Mitchell	16 Sig Regt
WO 2 FofS GM Thompson	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn
WO 2 Supvr R PJ Burns	JSSU Digby
WO 2 Supvr R D O'Neill	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO 2 RD RG Kidd	JSSU Cyprus
A/WO 2 RD PS Kinsey	ATR bassingbourn
A/WO 2 RD JB Love	UOTC Tayforth
A/WO 2 RD WJF Morris	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO 2 RD A Paling	21 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD G Sinclair	7 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 RD S Spink	UOTC Southampton
A/WO 2 RD DJ Thwaite	71 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 YofS DME Heath	SANGCOM
A/WO 2 YofS MJ Pollitt	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 Supvr R SK Campbell	224 Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 Supvr R MS Mattacola	11 EOD Sqn
A/WO 2 Supvr R LD Mitchell	224 Sig Sqn
SSgt YofS D Robinson	19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt FofS MAJ Brown	19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt FofS JP Ford	600 Sig Tp
SSgt PJ Conroy	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
SSgt RG Howe	251 Sig Sqn
SSgt SG McIlroy	15 Sig Regt
SSgt GGW Poppa	16 Sig Regt
Sgt JP Dine	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn
Sgt G Fisher	JCUFI
Sgt LG Longworth	ATR Litchfield
Sgt A Smith	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt KJ Wood	NATO Comms School Latina

RETIREMENTS

Sgt I Wornham ... ... 14 Sig Regt (EW)

April 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Newton - Capt D Newton	02 Apr 06
Crosby - TC Crosby	03 Apr 06
Gardner - BP Gardner	04 Apr 06
Holland - Capt CM Holland	14 Apr 06

MAY 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Blythe - Maj GE Blythe	18 May 06
Borrill - Lt Col NJ Borrill	31 May 06
Gorford - Maj PK Gorford	19 May 06

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt RA Moody**
Team Sgt **Sgt AS Butterfield**

TRAINING CAMP 06 - *by LCpl White and Sig Fitzgerald*

The new riders have arrived from the January selection course, and we would like to say congratulations and welcome to **Cpl Si Kidd**, **LCpl Al Huish**, **Sigs Shea Dawson**, **Jonny Mustoe**, **Paul Reffin**, **Ian Greenhalgh**, and **Mel Quinn**.

The trg season kicked off in earnest with a 5 week trg camp at RAF St Mawgan, Newquay, Cornwall. Due to lack of accommodation at St Mawgan, the first week was spent bunking at Penhale trg camp. After the first weekend, we were fortunate enough to move to the relative luxury of the accommodation at St Mawgan, saving us 30 minutes of travel every morning; the few extra minutes in bed in the morning were welcomed by all.

The trg camp was a great success, with all the team members getting to grips with their tricks. For the more experienced riders, there was the opportunity to compete for a place in one of the cross over rides. Needless to say, only the best got in. There were even 6 new volunteers for the car jump, congratulations to **Sig Shea Dawson** for being the only new rider to make the grade for this trick. It was also the time of the year for riders to get their Wheelie licences. Anybody in the team can attempt to

Cpl Baz Fullerton shows the rest of the Team how to do it!

wheelie during the first week, but riders are gradually whittled down to save damage to the bikes. Well done to **Cpl Baz Fullerton**, who is now a fully fledged 'wheelier', after trying for the last 9 trg camps!

The trg camp was not all plain sailing, and there were minor bumps and grazes, on a day to day basis. **Sig Jonny Mustoe**

The Team in front of the Avro Shackleton at RAF St Mawgan

was lucky enough to get a ride in the Cornwall Air Ambulance, and was fortunate only to be diagnosed with whiplash. **LCpl Whittenstall**, on the other hand, has a broken collar bone, but he will hopefully be back by the opening show. As a way of saying thank you to St Mawgan, for their support and hospitality, the team put on a show for the camp personnel, their families, and (unexpectedly) 2 whole year groups from the local infants school. We weren't sure who was more excited, the children, at the prospect of sitting on the bikes, or the teachers at the chance to ride pillion, with some strapping young soldiers! **Cpl Forster** was glad to get rid of the black peak, the award for the last rider to fall off in a show, when a large gust of Atlantic wind caught **Cpl Jim Brown**, during the ladder trick, causing him to fall. In all, the trg camp was a great success and we will hopefully be returning in 2007 for the next one.

Congratulations and best wishes go to **Cpl Mal Cooper**, **LCpl JPJ Burrows**, **LCpl Julie Jones**, and **LCpl White**, who are all expecting babies in the near future (it must be something in the water at Blandford).

If you think you have what it takes to become a member of the White Helmets, and you like the idea of a 5 week trg camp in Newquay in Feb 2007, then contact us now and reserve your place on the next selection course, being held November 2006. Details about the selection course can be found in SOinC(A) PD 204, held in every orderly room or from the HQ SOinC website.

If you have any questions, and prefer a friendly voice, you can call the office at any time on mil: 94371 2365 (civ: 01258 482365) to discuss a potential tour with the White Helmets.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BAND

After 5 years as Director of Music, **Maj Paul Murrell** retired in January 2006 and handed over to **Capt Guy Booth** who has now taken up the baton and will appear as Director of Music at all future performances of The Royal Signals Band.

The new Director of Music, Capt Guy Booth

REHEARSAL FOR THE LAST CORPS DINNER NIGHT

Under the direction of **Capt Booth**, **Maj Murrell**, rehearses for his final appearance in Headquarters Officers Mess, before leaving the army after 35 years service.

Maj Murrell's Last Stand

You might well be surprised to find out that the picture above was taken at Winterbourne Gunner, during the last week of February and the warlike band you can see are indeed The Band. During that week, when the snow fell, the Band were learning their new wartime role as chemical decontaminants, or as we say in "Army Speak", Chemical Decontamination Area (CDA) operators.

Over the years, most of us have heard the well worn question from our army buddies, our friends and even our children: "What do you actually do in wartime?" The answer is that from the Second World War up until the late 1970s, we did our job, i.e. we played our Trumpets or Trombones or Saxophones. Then in the 1980s, we trained as Telephone Exchange Operators (40/160's and Merlin). Then, in the mid 1980's, we became 'In-Transit Medical Assistants' but this was not really the best use for us. So the Army decided to use proper medical staff and we lost that role. We then needed a new wartime role; a job that needed to be done, and gave bands more than one reason to exist. So now we are CDA Ops.

We are still trying to establish whether, by removing the Primary Speech Module, we could perform in full IPE. That would be a first!

Who are these people?

BLANDFORD GARRISON SUPPORT UNIT

CO **Lt Col Rab Young**
GSM **WO1 Neil Jennings**

'Any excuse accepted to hold a party' is one of the CO's favourite sayings and so, as the unit was only formed on 31 January this year, we really had to have an inaugural lunch. All the officers, seniors and our senior civil servants gathered in the George III Restaurant on camp for a delicious carvery lunch .....and just the odd drop or two of wine!

QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT

QM **Lt Col Wally Drain**

On a cold, crisp November morning, volunteers from the QM's Dept and friends, including the Corps Band, **Capt Brown** APTC, **Pipe Major Rowan** and **Sergeant Fitzpatrick**, set out to raise money for the Children In Need Appeal, by entertaining the town of Blandford to a musical extravaganza. The team of cold, but merry men and one valiant woman, were led by **Lt Col Drain** and **WO2(RQMS) Mickey Yendell**. The day's events were very successful and the team managed to raise a grand total of £1774.03. Surprisingly, there was very little heckling from the members of the public and not too many rotten tomatoes thrown. Fortunately, no-one was arrested for hijacking the passing cars and vans – well, it was the only way to get the drivers to part with their money!

BGSU Inaugural Lunch

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those that contributed their time, effort and money to such a worthwhile cause and look forward to their support again this year!

MT SECTION

MTO **WO2 Billy Lilburn**
MTWO **WO2 Tim Tatler**

The first few months of 2006 have seen a flood of fresh new faces in the newly formed BGSU Transport Office with **WO2 Billy Lilburn**, taking over as the MTO after leaving sunny Cyprus; **Sig Cook** from Bulford and **Sig Lunn** – welcome back from a long absence. Congratulations and goodbye to newly promoted **WO1 Leigh Crossing**, now enjoying that wonderful sun in Cyprus; and goodbye to **Sig Critchley**, who has moved to Bulford.

We would like to congratulate **Cpl Buck Rodgers** for his success on the JCLM course and **Sig Chadwick** who has passed his PTI course with ease. Early in March we organised a fun bowls night. The guys in green didn't stand a chance against the might of the civvie drivers!
Well done to **Sgt Kez Brown**, who was part of the Army team at the Tug of War championships held at Killarney in Ireland; the team came a creditable 10th out of the 22 taking part. **Sgt Brown's** skills come in handy whenever the wrecker is off the road!

NEWS OF TRAINING

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) T Henry**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj Don Cain M.M.M.**
SSM **WO2(SSM) K Overton**

EXERCISE OUSTON WARRIOR – *by Cpl Walsh*

On Friday 17th February 06, members of 1 Sqn embarked on an ex in the Bovington trg area. It began with a UK Special Forces Communicator (SFC) brief lasting approximately an hour. It was an excellent start, as it was the first time many had experienced such a brief. Needless to say, it left us fired up and with aspirations to serve with the SF in the future.

We arrived at Bovington Camp around 2030 hrs and after an excellent safety brief, and a Pyrotechnics Demonstration from **SSgt Gray** and **Cpl Frost**, the ex began. It was straight into a tactical situation and the mission was to secure the border area of Agaii, in order to stop border incursions by Jackov Armed Forces. It was the comd's intent that the enemy be removed by aggressive manoeuvring, dislodging or destroying enemy units in the area.

At around 2130 hrs, 1 and 2 Platoons, now with their mission, patrolled to their harbour areas, where they set up clearance patrols and then went into normal night routine. The standing patrols were deployed and a fun packed night awaited them. There was no holding the enemy back and at around 0030 hrs, they were at each of the respective standing patrol positions. With concurrent movement, facilitated by radio, they attacked both patrols simultaneously. However, they were beaten off and retreated to their RV point, for a re-supply of ammo. Around 0130 hrs, it was the turn of the Platoon harbour areas to receive a barrage from the enemy, but once again they were beaten off and forced to retreat.

Reveille was called at 0600 hrs, the standing patrols came in and the first scenario ended. It was now the turn of personnel from 18 Sig Regt to share some of the features that make them an elite force. For the first half of the day, there were stands to visit; a stand demonstrating building and lighting fires, and techniques on extracting water in the field by various methods, a wpns stand looking at wpns such as the GPMG, Minimi, AK-47, MP5 and the 9mm pistol and finally, we looked at some of the radios the SF use. After lunch, the rest of the day involved Prisoner of War Handling by **SSgt Gray**, and unarmed combat with **Cpl Chorlton**. This proved to be very interesting and the day was then topped of by brushing up on some ambush and patrolling skills.

At 1900 hrs, the scenario restarted with the evening meal, followed by orders. At 2200 hrs, the standing patrols were sent back out. At around 2300 hrs, a special patrol from each sect was tasked to pick up an agent, who would give them intelligence on the current situation. The agents were picked up simultaneously at different locations and the correct challenge methods were adhered to. The easy part was done; it was trying to get back to the harbour areas undetected that was the problem. Professionalism and patrolling skills allowed 1 Platoon to achieve its aim, but 2 Platoon found itself stuck in an enemy ambush. Using their skills, they extracted themselves and remained unscathed. Through the night various recce patrols were carried out, with the enemy waiting in the background, and **SSgt Gray** had to deal with all sorts of issues. At 0400 hrs the standing patrols were called in and the preparations for the final attack took shape. At 0500 hrs, both Platoons met up and received their final orders. 1 Platoon was to give cover and fire sp to 2 Platoon, who were to go for the kill. H Hour was 0530 hrs and all hell let loose. The enemy had an excellent position at the top of the hill and there were many pitfalls for the platoons to overcome to reach it. Trip flares were set off, the attack was on and the enemy was battered and beaten by the sheer weight of numbers and the firepower from the platoons, under the excellent leadership of **Cpl Frost**. It wasn't easy; there were small pockets of resistance everywhere and that extra push was needed. It was time to re-org and hold the position until further notice. ENDEX was called, but the atmosphere was electric and everyone ecstatic at what had just happened. As usual a perfect solution to this, was to go back and pick up the thousands of rounds of ammunition and smoke grenades used, but even this didn't put a dent in the atmosphere.

At 1000 hrs, it was time for the Padre's service, carried out by **Padre A Steele**. It was an excellent service, which gave us time

Cpl Chorlton is showing the finer points of unarmed combat to a lucky trainee.

to reflect. **Sig Thomas** had the same idea as everyone when he asked for prayers to stop it raining. After this, it was a debrief by the OC and SSM, then back to camp for the turnaround. Overall it was a well planned ex, packed with action and even though it was freezing, everyone rose to the challenge and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj I Carter**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) P Coates**

EXERCISE IRON DUNKER AT RNAS YEOVILTON
– by Cpl Fraser

On 7 March 2006, Iron Tp organised a trip to the helicopter dunking facility at *RNAS Yeovilton*. **Captain Landreth** and **Cpl Ranson** took a number of Sigs, including; **Sigs Chinn**, **Cooke**, **Dixon**, **Forshaw**, **Lloyd**, **Mee**, **Nicholl**, and **Nielson**. Helicopter dunking simulates a helicopter rolling and sinking, after hitting the water. The soldiers use the dunking machine to learn escape procedures after a crash. Everyone was very nervous when they arrived, but after watching other units getting dunked first, the nerves began to fade away. There were still plenty of anxious faces, as they awaited the plunge, and these were worse when they drill was repeated in total darkness. **Captain Landreth** drew comfort from clinging to **Sig Chinns** hand through out the ex.

When the device hits the water and begins to sink, it can be a challenge for some occupants. Weak swimmers were identified by the instructors and had to wear red helmets, so the instructors could keep an eye on them. It was **Cpl Ranson** who wore the red helmet, as a self confessed "weak swimmer". Or was it just a fashion statement to match the colour of his hair?

Smiling and nervous faces before the "Heli-Dunking"

GOLD DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD - *by Cpl Fraser*

Sig Fullylove of 2 Sqn Beaufighter Tp recently attended an award ceremony at St James's Palace to receive her Gold Duke of Edinburgh award. She started this at her 6th Form college in Pensby, Wirral with the West Cheshire and Wirral Expedition Committee. She had previously completed her Bronze and Silver Awards through the cadets.

Sig Fullylove enjoyed the experience, which she describes in her own words below:

"My best experience during my Gold award was the expedition itself, I went to the Snowdon Ranges and it was amazing. When I

Sig Fullylove proudly showing her Gold Duke of Edinburgh award

went to collect my award on the 30th March 06 at St James's palace, I met **HRH Prince Philip**, **Duke of Edinburgh** and he spoke to me. **Prince Philip** was around when the award was presented, but a reporter from BBC News 24 handed me the certificate. It was an amazing day and the experience of all the awards was brilliant."

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj R Jones**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) JM SWANSTON**

EXERCISE HARROGATE ENDEAVOUR - *by Sig Kirkham*

On Friday 31 March, 3 (Harrogate) Sqn deployed on EX HARROGATE ENDEAVOUR, a military skills ex aimed at refreshing and improving basic field knowledge. The ex itself was timed to prepare for the Gordon's Cup Competition, a Regtl Military Skills competition.

The Sqn arrived at Salisbury Plain at around 1800 hrs, and went into a short lesson on camouflaging a Land Rover, before getting into our night routine. The next morning, the omens were not looking good, as the heavens opened. Fortunately, just before the trg started, the sun came out and stayed out for most of the day. Eight sects in total carried out a number of stands, consisting of different military skills. Each task had to be completed by the whole sect. The better you performed, the more points went to your sect. The stands were CBRN, log run, BCDT, Recognition and a number of comd tasks.

After a hard day's trg, we headed back to our luxury cow shed, where after a bit of admin, we headed off on a night NavEx. The route included 8 checkpoints over 4 miles; the going was quite hard but it ensured a good night's sleep was had by all, before the march and shoot competition the following morning. On Sunday morning, the Sqn was up and away early on the return to Blandford for the March and Shoot competition.

This competition consisted of a 4km march, followed by a shoot at the DCCT range. Several sects were still able to win the overall best sect prior to starting, so this ensured that all sects went all out to win. In the end my section won the prize which was a Gucci head torch. Overall, the ex was a very beneficial and enjoyable military skills refresher and thanks go out to **Cpl Dave Tuck** for setting it up.

3 Sqn trainees at the end of EX HARROGATE ENDEAVOUR, well prepared for further Regimental competitions.

HARROGATE CUP NETBALL - *by Sig Tyler*

On 9 March 2006, it was time for the Harrogate Cup Netball Competition to come around. Although the girls were "nicely volunteered", they were all in good spirits. For some it was a first experience playing netball and for others it was like a stroll in the park. The first night, trg seemed very daunting but all the girls were very much up for it. We learned how to shoot, mark people and also various skills and tactics that could help us maintain the Sqn's winning performances. Once we were sorted out into the positions we were going to be playing, the trg started to get more specific.

On the evening itself, everyone was nervous; it was the first time some of us were playing in front of fellow trainees and other Regtl personalities. However, by the end it was very pleasurable. Although we did not know what to expect from the other teams, our expectations turned out for the better, as we demolished both the other sqns. Taking nothing away from 2 Sqn, it was 1 Sqn that gave us a harder battle; our trg must have been a lot better and more pro-active, as we turned them over as well. As with everything 3 (Harrogate) Sqn proved that grit and determination gets you a long way, and we bought the 3 points home. What made it feel even better was that we got to brag and cheer as a Sqn, in front of all the other trainees. It felt really good.

MILITARY LEADERSHIP GROUP – ROYAL SIGNALS PIPES & DRUMS

Senior Pipe Major	**WO2 (PM) G Rowan**
Corps Pipe Major,	**SSgt (PM) J Taylor**

GENERAL

The Pipes and Drums have had a busy period since the last edition of *The Wire* with pipers playing as far a field as Norway, Germany, Israel and Italy. **Pipe Major Taylor** recently found himself on a recce for the Pipes and Drums ex in Italy later this year, the pipers are still waiting for their duty free requests, which were promised. 2 Sig Bde hosted their annual trg weekend in a country hotel near Derby, **Pipe Major Taylor** composed a tune for the event in honour of the Bde COS, **Col N Beacom,** entitled "Nigel's Jig", which was played by **SSgt Billy Wardrope**, **Sgt Narendra Gurung** and **Cpl Malcolm Colquoln**.

ALL ARMS CLASS 2 PIPERS COURSE

SSgt (Supvr IS) Billy Wardrope and **Cpl Glenn MacDonald** both recently completed the All Arms Class 2 Pipers Course at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming at Inchdrewer House, Edinburgh.

The course is 10 weeks long and is primarily designed to teach pipers the principles of the March, Strathspey and Reel (MSR) which are traditionally taught, and prepare the Piper for both military and civilian solo competitions. In addition to the MSR the Pipers also learned to play Piobaireachd (pronounced pibroch), which they then demonstrated to the Director of Army Bagpipe Music, **Capt S D Samson**, HLDRS, who himself is a runner up to the prestigious piping Gold Medal.

If any readers are thinking that the 10 week Class 2 course sounds easy, they would be mistaken. The Pipers were out on the square every day in all weathers (January and February) playing as a military pipe band. Many hours were also spent on kit preparation and bagpipe tuning.

Lt Col MJ Fensom CO 11 Sig Regt attended the parade in his capacity as Pipes and Drums President with the 2 Pipe Majors in attendance. This was an outstanding display of skills, learned in such a short period of time, with the Edinburgh weather struggling to stay above freezing on the day and the indoor piping programme cancelled at the last minute.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations on some recent and well deserved promotions go to **WO2(PM) Rowan**, **WO2(Supvr IS) Wardrope**, **SSgt(PM) Taylor**, **Cpl Colquoln** and **LCpl Bailey**.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) G McGachy**

The premier Armd Regt has been hard at work deployed on ops in Iraq and the Balkans, however they have continued to train at home.

THE REGIMENTAL CADRE COURSE 2006
- by LCpl Palmer, 212 Sig Sqn

The Cadre Course commenced on Sunday 19 March with all course members expecting a simple BPFA, followed by a brief and an early knock off, before the course really got going on Monday. However, the Trg Wing staff had other plans and a few surprises for us, which would turn out to be the general pattern of the course.

Once the BPFA was completed, we changed into Combat 95 and were given a brief on what would be happening over the next few days. We were then given 15 minutes to be on the square in immaculate Number 2 dress. After a thorough inspection, we were each scored on our turnout and then it was back into Combat 95 to complete the written assessments on BCDT, CBRN, Wpns, Fieldcraft and Map Reading. We all thought this would be the end of the day, but we were then told that we were to give our previously prepared 15 minute presentations that evening. We eventually left the Trg Wing at 2100 hrs and the shock had given us all a taste of what was to come.

The first few days of the course were mostly classroom based. They were intended to revise knowledge forgotten since basic trg, and to teach us new skills such as model making and the giving and receiving of orders. Though some of the lessons were long and tedious, they helped a great deal to improve our knowledge before going into the field and, fortunately, death by Power Point was kept to a minimum.

On Tuesday 21st a CFT 'with a twist' was planned. The first 4 miles were to be completed as a squad, with the return leg being best effort. **Sig Smith** proved he was fast, with or without weight to carry, by winning the CFT as well as the BPFA and **Sig Mulligan** gave a lot of the male participants something to think about, finishing in the top half.

On Wednesday 22nd, we deployed to Haltern Trg Area to conduct the field ex, which was to be the main area in which we were to be tested. The first 4 days were set aside for lessons, to teach or refresh all the skills we would need for the final ex. Everything from harbour drills, duties of a sentry and sect attacks was covered and though the schedule was busy, **WO1 Cooper** and the Trg Team found time for a visit from an AAC Lynx helicopter, to raise morale in the wet conditions.

The ex proper began from Sunday evening onwards, and after receiving a set of platoon orders we set off to establish the harbour that was to be our home until Wednesday.

As the days went on, the patrols evolved into occasional ambushes, then contacts and culminated on Wednesday afternoon with a platoon attack on 3 positions. One sect took a hilltop GPMG position and provided fire sp as 2 and 3 sects took

Prize winners Sig Applegate, Best Field Soldier and LCpl Palmer, Top Student

their objectives. Once re-org had been called, we all knew we had made it through the ex as the tpt home pulled up in the distance. Once back in Herford, wpns cleaning was, as ever, a tedious chore that reminded us that it wasn't over yet.

Once all the admin had been done, it was straight into rehearsals for the pass-off parade. On Thursday night, we dined in the Sergeants' Mess and the CO, **Lt Col Robson**, presented some of the individual and sect awards. **Sig Applegate** received the Top Field Soldier award, **Sig Smith**, the Best Fitness and 1 Sect guided by **Cpl Wilkinson**, were the best Sect. The Top Student Award was saved for the next day.

On Friday 31 March, the course came to an end with the pass-off parade in the gym due to the weather, and the Top Student, **Sig Palmer**, received his LCpl stripe from the CO, watched by the Regt. The course had been a challenge in many ways, but as promised by **WO1 Cooper** at the start, we all finished it better soldiers.

Special mention must also go to **Sig Adams** who received the 'Spoon of Doom' Award and to **Sig Thomas** who received the best Map Reading Award, for getting lost before even leaving the harbour.

EXERCISE RHINO ADVANTGARDE *- by 2Lt Copeland*

At 0600 hrs on a cold winter morning at Hammersmith Barracks, 37 members met to head south to the Austrian Alps, for EX RHINO ADVANTGARDE. We were headed for a weeks skiing, with the majority of the group being non-skiers.

We arrived in Hochfilzen, a small, local resort with plenty of snow, which pleased everyone. The first morning was quite a laugh. As most people had never put skies on, the T Bar was, to say the least, a little bit challenging. Unfortunately for us, the weather was not very kind and visibility for our first morning was dreadful, but it didn't deter anyone and after a hearty Austrian lunch, everyone was keen to get back on the slopes. I don't think anyone had realised how exhausting a day's skiing can be and after a little rest and an interesting dinner, most were too weary to head out for Karaoke. A few managed to drag themselves out and stole the show, including **LCpl Walker** and **Sig Breese**. I think we have found our next Pop Idols.

We spent the next day at the same resort. Thankfully, the sun shone but by the end of the day, everyone, including all the beginners, had skied the entire area, which was impressive, considering the day before they were barely able to stand on skis.

We headed for Steinplatter on our third day. This was fantastic, as it was a much bigger and more challenging area. Unfortunately it was packed, but most people managed to avoid other skiers. It was evident by the end of the day however, that everyone had picked up skiing and confidence within the group was definitely growing. It was helped of course, with regular stops for the hot chocolate and cream, which was an essential part of the day for everyone.

We had a civilian instructor attached with us, who was wildly impressed with her group and was quoted as saying "This was the best group I had ever taken because they made me laugh so much. I wanted to keep them for a month". I don't think anyone complained, what with her being a tall, leggy blonde Norwegian, they all seemed happy.

Another day on Steinplatter wasn't quite the same. The weather closed in dramatically and by 1500 hrs, the lifts had been closed. It just meant that when **LCpl Wright** tried jumping Olympic style, he had plenty of snow to land in.

The evening's activities never seemed to give us a minute's rest, and this particular day was no exception. After our day on the slopes, we had a 2.6km sledge run, up on 2 T Bars, and then down hill all the way. Steering was optional and I think by the time we got to the bottom, everyone had a small story to tell about ending up in the powder.

With two days left, everyone attempting their Basic Ski Proficiency passed, and about 10 people got their ASP, which **Sgt Robertson** took us through.

Special thanks go to **SSgt Robinson**, **Sgt Robertson**, **2Lt Hodges** and **2Lt Hillhouse** for all their hard work in making it an absolutely brilliant skiing exped.

MISU TROOP BANJA LUKA

Life in the Balkans has taken an unexpected turn for the better in the last month. After weeks of snow and empty promises that "summer is just around the corner," the hot weather finally made an appearance. This was obviously a cue for the Gym Queens to make it out of their warm confines, and strut around showing off the product of their hard winter's trg. That gym mirror really does enhance the figure well!

Spring has brought with it a change of BGs, and a farewell is said to 1 RGR and a equally warm welcome to 1 GH. Confusion still remains as to what exactly a 'Howard' is, and more importantly why is he Green? (Answers on a postcard please). Early morning runs have turned into episodes of "running the gauntlet" with the Bulgarian Coy who are taking their turn at guarding the Metal Factory. Having been asked on the recce where they could store their RPGs, it was always going to be an interesting integration. Maybe the Uncle Bulgarians have an alternative approach to peacekeeping, a novel approach to a withdrawal strategy perhaps!

Comms continue to prove frustrating to achieve, as ISIS continues to fall over more frequently than a Slovenian having a quiet drink. Despite the frustration, all are continuing to work hard and enhance the reputation of the Corps.

MISU Tp is continuing to fly the flag on all fronts, with several notable sporting and cultural events taking place. In the 2 recent 'fun runs', MISU members put the rest of BLMF to shame – with **Maj Keily** leading from the front. However, even he has been challenged on this front, as **WO2(SSM) Tressider** and **Sgt Woosnam** seem determined to go out for even longer runs. Surely a marathon will be completed by the end of tour?

Sgt Cooper Receiving his award

Never ones to ignore the cultural side of life, another battlefield tour to Sarajevo took place. This was again an ideal opportunity for younger members to see first hand the reasons for British and EUFOR involvement in the Balkans. Talking of visits, **Sgt Cooper** managed to wangle a trip back to the UK to receive an award. The Best Class One IS Engineer for 2005, (also known as Chief Geek 05). The award is highly deserved and reinforces the sterling job he has carried out, fighting the ongoing crisis with ISIS.

Not to be outdone, **Cpl Binnie**, 21 Sig Regt, was whisked back to represent the Army at netball in the Tri Service Championships. With the tour coming to an end, everyone is now looking forward to returning home to friends and families and a well deserved break. We look forward to handing over to 97 Sig Sqn(V), but there's still time to get another fun run in.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM **WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

In the last 2 months, the Regt's feet have hardly touched the floor with Sqn trg, Tp deployments, a Regtl ex to Devon and a few inspections. All personnel have worked extremely hard, really earning their Easter break. Cormorant has been tested over greater distances than before, and stood up to 40mph winds and the Ops Officer's rants.

More recently, it was a delight to commission the Regtl YofS, and **Capt John Nixon** has now moved to take up the post as RCMO (South). We wish him, **Andrea** and **Ashley** every future success.

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT - ARMY SQUASH CHAMPIONS 2006

The season began with high hopes for the Regtl team, as we had a nucleus of good players. The challenge was always going to be, trying to get everyone together at the same time, for both trg and competitions alike. The first competition was the Royal Signals Individual and Team Championships in September 05, and after sterling performances from **SSgt Dhir**, **Capt Paul Downie** and **SSgt Guman,** the Regt managed to stave off a strong challenge from *RAF Digby* and retain the Davies Stewart Cup. Fresh from this success, the next important competition was the 2 Div Championships at AFC Harrogate. With 8 teams entered, the Regt's No 2 seed absent for the first day, and having never won the Championships before, this was a far more difficult prospect. However, with some punishing work from **Capt Steve Knight** standing in for the No 2 seed on the first day, the team of **SSgt Dave Gallagher**, **Maj Colin Jackson** and **Capt Paul Downie** came through victorious to lift the Cup. The match of the tournament was **SSgt Dave Gallagher** who was narrowly defeated by an Army player, even though he was playing on only one leg, after a long term injury.

Feeling full of confidence, the next competition in our sights was the Northern Area Championships. The Regt lifted the trophy without losing a match; a great achievement by **SSgt Dave Gallagher**, **Maj Colin Jackson**, **SSgt Dhir**, **Capt Nirmal** and **SSgt Guman.** This set the team up to go through as the Northern Region winners for the Army Championships – the big one! Although the team consisting of: **SSgt Dave Gallagher**, **Maj Colin Jackson**, **SSgt Dhir**, **Capt Nirmal**, **Capt Paul Downie** and **Cpl Rudra** were a bit knackered and windswept from EX KEY FLIGHT, we were all present and correct and looking forward to doing battle with the opposition.

The first day consisted of matches against the Northern Ireland and Germany winners and apart from an unexpected loss by **Maj Colin Jackson**, and an extremely rusty performance by **SSgt Dave Gallagher**, on freezing cold courts, the team got through 5 – 0 and 4 – 1 with **Cpl Rudra** putting in a fine performance. On Day 2 the first match went well, with a victory for us 5 – 0, leaving the Army Cup to be decided between the Northern and Southern Winners. The Regt's No 4 seed **Capt Nirmal** went down, but not without putting every ounce of effort into it and leaving a little blood on the court as well, a great effort. **Maj Colin Jackson** at No 2, played with extreme confidence and, as predicted, came through 3 – 0. The No 5 seeds were extremely well matched and as it progressed, **Capt Paul Downie** kept his cool and came out the winner 3 – 1. **SSgt Dhir** played with all the passion and guts that he could muster, putting up a fantastic fight but went down, leaving the match tied at 2 - 2 with the No 1 seeds left to play. As predicted **SSgt Dave Gallagher's** experience shone through and he outclassed his opponent, without getting into top gear, and won 3 – 0, giving the Army Cup to the Regt. The last time any Royal Signals team won the Cup was 16 years ago and this is only the 2nd time in the history of the Army Cup Competition; a fantastic achievement. The Regt is now looking forward to building a bigger squad to take on all comers next year!

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj M S Tivey**
SSM **WO2(SSM) D Leask**

Over the last 2 months, HQ Sqn have continued to support the comms sqns during their various exs, and indeed had several successes on the Regtl ex, including shutting the M5 for 15 minutes during rush hour!

Even though RCMO North is only admincon this unit, we would like to bid farewell to **Capt Tony Manktelow**. He goes with our best wishes for every success in his new career, at the same time, we welcome **Capt Bob Low** to the officer corps, and to the Regt. We hope you enjoy your time here.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

By the time these *Wire* Notes are out, both the OC Sqn and SSM will be married – no not to each other! The Sqn would like to wish **Maj Mel Rayner** and her husband **Mr Colin Slade** all the best for the future, as well as extend our best wishes to **WO2(SSM) Chris Ogg** and **Emma**. The Sqn have had to say good bye to **Capt Jim King** and **Capt Sarah Panting**, both of whom have been posted to pastures new. We wish them both every success in their new units and thank them for their tireless endeavours with Cormorant and SLE.

The Sqn now welcome the new Ops Officer, **Flt Lt Jamie Thompson**, who brings a pinch of the RAF with him, but we will soon knock that out of you, Sir. In addition, the Sqn would like to welcome **2Lt David Marcham**, from his Tp Comd course into 214. Hopefully once you have mastered Sp Tp, and earned the right to have a pen, you might be allowed into a comms tp – oh yes, but only once we have managed to post its current incumbent!

EXERCISE GLOBAL VINE - *Sgt Carr*

At the end of February, Roman Tp deployed to Cyprus for 4 weeks to test the SLE Strategic Comms Tp ability to deploy overseas. The advance party, led by **Sgt 'Giz' Carr**, left 48 hrs in advance to make sure all was ready, only to be delayed at *RAF Brize Norton*. The vehicles: a Cormorant CLASP, 2 Bedfords and a FEPS Generator arrived at *RAF Brize Norton* led by a stressed out **Sgt Dusty Millar**, after packing and loading fun at the JAMC! The advance party arrived a good hour before the main body at *RAF Akrotiri*, and then travelled to Episkopi Garrison in a very slow convoy, led by the SLE OC **Capt Andrew Stannard**. We then got our first taste of the culinary delights of Cyprus by going for an Indian!

Prior to the main ex phase, SLE set up in a building of opportunity within the Garrison area. On initial set up, all comms worked fine back to the UK. The ex was going extremely well, until the dreaded move to Paramali. The generator brakes stuck whilst going through the treacherous hills of Happy Valley, the TALON didn't want to play ball and **LCpl Knight** and **Cpl Lee Armitage**, after a few hours of head scratching and many

support calls on the Sat Phone, declared that the TALON was dead. The OC at this stage was attempting to communicate with an old dustbin lid and a baked bean can, as the 2 Sig Regt main ex was about to start. Alas defeat was inevitable, and the back up plan ITD trg and battle lessons were activated and led by **SSgt Andy Hayler**.

LWRN DEPLOYMENT TO PAKISTAN - *by Cpl Danny Raw*

SLE Tp has been at R1 readiness for several months now. Countless personal kit and docs checks have taken place, almost causing loss of speech for **Sgt Joey Maguire** AKA 'show me your underpants'. With the ever-looming handover of SLE to Roman Tp in May, the mere thought of a deployment was looking bleak, until a cry for help was heard from Pakistan. LOCT team 1 was stepped up for the job, which consisted of a 2 man crew, **Cpls Danny Raw** and **Frodo Simpson**. The other LOCT team was a little upset not to be chosen, especially as the team comd was the highest ranking Cpl in the British Army, **Cpl Glennard** (AKA 'The General').

Within a short space of time, the crew deployed from York to PJHQ for briefings, further briefings, some admin including the collection of visas, and more briefings. Before long, the team found themselves at Heathrow Airport awaiting their flight, Business Class naturally with full access to the executive suite (apparently it was all to do with the weight of the baggage). This was a real pain because, as professional soldiers, the LOCT team adapted rather too well and became used to their fully reclining seats and enough leg room to store a small elephant. During the flight, **Cpl Simpson** allegedly found himself teaching **Cpl Raw** how to mix the perfect Bloody Mary.

After a long flight, a good sleep and some traditional food, the work started. A Messaging System was to be installed and commissioned, ready for staff officers to break, or hopefully use as part of Op HERRICK. Due to the excellent trg 2 Sig Regt provided, 2 days was all that was needed to get the job done. Time for shopping was limited, as parts of the area were unsafe, but the market area in Islamabad proved more than enough for the crew. At times the shopping was slightly confusing for **Cpl Raw**, when he noticed most things had UK Matalan price tags on them. Recovery back to the UK was swift and sure; there were then hot debriefs at PJHQ, followed by tall tales of adventure and excitement for the Tp back in York.

EX KEY FLIGHT - *by Cpl Wright*

The Regtl ex, EX KEY FLIGHT started on Monday 13 March. The build up to the ex had started many weeks before, and was based on a scenario that involved 2 Sig Regt deploying into the fictional country of Penwithia (Devon), as part of a force to restore the rightful government.

The crew of Cormorant Core Element 123 (C123) deployed from York at 0300 hrs. This was the start of an extremely long day, which ended with all Regtl assets congregated around the JAMC at South Cerney. The usual 'hurry up and wait' occurred on the airfield, before the vehicles were lined up again and then everyone moved into accommodation for a period of enforced rest. After this, the packet lined up and the crew of C123 deployed to the highly volatile region of Penwithia. After in-theatre processing at Okehampton Trg Camp, C123 deployed to Carradon Hill, a bleak and desolate place, and with support from 2 x Bearer Modules, established a Wide Area Switching (WAS) facility. The WAS acted as a hub ensuring that the Cormorant deployed network was resilient and robust.

Once on the hill top site, the crew established comms quickly with relatively no problems; except of course for **Sig 'Garth' Flood** who decided to drive a guy stake through a mains electricity cable. This, in turn, caused a minor explosion on a nearby pylon. The result of this was a digging team of 6 men from the Electricity Board, who came to remove the guy stake and repair the damage to the pylon. Other than this minor distraction, the WAS was very stable and the crew settled quickly into routine. The morale boost runs from SQMS 219 and OC 214 were a welcome distraction from the ration packs, which after 10 days of Menu G, were getting a little bland!

During the course of the ex, Cormorant was put through its paces. Two networks had to be deployed, due to an ongoing upgrade program. This provided a testing time for the Theatre Management Cell (TMC) and the Regional Management Cells (RMC). Despite the complications, both networks were established within the required timeframes. Short range RF links were used in favour of fibre lays and medium range links were successfully established up to 54km, well above the manufacturer's quoted figure of 30km. The Penwithian government was finally reinstated and the controlled tear down and recovery phase got underway. We deployed to Swynnerton Trg Camp, where we met the rest of the Regt. After an overnight rest stop, it was on the road again, destination York. The Regt returned to York and once the eqpt was turned around it was 'home James', for a long weekend and a couple of beers.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) NL Hunt**

SUPPORT TROOP

Since the start of the year, it has been an extremely busy period for 219 Sig Sqn, with the arrival of 9 new Cormorant dets. Our feet have hardly had a chance to touch the ground, with an extensive 2-week Systems Acceptance Test, a 2 week Sqn ex and the Regtl FT Ex. As can be expected, Easter leave is being eagerly anticipated!

The Sqn would like to congratulate **Maj Dave Duggan** and his wife **Lizzie** on the birth of baby **William** and also **SSgt(FofS) MacDonald** and his wife **Catherine** on the birth of **Caitlin**. The Sqn would also like to say welcome back to the 2IC, **Capt Si Smith,** from the sunshine and beaches in Tampa on Op VERITAS (Rear).

EAGLE TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt S Gray**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ulley**

After a period under the comd of Phoenix Tp, Eagle Tp was reformed in late March 2006. Many of the personnel have recently returned from operational commitments, including Op HERRICK and Op VERITAS. The Tp collected most of its Cormorant assets in January and took part in a successful Regtl Cormorant FT Ex in March, to Devon and Cornwall.

We would like to welcome a new Tp Comd, **Lt Simon Gray**, who arrives from Blandford, together with a new Tp SSgt, **SSgt Ulley**, who returns from Op HERRICK. In addition a welcome to **Sigs Hills** and **Johnson** who arrived from trg in Blandford. Congratulations also go to **LCpl Glendining** on his promotion; shame he was cross-posted to 214 Sig Sqn.

FALCON TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Scaife**
Tp SSgt **SSgt(QGS) Dhir**

We deployed to Catterick Trg Area for a 2-week Sqn Ex (EX KEY PHOENIX 06) in preparation of the upcoming Regtl ex, EX KEY FLIGHT 06. The Sqn had recently taken possession of its complement of Cormorant eqpt, and many of the personnel, returning from Op Herrick, were introduced to the new TT2 Cormorant eqpt and its capabilities. The ex was the first

deployment in the field of TT2 assets since arriving at the Regt, and for most of the personnel, a first opportunity to work with Cormorant eqpt and vehicles. The ex ran smoothly and was enjoyed by all. Especially with a few added home comforts during the ex, and the many bacon and egg banjos that **LCpl Porter** provided. The hard work of the Sqn on Ex KEY PHOENIX allowed the Sqn to deploy on the Regtl Ex, confident in the knowledge of their ability to sustain an operational Cormorant Network.

PHOENIX TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Higgins**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Belshaw**

EX KEY PHOENIX – PHASE 1

On a Saturday morning in February, 219 Sig Sqn deployed to Catterick Trg Area for a comms/key skills/ISWE ex. Cormorant TT2 was deployed into the field for the first time. An RMC and a JFLOGC notional HQ were supported at one location, while at the other locations; we had an APOD and a SPOD, both with an LMC and notional HQs.

From the moment we set off, it was all fun and games! It took about 4 hours to get from York to Catterick. **Sgt Ian Belshaw** saw his life flash before his eyes on several occasions, as **Sig Wendy Cunnington** was his driver, and had problems getting her old 4 Ton Bedford up the steep hills of Yorkshire and also keeping it on the road. We arrived in location in the mid-afternoon. The key skills phase started almost immediately. **Sgt Maj Neil Hunt** was teaching Defence of a Comms Site but the three Cs quickly became mixed up, as most of 219 wanted COMFORT instead of COMMS, to come first. **Cpl Matt Ashley** was teaching cam and concealment, which didn't take very long as his assistants, **Sig Neil Messenger** and **Sig Andy McGough** were more than up to the job. Various other lessons were taught throughout the day and night. The funniest was the driving into location at night, as we were all rusty on this particular skill. Brake light after brake light was illuminating the whole location, and so it was a good job that the enemy was not hot on our tails.

EX KEY PHOENIX – PHASE 2

Day 2 and the comms phase kicked in with a bang. Our mission was to establish comms ASAP. **LCpl Joe Perry** and **Sig Glen Bolden's** team both had dismounted dets to build. This was no easy task but with **Cpl Jono Johnson** on the team, how could we fail? Needless to say the whole network was in and working well ahead of schedule.

EX KEY PHOENIX – PHASE 3

We moved back to Imphal Barracks without any dramas to start the ISWE phase. Morale was low, the boys and girls were all within reach of home or their accommodation blocks, but could not sleep in them. **Sgt Snoz Davis**, being the switched on cookie he is, organised a surprise quiz and beers for all. Morale was soon lifted and the troops were happy once again.

ISWE (big tent) trg was conducted with ISWE IC **Sgt Davis**. There were many confused faces that day, but with **Cpl Stubbs** on hand, things were soon put right, and tents erected in all their glory. In no time at all, **Major Dave Duggan** had made his new RMC home in the ISWE, and with the new heating system in full flow, the RMC entourage were right behind him. Finally on Day 10, all dets moved back into garages for ex turnaround.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Stoter**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Kedar**

EX RED TRICORN - *by Cpl Durgaprasad Gurung*

246 Gurkha Sig Sqn has been very privileged to be able to take the role of NATO Reaction Force (NRF 6) from January 2006 for six months, with Cormorant, the latest and most sophisticated comms asset within the British Army,. All Sqn personnel are extremely happy as they have been able to support such a high profile task.

EX RED TRICORN was held during 9 - 22 January 2006. The Sqn's mission was to provide a backbone Communication Information System (CIS) on Cormorant. This used SATCOM to provide Wide Area connectivity, throughout the UK, via Satellite Ground Station Oakhanger, and onward, via DCSA Service Delivery Points (SDPs), to support 3(UK) Div HQ. All three Tps from the Sqn had different missions to support their respective HQs; Island Tp provided up to 30 voice and data subscribers to 19 Lt Bde at Catterick, Sek-kong Tp provided up to 30 voice and data subscribers to 101 Log Bde at Ludgershall and Kowloon Tp provided up to 30 voice and data subscribers for LCC (Land Command Component) forward and up to 100 voice and 91 data subscribers facilities in LCC Main at Barton Stacey, near Salisbury Plain. To establish the network around these locations, we used Bearer Module (BM) up to 30km and Talon SATCOM for unlimited distances. All voice, data and limited Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) and analogue line services were provided by using Local Area Support (LASp), which were vehicle mounted and transit cased.

During the ex, we had interface link and BTDS trials with Ptarmigan. We also had Video Tele Conferencing (VTC) through ISDN at different speed levels of 64kb/s, 128kb/s and 384kb/s.

This system is about teamwork, which involves different tradesmen to make it work. We learnt quite a lot about the system during the ex, as not everything is covered on the Cormorant course. I am proud to say that we have definitely sharpened our skills on the system and are even more confident to deploy anywhere in the world.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AG Hill**
RSM	**WO1 MJR Wakeling**

REGIMENTAL SAAM - *by Sgt Baz Barrett*

The Regtl Skill At Arms Meeting (SAAM) was fantastically organised by 222 Sig Sqn, with a lot of help from **SSgt Stevie Foord,** of HQ Sqn. The event was held over a 3 day period, in which we saw some of the coldest days in Bulford, ever recorded. With each Sqn entering two 5-man fire teams, led by an Officer or SNCO, the rivalry was high from the start. Everyone hoped to take back some of the exquisite silverware up for grabs.

The first shoot was the Para Regt Cup; a 2 mile march and shoot. Every fire team made it round the course, well within the 20 minute time limit, some faster than others. The fastest time for the march went to **Sgt 'Chairborne' Jakeman,** while bringing up the rear was **Sig Elliott**. Not that the time was important; it was actually holes in the target that would win the trophy. With an excellent shoot and only 3 shots dropped, it was **Sig Elliot** who helped his team into second place. The winning fire team for the shoot was HQ Sqn A, captained by **SSgt Foord**.

The second shoot was the Whittaker Trophy. With snow being blown into the eyes of the firers by a bitterly cold wind, which made it even harder to see the targets, some firers found an excuse for not performing too well. The hero of the match was **Sig Will Ashmore** dropping only 2 shots and helping 222 Sig Sqn A to victory.

Sig Pete Hornby proving that he can shoot as well as drive the CO

Day 3 saw more cold weather. The Roupell Cup and the Roberts Cup are 2 matches with a lot of points up for grabs, if you can keep your eye on the target and, ideally, hit it. Unfortunately for **Sig Hackett**, this was easier said than done. He swears he was aiming at his target, but every time he fired, the target in Lane 11 went down. It wouldn't be so bad, but he was on Lane 5! It was also a chance for 202 and 206 Sig Sqns to pull something out of the bag and claim a trophy or two. Unluckily for them, HQ Sqn A was on top form and won both matches, taking both trophies. An outstanding performance from **CSgt Mark Cooper** saw him take best individual firer of the whole SAAM and help HQ Sqn win best team, best fire team and 3 out of the 4 matches. All he needs to do now is to put in a demand for a new trophy cabinet to put all the silverware in. Being a great sportsman, **CSgt Cooper** presented his prize for the Best Individual firer to **Sig Elliot**, for being an excellent runner up. He felt he could not accept it, due to his experience as a Bizley top 100 winner. The Regtl shooting team has now been selected and we wish them all the best when they compete in the Corps and Div SAAM.

The HQ Sqn A Team

EX ICY DRAGON - *by Lt Vanessa Shipley*

After a busy period preparing the Regt for NRF 6 and engaging in EX RED TRICORN 1/06 on Salisbury Plain and Catterick in February, 42 members of the Regt and 5 from neighbouring units left Bulford, heading for the delights of the French Alps and Tignes in particular. All the Regtl ski instructors were taken out to France to support the exped and their instruction was first rate. **SSgt Andy Dawson**, **WO2 Ivan Goodchild** and **Sgt Pete Grime** put the more experienced skiers through their paces, while **Capt Nige Humphries** and **Cpl Mick Qualtrough** instructed the beginners. A large number of those on the exped had never skied before, but Tignes was perfectly set up to ease them in gently. During the early days, before the beginner group had mastered the snow plough stop, their route could be easily traced by the rather large holes in the snow banks lining the piste! For the advanced groups there was no avoiding the men's downhill slalom route. I was particularly glad that we were allowed to turn on the route and not 'egg' straight to the bottom. I think most would agree, it was not for the faint hearted! Award for gallantry has to go to **Sig McLaughlan**, for his bravery when sustaining spectacular dental injuries, while negotiating a black run on foot! The remainder of the exped passed relatively injury free and everyone enjoyed 6 quality days on the piste.

Is this the way to Amarillo?

The exped yielded successful results on the piste with **LCpl Taff Taylor** and **Cpl Ritchie Harris** receiving recommendations for instructor trg. Five personnel were awarded the Advanced Ski Proficiency Award and 18 gained their Basic Ski Proficiency Award. The remainder benefited from the quality of tuition they received, and will hopefully be ready to take their ASP test in the near future – roll on next year's 3 Div Sig Regt skiing exped!

EX RED TRICORN 1/06
- by Sig Claire Gibson and Sig Washington

206 Sig Sqn deployed for EX RED TRICORN 1/06 on 3 Feb. It was straight out to Salisbury Plain for the first 3 days, which was the Sqn Phase, involving military skills and comms trg to prepare us for the Regtl Phase. Once this was complete, the Sqn began the incredibly long drive to Catterick Trg Area, which took 10 hours, but felt like forever! On arrival, it was time for some enforced rest, which brought smiles to everyone's faces, before the hard slog of erecting the Land Component Comd HQ began the next morning. The full set up took us 2 days, which was an excellent time considering we had minimal manning, and it was almost all wasted when the wind picked up and a few of the DRASh pods decided to do kite impressions! After 3

days in routine, it was time to tear down the HQ and commence the long drive back down south, leaving the LO dets behind, so comms trials could be carried out. This included the 'mascara' det manned by **Sig Emma Thomas** and **Sig Claire Gibson**.

Once we arrived at Barton Stacey, we had another 2 days of hard work setting up the LCC HQ. Once it was complete, with a Cormorant det from 2 Sig Regt, everybody settled into routine and started to prepare for the various comms trials and visits, which were due to take place. The next 2 weeks were quite hectic, with visits from 1st (UK) Armd Div, the Tp Comd Course and the Project Roberts Team. Whilst all this was happening, along with various comms trials, we had to deal with mortar and small arms fire attacks, suicide bombers and protestors. The RSM would use anyone to take his asymmetric warfare to us, particularly in the form of bomb belts. We became so paranoid, that we very nearly checked the GOC and SOinC on their visits. We are pleased to report that neither blew up whilst on site! This was excellent trg, as the Sqn is due to deploy to Iraq in the late summer and when the alarms sound now, everyone comes together, to supply a strong fighting force to protect the HQ. These scenarios taught us, or refreshed our memories on what to do in different situations.

Back to comms. One of the most important comms trials carried out on the ex was 'Stretch BOWMAN'. This involved the LO dets in Catterick, with 19 Bde, forming a link with the HQ in the South, and this was done as secure Clansman to BOWMAN, VHF to HF back to VHF. This trial was a great success and the first time it has ever been achieved. So there were praises all round. Time flew, and it was soon time to begin the tear down of the HQ in the snow! Before we knew it, we were back in the garages conducting the ex turnaround. Spirits were high; as everyone knew that after a good night's sleep, there was a well deserved all ranks curry night to attend, where the beers and stories of the ex would be shared.

JNCO CADRE – Ex IRON FOOT - *by Sig Sam Bibby*

Challenging, rewarding and arduous are some of the words that spring to mind, as I look back on the past few weeks and ask myself: 'Was it worth it? Would I do it again?' The answer is very simple - yes!

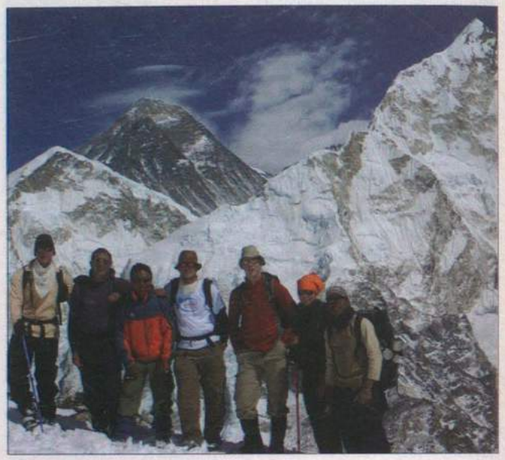
Thursday afternoon usually means thoughts of the upcoming weekend, but not so for the 30 young Sigs about to embark on their JNCO cadre. It was soon made very clear what we had to expect, with 'shakedown' PT late that evening. This was followed by a nice CFT at the crack of dawn, and the typical 'we are not here to mess you about' speech. Week 1 was long and tiring, with 0600 hrs PT sessions, block inspections, back to back tactics, NBC, FIBUA and field craft lessons. The small amount of free time we had, was spent ironing and bulling boots. I don't remember basic trg being that tough! But moral was high and each sect was already producing their own potential JNCOs.

Week 2 was where it all came into play; drill and weapon handling tests, comd tasks, and the ex phase. The first ex was only one day. One very long day! There was plenty for us to practise, such as harbour drills, sect attacks, patrols and leopard crawling. Following this, we had a 4 day ex, during which we were handed control of our own sects at various stages. This gave us all varying comd appointments, in situations such as NBC casualty evacuation, recce of enemy positions, VCPs and sect assaults.

Everyone was now showing their leadership qualities, not only in comd appointments but also as individuals, working for one another. But soon the final morning was upon us. This was it; time to assault the enemy! We moved into position at first light, and soon it was H hour. That was it, the mortar fire went in and the assault began. The enemy was well defended and in their built up location. It took all 3 sects and the people in the comd appointments, to maintain control and overrun the enemy; thus achieving our final objective. Then it was over. **Sig Jodie Blair** was promoted to LCpl for achieving top student in the course, while the rest of were left with a feeling of relief, satisfaction and pride. The following day, the occasion was marked by a formal dinner with the CO, **Lt Col Alan Hill**, and the trg staff; **WO2(SSM) Tony Ward**, **SSgt Steve Foord**, **Cpl Rob Varley**, **Cpl Drew McMann** and **Cpl Paul Denham**. I think everyone who participated learned something from this course and enjoyed it in some way. I would recommend all sigs to complete the JNCO cadre.

A TRIP OF A LIFETIME TO MOUNT EVEREST
- by Lt John Walton

In the early hours of 28 February 2006, a hardy band of 12 adventurers from 3 Div Sig Regt set off from Heathrow Airport headed for Kathmandu and the foot of Mount Everest. After a long and tedious journey, we arrived in the stifling heat of Kathmandu.



Everest – Fresh Air!

Following 48 hours of acclimatisation, briefings and kit preparation, we found ourselves on board a small plane flying to Lukla, with a broken fuel gauge, piloted by a 12 year old. The runway at Lukla is a 400m strip, cut into the mountain, with a solid rock wall at one end and a cliff at the other. The screams as we came in to land are quite a regular occurrence, apparently.

Thus began 15 days of trekking, with the target being the Kalapathar ridge (5600m) – the best vantage point for Everest. Our ascent took us through several villages, stopping at key altitudes for acclimatisation, before we were snowed in at 4500m. Our final push, through the snow, to Kalapathar was extremely hard work; the thin air affecting everyone in the group, far more than anyone expected. The sense of achievement when we finally reached the top and looked down on Base Camp and the route up to the summit of Everest was wonderful, and the sight itself was awe inspiring. The descent was much quicker than the climb, with time to spare for more monastery visits and a party with the Sherpas and porters, before flying back to Kathmandu. The effects of the altitude could be felt very clearly as we came down into the thicker air – everything became easier and simple breathing no longer hurt the lungs. With 2 days to go in Kathmandu before the flights home, the group separated to go sight-seeing and souvenir shopping, before boarding the minibus for the airport.

In total, the group managed to raise over £16000 for SSAFA Families Help as a result of sponsorship for the climb. The money raised will go to help the families of servicemen from across the forces.

231 Sig Sqn Gp deployed to Afghanistan

CO	**Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**

INTRODUCTION – *by Lt Col A R Blackwell*

In sport, we can celebrate a resounding win in the Bde Inter-Unit Boxing, a hard fought, gritty victory in the British Army Germany Football Cup and outstanding performances in netball, rugby, Nordic skiing, snow boarding and cross-country. At the same time, we are deploying a Sqn Gp to Afghanistan and taking the lead role in the Bde and ARRC trg and preparation of personnel for the forthcoming tranches of Afghanistan deployments. All of this shows that the Mighty Seventh rolls on; going firmly from strength to strength.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON GROUP DEPLOY – *by Lt McGuckian*

The majority of 231 Sig Sqn Gp have now deployed as the vanguard of the British Communication Network in Afghanistan. After an unexpectedly early departure on 3 March, 231 Gp found themselves ankle deep in snow for 2 days at Ramstein Airbase. After a lengthy C17 flight, we arrived in the slightly warmer environs of Kandahar Airfield. The initial deployment of troops and eqpt includes the soldiers supporting the Task Gp HQ in Lashka Gar, the BG HQ at Camp Bastion and the FOB in Gereshk.

Two weeks of acclimatisation and plug ups on Kandahar Airfield helped us to prepare for deploying forward to these locations. Concurrent to this, the comd element went forward to recce the individual sites and touch base with the troops already on the ground. For younger soldiers, who have not deployed on ops before, the extent and quality of the amenities at Kandahar Airfield came as quite a surprise. An excellent gym and extensive running routes, allow the Sqn a routine of morning PT, with just a few groans, and even afternoon sports.

The 2 larger dets have now moved forward to Lashka Gar and Camp Bastion, in order to get a foot on the ground and begin to put in the interim comms solutions. This has proved to be a fantastic opportunity to work in small independent dets, supporting a wide and varied mix of other Arms, whilst working in a multi-national environment.

Morale has been maintained by the dual strategy of watching the antics of other nations on early morning PT, combined with a weekly in-house newsletter, which goes to great lengths to highlight the week's ups, downs and (very) occasional faux pas from individuals.

BOXING NIGHT – *by Lt Mhango*

Elmpt Station, Hanger 2fi was the grand setting for the 1(UK) Sig Bde Inter-Unit Boxing competition. The contest consisted of 9 bouts, fought out between fighters from 7 Sig Regt, ARRC Sp Bn, and 16 Sig Regt.

A total of 7 fighters were eventually fielded, having been selected over the past few months from across the Regt. The first bout was a close run thing, with **LCpl Bennett**, 229 Sig Sqn, equally matched against **Pte Wareing**, ARRC Sp Bn. An impressive flurry of point winning punches in the third round helped **Bennett** to edge over **Wareing** and win his first Bantamweight fight by 18 points to 16 points. In the second bout, a highly impressive **LCpl Ward**, also 229 Sig Sqn, delivered a number of devastating rapid combinations, leaving his opponent reeling and causing the referee to stop the fight, within 30 seconds of the first bell. **Sig Carter**, 231 Sig Sqn, made it an impressive hat trick , earning

himself some good points in the first round, blooding his opponent in the second and demolishing him in the third, to earn a convincing points victory of 24 points to 5 points.

The final fight of the half, was another even match between **LCpl Bowler** of 229 Sig Sqn and the taller **Pte Kirlew**, ARRC Sp Bn. **Bowler** took some early punishment but stood his ground, despite his opponent's considerable height advantage. He made a thrilling fight back in the second round, but eventually succumbed to **Pte Kirlew's** longer reach, and the fight was stopped in the third round.

LCpl Bennett of 229 Sig Sqn receiving his honours

The proud medal recipients with their families after receiving their Awards

Following a short interval, **Sig Williams**, 229 Sig Sqn, squared up for the evening's Middleweight fight. He put up a very brave performance in the first two rounds, fighting close-in, trying to limit the punishment from his opponent's superior range. Unfortunately the last round went against him and the match ended 8 points to 3 points. In the Light Heavyweight match, **Sig Rossini**, 232 Sig Sqn, put the Regt back on track with a blistering assault on **Sig Zanone**, 16 Sig Regt. Eventually he had little response to **Rossini's** superior power and pace, and the match was stopped in the second round. The Regt's last bout of the evening was the Welterweight fight between **Sig Brent**, 232 Sig Sqn, and **LCpl Kemp**, 16 Sig Regt.

The final result saw 7 Sig Regt victorious with 20 points , ARRC Sp Bn second with 18 and 16 Sig Regt third with 14. All the fighters competing displayed remarkable courage, skill and endurance and no-one watching could have failed to be deeply honoured by their efforts for their Regiments. Boxers, well done!

RE-BURIAL OF WWII SERVICEMAN – *by Sgt Matt Hulbert*

On 2 March 06, soldiers from Rhine Garrison made up the Burial and Firing Party for the re-burial of what are believed to be the remains of 14 British soldiers and 4 airmen, from a downed Halifax crew, that were discovered while foundations were being dug for a supermarket, near Kleve.

The ceremony took place at The Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery in Reichswald on a bitterly cold, snowy morning. All the polish that had been applied to the boots proved insignificant, as ankle deep snow covered the party's footwear as we marched to the gravesite. VIPs were in attendance from across the Commonwealth, as was an old colleague of the downed aircrew (which really brought home why we were there) as well as various outsiders who had come to pay their respects.

The ceremony passed without any (noticeable) hitches. The WWII Air Force veteran was visibly moved and passed on his thanks to all afterwards. Drinks and a curry lunch followed in ARRC WOs' and Sgts' Mess, which was enjoyed by all.

PRESENTATIONS IN THE CORPORALS' CLUB – *by Cpl Plant*

It was another cold day at Javelin Barracks, as the Cpls' Club prepared for the presentations of Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to 4 of its members. The Bde Comd, **Brig NAW Pope** presented the medals. **Cpl Allen** from the Regtl Trg Wing was the first to be awarded with the medal and there was a bouquet of flowers for his wife **Tracy** as well, also there were his daughters **Melissa** and **Toni**. **Cpl Plant**, also from the Regtl Trg Wing, was next in line for the medal, again with flowers for his wife. Two of their sons were also present. **Cpl McGee**, from 232 Sig Sqn, and **Mrs McGee** were next, receiving medal and flowers respectively. Last, but not least, **Cpl Simpson** from 229 Sig Sqn received the final medal and the Comd presented his partner with a bouquet of flowers as well. This presentation doubled the number of medals **Cpl Simpson** has received, having served 15 years without deploying on any op tour.

After the presentation the Bde Comd, CO, RSM and the Cpls with their families led the way, for the rest of the Club to have a sit-down curry lunch. After the meal, it was back into the bar, to relax and have a drink or two. Thank you to the Cpls' Club which hosted an excellent afternoon that was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

ARCHIES OPENS AFTER REFURBISHMENT – *by Lt Joiner*

With the Regt now deploying to Afghanistan, as part of Op HERRICK and ISAF IX, the CO, **Lt Col Blackwell** decided that 'Archies', the Regtl Club should be renovated, to provide somewhere that all ranks could use to socialise when appropriate. At the same time, it would be providing a place for families to visit during the day for coffee, updates on the deployment and to meet with officers and soldiers from the Regt. With information that a rotating sqn ownership was on the cards, 232 Sig Sqn quickly volunteered for the first tenure, thus taking on the task of redecorating. In something reminiscent of the BBC's "Changing Rooms", a dramatic change of appearance started to take place. After some superb plastering repair by **Sig Fuller** and **Sig McArthur**, the 1970s freak-out, lurid orange walls were rapidly repainted with a fresher, light blue.

A newly sanded and varnished wooden floor in the bar, accompanied by new Ikea lights and a 52" plasma TV, now make the bar a trendy, clean and comfortable place to drink and socialise...a place to be seen in! In the function area, a DJ booth built by **LCpl Andy Pearson** and **Cpl Barkway** has nicely finished the newly carpeted, re-upholstered and thoroughly cleaned room.

In his address to the Sqn, **Maj Large**, OC 232 Sig Sqn, thanked everyone involved for their efforts, without whose hard work the spectacular change could not have been achieved, reserving special praise for **Sgt Mallison**, for heading up the project and providing hours of selfless commitment to ensure that all was completed in time for the opening party.

The club re-opened to a packed crowd of 7 Sig Regt soldiers, officers and their guests on Friday 17th March, with live music and a DJ. Now expected to open every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, 'Archies' bar is once again somewhere 7 Sig Regt can get together to share good times, as it was for so many years past.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Richard J Quinlan**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Mark Gilbert**

CHANGE OF COMMAND – *by Lt Col RJ Quinlan*

I am thrilled to have assumed comd of 10 Sig Regt on 20 March 06. This is a busy Regt, which has transitioned to a new and exciting role, with a focus on UK and Expeditionary Ops, in equal measure. The breadth of capability within the Regt is growing month by month, with the raising of a Specialist Teams Royal Signals Sqn on 1 April 06 and the transfer-in of the Electronic Counter Measures/Force Protection Sqn on 1 May.

Meanwhile, a huge effort is going into building the Technical Response Force ICS piece and working out what we are to provide the new LAND and AG Integrated HQ. All this while sustaining ceremonial ops in London, nascent UK Ops capabilities country-wide and the Corsham Hub. There are plans to absorb other capabilities too. When coupled with our geographic dispersal and lack of core estates plan, the changes to establishment and manning pressures, make this as challenging a role as any CO could wish for.

Our people are our most important asset. Military and civilian alike, all are important pieces in the jigsaw puzzle that is 10 Sig Regt. We are capable as individual sqns, but have great potential as a coherent Regt. And that is where I will expend my energies as CO: building this Regt to sit proudly alongside the other Regular Regts in the Corps.

CO 10 Sig Regt, Lt Col RJ Quinlan, Bruno, and Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, Brig M Lithgow CBE

We say a fond farewell to **Lt Col Paul Glibbery** and **Maj (Retd) Mike Bailes**. As CO and 2IC, both have taken this Regt through a huge transition. Good luck to you both.

We welcome **WO1(RSM) Gilbert** as the Regt's first RSM, since its reformation in July 2002. Things will never be the same around here, so watch out!

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj James Vosper**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Jim McEwan**

Another busy period for the Sqn since our return from Christmas leave, with Tps deployed on a number of Incident Response trg exs, a period of ceremonial trg in Chelsea Barracks, followed by the State Visit of Brazil, a Sqn led Regtl skiing exped to Austria and constant support to 251 Sig Sqn in Aldershot.

TRAINING – *by Capt Gudonis*

Throughout the year, the Sqn organises various trg days and exs. The trg days take place on most Tuesdays and vary from range practices to Incident Response team trg to professional development (7Q's, Orders, Risk Assessment, Project Management, etc) to Treasure Hunt style exs round London – the last checkpoint is normally a bar in Covent Garden! The Sqn also carries out physical trg every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and contrary to the common belief throughout the Corps, it is fairly cheeky. Nothing to do with the Unit Fitness Officer, **WO2(YofS) Dave Thomas**, trg for the London Marathon, 2 PTI's training for PT Corps selection, an ex-216 Tp Comd and an ex-Inf OC Sqn!

THE STATE VISIT OF BRAZIL – *by Capt Gudonis*

On 7 March 2006, the Brazilian President visited the United Kingdom. This event was a formal affair, which warranted the full state visit ceremonial parade. The parade consists of a Guard of Honour and Guards Band on Horse Guards Parade, where the visiting dignitary meets Her Majesty The Queen at the Royal Pavilion. The arrival of the visitor at the Royal Pavilion is marked by 2 simultaneous 42 gun salutes, fired from Green Park by King's Troop RHA and from the Tower of London by the Honourable Artillery Company.

The timings of the salute need to be precise, as Her Majesty has been known to comment on any irregularities in timing. The Sqn provides street liners to report on events, e.g. locations of the Royal Carriage, and act as operators for the Foot Guards Half

Coy Comds. Additionally, 238 operators work in the Horse Guards ops room and report on movement of all Troops, to and from Wellington Barracks.

Cpl Shey street lining on The Mall during the State Visit of Brazil

BUCKINGHAM PALACE – *by Cpl Orme*

One of the more unusual tasks that personnel from 238 take part in are those at Buckingham Palace. The State Visit of Brazil resulted in one such tasking. The volunteers/pressed men (both the same it seems) met at the Tp at 2000 hrs for initial inspections and to re-assure the Tp Comd, **Captain Paul Gudonis**, that his 'One's' did not make him look fat. The Airwave radio, in the base of my back, stretched the buttons, making my normally slim athletic physique appear slightly desperate to burst from my jacket!. When all were satisfied and fitted with appropriate comms we proceeded to the Palace.
Once inside and following posh sandwiches and biscuits in a cafeteria, the group was split with two very differing groups: those who had done this before and as such, took the whole thing in their stride and those like myself, and the SSM, who looked like tourists wandering around, admiring the decor and lavishness of the whole thing. The event itself was simply to ensure that the various dignitaries (MPs and celebrities alike) got their transport when required. Thankfully, the evening went without a hitch and 238 should be allowed back!

WO2 (SSM) McEwan posing before the stairs to the Ball Room in Buckingham Palace

LOOK FORWARD – *by Capt Gudonis*

The coming months are just as busy as the previous ones, with a Sqn level military skills ex using TES weapons effect eqpt at the end of March, a visit from the GOC Theatre Troops, CORPSAAM and LONDISTSAAM and Easter leave in April, ceremonial trg for the Queen's Birthday Parade and (more importantly) the Army *v* Navy Rugby and subsequent Church Parade in May. The majority of June will be rehearsals for the Queen's Birthday Parade and support to a number of Beating Retreat events. The pace slows slightly in July, with two 1- week AT packages at Fremington Camp, before Chelsea Barracks becomes a ghost town in August, our maximum leave period.

A number of personnel have also moved on in the past few months, including **Sgt Phillips** who has left us for the MOD Main Building (nice!), **Cpl Hallway** who has been posted to PJHQ (even nicer!) and **Cpl Mulvaney**, who leaves on posting, after completing his IS Engr conversion course. Additionally, **Cpl Siddall** has left us for the greener pastures of civilian life (?) and **LCpl Candler** has jumped ship for a life in Singapore, with his wife, before anyone jumps to any cross-dressing conclusions! The Sqn welcomes **Cpl Orme**, who has joined us from Cyprus. Five out and one in, something does not add up. Throughout this busy period the Sqn has also managed to squeeze in some leave, lots of testing physical trg, sports afternoons on some Wednesdays and a few social events in the City, including a couple of visits to The Church.

241 (STRS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj (TOT) AG Jenkins**
SSM **WO2 Paul Batley**

The 1st Apr 2006 was indeed a historic day for the Corps, 10 Sig Regt and the Installation Technician community with the formation of 241 Specialist Teams Royal Signals (STRS) Sig Sqn. The Sqn has been born from the requirement to support Expeditionary and Enduring ops with Instl Tech capability, as used to such great effect in the Balkans and more recently on Ops TELIC and HERRICK.

Lt Col Quinlan and Maj (TOT) AG Jenkins outside SHQ

Within certain Royal Signals field units, Instl Techs are under utilised. This is no fault of the unit or the Instl Techs themselves, but is a consequence of the role of the unit and the eqpt used to fulfil that role. This means that, coupled with DCSA and contract support of in-barracks telephony and data systems, the Instl Tech in many cases has little or no role whatsoever. For the individual, this means limited job satisfaction and skill fade.

The Instl Techs Brigading Plan is an initiative that identified the above capability shortfall and seeks to redress this balance, whilst offering maximum sp to field units. Instl Techs, within field units under HQ LAND, will be restructured into 241(STRS) Sig Sqn, with LSNs being transferred on 1 Apr 06 and MCM moving

personnel into the newly formed Sqn by 1 Apr 07. The donating units are:

1(UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, including 4, 7,
20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqns
3(UK) Div Sig Regt, including 1, 12,
19 Bde HQ and Sig Sqns
21 Sig Regt (AS)
22 Sig Regt
101 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
102 Log Bde HQ and Sig Sqn

The Adjt of 10 Sig Regt has made initial contact with the Adjts and 2ICs of the above units and together they will formulate a migration plan, which will meet the needs of both the units involved and the soldiers affected.

So what will we look like and where will we based. The Sqn is based around an SHQ in Corsham and 3 identical Instl Tps; 1 based in Corsham, 1 split between Corsham and Wilton and 1 based in Elmpt Station.

The Sqn Mission Statement is as follows:

"To provide specialist installation teams for expeditionary operations and in support of existing Defence infrastructure worldwide, in order to support the nominated commander."

The projects are usually of short duration, 4/6 weeks with the complete Instl Tech skill set being exercised on the varied tasks. We also have a more stabilised role supporting UK based exs and tasks in support of HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj CP Shead MBE**
SSM **WO2(SSM) TW Ewart**

CINC'S COMMENDATION FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE

WO2(Supvr IS) Craig Collins was recently presented with the CinC's Commendation for Meritorious Service. This award was official recognition for his success as the Project Manager of the HQ LAND Delamination Project. This technically complex project required the installation of over 350km of fibre optic cable, the rebuilding and configuration of 1600 desktop machines, and the entire migration of a 4 star HQ's data.

Gen Sir Richard Dannatt KCB CBE MC presenting WO2 Collins with the Commendation for Meritorious Service

EXERCISE UGLY BEAR - *by Cpl Neill*

During February 2006, 243 and 238 Sig Sqns deployed on EX UGLY BEAR, a Regtl Battle Camp at Bramley Trg Area near Basingstoke. The SSM planned a trg package, with the aim of introducing us to likely situations that we could find ourselves in, while deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan.

We reluctantly signed for the eqpt, expecting a typical week of early morning PT and being messed about from pillar to post, from sunrise to sunset and beyond.

On arrival at Bramley, the SSM's merry band of DS including **SSgt(YofS) 'Tommy' Tucker**, **SSgt Bryan Flynn**, **SSgt Bob Watson**, **Sgt Mick Lawlor**, **Sgt Neil Tarry** and last, but certainly not least, **Sig 'Scooby' Tucker**, a most affectionate German Shepherd dog, were there to greet us. More kit was issued and we were shown to our windowless accommodation, and with no time to find a pit space, the briefings and lectures began.

On Day 2 after our boil in the bag breakfast, we set off to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where we were given a crash course on the Orders process and the Seven Question Estimate. As a concurrent activity, we were also taught how one is to drink coffee from a china cup. Arriving back in camp the SSM began his lessons on a variety of subjects. These included one on personal kit, i.e. the stuff he carries learned from experience. For example, night candles to light hexi blocks so you don't have to use a match. Big question is, what do you use to light the candle in the first place…a match? That aside, from para cord for your boots, to the type of clothing to be worn, made our own packing look wholly inadequate. After a briefing on the following day's activities we set off with our Bergens for a chilly night's sleep and a premonition that the next morning's mess tin wash would be no better than the first.

Helicopter crash site

On Day 3, the RAVC provided a demonstration on the way dogs can be used as assets during ops. The dog handlers are constantly on ops in both Iraq and Afghanistan, with average tour lengths of up to 12 months. Other lessons and briefings covered throughout the week included a Media Ops brief illustrating how the media effect ops. The main emphasis was on how to talk to and deal with the media, in various situations. We also had a comprehensive First Aid trg package from the YofS, as well as anti-ambush drills. The highlight of the week was the leadership development area. This involved climbing trees, crossing wire bridges with leaps over voids, all about 10m – 15m up.

The last 2 days were the testing phase, with scenarios covering all the skills we had learned during the week, such as dealing with media, casualty handling, anti ambush drills (both vehicle and patrol), and the grand finale was the Defence of a Comms Site. Management of the defence, which sounds pretty simple, was soon to be a rude awakening for those given comd

appointments. It's not easy when simulated casualties occur: wpns jam, all while trying to maintain an effective defence. It was a period of confusion and many burnt fingers. Over the next several hours, repeated attacks were beaten off and eventually with relief to the defenders and attackers alike, ENDEX was called. Littered upon the ground were the empty blank cases of some 11000 blank rounds.

Our final evening in Bramley Training Area was capped off with a few beers and boil in the bag and a rather amusing skit performed by **Sig 'Dorris' Day**, whose impersonation of the SSM left us all in stitches and ended a thoroughly enjoyable and informative week, which every body gained from.

251 (UK OPS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Nik Beecher**
Ops Officer	**Capt Andy Campbell**
Ops YofS	**WO2(YofS) Jim Bromfield**
Supvr IS	**WO2 Si Graham**
FofS	**SSgt (FofS) Kev Eaves**

Since the re-organisation of the Regt, 251 has also reorganised to become the UK Ops Sig Sqn and charged with providing ICS support to UK Ops, at very short notice. In order to fulfil this role the Sqn has taken on a number of unique capabilities:

OP BASILISK

The Sqn assumed the ICS commitment for Op BASILISK from 30 Sig Regt on 2 Sep 05. In essence, the task provides the 4 main HQs deployed to Blue Light Crisis Ops at Very High Readiness. The dets provide Secure Voice, Fax and File Transfer facilities to the key players at these HQs.

CASBAH

CASBAH has just entered service and provides a High Data Rate Microwave link between 2 key sites deployed under Blue Light Crisis Ops. It will allow High Resolution data to be assessed in a clean environment away from any potential threat.

OP COMPASS

The Sqn also assumed an Incident Response Team (IRT) commitment from 30 Sig Regt at the same time. The team provides Formal Messaging, Insecure/Secure Voice and Fax, VTC and remote connection to the MOD restricted Intranet.

EDWIN

EDWIN is a deployable LAN providing up to a 100 staff HQ with Restricted and limited Secret IS and Voice/Fax systems and has already been used in support of OP FRESCO ZULU 2.

EXERCISE HOT SANDS – SWYNNERTON

The Sqn deployed for the first time, in its new UK Ops role, to Swynnerton Trg Camp on 6 Feb to conduct individual and collective trg, in order to become licensed to operate as part of the United Kingdom's Technical Response Force (TRF).

The week started like any other day in the Royal Corps, with PT rain or shine – part of the latest craze is doing PT in pitch blackness, hard core! All members of the Sqn were treated to some excellent and informative trg on OP BASILISK, CASBAH, OP COMPASS, and Airwave. The rest of the week was taken up with on the job eqpt trg, putting into practice everything learned during the week. This was followed by an excellent visit to the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), which was also exercising at Swynnerton. This was a real eye opener to all Sqn members, seeing what eqpt they used and the capabilities they provided.

The final phase of the ex was a NavEx around Staffordshire and the surrounding areas. The aim of this phase was to train and prepare Sqn personnel for rapid deployment on map reading whilst on the move, and more importantly voice procedure over Airwave. A lot of lessons were learned that will be put to good effect on the next EX HOT SANDS in June of this year. The main successes of this ex was the licensing of the Sqn to be able to deploy on UK Ops and the opportunity it afforded to train the whole of 2 Tp on the new CASBAH eqpt.

EXERCISE SINK OR SWIM – *by Sig Malcolm*

On a cold Monday morning, at an hour most people would prefer to be asleep, 13 members of 251 (UK Ops) Sig Sqn embarked on EX SINK OR SWIM, a 3 day ex involving helicopters, boats and a few drops of water.

On our first day, we visited the 'Dunk Tank' at *RNAS Yeovilton*, where after a quick brief on how to take off our seatbelts and jettison the windows, we were strapped into a simulated helicopter and dunked into a surprisingly warm pool, at varying angles and levels of darkness.

Most of the group escaped the submerged helicopter without incident, until **Cpl Sid Maxwell**, with the water rapidly rising behind him, forgot he was the one operating the window release handle, and proceeded to bang on the window and scream for help. Eventually he escaped, but not after forgetting to release his seatbelt. For some reason he didn't want to join in during the pitch black run later.

The next day involved a visit to the Tank Museum at Bovington and a 'walk' over the hills in the Lulworth Cove area and although wet and windy, a good time was had by all. The final day of the ex involved a visit to the Damage Repair Unit at HMS Raleigh. After watching a video of what seemed like the Titanic going down, we all proceeded to enter a huge ship simulator, which can rotate to angles that ships wouldn't normally achieve.

After plugging up various holes and evacuating the engine room, which was never going to be saved, it was noticed that one of the groups had done a perfect job of how to plug a hole, albeit a few metres from where the hole actually was. Overall, everyone enjoyed the experience and just hope we never have to use the skills that we learnt!

1 TROOP

OC	**Capt Nic Berry**
BASILISK YofS	**SSgt(YofS) Pete Sykes**

MY TIME AT 251 SIGNAL SQUADRON ... SO FAR – *by Sig Talbot*

My first posting, following my Area Systems Operator trg at the Royal School of Signals, was to 251 (UK Ops) Sig Sqn. At the time, the unit was in the developing stages of changing from providing fixed support to LANDCSS(R), to a UK Ops Sig Sqn. I knew that 251 wasn't a Ptarmigan unit, so I began to worry a little, as I didn't know what to expect. To my surprise, it wasn't as daunting as I had expected. The systems that I work with have many similar aspects to Ptarmigan installations, so I could use the principles that I had learnt during my trade trg.

My role as an operator in 251 is to set up and engineer our installation, to provide secure comms to the Standing Joint Commander for Crisis Operations such as a natural disaster or a terrorist act. We also provide voice and data facilities to other military and civilian agencies, such as the AWE. We have found it to be very successful, especially on recent exs BRIGHT FUTURE, working with West Yorkshire Police, and on HOT SANDS as part of the TRF.

I would recommend 251 (UK Ops) Sig Sqn as a posting to others in my trade group, as the unit has a high profile, specialist role. We deploy on lots of unusual exs to test and improve our operating skills and deployability. In the future, the unit will be trialling and taking on new eqpt to help in its role.

2 TROOP

OC	**SSgt(YofS) Nige Brewin**
SSgt	**SSgt Dani Thwaite**

First, we bid a sad farewell to **Cpl 'Bradders' Bradley**, who leaves us to start a fresh career outside the military, good luck **Bradders**. We welcome into the Tp: **LCpl Rob Charlton** on a permanent basis and **Sgt Dean Thompson** and **Cpl Stu Firth** on attachment from 238 (London) Sig Sqn. Congratulations to **SSgt Dani Thwaite** on her promotion to WO2 and on her pregnancy. Congratulations also to **Sgt Iain Hamilton** and **Sgt Ian McKenna** on becoming proud fathers recently.

CASBAH

2 Tp recently took delivery of the CASBAH vehicle platforms; a purpose built, high capacity, data bearer system used by the Sqn in sp of the TRF. **SSgt (YofS) Nige Brewin** led the trials prior to its coming into service, ably assisted by **Cpl Mark O'Donovan**, **Cpl Bradley**, **LCpl 'Mitch' Mitchinson** and **Sig Rob Wareham**, spending much of the preceding months with the Royal Engineers on various exs throughout the UK.

The two dets, known as the Master and Slave, have been given the nicknames of Caesar and Spartacus respectively. An extremely visible asset, these detachments turn heads wherever they go and are completely user friendly.

One of the CASBAH Landrovers in use on Long Valley South Training Area

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col SJ Vickery**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) J Reid**

HQ SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Williams**
A/SSM	**SSgt SJ White**

CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S VISIT – *by JT Martin*

On 13 March 2006, a group of 9 children from Chernobyl visited 14 Sig Regt (EW) for the day. The charity, "Chernobyl Children's Lifeline", organises 2 annual visits to the UK for a group of children, as a respite from the radioactive environment in which they currently live. The period is for a month, which can extend a child's life expectancy by up to 2 years. The children suffer from severely decreased immune systems, leukaemia or cancer and many babies are still being born with serious deformities. When the children come to the UK, they stay with host families in Fishguard and are taken on numerous days out around Pembrokeshire.

In previous years, the children have visited us and the day was classed as a big success, so the invitation was offered again this year. It was **Cpl Miskelly** who initially took on the role of organising the day, but due to her Op TELIC deployment; she was sadly absent for the actual day. **Cpl Miskelly** handed over the reins to **JT Martin**, who shared the task with a few others, including **Cpl Whitmore** and **LCpl Ardron**. Throughout the day numerous volunteers interacted with the children, talked to them (which was a great opportunity for the Russian Linguists at the Regt) and kept them entertained.

The children all received a goodie bag, each made up from donations from Tesco, PRI and ourselves. The charity also received a £200 donation from the Regt, presented by OC HQ Sqn, **Major Williams** and **WO1(RSM) Reid**. The PRI also donated an inscribed plaque, which was presented to the interpreter from Chernobyl.

Cpl Whitmore with two happy visitors

TM TROOP PEMBROKESHIRE COASTAL CHALLENGE – *by Sgt Wood*

Pembrokeshire Coastal Challenge 2005 took place between 23rd and 30th of May. The aim was for 10 members of TM Tp and a token chef to walk 187 miles of the coastal path in 7 days. If that wasn't a feat in itself, then you try to do it carrying collection buckets, full of loose change, which really made it an ordeal. The main emphasis of the challenge was to put a little back into the local community, with 2 local charities benefiting from our efforts.

The Tp raised just over £2000, which was split between the Army Benevolent Fund, Withybush Hospital League of Friends and the Pembrokeshire Deaf Children Society. A Cheque for £687.14 was handed over by **Capt John Greenwood** to the Chairman of the Hospital on 23 February 2006.

After the presentation was completed, personnel from the Tp who took part in the event, were hosted by members of the Withybush League of Friends. Tea, Coffee and the odd Welsh cake were shared out, putting all the calories back on, which were lost the year before.

224 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW) – RAF DIGBY

OC	**Maj J Brown** Intelligence Corps
SSM	**WO2 G Shuck**

The Sqn is now coming up to its first anniversary since reformation and has achieved so much in a short space of time. Worthy of note, is the recent deployment to Afghanistan for C Tp, where the reputation of the Sqn was tested for the first time. The mission was a great success and proved that the eqpt, manning and logistics chain in a unit where personnel hail from different backgrounds and Corps, really does work well.

EXERCISE PREMIER INITIATIVE – ALTCAR RANGES
– by SAC Hurst

On a cold and windy Wednesday morning, members of 224 Sig Sqn departed *RAF Digby* for Liverpool. The challenge? A 3 day initiative ex set up by members of Sp Tp to test our resourcefulness and strangely enough, our initiative.

On arriving at Altcar Trg Camp for lunch, we settled into our dining area and helped ourselves to some much needed tea and coffee. **Cpl Perry Mason** gave the troops a quick safety and orientation briefing, before he split us into teams of 4, to try our hands at some comd tasks. Some of these were fiendishly hard and full of variety, but we were in tears laughing at the efforts of **Sgt Harmer** and his team, who seemed to be doing their level best to try to dump the SSM off the stretcher, while leaving team members stranded in various places! The video will soon be off to *"You've been framed"*.

Showing Sgt Harmer how it's done!

The next task was a game of charades. It was interesting, to say the least, with points being awarded to each team for quality of acting, as well as guessing correctly. It was enormous fun, although I'd like to forget the dirty dancing moment I was forced to endure! The DS staff kindly agreed to our request to perform the Full Monty, although the video camera somehow managed to lose focus...

The main event proved to be the trip into Liverpool. Our teams were further subdivided, and each team were issued identical lists of objectives to achieve. One of the best tasks was to lift the European Cup at Anfield, which was simply fabulous. Three teams managed it, although one joker did it while wearing a Man U shirt!

My favourite part of the day was meeting someone famous, **Mr Ricky Tomlinson**. I got a copy of his new book, which he kindly signed and gave to **Cpl Woodfint** and me.

I think I can speak for everyone when I say we had a highly enjoyable couple of days, even though it was hard work at times. We learned a lot about ourselves, and how resourceful we could be when needed. If we ever manage an ex like this again, I'd like to be first on the list!

EXERCISE PREMIER SKILLS – PROTEUS TRAINING AREA
– by Sgt D Whatmough

Following the arrival of lots of new blood in a recently formed Sqn can mean only one thing – ex time! **Cpl Feeney** and I were tasked with organising a non-tactical, low-level, military skills ex with 2 aims; to enhance and test military fieldcraft and leadership skills and to increase camaraderie within the Sqn. Neither **Cpl Feeney** nor I, had any experience in organising an ex, however with guidance from **WO2(SSM) Shuck,** we soon found our way. The ex covered a variety of subjects, all taught by personnel within the Sqn. The subjects included Sect Battle Drills, Mine Awareness, Battlefield First Aid, Vehicle Anti-Ambush Drills and a night NavEx.

Fuel extraction in Noddy kit, what fun!

Day 1 saw the deployment of troops onto Proteus Trg Area at around lunchtime and the sun shining. The troops were in high spirits and set about making their 'bashas' as comfortable as possible. They quickly sorted out their admin and ploughed into their first lesson of map reading theory with **Cpl Perry Mason**, which continued through until the evening. The evening's entertainment was kindly provided by **Sgt Gav Wilson** in the form of a quiz under the stars – who could ask for more?

Days 2 and 3 saw the troops split into 2 syndicates, each split again into 3. The groups negotiated a 'round robin' system of stands, some of which have already been mentioned. The NBC Comd Task stand was run by myself, with the help of **Cpl Feeney** and was intended to add a fun element to this phase of the ex. With the sun beating down however, the 'erect a tent in ten minutes in full IPE' phase proved to be more of a beasting than a jolly!

Trg culminated in the 'Advance to Contact' scenario for the troops, with some Battlefield First Aid under fire, thrown in for good measure! The troops managed to deal with the situation, although the 'battleshock victim is worthy of a mention. It is possible that somebody forgot to mention to **SSgt Willumsen** that he was only to pretend to be mad, not to be a total psychopath! After a titanic struggle, 4 soldiers managed to restrain him, and he gave up the fight, exhausted, but very pleased with his acting!

The last day consisted of vehicle borne anti-ambush drills, followed by end of ex tear-down. Despite the fact that it was raining, all the troops managed to pack away the eqpt in double-quick time and we were ready to leave on schedule.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC	**Maj CN Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 I Conlan**

OP HERRICK

The deployment of the first LEWT Tp patrol to Afghanistan has signalled the beginning of the end to the Op HERRICK preparations, and maybe some sleep finally for the Ops team! The build up to this op has covered over 7 months and started after the Regtl Ex last October and at one point involved the majority of the Sqn deploying. LEWT Tp have taken the brunt of the build up trg with exs in STANTA and Brawdy and should by now have an encyclopaedic knowledge of the airfield.

The Sqn has spent all of March conducting final preparations for deployment to Afghanistan. Finally, patrols from the Sqn are starting to deploy to Theatre. The lucky few to make the advance party deployed with Pathfinder Platoon in the middle of the month and will currently be enjoying the Afghan spring weather. The remainder of the Sqn has spent a large amount of time preparing for EX WHALE SPEAR, an inf skills ex in Nescliff, and the troops have also been busy organising tp level exs, focusing on developing the operators' trade skills. Romeo Tp have also deployed with 237 Sig Sqn on EX ELECTRIC EEL in the North of England, where they worked on using INCE with the RAF.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC	**Maj PR Flavell**
SSM	**WO2 T Morgan**

SNOWBOARDING – *by Sig Deeley*

On 20 November 2005, I departed from England on my way to Austria for 4 weeks of snowboarding, at the Corps camp in Zell Am See and Neustift. It was an eventful first week, I spent most of the time getting friendly with the snow and pushing myself back onto my feet.

The week passed quickly, with a lot of information to absorb so as to stay upright and move fast. The second week was race week. There was a lot of competition but everyone was in high spirits. There was a range of races from slalom, giant slalom to dual slalom. In dual slalom you raced down the course with your opponent adjacent to you on the other course. This gets your adrenaline rushing to win your race and beat the other person to the finish. The presentation took place in the hotel bar where I picked up four awards: one 3rd, two 1sts and the overall 1st female.

The second 2 weeks at Neustift saw the start of the Div Championships. The weather was bitterly cold but morale remained high throughout. We had one extra race, the border cross, which had jumps, berms and rollers throughout and you raced 4 people at a time. My race was very fast; everyone stayed on their feet till the last jump. No one slowed down. As a result, I went flying over it only to come crashing back down and slide in style across the finish line. I finished overall 3rd for the Championship.

The final week was the Army Championships, where the races were identical to the Div Championships, but were much more technical. The final presentation evening was a big event and I was chosen as 1st reserve for the Army Team (after only 6 weeks on snow, quite an achievement!). The Inter Services took place during the first 2 weeks in February at Crans Montana, Switzerland. After another week's instruction I felt a lot more confident and stronger, all the time. We were quietly confident about racing the RAF and Navy. We produced a first class performance during race week, with the female team picking up all but one of the 1st places and becoming overall winning team for 2006.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC	**Maj S G Scott**
SSM	**WO2 KN Smith**

EXERCISE MOUFLON WARRIOR

EX MOUFLON WARRIOR was our Sqn FIBUA ex conducted at Sennybridge earlier this year. FIBUA exs are not a standard part of our comms trg programme, but it was a fantastic insight into inf trg, as well as a very real and daunting challenge.

We exercised as per an Inf ORBAT, which allowed **Sgt Watson** to escape the Tech Workshop and let all of us learn and appreciate the demands and expertise required of our inf equivalents.

The first part of the ex consisted of basic soldiering lessons, including map reading, camouflage and concealment and battle drills. The second half of the week, saw a FIBUA focus in which

Platoon ENDEX photo – exhausted but happy!

lessons, demos and a final FIBUA ex pushed us to our limits and utilised all the skills we had learnt earlier. Happily some of the lessons learned on the FIBUA phase were of a practical nature. For example, **LCpl Martin** and **Sig Grice** finally learned the laws of gravity, when they hit the ground, with a painful thud after launching themselves out of a building. **LCpl Gingell** discovered that it is not generally advised to pick a GPMG up by the barrel immediately after firing several hundred rounds! And finally, **LCpl Shaw** proved that his Irish heritage hadn't gone to waste on the Molotov cocktail range!

Despite the moments of comic relief, 245 battled against arctic conditions (-20 with wind chill) to master the skills of building clearance and defence. The week was a huge success for all. It refreshed, developed and taught the Sqn new and important inf skills. That said, several unnamed sigs are rumoured to be considering a re-trade to chef after discovering the warmth of the cook tent!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON ON THE RECRUITING AND DEMO CIRCUIT

245 has also been doing its best to compete for the Birtwhistle Pennant for Recruiting. With our Armd and Lt EW forces available, we've had lots to show off at recruitment events and demonstrations. Since November, the Sqn has provided sp to over a dozen events. We have provided demonstrations to cadets, civilians, Government Departments, Universities and the Tp Comd Course.

We also did a demonstration for Staff College and even the Comd Field Army! One of the most entertaining was EX LIGHTING STRIKE, a UOTC recruitment competition and formal dinner, held on Salisbury Plain and Blandford Camp. 19 year-old, **2Lt Dave Seaton**, was a hit with the impressionable young female students, unlike **SSgt Andy Butler** who tried his best to recruit more Intelligence Corps Linguists at a Royal Signals Event!

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Jase Goldsworthy**

OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN - SIGNALS SUPPORT GROUP HQ ISAF, KABUL - *by Cpl Chris Duncan.*

OC **Maj A Long**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Maylett**

The majority of 255 Sig Sqn deployed to Afghanistan on 17 March 2006, to take up the reins as the Signals Support Group (SSG) for ISAF IIX and IX.

Many of the Sqn had never experienced a French tactical landing in a C130 before; it was an experience to say the least. We were cruising along at 10,000 ft above the Hindu Kush, when the engines suddenly stopped and the plane rapidly began to do, what I thought was, a nosedive. I have to admit, I was terrified. I lost all control over my body and it would seem I placed a firm grip on my Sgt's leg. I received my first ear-full of the tour, before we had even landed in Afghanistan.

WO2(SSM) Maylett and WO2(YofS) Boase fly into Afghanistan

The advance party was there to meet us, and **WO2(SSM) Andy Maylett** soon had us tucked up in bed, which was much needed after our 36 hours travelling from Germany. We had to rise early the next morning, as the Germans we were taking over from, had left theatre the same day that we had arrived, so the advance party was running the SSG. We hit the ground running, and it didn't take us long to pick up the pieces and get the SSG working well.

Now we have settled into our routines, the days are long, but we have been blessed with 2 things, a wonderful gym (which I have made my second home, of course) and Italian drivers. We have already seen them knock an innocent Afghani cyclist off his 1960's style pushbike, and then ram into a 4x4 in the middle of Kabul. They laughed, the passengers didn't, but we have learned how not to do it.

My Det Comd, **Sgt Bill Morrison**, had his 40th birthday on 3 April. On that special day, he was under the impression that he was going to play a few friendly games of cards with associates and card addicts, to celebrate. A well-kept surprise party was planned.

The birthday boy is served his jelly

After duties he was taken down to the "FUBAR", to be confronted by the majority of the Sqn, and a party fit for a 4 year old. The clown was called "Randy" and was actually an Italian Sgt Maj. The fact that his English was not the best added to the fun. After

the delights of "Randy", a fellow Scot, **Malcolm**, a civilian employee working in the stores, played some of the birthday boy's favourite tunes on the bagpipes. All in all, the party was a success and **Sgt Morrison** was made a very happy man on his birthday.

Work carries on as normal now; chuff charts are going up all over camp and R and R can't come quick enough. I have enjoyed this tour so far, there is plenty to do and we've even started a five-a-side football team. Next week we have an international against the Italians. Wish us luck!!

CFX – SALISBURY PLAIN – *by LCpl Johnson*

Members of 16 Sig Regt group, deploying on the first tranche of the Op HERRICK/ ISAF IIX & IX mission, finished the last of their pre-deployment trg with a final confirmatory ex on Salisbury Rains...sorry Plains.

Under the tutelage of OPTAG the 16 Sig Regt group (made up of both 7 and 16 Sig Regt soldiers) split down into teams, to tackle OPTAG's operationally relevant scenarios. Multiple scenarios included such things as IED trg. **Cpl Lawless** and **LCpl Filipo** can confirm what damage an IED can do to Toyota Hilux Twincab. Navigation skills were also exercised.

As well as strengthening military awareness and skills for the deployment, the Regt also appeared to be tasked with trialling the new Nokia comms systems. To be honest, some sects did not require comms; **Cpl Alexander's** sect decided that an IED was not worth a mention to the Ops room! Other highlights include **LCpl Adam Burr's** lesson on timings, as he took his sect on a 25 minute detail and 3.5 hours later triumphantly returned, having visited every site on the plains – minus the Stonehenge gift shop. What's more, when **LCpl Laverick** was asked which way the enemy ran, "away" was not the answer the Ops team was hoping for.

As the week went on, morale stayed high and a very valuable and fun ex was had by all. Members of the 16 Sig Regt group are well prepared and look forward to a successful tour in Afghanistan.

OPENING OF ELMPT STATION GYMNASIUM
- by LCpl Ian Atkins

March 17th 2006 marked an important day for Elmpt Station. After almost 2 years of work, the new Elmpt Station gym, which is modelled on the same successful design as the 4 Bde gym in Gutersloh, was officially opened by Comd RESG, **Brig SJM Marriner MBE.**

Anyone who is familiar with Javelin Barracks, within the last few years, could not have failed to notice the building work taking place at the location of the old Bruggen school building, which was closed down in 2002.

The £3.5 million project boasts a large and well equipped sports hall, with a built in climbing wall, 3 glass walled squash courts, an impressive CV and weights area and excellent changing facilities. Also open to dependants and civilian personnel, the facility has proved to be an instant hit and was put to use immediately.

On the morning of the opening, the Brigadier was met by **Maj (Retd) Smith** and **WO1(RSM) TJ Lappin**, 7 Sig Regt. After being escorted to the new building, he received a guided tour by **WO2(QMSI) 'Spike' Cawley** APTC and was extremely happy with the completed project.

After meeting the rest of the gym staff a buffet lunch was laid on in the dedicated BPFA area. **Brig Marriner** described the new facility as excellent and promised to make additional funding available for the redevelopment of the surrounding area, into sports pitches and a proposed new assault course, due for completion in 2008.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Ollie Halstead**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Dickie Dyer**

HQ SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Horton BEM**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Gaz Chapman**

INTER SQUADRON CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITION 2005 - *by SSgt Jock Castle*

The Inter Sqn Cross Country competition was held as part of the CO's Challenge Cup in early December. This eagerly awaited competition attracted a total of 282 runners. The course was designed to give all participants the opportunity to take in, and admire the breathtaking views within the camp, including beauty spots such as 'Crash Gate 6', 'Twig in the Eye Alley' and 'The Big Brown Puddle'. To ensure that the course was nice and muddy, the 5 Div Championships were held 2 days earlier over the same route. The male runners were delighted to find out that they only had to complete a 6 mile route and the females were just as happy with 3 miles.

The Inter Sqn competition was very close. Had HQ Sqn not celebrated at their Christmas Party the previous night, they might have narrowly beaten 248 Sig Sqn. 244 and 220 Sig Sqns filled the remaining positions. The individual competition saw some fierce competition and it was agreed that no Regtl Cross-Country runner would be eligible for a prize in any category. The race ran to form with the non-eligible prize winning racing snakes (AKA the Regtl Cross Country team), gliding over the mud and water trying not to get dirty. At the end of the competition, many of the exhausted prize-winners were delighted to find out that they were now members of the Regtl Cross-Country Team and could look forward to muddy fun every week. It pays to be a winner, welcome to the team!

And they're off.....

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jason Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Surendra**

EX EARLY RISER "REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS DAY"

The day began in fine style, with the Officers and Seniors serving a small tot of Gunfire to the rest of the Regt. In the finest traditions of the British Army, the Officers and Seniors refused to be beaten by some highly unpleasant conditions. They went above and beyond the call of duty, to fight their way over piles of discarded clothes and half eaten pizzas, to make sure every soldier received a drink. Although those who had been celebrating at Sqn parties the previous night, could easily have done without one.

The Regt then attempted a world record for the largest number of X-Factor and Pop Idol rejects singing together at once, and gave it the title 'Regtl Carol Service'. It was a blessing that, with so many soldiers at church, there was a chance that at least one of them was singing the correct note, at any the correct time. After such rousing singing, everyone was in the mood to witness some fiercely competitive sport. The rush to watch the 'Bone of Contention' rugby match, meant that many were out of step on the march back, a contrast to our usual Guardsman-like standard.

Lt Dave Palmer looks to offload the ball during the Bone of Contention rugby match

At 1100 hrs, on a cold and grey afternoon, the 2 teams of gladiators faced each other, for the Officers and Seniors *v* ORs rugby match. The Officers and Seniors (The Seniors) had a slight advantage in the size of the pack, but the ORs (The Juniors) had the advantage of speed. The game began with the Seniors holding the ball tight up front and rolling the ball up-field, coming close to taking the lead on a couple of occasions. As the match progressed, however, the Juniors started to gain more possession and utilised their pace to break through. The Seniors put up a tremendous fight, in a game that both sides were determined to win. But at the final whistle, the Juniors proved to be worthy winners, gaining revenge for the previous year's defeat.

Over Christmas Lunch, everyone had the chance to offer their critical analysis of the game and as the '2 Cans' flowed, discussion raged over whether **Maj Kennedy** really can sell those dummies any longer and if the Seniors' long term, pie-eating trg plan, to improve the power of the pack, had been particularly effective!

COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT AND GURKHA MAJOR'S VISIT - *by Cpl Pitamber*

The Sqn recently welcomed the Col of the Regt, **Brig N A W Pope,** and Gurkha Maj QG Signals, **Maj(QGO) Krishna Bahadur Gurung** to Colerne. It was the first official visit since they assumed their appointments. Sqn Comd, **Maj Kennedy** came up with an excellent plan to hold a dinner night for all members of the Sqn, another "Kennedy KAIDA". **SSgt Sean Curry** and **Sgt Jase Lowes** were tasked to organise the event.

All Sqn personnel assembled in the Lekali Social Club for a couple of pre-dinner drinks and to welcome the guests, which included the CO and RSM. For many of the Sqn, this was their first experience of a formal dinner. Much effort had gone into turning the Briefing Room into a fitting venue, and the excellent food ensured that nobody was disappointed. The dinner was a great success with the added ambience of the pipes, played by **Capt Frazer Keith** of 220 Sig Sqn. Following dinner and the toast, **Maj Kennedy** formally welcomed the guests with the presentation of garlands. **Brig Pope** gave a polished address in Gurkhali with New Year wishes for the Sqn. He was followed by the GM Saheb, who emphasized the importance of hard work and reminded us that we must never forget our KAIDA.

It was our privilege to host our Col of the Regt and Gurkha Maj in such a manner. This was a first for the Sqn, and was a thoroughly enjoyable night. We hope this becomes a tradition and look forward to next year's event.

Since the last edition of *The Wire,* the Sqn has bade farewell to **SSgt(SQMS) 'Baggie' Bagbir**, **Sgt 'Baz' Basanta**, **Cpl Manbir**, **Cpl Khagendra**, **Cpl Ganesh Ale**, **LCpl Basanta**, **LCpl Hardy**, **LCpl Kajiman**, **Sig Lewis and Sig Badri**. A very fond farewell to all those who have recently left the Sqn, after successful tours. In turn, we welcome **SSgt(SQMS) Om**, **Sgt Sundar Yakkha**, **Cpl Damber Phagu**, **LCpl Suboth**, **LCpl Milan**, **LCpl SLB Hawkes** and **LCpl Dhan Thada** to 248.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Gareth Lamb**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wayne Dunbar**

The Sqn has had a busy time saying its goodbyes to 220 stalwarts recently. **Cpl Mick Qualtrough** has left us to take the 'Q Roadshow' to sunnier climes in Bulford, while **Sig Rob Young** moves up north to 2 Sig Regt. **Sig Emma Gilbert** picks up her first tape, and a move to Northern Ireland, while **Cpl John Merrick** picks up his second, and has the opportunity to shape the AS Ops of the future, at the RSS.

EXERCISE TYROLEAN DRAGON V - *by Lt Holly Dyer*

Friday 27th January 2006 was the beginning of EX TYROLEAN DRAGON V. Over 2 weeks, 59 members of 21 Sig Regt (AS), plus a few atts and dets, went through the rigours of arduous ski trg on the snow-clad slopes of Austria.

Day 1 started on the slopes. As we waited for the lifts to open, thanks to the zealous boss, **WO2(RQMS) Regina Crooks** took us through a comprehensive warm-up. We were then split into ability groups and the entertainment started. The beginner groups comprised mainly of the Gurkha contingent, whose banshee screams of 'No Fear' were heard echoing round the Alps. The intermediate group focused mainly on the techniques needed to gain the Advanced Ski Proficiency (ASP) qualification, whereas the Advanced group continued the pursuit of greatest "Air-Time"; textbook (or any variety of) landing not essential!

Throughout the week, we also had the opportunity to partake in some Nordic skiing, under the watchful eye of **SSgt Dinger Bell**. For those who weren't quite so adventurous, ski touring was the moderately less painful option. An afternoon of snowboarding, however, ensured that no one escaped bruise-free!

The final day sorted the men from the boys as everyone competed in the slalom race. **Captain Mike Morton** swept the floor in the first week's race and shortly afterwards was seen to be heading to Turin for the Winter Olympics. Congratulations to **Cpl Kate Hopkinson** for showing up all the lads in week 2.

After each day, the hard work was rewarded by various evening entertainments. These ranged from Ice-Karting and Bum-Boarding, to karaoke and the finer side of après-ski. The 2 separate weeks proved to be a great success as everyone achieved the Basic Ski Proficiency (BSP), and 8 people their ASP.

All those who aren't scared, form an orderly queue for EX TYROLEAN DRAGON VI!

OP MATURIN – EMERGENCY RELIEF TO PAKISTAN

Following the earthquake in Pakistan last year, the Sqn was tasked to deploy a 4 man det to provide comms to 27 Sqn RAF, as they provided vital aid relief. The tour not only consisted of the usual det routines, but involved the 220 Sqn crew in the thick of the action, flying up to the mountains, humping and dumping 50kg bags of rice, tents, medical eqpt and various other supplies, as well as airlifting casualties to less affected, lower lying, holding areas. The det consisted of **Cpl Mac McPherson**, **LCpl Lyon**, **LCpl Thurston** and the self proclaimed backbone of the operation, **Sig Chaders Chadwick**. The length of the tour was initially uncertain; however it turned out to be a little over 5 weeks, with 28 days of operational flying. All the crew found it to be a valuable and challenging experience, and apart from decent suntans, they all came away with a great sense of satisfaction, in the job they had completed.

LCpl Thurston accompanies vital aid supplies in Pakistan

22 SIGNAL REGIMENT

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

SO1/CO	**Lt Col ND Fraser**
SO2/QM	**Maj T Smith**
SO3/Adjt	**Capt JS Balfour**
Regt FofS	**WO1 K Scaife**
RQMS	**WO2 RD Heynes**

First and foremost, the Early Implementation Team (EIT) would like to announce and warmly welcome the arrival of both **Lt Col ND Fraser** and **Capt JS Balfour**, who have arrived in post. The Implementation Team (IT) is now up and running.

During February, the team hosted **Lt Col Fraser** and **Capt Balfour** on their first visit to Stafford. The 3-day visit involved extensive briefings, site visits and meeting key personalities.

Maj Smith, Lt Col Fraser and Capt Balfour

THE STAFFORD HALF MARATHON

The Stafford Half Marathon is an annual event, which has traditionally been well supported by the RAF here in Stafford. It is hoped that in time, the Army will support this well organised event in the same way.

This year the EIT decided to take to the streets and run the half marathon, in order to raise a donation towards the 'Vicki Alexander Trust' which has been established to support children diagnosed with cancer. We finished the run in a respectable 1 hour 40 minutes (plus a little bit more), raising just short of £500.

WO1 Scaife, Maj Smith and WO2 Heynes with 3 miles to go

UPDATE

Since our first report in *The WIRE*, the EIT has continued to focus and develop the infrastructure requirements for 22 Sig Regt. This has involved working closely with the Army Infrastructure Organisation, 143(WM) Bde and Defence Estates, to name only a few, in order to establish the best possible courses of action available within the constraints, such as real estate and funding.

On 31 March 2006, there was a significant step forward, with the RAF ensign being lowered for the final time, prior to the Army taking responsibility for the Stafford site on 1 April 06. The Head

of Establishment is now the Bde Comd of 143 (WM) Bde, **Brig CJ Murray CBE**.

Much work has continued to happen, to ensure the best possible start for the Regt. This has involved the whole team working closely together, and ploughing through the many issues involved with the re-formation of a regt. With the arrival of **Lt Col Fraser** and **Capt Balfour**, the IT has now been able to look further into Regtl matters.

During the early part of this summer, we will see key personalities arrive in post. These will include the Regtl 2I/C, OC HQ Sqn and the Ops Officer. Towards the end of the summer period, the appointed RSM will arrive to take up post.

Over the forthcoming months, **Maj Smith** will continue to be instrumental in the development of the Main Gate business case.

When the plan is approved, this will lead to the release of funds, which will allow the physical work on site to begin.

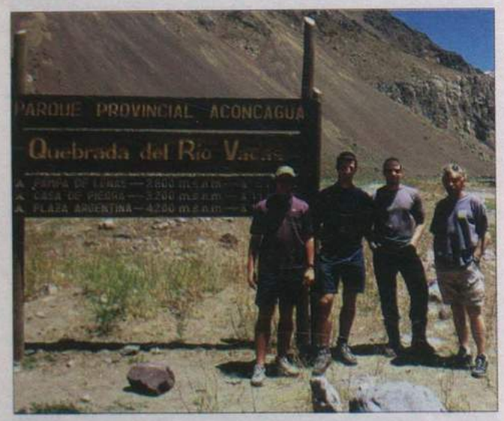
The work will concentrate on the improvement of existing accommodation blocks, office and working areas and the housing of the Regt assets.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM **WO1(RSM) JS McGraw**

EXERCISE VACAS DRAGON 2006 - *by Lt Witcher*

EX VACAS DRAGON was a Regtl AT exped from 30 Sig Regt which ran from 3 – 25 January 2006, with the aim of making the first British Army ascent of Aconcagua in Argentina, via the Vacas Valley and Polish Traverse route. At 6959m, Aconcagua is the highest mountain in the world outside the Himalaya and is renowned for ferocious storms and difficult terrain, in addition to all the difficulties and potential danger inherent in climbing at such a high altitude. The members of the exped were **Maj Andy Parfitt** (MOD Whitehall J6 Ops7), **Capt Dan Ashton**, **Lt Simon Witcher** (OIC), **WO2 Chips Rafferty** (APTC) and **Sig Matt Turner**.



Trail-Head at Punta de Vacas: From here on, it's all uphill! Sig Matt Turner, Lt Simon Witcher, Capt Dan Ashton, WO2 Chips Rafferty

The route involved an initial 3-day trek to Base Camp, accompanied by a mule-train to carry the baggage!

Two high camps were established, before a final tough day to reach the summit. The climb consisted of steep and loose scree, including an infamous rubble slope known as the Canaletta, which certainly broke the spirit of a few weaker, commercial teams.

Unfortunately, on the summit day, **Capt Dan Ashton** developed increasingly severe symptoms of Acute Mountain Sickness and was forced to descend from a height of 6,100m back to Camp 2. The remaining 4 climbers toiled ever upwards to reach the summit, just as the weather began to deteriorate and they were forced to descend rapidly, as high winds and snow closed in.

Summit of Aconcagua (6959m): Lt Simon Witcher, Sig Matt Turner, WO2 Chips Rafferty and Maj Andy Parfitt

To relax after such exertions, the team spent a sunny afternoon learning to appreciate fine Argentinian wines at the Ruca Malen vineyard, just outside the nearby city of Mendoza. EX VACAS DRAGON was made possible with grants, kindly awarded by the Worshipful Company of Dyers, the Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Fund and 30 Sig Regt.

CHARITY EVENT IN GNOSALL VILLAGE
- by Sgt Sundar Sherchan

On 11 February 2006, a fund-raising charity event took place at St Lawrence School, the CE Primary School of Gnosall village, Stafford. This was a combined charity event, organised in support of the First Responder Group for Gnosall Village and the Gurkha Welfare Trust (GWT).

To add some flavour to the event, the organisers approached RHQ QGS, seeking sp from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. Although a busy period for 250 Sqn, **Lt (QGO) Narayan Bhandari** chose to sp the event ('it's for charity mate'), with the provision of comms display stands, a Gurkha Curry and a series of presentations.

Pipers and participants for the event

The guests started with the comms display, which was setup under **Cpl Nabin Rai**, and then they gathered in the main hall. **Lt(QGO) Narayan Bhandari** gave a short welcome speech on behalf of the Gurkhas, and **Sgt Sundar Sherchan** gave a presentation on the history of the Bde of Gurkhas. Everybody appreciated how we Gurkhas inherit such a rich history from our forefathers. **Mrs Margaret Cross**, the Cannock rep for the GWT was also present on the day to run the GWT stand and she spoke about the Trust in more detail.

After this presentation, the cultural show commenced with the pipers on the stage playing their melodious tunes. After a few dances, there was a short break for the audience to have their delicious Gurkha curry, prepared by **Sgt Bed** and his team.

It was wonderful to speak to British war veterans who had served with Gurkhas during the war. Not only could they speak fluently in Nepalese, but there was one particular war veteran who spoke in Limbu (the tribal language of Limbu caste).

The show resumed after the dinner and the audience enjoyed the Gurkhas performing their cultural show, as the music blasted against the walls. Finally, our show came to an end and all the Gurkhas were brought to the stage. This was when the piper started playing the bagpipes and all the audience stood up and started clapping in appreciation of our presence on that day (West End – eat your heart out!)

£1440 was raised for the GWT, and on top of that **Mrs Cross** managed to collect £314.32 separately. Everyone who took part certainly enjoyed the event and we were proud to be there to display our tradition and show the comms skills of the Gurkhas.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING IN THE LAKE DISTRICT
- by Sig Kirby

EX QUINCE DRAGON was a Bravo Tp AT Ex at Halton Camp, Lancaster. The activities during the week included; mountain biking, climbing, abseiling and trekking. **Sgt O'Mahony** led the mountain biking around Grizdale North Face Trail, a new £2M, purpose built mountain bike trail in the Lake District. Although rated as moderate, **Sig King** remarked "It was a killer on the thighs!"

Cpl Thompson and **Sig Rew** instructed on the climbing and abseiling and they even managed to convince soldiers scared of heights, to ascend Scar Crag. The AT was the last Tp activity for **Lt Goldsmith**, as she is off to Germany on attachment with the Int Corps. She didn't want to say goodbye the easy way, so with **Cpl Roberts**, she lead up the Hellvellyn Ridge, for the trekking phase of the AT.

The whole Tp enjoyed every aspect of the week and it was a great way to recharge the batteries after the Regtl FTX. Our final good luck and goodbye, is to wish **Cpl Shepherd** the best on leaving the Army.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE - *by LCpl Steed*

EX LIGHTNING STRIKE is an annual HQ Royal Signals Ex, which saw Alpha Tp, 256 Sig Sqn, deploy a team of 8 to Salisbury Plain, to showcase both SATCOM and other specialist comms eqpt to members of various UOTCs, from all over the country.
On arrival at Rollestone Camp, we hit the ground running, securing our real estate and setting up the stand. Meanwhile back in the Bat Cave, **Lt Will Mawby** and **2Lt Lewis Matthews** sat back, in true gentlemanly fashion, pondering over what events would amuse them throughout the ex; in particular, the number of student girls!

Early Saturday morning, the Tp got ready for a pre-event inspection by HQ Royal Signals Staff, which included an overview of all assets. At 0800 hrs the first 2 teams of UOTC students arrived and were given the comms eqpt brief by **SSgt Shaun Fardy** and **Sgt Paddy Lynn.** With their combined experience, spanning many years in the Army (about 50 in total), they explained and delivered an interesting 10 minute speech, to slightly baffled faces.

Following the brief, **LCpl Steed** and **Cpl 'Stan' Standish** took over, providing entertainment in the form of a PT lesson, then a 200m Land Rover pull, followed by putting up a tent and setting up the comms as fast as possible. The teams came thick and fast and finally, after 18 teams had completed the event, Southampton UOTC was declared the winner.

EX MAGANGA MERCURY – 23 JANUARY TO 13 FEBRUARY 2006

The time had arrived for Foxtrot Tp to deploy JTFHQ one last time, before handing it over to 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn. The location

chosen was Malawi, offering us infinite sun-tanning possibilities. Our mission was to deploy JTFHQ to Salima Airstrip, to enable PJHQ to conduct a British National Evacuation ex.

On 23 January, we began our 3-day journey. Our route was to fly from *RAF Lyneham*, spend a night in Cyprus, then on to a night in Nairobi and finally to Lilongwe. Then we would have a 3fi hour bus journey to our final destination. The worst part of the journey was the trip from Gamecock Barracks to *RAF Lyneham*. A left hand drive bus, with no heating and -3C, made for an interesting journey.

The weather in Malawi was completely the opposite, 36C and 90% humidity, but the novelty soon wore off. Our first night was spent in a building with no opening windows and the door shut to keep out the mosquitoes. While waiting for the kit to arrive, **LCpl Goff** took groups of people into the nearest copse of trees, to look for local wildlife. Shortly afterwards, these had to be stopped, as the Doctor wasn't too sure that soldiers carrying Tarantulas around was particularly healthy!

Once our eqpt arrived, we set about building JTFHQ. It was decided to do the main part of the build at night, when the heat wasn't so oppressive. With the HQ completed, and the JTFHQ staff established, we could start enjoying the local area. This consisted of a row of shops selling woodcarvings and not much else. After 4 days the RAF mover thought it might be the right time to tell people not to buy anymore $5 bargains, for fear of excess cargo.

Only accustomed to a single pole, Lt Barr wonders what to do with all the rest...

There was also the opportunity to play some sports. **Cpl Houghton** made a cricket pitch, named Salima Oval, and coached us in the finer points of the game. When the staff had finished their war games, they moved out into the local area to enjoy a little jungle trg. All that was left was to tear down the HQ (again at night) and then enjoy a couple of days R and R. For the majority, this consisted of sitting by a pool vying for the title of most ridiculously sunburnt! All that remains is to say good luck to 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, who have now taken over JTFHQ, and good luck to JTFHQ!

EXERCISE SWAN CONNECTION - *by Sp Sqn*

For the first time in Regtl history, 30 Sig Regt was to deploy on a Regtl Ex. Dawn broke on a frosty, Friday morning as A Ech deployed to darkest Norfolk. The QM's Dept, though well represented on the many recent ops, blew the dust off their webbing, folded up the laminated sick chits and set their jaws, to deploy into the field. Wpns were drawn and cam nets unfurled in anger. Old heads were scratched, memories were stirred of the good old days, when pretending to play war was the norm.

Led from the front by our new shiny QM, **Capt Burdge**, and shepherded by **Sgt Simmo Simpson,** the younger members of the Dept "hit the beach". First casualty was **Sig Hughes**, who wisely wore 2 pairs of fresh socks over his wet socks, in an attempt to dry them out. The rest of the ex was spent wondering why he ended up with 3 pairs of wet socks! Next to go was **Sig Mellor's** ego, which was badly bruised by the many colourful answers to the question "What does a scarecrow actually do?" I think the answer was in the question. Morale was lifted, as it became apparent that the rest of the Regt was out of practice too, with kerosene heaters deployed with no wicks and Sqn Comd Posts with no stationery and then the favourite, "but nobody said anything about bringing cam nets."

It was good to see that, after a brief period of adjustment for the "Old Heads", and a sharp learning curve for the "youngsters", things started to click. By the end of a busy 3 weeks, the Regt had morphed into something like organisation (at least from a distance). Luckily, we will all get to hone these skills still further, in the forthcoming Theatre Troops Ex in June.

EXERCISE CYGNET REEF 13 FEBRUARY – 3 MARCH 2006
- by Lt Drescher

Charlie Tp, from 256 Sig Sqn, deployed to Belize to practise their trades in a jungle environment. We took a Talon Det and also PRC 320 man pack radios.

On arrival, we spent 24 hrs in Price Barracks receiving arrival briefings from the BATSUB personalities. We also began to prepare ourselves to become jungle warriors, before the jungle phase of our trg began. We deployed into the field, minus one, as **Sig Kane** managed to escape by claiming he had mumps. Our trip was to be courtesy of the RAF on a Chinook, which carried us to our destination, deep in the jungle. Here we were to spend 3 nights on jungle survival trg.

The first night in the jungle was left to us, to set up our bashers with the help of the staff. As we started to settle into our new surroundings, the howler monkeys decided to entertain us with their rather loud calls, which sounded more like screams. The following day, we were taught how to use our senses, through a series of stands. The most memorable event of the day was the tracking lesson in which **Lt Drescher** decided to take on a swarm of killer hornets; the latter won!

The third day, we spent learning the finer art of survival. We ditched our Bergens and carried on with only our belt kit. After a

It was a close call but Sig Craft overcame the chicken

demo on how to kill a chicken, it was now our turn. The expressions on the faces of **Sig Dexter** and **LCpl Bain** suggested they didn't relish this idea.

Moving on through a series of lessons, we learned about traps and shelters, how to collect and gather water and finally, fire and food.

The day culminated in moving to an isolated area of the jungle, to construct makeshift shelters from logs, leaves and string. All in all, the shelters were relatively comfortable, although the majority would have preferred the comfort of their hammocks and ponchos. We spent the night on the floor, with species that you would rather not. **Sig Abbott** soon learnt how easy it was to get lost in the jungle, after he became navigationally embarrassed, trying to find a suitable place to relieve himself during the night. Next began the 5-day comms ex. The Talon Det remained at Price Barracks to establish rear link comms to the UK. The remainder of the intrepid jungle warriors set off to the deepest parts of the jungle to conduct HF trg, using our PRC 320 man pack radios, to communicate between us. All went well, other than constant break downs, requiring REME sp and recovery. 30 Sig Regt is now infamous with the BATSUB LAD. **Sig Kane** managed 24 hours on the ex. After being released from the Med Centre, he needed a casevac to get 5 stitches in his head after a stunning RTA! Overall a cracking time was had by all. We all returned wiser and slightly better communicators, revelling in the opportunity to expound 'when I was in Belize' stories!

Mmmm, can't wait for dinner

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

CO **Lt Col SL Streete MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGrail**

5 (QOOH) SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Empson**

The last few months of 2005 proved quite hectic on the social front for the Sqn, with EX HUSSAR FAREWELL in November and the Sqn Christmas Party in December. This all fitted around bounty catch up, and then the first of our Regtl weekends. After our Christmas break, we saw in the New Year with a Regtl Development weekend and a Sqn Comms Ex practice in our new UK Ops role, for the first time.

We also welcomed in a number of soldiers transferring to us **Sgt Wellstood**, **LCpl Murray**, **LCpl Burnage** and **Pte Johnson** – welcome aboard – it is great to have you as important parts of the Sqn. Welcome also to our new recruits: **Dean**, **Ridgeway**, **Williams**, **Wooton**, **Hitchens**, **Hoey** and **Stickley**.

EX HUSSAR FAREWELL enabled the Sqn to say goodbye properly, and thank our long serving PSAO, **Capt Bob Sheldon**. The evening function at the TA Centre in Banbury was a great success, with over 90 guests and soldiers, all from **Bob's** time as PSAO, and some from before, enjoying the event. Special thanks to **WO2(YofS) Judith Phillips** and **Sgt Claire Goodwin** for all their hard work to make the event happen, A/SSM, **SSgt Mark Taylor**, and the SPSI, **SSgt Don Garner**, for putting on such an excellent firework display, and last, but definitely not least, our 2 outstanding chefs, **SSgt Dave Jarvis-Cleaver** and **Sgt Sharon Scutt** for the excellent food. It was also with some pride that **Major Sheldon** opened our newly refurbished Churchill Club. Our new PSAO, **Capt Carl Jelfs**, has made an excellent job of the club and RFCA are still reeling from the overspend!

Under the guidance of **Capt Dai Jones**, the Sqn resurrected a few of the trophies that had been sitting in our display cabinet, at the Christmas party . Congratulations to **Sig** (now LCpl) **Clive Wragg** for all his hard work this year, which had made him the obvious choice for the PSI's Trophy. In addition, **Sig Jessica Dean** was awarded the Best Recruit Shot in 2005, as she rapidly

LCpl Wragg uses his shovel to instruct recruits Nathan Eagan, Adam Pengelly and Chris See on the finer points of vehicle recovery

rises to be a leading light in the Regtl Shooting Team, and well done to **Sig Simon Machin** as the Most Improved Runner (very improved in his case!). With your names on the trophies, you are now a piece of 5 Sqn history!

EX GOLDEN HUSSAR saw the Sqn head for Salisbury Plain for some excellent driver trg on one of the coldest weekends in December. The cold weather and the less than welcoming, Pennings Cottages, were against us but with the benefit of lots of warm food and drink courtesy of **Sgt Scutt**, the Sqn achieved a total of 12 Land Rover Familiarisations and Off Road qualifications. Despite their age, our sturdy steeds did us proud and fared well – just a few broken headlamps for the fitter – and we all became very familiar with the turf winch!

EX HUSSAR MERCURY in January, saw us begin to tackle and understand at det level, what is required in our new UK Ops role. After some lessons on AMCERP under the guidance of **Lt Alex Orr** and PSI (T), **Sgt Nick McAnulty**, the Sqn deployed to a freezing Swynnerton. Simulating GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE HQs, the Sqn honed its skills on HF Voice, Airwave and AMCERP. With a variety of incidents thrown in, to keep everyone on their toes, we all had a great weekend. The newest recruits, under the guidance of **Pte Danny Hone**, also got to join in and thoroughly enjoyed the dawn attack on BRONZE. With the anticipation of FAS, it is very much a case of 'out with the old and in with the new'. In January, we welcomed our new CO, **Lt Col Sarah Streete MBE TD** and also 2IC 39 Sig Regt, **Maj Rich Belbin**, ex OC 5 Sqn. Our thanks to **Rich,** for the superb and unique picture of an NCRS det underslung from a Chinook during a Brigade FTX in 2001.

The following weekend saw the Sqn trg on a new piece of equipment, REEBOK, not a running shoe, but a mobile LAN utilising either ISDN lines or a satellite link.

LCpl Kerry Butt appreciates the finer points of REEBOK !

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Paine**

It has been another busy period us. We officially welcomed 884 Sig Tp from Brighton, into the fold as part of 56 Sig Sqn. We look forward to an exciting and busy trg year ahead together. Our establishment is now up to 103 all ranks, and we are continuing to recruit very well, with 8 soldiers attested since Christmas, and a further 9 going through the documentation process. So the future looks very good for us on the S Coast.

Three members of the Sqn recently passed their Class 1 Radio Ops course at the RSS. Congratulations to **Cpls Paul Renaud**, **Carys Jones** and **Tim Still**.

The Sqn supported 145 (HC) Bde on a "flooding ex" scenario in March and got the chance to play with our new kit, including TACSAT, Brent, Cellular phones and AIRWAVE. It was an enjoyable, and at times very experimental ex, and it was good to get back to our Corps business.

Success was found at the TA CORPSSAM where **O/Cdt Ed Board**, **LCpl Sarah Ford** and **Sig Stuart Titchener** all won medals for various shoots as part of their teams and individually for **Sig Titchener**, as the best Class B shot. There are high hopes to enter a solely Sqn team in next year's competition. The Master Chef, **WO2 Steve Howell**, provided a BBQ again, well assisted by **LCpl Nicky Walker**.

Unfortunately, we say goodbye to **Cpl Carys Jones** after 6 years with Sqn, as she moves back to S Wales to join the police, but we wish her luck with her new TA unit in Cardiff. Another temporary goodbye is to **Sig Georgie Adie**, who is in India for 3 months, working for a charity, looking after impoverished children. We wish her well.

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT SKI TEAM

Downhill all the way. Our advance party found the Austrian Kitsteinhorn pistes with the worst snow cover we've ever seen in the resort. However heavy snow falls over the following weeks put paid to any fears of global warming shrinking the glacier.

Our token boarder, **Cpl Carys Jones**, who is by her own admission, a "recreational" rather than a racing boarder, had some eqpt problems to start with. After a good investment in a higher performance board which matched her ability, her riding dramatically improved. Her relaxed, laid-back boarding image then changed, as she started chasing good race results. **Cpl Ben Sherwin** was another canny shopper and kept reminding us of how his 10 goggles outperformed the expensive ones some of us were using.

The heavy snow fall meant that racing could be moved to the sunnier and warmer pistes. Competition for best crash of the team was fierce. First was **SSgt(YofS) Lloyd's** acrobatic somersault in the seeding, where he somehow landed on his skis and kept going, which beat my own high speed tumble towards the trees in the individual GS. Luckily, neither badly affected the team races, allowing us to win the combined TA trophy for the second time in its 4 year history, as well as the wooden spoon for slowest racer, which went to **Pte Nerys Pearce**. In fairness, she had tried every pair of boots in the resort trying to get some that would fit.

In the evenings, **Capt Lee McEvoy** made some disturbing discoveries at the local sauna. Firstly that local dress codes apply, second that the door to the "Fresh air room" led out to a small patio next to the snow covered car park and last, that

31 Sig Regt Ski Team

combining the above, can leave you slightly over exposed. This also applied to **Lt James Cleary's** and **SSgt Lloyd's** far too revealing dress sense on the final night.

ANNOUNCEMENT - CLOSURE OF 83 (LONDON) SIG SQN (V)

Following the announcement in March 2006 on TA Re-balancing, 83 (London) Sig Sqn (V) is to close at the White City TA Centre and merge with HQ Sqn of 31 (City of London) Sig Regt at Southfields to form 83 Sp Sqn. In accordance with tradition, therefore, any person who has presented a gift to the Sqn and wishes it to be returned, is requested to contact **Maj A Knight**, Rgtl 2IC, via the Chief Clerk on Tel: 020 8871 0156.

All items not requested for return by 30 September 2006 will be shared between 83 Sp Sqn and C Tp, formerly a troop of 83 Sig Sqn, now to be part of 41 (Princes Louise's of Kensington) Sig Sqn. C Tp will be based at Kingston upon Thames.

32nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

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

HQ SQN

OC	**Capt T McVey**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) DR Dunn**

STW 02 – 3-5 FEBRUARY 2006

The Sqn deployed for the weekend to carryout the A2 wpn conversion. The base was the Elgin TAC (soon to be the home of a Tp belonging to 51 Sqn), while the trg area used was the Fort George range complex.

SPSI, **SSgt Love**, carried out the A2 conversion with everyone, and then it was on to the ranges to zero the wpns. **Capt McVey** ran one range and the Regt 2IC, **Maj Payne**, the other. Everyone got there eventually, allowing them to take part in competition shoots, in preparation for the RSAAM and the CORPSAAM, which are nearly upon us. Once the shooting was over, the Sqn did some CFT trg, as a lead-in to the new 6 mile CFT, which comes into effect in April 06. All those that took part did really well and now have a bench mark to work from, to allow them to pass.

We returned to the TAC at Elgin and after the admin was completed, the Chefs had prepared a fantastic evening meal, accompanied by a few beers. During the after-dinner drinks, the OC congratulated the SPSI on his promotion to WO2 and presented him with an "expensive" bottle of bubbly.

LCpl Ferguson was also celebrating and was presented with a birthday cake for her 39th birthday. Sadly, the fire regulations did not allow the full number of candles to be lit on the cake.

After a good night out in Elgin, the Sqn had a slightly later start on Sunday morning. Breakfast over; it was time to hand the TAC back, before departing to the ranges once again, to take part in more competition shoots, as well as the APWT for those that required it. The over-packed lunches were issued at lunchtime, and it was then into the vehicles for the 200 mile trip back to Glasgow.

RTW 02 – 17-19 FEBRUARY 2006

The Sqn once again headed to the Fort George Range complex, to take part in the RSAAM competition. A bus was used for the 180 mile journey and the Regt arrived just after midnight, and the briefings began. With an early start on Saturday morning, bed seemed the more sensible option.

The weather on Saturday morning was cold but dry, which meant good shooting competitions prevailed. **WO2(RQMS) Parke** was taking the competition seriously and this was evident, as rather than a beer on Friday evening, he went to watch *'Brokeback Mountain'* with a "friend", rumoured also to have been an enthusiastic shooter!

Some good scores were made, especially by the younger members of the Sqn; **Sigs Hough**, **Hanson**, **Laird**, **McVey** and **Recruit Fitzgerald**.

Unfortunately, team scores were down on last year and no major prizes were taken, although young **Sig McVey** won the Best Young Shot and **WO2 Parke** won the Moving Targets prize.

SQUADRON GENERAL NEWS

Congratulations go to the following on promotions: **Cpl McCormack** and **LCpl Ferguson**. Three Regular members have also been promoted: **SSgt Loveridge** and **SSgt Love**, both came off the SSgt to WO2 promotion board, and **WO2 Parke** came off the WO1 promotion board and looks likely to be posted to Bristol UOTC.

A welcome back to the Sqn is also in order to **LCpl Alasdair Beaton**, on his return from sunny Iraq. He was a credit to 3 Log Sp Regt that he served with, and the highlight of his tour "was the chance to make a difference in the world". He also admitted that so was coming home to a big party. The fact the WO's and Sgt's Mess will no longer have to pay ridiculous money for a piper, since **LCpl Beaton** only charges a bottle of lemonade, is a Regtl plus!

BRIGADE COMMANDER'S COMMENDATION

The G8 in July was a heavy commitment for the Regt and 2 members were awarded with the Bde Comd's commendation, for the efforts they made to make it run so smoothly. **WO2(FofS) 'Bullin' Pullan** and **WO2(YofS) Parkins** were presented their awards by **Col Lapsley**, at a presentation in the Officers Mess. **FofS Pullan** said of the award: "To be honoured in this way, is truly breathtaking after 26 years in the Army".

Col Lapsley with WO2(FofS) Pullan and WO2(YofS) Parkins after presentation of Bde Comd's Commendations

51 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Thompson**
SSM **WO2 Riach**

BABY BOOM IN ABERDEEN!

It seems there is something catching in the water in Aberdeen this year. Since July we have seen the births of 8 babies in the Sqn, with another 2 on the way. It must be something to do with the fresh sea air in the North East, although the OC seemed to think it was every time somebody sat in his office, they fell pregnant (or at least their partners did!)

This is certainly one way of boosting the strength of intake for the Sqn; although a little bit drastic some may say! Nevertheless, congratulations to everyone involved.

SKIING – EXERCISE MERCURY GLACIER

Two members of the Sqn, **Capt Postlethwaite** and **Sgt Henderson** entered the Corps Skiing Championships in Zell-Am-Zee, Austria. Both had an excellent time and apparently it was agreed that it was the best standard of skiing for sometime. Congratulations to **Sgt Henderson** on winning the TA Individual Slalom competition.

CHRISTMAS

The last Sqn weekend of the year was held at Black Dog Ranges and covered trade trg for all personnel. This included Airwave trg, refresher voice procedure and refreshers for Tech and ED trades.

For some, it meant helping out with the Children's Christmas party back in the Barracks, where Santa Claus made a guest appearance and brought lovely gifts for the children. **LCpl Duncan** organised the party and it was enjoyed by everyone who attended, which as I'm sure **LCpl Duncan** will agree, makes it all worth while. It also meant helping with the preparation for the Sqn "Big Kids" Christmas Party which was also supported by our partners. The Party was a formal dinner and turned out to be a great success. Our thanks to the SSM and his team for the organisation.

61 (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Capt GP Gaw**
SSM **WO2(SSM) N Sproul**

February is the shortest month of the year but strangely, it is by far one of the busiest for the Capital Sqn. We took delivery of our shiny new SA80-A2s and set about converting ourselves to their use; provided some pre-Lightning Strike trg for Tayforth UOTC; hosted 84 and 85 Sig Sqns from NI; charged around the Pentland Hills learning about sect attacks and anti-ambush drills; won a prize in the Regt Skill-at-Arms meeting; and still managed to carry out an Airwave comms ex and recruit another dozen people into the Sqn.

STW 2 – HASTY ATTACKS, VEHICLE AMBUSHED, FIRST AID AND MORE!

This account of a weekend learning basic battle procedures, vehicle anti-ambush drills and first aid was written by **Sig Rickett** and **Sig Shewan**:

"Backstreet Boys on the intercom at 0600 hrs almost made me wish I'd stayed at home, after only 3 hours sleep. However, after breakfast, we signed out the SA-80 A2 for the first time and took the Land Rovers up to Dreghorn Trg Area in the Pentlands. We were issued PRRs, a first for me! It was a cold morning, but after a few lessons on fire and movement and section attacks, we were given blank rounds and smoke grenades and executed our first sect attack.

So off we went in Charlie and Delta fire teams. We patrolled up the track and quickly came under effective, enemy fire from a concealed position on a hill to our front. With Delta fire team providing suppressive fire, Charlie team immediately responded with a flanking manoeuvre, which led up a gully in the hillside where the enemy sat unaware of our advance. A smoke grenade was thrown, and we stormed out of the gully over the fence on top of the enemy position, which had been overwhelmed by Delta fire team's covering fire. Delta fire team quickly joined up for the re-org.

Vehicle anti-ambush drills were next! Starting off slowly, doing a walk-through, talk-through of what to do if your vehicle is ambushed, we were soon going through the drills in quick time. Providing top cover out of the top of the Land Rover was great, and it was fascinating to see how the skills, learned in the morning, could be adapted to this situation. It wasn't long before we were turning the situation round and attacking the ambushers!

We drove down the track, which came to a farm where the sect came under attack. With a quick smoke grenade from Delta, all the men were out of the Rovers laying down return fire on the enemy, without their knowing. Some smoke and a good few rounds later, the enemy was overrun, after a flanking manoeuvre through a stream and under a tunnel.

Intelligence on the enemy's operating procedures suggested a quick reaction force (QRF) may be on the way. The decision was taken to bug out, after a quick search of the area. Using pairs fire and manoeuvre, we headed for the emergency RV point. The QRF quickly closed the gap, forcing us to fight a running battle, utilising all the skills acquired throughout the day. Everyone worked hard and we all agree that it was one of the best weekends that we've been on as recruits and it gave us a great sense of achievement. There are not enough hours in the day!"

MOBILISATIONS AND RETURNS

The Sqn welcomes back **LCpl McRobbie** from Iraq and **LCpl Sinclair** from Bulford, both full of stories and extremely keen to get back in amongst it in the Sqn. **Maj Bruce** is still out in Iraq and **Sgt Cook** is currently preparing to go with 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200). Good luck **Sgt Cook**, keep your head down and keep sending back lots of digital photos. Remember, stay low, move fast!

REGIMENTAL SKILL-AT-ARMS MEETING, FORT GEORGE

Every thing was going well until **SSgt(YofS) Chisholm** went to the boot of her car and realised she had left all her kit at home! As everyone else was already on the bus, it seemed pointless to get back off, so there we sat for 45 minutes while a new cross-town land speed record was set; recovering some clean undies. After **Sig Bugonovic** analysed the on board movie, we arrived in a wet and dark Cameron Barracks, ready for a bowl of soup and an early start.

The day started off suspiciously well – the sun was shining, there was hardly a cloud in the sky and everything was going to plan. That was until 61 tried to zero their new SA80-A2s. After an average of 45 rounds each, we eventually decided enough was enough, and we were never going to beat the 52 Loyal anyway. The first shoot was the Graham Trophy – a FIBUA shoot on the 100m range.

It was a bit odd doing a FIBUA shoot without a building in sight, but we gave it our best and well and truly scared the targets into submission – some of us even managed to hit them! The new

APWT seemed a bit easier than the old one, not least because you don't have to shoot with your 'face welly' on. The majority of the Sqn passed it on the first attempt, **2Lt Kennedy-Lunde** even reached marksman standards along with his black eye. Howling winds, lashing rain and poor visibility would have been fantastic excuses for our poor performance on the moving target range; however, **LCpl McRobbie's** admission that he forgot his contact lenses was closer to the truth. The gallery range also proved difficult due to the sandy coloured targets up against the sand banks at 300m. Despite all these poor excuses we did have a great weekend shooting, with **2Lt Kennedy-Lunde**, **Sig Bush** and **LCpl Sinclair** winning the pistol shoot. Lots of us even managed to bag a couple of ITDs as well, including the TACFT (last chance at 4 miles), recognition and first aid.

33rd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Bill Adsett**
RSM **WO1 Shean Dewar**

CHARITY CAROL CONCERT

The Regt held its annual charity Carol Concert in Decembe, to present monies raised during the year to the Army Benevolent Fund, SSAFA Forces Help and a local civilian Squash Club. 42 Sig Sqn assisted by raising over £2000, during a Coast-to-Coast sponsored walk in the summer of 2005, organised by it's PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**. This was one of a series of charity walks carried out by the Sqn over the last few years, from St Bees in Cumberland to Robin Hood's Bay in North Yorkshire.

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Andy Quinn**
SSM **WO2 Kevin Westall**

As the Sqn has not appeared in the Wire since the December issue, it is time to put pen to paper, before the Adjt's phone call, to demand news from the Manchester branch of 33 Sig Regt (V).

ROYAL SIGNALS INSPECTION TEAM (RSIT)

After the parties and festivities of the Christmas period, reality was restored with the thought of the annual RSIT visit on 21 January, looming on the horizon. This visit had occupied the mind of the Sqn Foreman, **SSgt Danny Mulheran**, for some time as he threatened and cajoled Det Comds, to ensure that their installations would stand up to the scrutiny of **Maj Gigg Plumb** and his merry men. As it happened, and by virtue of a minor miracle, performed by the Foreman, we were not shown the 'red card' but given the thumbs up by an impressed RSIT, with **LCpl Monty Montgomerie's** and **Sgt Kenny Bryan's** dets being singled out for special praise. In addition, 80 Sig Sqn as a whole gained the accolade from RSIT, for having the best presented installations for some time – well done **SSgt Paul Richards** and his team.

OPERATIONS

The Sqn continues to supply volunteers to Op TELIC with **Cpl Stu Green**, **Cpl Dave Curtis** and **LCpl Tony Dolan** returning after a 6 month stint just before Christmas. Currently we have **Sgt Mick Hanna**, **Cpl Paula Scully**, **LCpl Emma Warburton**, **LCpl Natasha Pinnock** and **LCpl 'Shrek' Walsh** serving on Op TELIC 7. In addition, **Sgt Alwyn Murray** has just deployed to the Balkans with 97 Sig Sqn (V) on an FTRS tour for a year.

GULF EXPERIENCE – *by Sgt Mick Hanna*

I deployed on Op TELIC 6 through RTMC Chilwell last July, as part of the Tiger Team; an asset tracking group working for HQ LAND. Once at Chilwell, I met up with an old friend from 85 Sig Sqn (V), **SSgt Paul McCann**, which was a pleasure as he filled me in on all the gossip over the water, since I last visited. The Tiger Team job itself wasn't particularly exciting, but had the added advantages of having constant patrols and moves all over South Iraq; visiting all camps where there may be any British eqpt. I even got a 3-day jaunt down to Oman and enough down-time to make sure I was getting in the gym, at least every other day.

After the RIP taking us into Op TELIC 7, and 3 months on the Tiger Team, **Paul** and I were split up, as I went off to a new project and he was redeployed to carry on a Tiger Team tasking in Afghanistan – getting two medals for the price of one! As for me, I had asked for a more challenging role and was offered the job of Home Nations Liaison Officer (HNLO) for Basra APOD. This put me in charge of over 330 Iraqis working on the air station; looking after their admin, discipline, pay etc. This is a very busy job and I normally work 14 – 15 hour days, everyday but as it is very busy, I'm definitely not getting bored. The only downside to being so busy, is that I haven't been to the gym in the last 3 months since taking over! The HNLO works from the QM(A) Dept, so obviously I was extended all the little extras that go with working in a QM's Dept! The first QM I worked under was **Maj Dee Orwin**, another familiar face from 85 Sig Sqn, but he was leaving just as I got there to be replaced by **Maj Richard Dorney** Grenadier Guards, so my drill is 100% better and I abbreviate nothing. The QM is the Quartermaster, and the RQMS is Quartermaster Sergeant – or Croissant, depending on how you pronounce it. The RQMS is **WO2 Andy Tyler** from the West Midlands Regt, another TA soldier who revels in his job and is having a good time saying no to officers, in as polite a manner as possible.

So far I have spent 6 months in BAS and SLB and have another 3 to go. I have made a lot of new friends and am having a very good time. Once the rain stops, I'll get working on the sun-tan again, but we'll have to see about the gym.

Sgt Mick Hanna (right of picture) deploying by helicopter with the Tiger Team

SQUADRON SKI TRIP 2006

The Sqn ski trip took place in March this year, with an 18 strong party flying out to Zurich for an 8 day ski course in the Arlberg ski area of Austria. This was a repeat of last year's trip, with the Sqn being accommodated in Algau Kaserne as guests of the Austrian Army. The exercise was led by the OC, **Maj Andy Quinn,** with **Lt Glenn Martin** as the Chief Instructor and **SSgt Dean McKenzie** of 35 Sig Regt as the second instructor.

The aim of the exped was to qualify TA soldiers as either Basic or Advanced Alpine skiers, following the syllabus supplied by the Army Ski School in Sennelager. This was largely achieved, with the majority qualifying as Basic skiers and the 'hot shots' managing an Advanced standard.

Unfortunately, **Sgt Paul Duffin** had a spectacular 'wipe out' on the fourth day of the trip and had to be taken off the slopes in a ski ambulance skidoo, for transfer to the local Krankenhaus. The diagnosis was that he had snapped the cruciate ligament behind his knee and had to have an operation to repair it. It is a tribute to the superb medical care available in Austria, that his operation was carried out only four hours after his accident! Happily, he was well enough to accompany the party back to Manchester on the return flight, but will not be able to go back to work for at least 6 weeks. Apart from this injury, the trip was a great success and it is hoped to repeat it next year and run another beginner's course and provide an opportunity for the Sqn Basic skiers to have a go at an Advanced course.

A smiling Sgt Paul Duffin on the right, blissfully unaware of what was to come, with Sgt Tony Knowles of 80 Sig Sqn

TRADE COURSE

A trade trg course was organised by the Regtl YofS**, WO2 Marcus Bailey**, during the period 25 Mar – 2 Apr in Crown Gate Barracks, Runcorn. The Sqn PSIs, **SSgt Dave Kirk**, **SSgt Jimmy Frew**, **SSgt(FofS) Danny Mulheran** and **Sgt Perry Mason** were all heavily involved as instructors. This was a successful event with the following members of the Sqn gaining trade qualifications:

Sigs Mike Welch, **Adam Southworth** and **Keith Turner** – Class 3 RR Op.
LCpl Mark Sowden – Class 2 Tech.
Sig Aiden Thomas – Class 3 Tech.
Sig Karen Smith – Area Sys Op (SW).
Sig Jenny Shortall – Area Sys Op (SAS MC).

Also, and just to show how busy and diverse life can be in a TA Ptarmigan Sqn, in the last 3 month period the Sqn has been involved in the following events:

Regt main weekend.
The Derby Trophy – a 42 (NW) Bde Military skills competition.
EX WINTER FALCON – Bde Comms Ex.
EX SPRING FALCON – Bde Comms Ex
CMT 3 - ITD qualification weekend
EX WHEATSHEAF ROSE – Regt Comms Ex.
DIVSAAM

Never a dull moment! However, with Easter next weekend, its time for a spot of leave.

CONGRATULATIONS

Finally, the Sqn congratulates **Sig Simon Benson** and his wife **Sarah** on the birth of their son **Alfie** on the first day of April**, LCpl Sophie Fenwick** on her recent promotion and, last but by no means least**, WO2 Kevin Westall** on taking over as the SSM from **WO2 Rooster Coburn** who moves to the Regt as the RQMS(V). As a footnote, congratulations must also be extended to **SSgt Jimmy Frew**, an Army Angler, on nearly winning the recent LAND Open pairs competition. Jimmy caught an impressive 93lb 8oz of Carp at Woodlands Lakes near Thirsk, which is a winning catch on a normal day.

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM	**Maj MJ McKenna**
RQMS	**WO2 G Steel**
RQMS(V)	**WO2 P Bell**
RCWO	**WO2 N Berry**

Since the last publication of *The Wire* in February, the QM, **Maj Mick McKenna**, lost a valuable member of his dept, due to an arduous 2-week ex. The RLC guru, **Sgt Scotty Burton**, spent 2 weeks putting his years of trg and experience into furthering and mastering being on the piste. Not only did he manage to ski hard, play hard and drink hard, much to the amusement of hundreds, he also skied into a chair lift pylon - 'Hard!'

When this release hits the press, the current RQMS, **WO2 Gary Steel**, will have completed his 22 years service and will have moved on. He will openly admit that he has lost count of the number of job applications he has submitted, including the current manager's vacancy at Sunderland AFC, which, as he let everyone know, he could do a much better job of – which is not hard at the minute! The Unit wishes to express their gratitude to a scholar and a gentleman, who will be missed. His successor is **WO2 Russ Shield**.
WO2 Neil Berry and **Cpl Arthur Warner** excelled themselves yet again, by providing excellent service during EX MARTIAL MERLIN, by providing quality food constantly through a 36-hour period, in a remote farmyard on the outskirts of Catterick trg area. We would also like to congratulate **Cpl Arthur Warner** on his long overdue promotion. Also a 'Well done' to the remainder of the QM's Dept who, with limited manpower, (three to be precise! The RQMS, **Sgt Burton** and **Sgt Kev Potter**) supported a successful ex.

The QM's Department. Sgt Burton, Maj McKenna, WO2 Steel, WO2 Berry, Mr Allen, Mrs Walker, Mr Kempster, Cpl Warner

Maj McKenna and the rest of his Military Staff would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of the Civilian Staff who support the Dept. They do an excellent job, they are; **Mr David Kempster** (Clothing Accountant), **Mrs Lorraine Walker** (Quartermaster's Clerk) and **Mr Peter Allen** (Expense Accountant). **Sgt Scotty Burton** is organising a sailing exped to sail around the Channel Islands, which will include the long haul to Guernsey, eventually returning through Cherbourg, before setting to dock at Gosport. There will be a crew of 12. The Skipper is being provided by JSASTC along with the Nic 55 yacht. Wait for report in next issue.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Keith Williams**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

EXERCISE AMBROSIAS

49 Sqn has been hard at work as ever, with some of the Sqn members participating in EX AMBROSIAS, a military skills weekend, organised by **Lt Ross Anderson** and **SSgt 'Woody' Wood**. The weekend was definitely a success, with trg varying from a foreign wpns stand, given by the West Yorkshire Police and aerobics (well OK, helicopter landing drills, without a helicopter) with **WO2 Brad Hogg**. The only downside to the weekend was the bitterly cold weather on Catterick trg area, but at least the snow stayed away until Sunday morning.

EX MARTIAL MERLIN

The Sqn also had 7 members in two of the teams for EX MARTIAL MERLIN, 15 (NE) Bde Annual Patrolling Competition. The teams were lead by **Lt Ross Anderson** and **Lt Doc McKerr,** in and around Catterick trg area. The teams worked incredibly hard over the 22 hrs they were out on the ground, of which half was in the typical, horrendous weather that Catterick is renowned for. However, this did not stop them from completing the competition, ahead of some other inf teams.

A massive effort was made by all throughout the patrol, but an extra special mention must be made for **Sig Clare Cambridge**, as she battled on relentlessly, carrying at least half her own body weight, in the form of the PRC352. Also, **Sig Patch Patchett** managed to give up his pipe smoking habit, well at least during the hours of darkness anyway.

CONGRATULATIONS

To **SSgt Mark Alexander** and **SSgt Frank Mason** upon receiving the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Outstanding Service to the Territorial Army. It is testament to the quality of these two SNCOs, that when being informed of their awards, they expressed some surprise at being rewarded for 'just doing their job'. **SSgt Mason** has also just been selected for an exchange visit with the US National Guard.

GOODBYE

To **Maj Keith Williams** who is leaving the Royal Signals after 21 years of accumulated service, with the Regular and Territorial Army. Good luck and best wishes to **Keith**, his wife **Beccy** and little **Samuel**.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Simon Smith**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Carol Ann Phillips**

Despite the usual apprehension, RSIT came and went this year without any major hitches. **SSgt(FofS) Sanderson** and his hand picked crew of cleaners and grease monkeys, swarmed all over the Sqn Comms vehicles, to ensure a satisfactory report, although the Foreman claimed it was all down to his immaculate Det Folders! On the other hand, OC RSIT was heard to mention that it was the excellent lunch that tipped the balance!

The annual 50 Sqn Officers and Seniors Dinner took place in February. This almost became a Regtl event, as the CO and all the PSAOs attended, because the function included the Dining Out of **WO2 Jim Robinson**, the SPSI of the Royal Signals Northern Band. **Jim** joined the Regular Army back in the early 60s, with the Band of the Cheshire Regt, and after completing his 22 years service, took on the NRPS post with our band. From then on, the band has never looked back, and having avoided the axe during SDR, is now on the verge of being fully re-established as a TA band.

Much of the band's success is due to **Jim's** hard work, and he will be sorely missed, but he is welcome to turn up for any of our dinners, since the band will naturally come along with him! On this occasion, we even forgave the band for playing on for an extra hour, as they had a long list of **Jim's** favourites to get through.

The end of February saw the Sqn host the Lord Lieutenant's Parade for Durham. This is an annual event, where HM Lord Lieutenant present certificates for meritorious service to members of the TA and Cadet Force Instructors, as well as awards to the high performers in the County's Cadet Forces.

This year, certificates were awarded to the OC, **Maj Simon Smith**, and **Sgt Kevin Brack**, who had both put in much hard work over a number of years. The parade also provided an ideal opportunity to present **Cpl Alan Urwin** with his Op TELIC medal, particularly since this was his last event before leaving to join the police service. **Sgts Gary Fletcher** and **Paul Standing** firmly marshalled the Honour Guard, who performed admirably, particularly since a number of the Guard had only just completed their recruit trg.

Well done to **Sigs Clark**, **Davidson**, **Gardiner**, **Henderson**, **Jacques**, **Moss** and **Williams**, whose drill was beyond reproach

The Honour Guard for the Lord Lieutenant's Parade

on the night. Thanks also to PSAO, **Capt JJ Wilson**, and NRPS, **SSgt Jeff Martin**, whose hard work ensured the event went without a hitch.

EX SPRING FALCON was the first comms deployment of the year, and saw the Sqn join the rest of 12 Sig Gp at *RAF Church Fenton* for a weekend, comprising a plug-up, CNR and RR exs and a CPX. A good snowfall did not deter the majority of the Sqn, and all benefited from the opportunity to shake off the cobwebs. Well done to those who completed their trade trg over the weekend.

Finally well done to all those who took part in EX MARTIAL MERLIN, the 15 (NE) Bde military skills competition, held at the end of March on rain soaked Catterick. Despite a constant downpour throughout the weekend, the team, including **LCpl Prothero**, **Sigs Brown**, **Freer**, **Gardiner** and **Nixon**, all performed well beyond expectations and completed the competition in a respectable position – which is more than can be said for some of the local inf units!

Goodbye to **Sig Henderson**, leaving us to join the Regular Army, and a slightly shorter farewell to **LCpl Nick Graham**, mobilised at short notice for a tour in Banja Luka ODA with 97 Sig Sqn.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Paul Denning**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Barry Hunter**

At the end of January, the Regt was inspected by the RSIT Team. 90 Sqn again demonstrated the high standard achievable, with a lot of hard work and elbow grease. **Cpl Harry Cutler** was singled out by the team for a commendation, but praise should go to everyone for the huge effort made. Well done everyone.

Also at the end of January, **Sgt Luke Hitchen** was persuaded by a friend that the Tough Guy 2006 competition would be a sensible idea. Being electrocuted, nearly drowned, made to swim across freezing ditches, through submerged tunnels of water and jumping over burning obstacles wasn't actually that much fun, but **Sgt Hitchen** persevered and was one of the triumphant finishers! He has however, declined to put in a repeat performance!

Last weekend the EX MARTIAL MERLIN competition took place on the Catterick trg area. Three members of 90 Sqn joined the Regtl team; **Sgt "Rossy" Ross**, **Cpl "Millie" Millington** and **Sig "Davy" Wright**. Reports say they all acquitted themselves admirably, and helped to show 4 Para how to finish a competition! Congratulations go to **WO2 Barry Hunter** on his recent promotion and elevation to SSM. Good luck to **FofS Potts**, who has decided that 6 months in the sun and sand sound like a good idea, and welcome back to **Sig Mark Turnbull** and **Sgt Keith Morgan** who have rejoined us after their time out there. Good luck also to our old SSM, **WO2 Les Stimson**, who is also enjoying the sun and sand lifestyle!

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

EXERCISE HIGHLIGHTS

With some of our crucial inspections out of the way, the Regt moved up a gear to continue with the ex trg programme. EX WILD PHEASANT, which took place at Nescliffe over the weekend 17/19 February, proved the ideal testing ground for most of our installations, post RSIT.

The ex also coincided with an intensive recruit trg weekend, so manpower was a little thin on the ground, but I suspect the sub zero temperatures also added to the reluctance to get out of bed. Nonetheless, despite one or two comms glitches, the ex proved to be a considerable success and it was good to get back to practising our much neglected comms skills, in preparation for the forthcoming Bde/Gp level ex, and later on in the year, annual camp.

During the ex, the Regt was also delighted to host the Hon Col, **Colonel Brian Foxon, OBE, TD, ADC**. Visits by the Hon Col are always welcome, as he has maintained a keen interest in all Regtl activities and the welfare of its soldiers, throughout his tenure and this time, he took time out to present many medals, ranging from operational awards for Op TELIC and Op VERITAS, through to the Efficiency Medal and Volunteer Reserve Service

The Honorary Colonel sharing a joke with the CO and the 2IC

Medal awards. **Sgts John Heesom** and **Simon Guy-Holt** both from 58 Sqn were clearly delighted to received their medals for long service and service in Afghanistan, respectively.

Sgt John Hessom and Sgt Guy-Holt proudly showing off their gongs!

Others that received medals during this memorable presentation included; **Maj Chris Lewis** who was awarded his VRSM, **Sgt Martin Roberts** and **Cpl Pete Gribben** who received their Op TELIC medal and **Sgt Eileen Monaghan** and **Cpl Wink Watson** who were awarded their VRSM. To all recipients we extend our warm congratulations.

Finally it was good to see one or two familiar faces on the ex, especially **WO2(FofS) Ray Edge**, who following his retirement from the Regular Army has returned as a member of the TA, passed his LECB and will take over as Tech Adjt when commissioned. **Ray** hopes eventually to succeed **Maj Ivan Thomas**, when **Ivan** retires from his TOT appointment next year.

Other successful candidates on the LECB included **WO2 Craig Kinsey** of 95 Sqn and **WO2 John Scott** of 58 Sqn who will both make fine additions to the Officers Mess and will no doubt be keen to celebrate their success by standing the next round of drinks at their Sqn Bars! The permanent staff instructors also gave their usual tremendous sp to this ex, **SSgt Nigel Stiff** the SPSI of HQ Sqn tried his hand at cooking breakfast for the masses, needless to say **SSgt Paul Holland** our expert chef was not too impressed with his marigolds!

After EXWILD PHEASANT, EX SPRING FALCON proved to be a bit of an anti-climax, but was equally successful despite a long journey in typically spring-like conditions to the snow bound North East, over the weekend 3/5 March. The ex, which took place at *RAF Church Fenton*, was a concentration of all regts under comd and control of 12 Sig Gp.

This unique ex allowed the TA Ptarmigan regts to work closely together, share ideas and carry out essential RR and CNR trg, without the need of a wide deployment. In addition it was a useful CPX, which used an interesting humanitarian and economic crisis scenario, which tested the expertise of the Comd and Control elements. Lessons learned during both exs will be tested fully, during our annual trg on EX GRIFFIN FOCUS in June, when the Regt will deploy to Castle Martin, South Wales.

SSgt Nigel Stiff displaying his catering skills with SSgt Paul Holland closely supervising

ROUND ROBIN

Following a few intensive weeks of trg, the Regt had little time to relax before moving up yet another gear to support EX MIDLAND SOLDIER. This was a major TA and Regular Army recruiting event, that took place at *RAF Stafford*, during the week 6/11 March and was Comd 143 Bde's main recruiting effort priority for 2006.

Our task was to encourage as many visitors to attend as possible on crucial visiting days. Our main effort to be devoted to Saturday 11 March, when we were ordered to ensure a minimum of 30 potential recruits were deployed, from each Sqn's area.

This proved to be an enormous challenge and our recruiting teams and staff, directed by PSAO's, saturated their respective areas with recruiting leaflets, conducted radio and press interviews and inundated schools and colleges with invitations to the show, offering free door to door transport and bags full of recruiting goodies.

Our efforts were rewarded with a tremendous response from Uniformed Service Groups at local colleges, sixth formers, youth and scout groups, and Cadet Forces (including Air Training Cadets). This ensured the Regt more than met its target and has resulted in many more potential recruits – now about that Birtwhistle Pennant submission?

Comms trg and recruiting priorities were however quickly switched to military trg priorities to conclude the final phase of ITD trg in order to qualify for the essential Certificate of Efficiency. Late Bounty Hunters descended on Lichfield over the weekend 18/19 March, to participate in EX FINAL CHANCE in order to complete final ITD tests. By contrast early bounty hunters for the new trg year engaged in the new Military Assessment Training

Tests (MATTs), also at Lichfield over the weekend 7/9 April on EX MIDLAND WARRIOR.

These guinea pigs can now be self satisfied that very early in the trg year, they have now done all of their military trg tests and are now (with the exception of trg days) fully qualified for their 2006/07 tax free bounty. If you are reading this and thinking damn why didn't I do it early; don't be dismayed, just ensure you attend the next MATTs trg weekend, planned for 1/3 September, but beforehand, do engage in some personal fitness trg to ensure you can pass both the BFCT and BPFA.

Meanwhile, before I forget, the weekend before in this exceptionally busy month of March, we saw **Maj John Middler** and his AT group of 17 willing participants, engage in a practice ex in the Brecon Beacons in preparation for the AT exped to France in July. The aim of the ex was to ensure that all exped members were made aware of the potential hazards involved in hill walking and to introduce the group to safety on steep ground, navigation in poor weather conditions and what clothing and eqpt to take and wear.

The weekend was an unqualified success and following some intense mountain walking on Day 1 the majority had a fabulous time on Day 2 climbing in the Llangorse Rope Centre, under the supervision of our climbing instructor **LCpl Jim Turner** before returning to their TA Centres. All are now looking forward to the next trg weekend in Central Wales, a week before they deploy to France.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Once again a number of changes have taken place throughout the Regt and we have extended a warm welcome to our new Regtl Foreman, **WO2(FofS) Drew Thomson,** he has also been joined by our first female Regular Technician **Sgt Helen Caplin**, who has joined HQ Sqn from the RSS at Blandford.

To 58 Sqn we have welcomed **WO2 Dave Cottage**, an ex Regular who will become 58 Sqn's Pay and Forge guru. A special welcome has also been extended to **Capt Bob Bath**, who joins the NRPS fold, as the Regtl Recruiting and Retention Officer. **Bob** joins us at a particularly interesting time and will no doubt considerably enhance our efforts.

Not forgetting our much valued civilian staff, 89 Sqn have also welcomed their new civilian fitter **Mr John Meeks**, fresh from

WO2 Drew Thomson shows Sgt Helen Caplin the ropes

Volvo and he has already taken them through a hugely successful ECI inspection – well done **John**! Sadly we have said farewell to **Sgt Colin Bentley** and we will miss both his Technical and AT skills and also to **SSgt Martin Barringer**, who moves from 48 Sqn to 30 Sig Regt. We wish all of our new arrivals a happy and rewarding time with 35 Sig Regt and to our leavers good luck and good fortune for the future.

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

EXERCISE VON TRAPP DRAGON IV (3 – 12 FEBRUARY 06)

EX VON TRAPP DRAGON is the Regt's annual ski trg ex. This year, it was held in Austria and was based in the Pillersee Hof, near the Fieberbrunn Ski area in the Tyrol. Thirty-six members of 37 Sig Regt, and 1 from 35 Sig Regt, attended the exercise, run by **SSgt Tim Abbott**. The group was split into 5 teams.

The beginners were taught by Austrian instructors and spent the first day learning cross-country skiing. **WO2 Eddie O'Connor** decided to try out skiing, during his last year in the TA. **Eddie** has served for 37 years and decided to concentrate on the cross-county skiing for the whole of the ex, rather than risk the speed of the alpine skis. The rest of the beginners group then moved onto alpine skis, and all gained the Basic Ski Proficiency. The intermediate groups were taught by **SSgt Tim Abbott**, **Sgt Judy Dunn** and **Emma** who was borrowed from 21 Sig Regt. As well

The Whole Group

as concentrating on their Alpine Skiing, they also took part in a Snow Shoe Trek and got stuck into digging snow holes and listening to incredibly interesting 249 Sig Sqn stories from **SSgt Tim Abbott**.

Cpl Andy Sole emerging from a snow hole

The advanced group was taught by **SSgt Pete 'Spike' Harris**. They concentrated on improving their skills; hopefully we will gain some new instructors next year. They also took part in an off-piste tour lead by an Austrian instructor.

The week was ended by an Après Ski party, in which the Regt showed off its singing and drinking prowess, lead by **SSgt Pete Harris**.

LCpl John Ruddock competes with an Austrian Ski Instructor in the International Table Dancing Competition

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Symmons**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Bathgate**

One weekend we had a 53 Sig Sqn comms ex, EX DRAGON'S DANCE, which was in preparation for the Regtl ex.

The weekend started on the Friday night, sorting out eqpt issue for the ex, followed by a "quiet night in the bar". Saturday started at 0700 hrs with a PT session taken by **Sgt Langton**.

Then after breakfast, some more lessons on VP and introduction to the PRC320. At 1300 hrs, the ex started with a short drive from the TA Centre in Cardiff, to Penarth Community Centre to set up comms. This also coincided with an invitation from Penarth Council Youth Day. So as well as the comms ex, we also turned it into a recruiting drive. The day went well, both from ex point of view, as the recruits learnt a lot, and from the recruiting side, as a lot of interest was shown by the general public. Sunday was taken up with lessons on NBC and First Aid. We finished the weekend mid-afternoon, just in time to watch the rugby.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj K Metcalf TD**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) R Francis MM**

The first trg weekend in February was 10th to 12th of the month. This weekend was a comms trg weekend, held in TAC Stourbridge. The aim was to make sure that all members of the sqn were ready for the Regtl Ex at the end of the month. After a take away meal on Friday night, it was up early on Saturday morning, to start the trg. All aspects of comms used within the Sqn were trained on, and practised to a good standard. Everyone worked hard and the general feeling was that a lot had been achieved by the end of the day.

While everyone else took part in the trg, the SSM, OC 870 Tp, PSI and **Cpl Mark Willis** managed to fully sort out the SCP. So, with a full day's work behind us, the PSI's BBQ he had planned, had to be started up ready for evening meal. With the temperature outside verging on freezing, the PSI surprisingly went missing and left the cooking to the PSI(T) and **LCpl 'Eli' Adams**.

They did have brief company, whenever the food was cooked, but people disappeared as soon as the grub was on their plate. After a good feed and a couple of beers, the day was over. Sunday was spent completing the trg and **Sgt Ash Girdler** even braved familiarising **Sig Hannah Jones** on the Rovers. They are both still alive.

The main event this month was the Regtl FTX on 24 - 26 February. EX VIXENS OUTING was held in Swynnerton, and all Sqns were self-supporting in the field. This tested everyone quite a lot, having to deal with the very cold temperatures as well as setting up SCP and CST dets. It was hard work and the conditions made things more difficult. Losing out on sleep, and driving long distances, took its toll but everyone came out of the ex for the better. A quick mention must go to **Cpl Willis**, as he fell ill during the ex and the Sqn hopes he gets well soon. Congratulations must also go to **Cpl Nick 'Tall' Caswell** and **Cpl Matt Hodgetts** for passing their Cpls course this month.

In March, the Sqn managed to take part in quite a lot. The main effort was the West Midland Soldier Recruiting Event. **Sgt Pete Buka** and **Sig Johnson** helped run a stand during the week, and then many more of the Sqn went down to the event on the weekend. With recruiting our main effort as a whole this year, the lads in the Sqn went out braving all weathers, recruiting on various occasions. It is hard work, and sometimes appears fruitless, but everyone is working hard to help us get more people through the door and it is paying dividends. So maybe catching the odd cold here and there is worth it.

Three members of the Sqn went to take part in the Corps Rugby sevens competition. **Sgt Kev 'Toff' Lucas** got the Regt's first try in the win over 11 Sig Regt. His kicking was inexcusably poor all day though, as he only put 1 over, out of 5 attempts. **LCpl 'Bones' Bonham** ended up with a nice war wound this year, with a nice fat bloody lip. And special praise has to go to most improved player **Cpl Mike Sheard,** for not tackling his own team mates this year.

On 18 March, members from Stratford TAC came in for a maint day. There seemed less to do now that the AGV det was moving from the Sqn. **Cpl Mike Sheard** had a tear in his eye, saying goodbye to the old SRV vehicle. He'll miss struggling putting masts up on top of hills in 80mph winds. Even though that det was off, there was still plenty to do. Everyone loves sorting out masts and mast kits.

It was a good day of hard graft, but it has to be done and there was still a laugh doing it. **WO2 Monty Walker** did get a little

annoyed at one stage, because SQMS **SSgt Andrew Robertson** had got the keys to the stores and was nowhere in sight. Everyone else found his rant quite amusing.

The final weekend of the month was used for some comms trg. This was well worthwhile, and those who took part got a lot out of it. We're looking forward to April now and the weather improving for our recruiting expeds.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

February saw the Sqn getting back into their main role of comms, with a Sqn and Regt comms weekend. It would be a new experience for a lot of the guys as we were preparing to take over 2 Airwave Gateway Vehicles (AGVs) from 53 Sqn and 93 Sqn.

The emphasis for the month was to get a couple of crews trained up on the AGVs, in order for us to integrate ourselves into the Regt comms plan, in the same way that 53 and 93 Sig Sqns had been doing for the last few years. With only 1 AGV by the start of the Sqn weekend, it meant that really all the guys could do was to use it as a talk-through, between the Ranger radios and the Sepura handsets. It was enough to familiarise the crews, prior to deploying on EX VIXENS OUTING, where formal trg by the Regtl 'gurus' would take place.

The ex was held at Swynnerton. We deployed there on the Friday night to practice moving a Regt through an FMB, where they would then be tasked by Ops to their locations. It seemed that the troops did a good job of turning up, sorting any admin issues out and then getting into the ex routine. Slick drills from everyone meant that all the kit was unloaded and those not on duties could get some much needed sleep, in the coldest building we could find.

Well, we weren't all cold, as the 12 x 12 in the building, with a blast from the kero heaters (don't mention the kero heaters) kept **SSgt Andy Milton**, **SSgt Mick Robinson** and myself comfortable for the whole night. The following day was spent trg the crews on setting up an AGV det, in order to enable them to deploy later that afternoon, and link into the Regt ex. During this time, the recruits were being given valuable trg on Airwave SRP2000 handsets and SATCOM so they could be used as crews for the rest of the dets on future exs.

We were all really impressed with just how quickly the information was picked up and the eventual deployment of the dets was hugely successful with comms in and working well within the target time frames. Unfortunately they never linked into the ex properly, due to problems with the AMSCERP – surprise – and so the ENDEX was called forward to 0300 hrs on Sunday morning.

The drills, as for the start, were then back into place as kit was handed back through the FMB and everyone deployed back to their respective TACs. It was a really productive weekend for the Sqn and nice to have an asset other than the FFR and CST to deploy out on the ground.

We now look forward to det maint and Lanyard Trophy trg over the Malvern Hills. With a lot happening this year, the Sqn is looking to cement its place as the Champion Sqn with even more effort and better performances than we displayed last year.

97 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM	**SSgt A Shrewsbury**

FORMING OF 97 SIGNAL SQUADRON

97 Sig Sqn predominately consists of members from Royal Signals TA units, who will deploy to the Balkans in April 2006, taking over from a Regular Sig Sqn as the HQ Multi-National Integrated Sig Unit based in Banja Luka, with a Tp in Pristina.

The Sqn was formed, under comd **Maj M Cosgrove,** and the SSM/SQMS **SSgt Alan Shrewsbury**, on the weekend of the 3rd of Feb 06 at Altcar Trg Camp.

The main reason for holding this mob weekend was to prepare for the RTMC Mob trg package, and to allow the Sqn time to get to know each other, whilst becoming familiar with the comd structure. The Sqn was trialling a deploy ability/readiness scheme.

This is a system where by soldiers are given a deploy ability status, depending on their BPFA and other Mandatory Army Training Tests (MATT) results. This scheme may possibly be used throughout the TA, in conjunction with the new MATT system and the two-tier deployability scale, with those immediately fit to deploy and those that have opportunity to improve. The level of fitness within the Sqn was very good. There has been a massive improvement, when looking back to the selection weekend held in December 05. Well done!

On the evening of 5 February the Sqn left Altcar Trg Camp and settled in to Parsons Barracks for the night, before deploying to RTMC Chillwell. On 6 February, we arrived at RTMC Chillwell to start mob.

Throughout RTMC we carried out ITDS 1-6 and required refresher lessons, to be fully up to spec to pass these ITDs. All but one in the Sqn was successful in passing through RTMC and the staff were very happy to inform us, that for our group of 90 students, to pass the APWT in 1 day, was a new RTMC record!

As is usual, when a new group of people get together and end up spending a lot of time together, you swap all of the current bugs going around. In our case many of us have picked up a dose of what we have termed Griffilys, which is a lovely stamina-robbing version of flu.

This was originally brought into the Sqn by **Sgt Hineson**, but popularly blamed on **Cpl Munden-Griffith**, hence the name.

The Sqn has now moved on from the mob phase and is now in a period of Special to Arm Trg, which includes, trade and driver trg, mainly based at Parsons Barracks in Donnington.

Blandford is home to several members of the Sqn on the Exchange Course. They are all very happy, apart from having to march everywhere, 'in a soldier like fashion'. Well sorry guys, anyone would have thought you were in the Army!

The Commcen team found their way to Copthorne Barracks in Shrewsbury, and are extremely happy, except they were not given a full kit list, so had to go into town to purchase their bikinis. It's a hard life when you have to take a sauna on a daily basis.

We also have many other Sqn members studying other roles required for the deployment to the Balkans. This includes 5 junior ranks who are being instructed on a coach converted into a classroom, studying IT in preparation for 6 month's of ISIS Admin. Heating problems have plagued the coach; however, we managed to resolve that just in time for the snow to arrive!

The two stores persons and the SPS clerk are currently receiving on the job trg at 30 Sig Regt in Bramcote and were surprised to find out they do real physical exercise there. The SSM paid them a visit, and was surprised to find a long underground tunnel. Come on guys keep digging!

The feeling in the Sqn is good, morale is high and we are all looking forward to getting out to Theatre. We have lots more trade trg to look forward to, and the OPTAG Trg Package coming up in the next couple of weeks. On the day of writing, the 23rd of February 2006, the Sqn is celebrating the birthday of **Sig Postlewaite** who is 20 today. Happy birthday **Jen**.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col AD Smith MBE TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Simcock**

LIFE IN A TA LAD – *by Capt Ian Walker*

Having nearly been in post for a year now, I felt it was a good time to write an article about life in a TA LAD. It certainly has been a most exciting year, capped off for me by recently returning from Bad Oberdorf in Bavaria, where I was OC for the annual ski trip. Twenty members of 38 Sig Regt took part, including 3 of us from the LAD. We skied the slopes of the Oberjoch area, with all participants achieved the Basic Ski Proficiency (BSP). Eleven of the individuals were complete novices and for many the trg provided them with their first experience of AT with the Army.

OC LAD and friends in the Alps

Sig Ross Douglas was the youngest member of the trip at 17 years of age. He progressed from complete novice to the level of skiing moguls, down black runs, by the end of the week. The Regt intends to repeat the ex next year, and once more the week will be aimed at novice skiers and junior members of the unit.

In addition to the ski trip, our annual camp included; mountain biking, sailing and hill walking in the Yorkshire Three Peaks. There was an HQ Sqn AT weekend in Jersey, which was attended by some of the LAD, and we also organised our own day of walking and then socialising in the Derbyshire Peaks, ascending to the top of Kinder Scout and then descending to the pub. **Cfn James Scott** was also a member of the Regt's challenging mountaineering exped to Canada.

Apart from AT, the LAD has several keen sportsmen. The new SPSI, **SSgt Andy Thomas**, has got the LAD out running and even inspired a few to enter the Army half-marathon. **Pte Steve Worley**, the LAD's AGC Clerk, is the Regt's 2IC for the football team, and our new recruits **Cfns Ian Hilton** and **Leon Mason** have been enjoying the Regt's badminton trg.

Earlier in the year, several of the officers including myself, entered a team in the Braham Horseless Trials. A rather mad concept, that involves running the eventing course, fences and all, and we even managed to bring home some silverware.

If at this point you are getting the feeling that life in the LAD is just sport and AT, you are wrong. This year's trg has included production at the JCBRN Regt (where the lads also got to drive the Fuchs vehicle), RGBWLI LAD in Chester and in our own TACs. We have also completed a weekend of trg on expedient repair and a weekend on eqpt care. This has all been in addition to the Regt's trg that has allowed us to complete our mandatory ITDs, but also do some interest trg on OBUA and other inf skills.

Individuals have also progressed through their own careers. **Ptes Ian Hilton**, **Leon Mason** and **Steve Worley** have all completed their recruits' course. **Cpl Mark Appleton** has done his Armourer conversion course and I attended JSC at Shrivenham. In the next month **LCpls Mark Souter** and **Tom Warren** deploy to Belize on EX CARIBBEAN SUNSET and **Sgt Frank Reid** will be attending his Class 1 Metalsmith course.

All of the above has been achieved by an LAD that had a strength of 13 a year ago, and is now at 18, still 5 below establishment. My message is that life in a TA LAD is busy and exciting, but also that given this is a second job, the people involved manage to achieve an incredible amount. With next year likely to be as busy as this, 38 Sig Regt LAD is an exciting place to be. More importantly the LAD is a pleasant and friendly family to be a part of, shown by the fact that at the social, organised by **Sgt Ray Boulton** in October, over 50 past and present members attended. If you are moving to the Sheffield, Derby or Nottingham areas and are looking for a change and a challenge, please do not hesitate to contact me: ianwalker78@hotmail.com.

CADRE WEEKEND – *by LCpl Coy*

38 Sig Regt kicked off 2006 with a bang, with the Cadre weekend held at Catterick based around OBUA tactics and range work.

The first weekend of the New Year focused on trg on the new A2 rifle, with the chance to fire an APWT. On Saturday afternoon trg turned to focus on OBUA, using the excellent facilities available at Whinney Hill. We were shown how to enter a building tactically, using a range of techniques, move across open ground in the urban environment and clear buildings using grenades.

All of the trg culminated in a mini ex later that afternoon, which proved to be a fun opportunity to practise the skills we had learnt. Sunday saw a mix of interest stands, including confidence building in the tunnel maze, Molotov cocktails and an urban assault course.

Overall this was a great weekend which struck a balance between teaching skills and the opportunity to practise them. The activities strengthened and built upon existing knowledge and provided a sound base for the Regtl Mil skills Ex in February.

The Molotov Cocktail Range

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JS Adams**
RSM **WO1(RSM) CS Tucker**

RHQ - FAREWELLS AND ARRIVALS

Since the last publication of *The Wire*, we have bade farewell to **WO1(RSM) PJ Hatton**, who left on commissioning to Captain to take up the appointment of Welfare Officer at 11 Sig Regt, Blandford. We welcome **WO1(RSM) CS Tucker**, who joins us from Joint Support Unit Corsham. We also welcome **WO2 Steve Bayliss** to the position of RAOWO (NRPS) replacing **WO2 Terry Morrissey**, who has moved downstairs to take up the appointment of PSAO HQ Sqn.

BRIGADE YOUNG OFFICERS' WEEKEND

The purpose of the 2 Sig Bde Young Officers' Weekend was primarily to educate junior officers in the eqpt and capabilities of the Bde, and how this supports potential UK Ops. The weekend was run by the Regt and much of the scenario work surrounding the "1000 Year Flood" was the brainchild of Ops Officer (V) **Capt Sainsbury**. Several units had brought eqpt along to demonstrate and the syndicate DS, from across the Bde, were able to guide the officers to a useful output for the day. After a dinner on the Saturday night, the Regtl staff put the young officers through their paces at a series of events on the Sunday morning. The events included a fun pistol shoot and comd tasks, but also included the assault course and a stream run to blow out any remaining cobwebs from the previous evening. The finale was a stretcher race, with the student syndicates competing for the much coveted 2 Sig Bde paperweights, which were presented by the CO at the end of the weekend. By all account, the weekend was well received by the officers, so many thanks to all who organised it and to the units who provided support.

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 2006

Seventeen members of the Regt travelled to Ash Ranges over the weekend 1/2 April 2006 to participate in the annual TA Corps Skill at Arms meeting. The Regt entered teams in both the Royal Signals and REME championships, with the remaining 9 members entering as individuals. After a damp, but successful weekend, the team returned to Bristol with the following achievements:

Overall Female B Class Champion
LCpl Cassie Downs

REME Runners Up Pistol
Cpl Rich Brown/Cfn Darren Hawkes

Runners Up Falling Plate
Cpl Rich Brown/Cfn Darren Hawkes

Cfn Neville Hancock/Cfn Alistair Tibbatts

Runners Up Graham Trophy
Cpl Rich Brown/Cfn Darren Hawkes

(FIBUA)
Cfn Neville Hancock/Cfn Alistair Tibbatts

Runners Up REME Championship
Cpl Rich Brown/Cfn Darren Hawkes
Cfn Neville Hancock/Cfn Alistair Tibbatts

Congratulations to all members who participated and we look forward to achieving more next year!

HEADQUARTERS (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

OC **Maj RR Loveridge**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Simpson**

The Sqn has had a busy couple of months at the beginning of 2006 with Sqn exs, social and charity events taking place.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

23 February 2006 saw the final departure of **Captain Tom Pengelley**, who retired from the Army after 42 years service, with both the Regulars and NRPS. **Tom** had been PSAO with HQ Sqn for almost 10 years and we wish him well in his retirement. His replacement is **Captain Terry Morrissey**, who returns to the Royal Signals, after 12 years with the AGC (SPS).

The successful Regimental Team at the Corps Skill at Arms Meeting 2006

EXERCISE WESSEX REPAST - NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY SQUADRON AND ASSOCIATION DINNER

- by Capt Phil Smith

The inaugural North Somerset Yeomanry combined Sqn and Association lunch took place at Horfield Territorial Barracks on 4 March 2006. There were 47 people in attendance, including three previous OCs of the Sqn, **Maj Glyn Nash**, **Maj Clive Dawes** and **Major Richie Belbin** (who is now 2IC of the Regt). The many Association Members attending, on being given the guided tour were surprised to find themselves part of the Sqn's photo gallery.

There was a presentation to the Association Members by the OC, **Major Gus Loveridge**. This was followed by a talk from one of the oldest surviving NSY veterans of the WW2, **E.J. (Ted) Shipp**, outlining his experiences.

An excellent 3 course lunch prepared by the Sqn's own chefs, **Sgt Mike Stawrowski** and **Cpl Colin Nattress**, was enjoyed by all, after which the OC proposed the toasts, ably assisted by **Signalman Adam Fox**, on his first outing as Mr Vice. Following lunch, the Hon Col, the **Rev David Sutch**, gave a speech thanking the organisers and Chefs. He welcomed all the Association Members, to what is now planned as an annual event. The reply from the Association was given by **Colonel John Bryant**, who was standing in for the Associations Chairman **Colonel HC Watson**, who was unable to make the lunch, due to previous commitments. He thanked the organisers and looked forward to the next dinner.

Many new friendships were struck up at the dinner with the younger Sqn members regaling the 'old and bold' with their war stories and vice versa.

EXERCISE WESSEX WORKOUT – CHARITY EVENT

- by Sgt Kerri Hill and Sgt Karen Hodges

The Sqn held a sponsored "Gymathon" for the charity "Tiny Lives" over the weekend 17/18 March 2006. The event was the brain child of **SSgt Kev Pritchard** REME, who decided that it would be a good idea to cycle, run and row 1000 miles in 24 hours without venturing more than a hundred metres from the TA Centre.

The Event started on Friday 17 March 2006, when everyone arrived for 1930 hrs to be issued with the charity T-shirts and a quick briefing on the programme of events, before getting warmed up ready for the test of endurance, which would last for 24hrs! The cycling, running and rowing machines were all lined up waiting for the first victims of what would be a very long night (for some)! The event was kicked off enthusiastically and energetically, with the OC, **Maj Loveridge**, **WO2 (SSM) Simpson** and **SSgt (SQMS)Oliver** taking the first stint and setting the pace for the rest of the Sqn to continue through the night, with the inspiration of GI Jane and other various movies being projected up in front of them.

At 0730 hrs on Saturday morning, after a very well deserved breakfast, the "Gymathon" was taken further afield, well just over the road actually to the Horfield Sports Centre, where we joined members of the paying public to run along side them in the gym and show them what we were made of – a bit bleary eyed but still going strong. A recruiting stand in Reception was erected to try and convince all these sporty people that they ought to join us!

Back at the TA Centre, the day was being supported by a guest chef from The Monmouth Regt, **Sgt Jerry Price** and with back up and assistance from stand in kitchen hands - **Sgts Kerri Hill** and **Karen Hodges**, the necessary sustenance was provided to the rest of the Sqn. This proved to be a great morale booster. However after lunch, the aches and pains were starting to show themselves but fortunately our two Medics, **LCpl 'Nanny' Nash** and **Pte Helen Baggaley** were on hand to provide the necessary TLC required and a few muscle rubs were the call of the day – which were very popular.

The target was met with 2 hours to spare much to the relief of all concerned. The evening ended with a social event in the Jimmy club, where a raffle was held to boost the sponsorship money. A good time was had by all.

The jubilant members of HQ (North Somerset Yeomanry) Sqn Charity Event Team on completion of 1000 miles in 24 hours

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

A DIRTY WEEKEND ANYONE? – EXERCISE MUDDY LYNX
- by Cpl Gareth Clarke

EX MUDDY LYNX living up to its name

On 17 March 2006, members of the Sqn assembled at Bletchley for a driver trg weekend down at Longmoor, under the expert guidance of **Sgt Gaz Patchett**. We were being familiarized on the unit's various vehicles; Land Rover 110 and Wolf, Bedford 4 tonne and a rare opportunity to use our 6x6 Pinzgauers, off road. Our levels of experience ranged from **Sig Natalie Keddie**, who hadn't driven any kind of military vehicle, to **Cpl Nick Vernon**, who was already familiarised on all of the Sqn's vehicles and was assisting with instructing.

The move down was simple enough; well it would have been, if one of the roads to the M1 hadn't been closed for resurfacing. Nevertheless, the route we were diverted down proved interesting through some villages, especially for **LCpl Jon Gray**, driving the Bedford, as he is used to a Transit during the week.

On Saturday morning after breakfast, we moved to the area to start trg, but first things first, the admin tents were up, and Burco was on. Now we were ready to start trg. One group started by going for a drive in the vehicles, to get used to how they handled off road. **Sgt Patchett** demonstrated a unique way of pruning tree branches, a method that is definitely not recommended.

The second group was introduced to the delights of the TURFUR winch by **LCpl 'Midge' Midgley**, one of our 2 resident VMs. After showing his group how it worked, he had a little surprise in store. After asking **LCpl Anna Yates** to park a Land Rover in a puddle, she was told to take charge and get it out using the winch. It was a competition against the clock, with the team with fastest time winning a prize. The team put in respectable time of 15 minutes 35 seconds.

After a quick brew, it was all change. **LCpl Yates's** group was taken on a gentle, guided tour of the trg area by **Sgt Patchett**, this time without any tree pruning lessons, and the second group, led by **Cpl 'Oz' Osborn** were learning to use the TURFUR. They were then timed using it, to recover the stuck Rover.

After lunch, the driving resumed. Although there was a new found confidence in the vehicles capabilities and our various driving abilities, **Sgt Patchett** did remind all those driving to curb their enthusiasm. I had the pleasure of being driven around the area by the Tp OC, **Lt Ewan McLeod**, which was pleasant enough, until he found a smallish puddle on the area, and our Wolf 'failed to proceed'. We dragged it out with relative ease, after which came the call for the Bedford to tow another stranded vehicle out and **Clarkey's** Towing Service was born. Arriving at my second customer, I found **Sgt Patchett** stuck in some water, but this time with one of the not so unstoppable 6x6 Pinzgauers. Then off to my third customer, **Sig Keddie**, and **LCpl Sean O'Connor** who required a tow and shortly afterwards, they needed a tow for the second time…

Sgt Patchett proves SNCO's do walk on water

It was my turn to chauffeur the Tp OC around the area, after he had driven me around the area in the Pinzgauer. I discovered I had similar talents to Sgt Patchett, and well and truly bogged the Pinzgauer. Even with the Bedford, it wasn't going to be dragged out. We called on the services of **Cpl Craig McGurk** and **LCpl Midgley**, the VMs. When you're stuck this well, there was no shortage of spectators. Although it put up a good fight, the use of the Pinzgauer winch, a ground anchor, a snatch block and the Bedford towing, all at the same time, it was eventually freed from its puddle, just in time for tea.

The next phase was driving round the trg area, using only convoy lights and Night Vision Goggles, what could possibly go wrong? Actually, not too much and all the vehicles got round the area without incident. Apart from **LCpl Anna Yates** who did get bogged in, but after the afternoon's towing practice, the VMs soon had her on her way again. After a couple of laps we packed up all the kit, including the Burco and headed back to Longmoor. We were all parked up and still made into the Longmoor Bullet for last orders.

Sunday morning, and after what could have been considered a lie in, we took the vehicles to the tank wash at SEME in Bordon. After using some over grown fire hoses to try to wash the vehicles down, defeat was admitted. We would need to use the pressure washer back at Bletchley. A quick turn around, and with fleet clean again, and parked up, all was done and dusted, and although it turned out to be late finish, it was a very enjoyable weekend. Thanks to **Sgt Patchett**, **Cpl McGurk**, **LCpl O'Connor**, and **LCpl Midgley** for giving up their free time to provide a very enjoyable weekend.

THE SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS COURSE
- by LCpl Lawrence

After finishing a 1 week assessment course, we started the Special Communications (SC) course on 24 October 2005. The course is long and arduous, containing both civil and military trg, lasting 5 months. The course initially started with 12 volunteers and finally finished with 7, ranging from Sig to Cpl. The first 8 weeks consisted of: a 1 week military field ex, a 2 week comms ex, using long range HF and SATCOM, and classroom skills, such as touch typing, current affairs discussion groups, map reading, and various power point presentations. Throughout the first 8 weeks, there was a comprehensive pistol range package, and regular PT. After the 8 week point, the tempo of the course increased and we spent most of the time away from Bletchley on various trg such as: 1 week hill walking in Snowdonia, a 2 week extensive range package, and other specific to role trg leading up to the final ex, EX GLOBAL LYNX.

This was the final test ex, combining all skills learnt on the course, and it is conducted overseas. This year the Field Dets were deployed to Oslo in Norway, Budapest in Hungary, and Vienna in Austria communicating back to the Base Det in Cyprus. The ex consisted of 2 phases, a military phase and an Embassy phase. The military phase was conducted from a local Army Barracks and was predominantly long range HF, SATCOM and specific to role eqpt based. The Embassy phase was designed to test a short notice to move, from a military to civilian location, whilst still maintaining comms.

At the end of the ex, there was time to make the most of the local areas; the Oslo Det managed to get some extreme sledging on a 2.8km run plus 2 days snowboarding and skiing. Due to lack of snow, the Budapest and Vienna Dets only had the local bars and clubs to sample. The course ended on a high, with a black tie dinner night in the TA Centre Bletchley, with approximately 50 people attending and a good night had by all. All in all, the course was long and arduous, but well worth the effort, as the job is unique to the Royal Signals.

The green phase of EX GLOBAL LYNX didn't quite live up to its name

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking for self-motivated, level headed, mature and flexible people. People who can maintain the highest standards, without supervision and operate in a variety of unique and demanding situations. We expect a good level of fitness and good trade skills.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Both male and females of all Operator trades are welcome to apply for service with the Sqn. Support trades vacancies exist for Electricians, Technicians, IS Ops and Stores Accountants of all ranks. There are also slots available for OC (Maj), Operations Officer (Capt), Tp OC (Lt/Capt), YofS, FofS and SSgt Trg.

HOW DO I JOIN?

If you are interested, read SOinC PD 206 Annex E (Application to join 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) and 264 SAS Sig Sqn, available through your unit Admin Office and submit one copy of the form to ourselves and one copy to Manning and Records. Sqn and Rgtl YofS should be able to provide further details, alternatively contact Ops Troop:

1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC)
TA Centre
Water Eaton Road
Bletchley
Milton Keynes
MK3 5HQ

Civ: 01908 638517
Mil: 94240 8517

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC — **Maj FE Hargreaves**
RSM — **WO1(RSM) Yates**

With Op TELIC 8 on the horizon, the Sqn has been extremely busy. It has conducted cascade trg, incorporating range packages up to, and including, transition to field firing. Pre-deployment trg then progressed onto OPTAG, and finally Sqn confirmatory trg. Together with BOWMAN trg and preparing kit for deployment, these have produced some long, but worthwhile working hours.

OPTAG TRAINING *- by LCpl Carr*

The Sqn was tasked to join the Bde Staff on their pre-tour OPTAG trg at 'Tin City', which is an urban trg environment on Sennelager Training Area. I assumed the role of team comd under **Maj Hones**.

The day started with a lesson on patrolling skills. For this, our multiples were tasked to patrol down a crowded street. We set off in 3 separate teams, with my team leading, and the other teams off to the flank. About halfway down the street, all hell broke loose, with several gunmen contacting us, with support from of a dug-in machine gun position. The shock and realisation of the situation soon dawned and my team immediately took cover, moving into relevant fire positions. Concurrently, I was sending directions to the flanking call signs, pushing them into depth. The serial went well and was a realistic scenario, bringing home the importance of the trg.

We then moved onto the public order side of trg, and my personal favourite; petrol bomb inoculation. The first two lucky

volunteers got up and moved forward, kitted out with body armour, leg and arm protectors, a 4ft shield, helmet and visor. We were instructed on the skills required to recover from the situation, being told to cover our faces, and stamp on the ground as hard as we could, whilst moving backwards, in order to extinguish the flames. The first person was hit and conducted these techniques, which worked impeccably. This seemed to give the remaining 'victims' some encouragement. We then prepped for a series of tasks throughout the dark hours, incorporating various convoy and mobile patrols. This was the first time I had experienced trg like this. I found it a very good instructional process, which has given me the self-assurance for my first operational tour.

EX SNOW WARRIOR - *by Sig Green*

Once again it's that time of year, where EX SNOW WARRIOR is upon us, with money being exchanged and favours being offered, just to secure a place. The objective of EX SNOW WARRIOR is to teach armed forces personnel how to survive and operate in the extreme conditions you find in the mountains. Most personnel who attend the course are able to achieve either the Basic Ski Proficiency (BSP) or the Advanced Ski Proficiency (ASP) certificate. Most importantly SNOW WARRIOR gives you the opportunity to either learn to ski, or improve your technique, at no cost to the individual.

My skiing adventure began on a typical cold Sennelager morning. waiting for the coaches, along with 3 other members from the Sqn. After a mere eight hours, we were at the Bavarian town of Oberstdorf in the foothills of the Alps, and we found our Multi-Activity Lodge. We were given a brief by the very helpful and friendly, permanent staff. The frantic kit issue then began, with the eqpt being of a high quality. Most people moved to the lodge's own bar and enjoyed a few drinks, while getting to know each other, due to the variety of cap badges on the course. The first day began with much enthusiasm, and we all made putting our boots into the bindings look like a command task, although there was constant reassurance from the instructors. However, after the completion of the first week we earned our BSP. We were all improving our technique every second we were on the slopes, the instruction was excellent. Even **Sig Ashcroft** could get his skis on unassisted. At the weekend, we began the touring phase, which was quite rewarding and some excellent views were gained of the surrounding area. Touring took up the rest of the weekend, and much was learnt with mountain survival and avalanche detection.

The second part of the course was mainly about improving technique. My group had an ambitious instructor who took us down a Black slope, which was a very rewarding experience. By the end of the week every one had come on leaps and bounds. **Sig Hulin's** cannonball technique was improving constantly and he could now get down a 5km track, with only 2 turns and an average of only 1 injury to the local population. Overall, EX SNOW WARRIOR was an excellent ex and personally one of the highlights of my Army career. After the forthcoming operational tour, I hope to continue with my skiing next season, being recommended for JSSI.

CASCADE TRAINING - *by LCpl Sanghera*

I had only been in Germany a little over a week, and I found myself straight in the heart of pre-deployment trg. As a TA soldier, augmenting a regular unit for an operational tour, I was anxious about the level of trg that I would be participating in. The Sqn had organized a series of one week 'battle camp' style trg packages, incorporating all the necessary instruction for our subsequent tour to Iraq. I prepared my Bergen for ex, including the usual requirements for field deployment; bungees, stakes, basha kit, and rations for a day or two. My webbing contained much the same with gas stoves, gortex, and of course, a woolly hat!

After about an hour to two on our coach, we arrived at Halton camp to what was going to be called 'home' for a week. Expecting to be in the field, I was pleasantly surprised to find a roof over my head, sockets in the wall, and even better still, heaters in the rooms! The first night contained essential briefings, admin, and being divided up into our Multiple ORBATs and after that was over, the fun began! I didn't know what to expect, as it was the first ex I had been on with the Sqn, and for all I knew, it could have meant no sleep for a week. Again, I was pleasantly surprised when I found out it was a no messing-around week, and we were here to learn, and learn I did!

On the first day, we went through base security and sangar drills, where I witnessed perfect demonstrations of the sentry doing his job, and the insurgent (AKA **Sgt Pullen**), falling over like a girl straight into a massive puddle...twice! As amusing as it was, reality quickly dawned when **WO1(RSM) Yates** explained that we all may find ourselves on sentry, and so our drills have got to be spot on, especially when all our colleagues are snoozing away and we're the only thing between them and an insurgent. Having this thought in the back of my head, I quickly started taking on board all the trg that was being provided to us! As the lessons progressed we moved onto the range. It began with a simulated top cover shoot from stripped down land rovers. We moved onto familiarization on the GPMG, Minimi LMG and 9mm Pistol. This was then incorporated into a shoot replicating a section in defence with rifles, GPMG and LMG, with a vast amount of 'brass' being expended.

We moved on to more Battle Lessons, followed by us being involved in a succession of confirmatory serials. Driving along at 20kph as top cover was cold, sometimes too cold, where all I wanted to do was hide back in the vehicle and be warmer than I was, but a quick glance into the tree line, and I saw somebody pop his head out. The next thing I knew an IED had just gone off, disabling the vehicle in front and the cold no longer mattered.

This was followed up by small arms fire. Adrenaline started rushing into the blood, and the drills we had been taught kicked in! As exciting as it was, nothing could have prepared me for when **Lt Lewin** told our multiple IC, he was a casualty, and we had to evacuate him to safety! Dragging a 6ft, 15 stone BEAST through the trees, over logs, is no fun I assure you! All in all, I believe the week couldn't have gone better! The skills and drills I have learnt off that one week alone, had given me the confidence to deploy on ops. It turned out to be a good week 'in the field'!

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

BRIGADE COMMANDER'S COMMENDATION FOR CPL PEART

On Wednesday 5 April 06, the Bde Comd visited 204 Sig Sqn to present his first Bde Comd's Commendation to **Cpl Sean Peart**.

On 29 July 2005, **Cpl Peart** gave immediate first aid assistance to a soldier from 21 Engr Regt, who had been involved in a motorcycle accident close to Quebec Barracks, Osnabruck. Although tragically the soldier did not survive the accident, the swift response and professional approach of **Cpl Peart** might have saved the man's life.

Cpl Peart acted with outstanding fortitude, perseverance, dogged determination and presence throughout the incident. Without any hint of indecisiveness, **Cpl Peart** used his natural soldierly qualities to assist someone in trouble. In the end, the motorcyclist died, but under better circumstances, **Cpl Peart** could have made the difference between life and death. For his actions, **Cpl Peart** has been given formal recognition in the form of a Bde Comd's Commendation.

Brig Deverill presents his commendation to Cpl Peart

MEDALS PARADE

Wed 5 Apr 06 also saw the majority of 204 Sig Sqn awarded their Op TELIC 5 medals. The Bde Comd awarded the medals to each serviceman on parade. For many of the younger soldiers, it was the first operational theatre that they had served in, and they were duly proud of their efforts. The Sqn had an excellent tour on Op TELIC 5 and definitely learnt a lot from the 6 months spent in Iraq.

The Medals Parade – The Bde Comd talks to Lt Cox

HANDOVER OF WO1(RSM) LLOYD TO WO1(RSM) BATLEY

After 22 years colour service, **WO1(RSM) Lloyd** leaves 204 Sig Sqn for a new life in Civilian Street. He has had an excellent tour at the Sqn, characterised by a 6 month tour on Op TELIC 5. The RSM has generated a massive enthusiasm for sport and fitness within the Sqn, which has seen the extremely successful Sqn Cross-Country team gain 1st place in the BA(G) and 3rd place in the Army cross-country championships. It was only fitting that the RSM's parting gift to the Sqn should be a first run of the new Personal Fitness Test, implemented on 1 Apr 06! **WO1(RSM) Lloyd** has had an outstanding tour with the Squadron and will be missed, we wish him and his wife **Deborah** all the best in the future.

204 Sig Sqn welcomes WO1(RSM) Batley (l) who joins us from 16 Sig Regt

BOWMAN SYSTEM MANAGERS (BSM) COURSE – 23 JANUARY-10 MARCH

204 Sig Sqn has steamed ahead with BOWMANisation, managing to get its vehicles in for conversion earlier than expected, and sending a large portion of the Ops team to Blandford, to mark the start of BOWMAN conversion trg for the Sqn.

The course started on 23 January, with the opening brief given by the Westland's Helicopter Group Supervisor and he told us what to expect for the next 7 weeks. After many hellos from all his staff, it was time to get on with the meat of the course in hand. We had to start at the bottom, learning to use the eqpt, in other words we completed a 2 week Advanced Signaller Systems course. However, not having any kit of there own, every lesson was a little like Chinese water torture (death by power point).

It was good to see that the £25000 emulation all worked and gave us a brilliant idea of the feel of the eqpt. Having passed the basics, and with a renewed sense of confidence in the BOWMAN radio system, we moved on to the BSM.

This is a 5 week, pass or fail, course with a day and a half long exam at the end. The idea is to be introduced to the CMIS application, in small bite size chunks, so that you get a feel for every little stage of plan writing, before moving onto the next. This is a good idea, until you realise that you don't really get to go back to the start, until the final exam, by which time you have

forgotten some parts of your teaching, making life some what difficult.

Eventually after 5 weeks of blood, sweat, and tears and hard work, the Ops team managed to complete the course, and have now been set free to write the new set of radio plans for the new radio systems, being fitted to our vehicles.

EX PRAIRIE EAGLE, POLAND – 21 FEBRUARY - 31 MARCH

Running concurrently to the preparation for BOWMANisation, a large number of the Sqn were deployed on EX PRAIRIE EAGLE on Drawsko Pomorjskie Trg Area in Poland. The Sqn's tasks were to set up and run EXCON: providing safety comms down to the RDG and SG BGs, as well as running the Admin Sp Unit for the ex, providing a 24 hour guard force for the Conotop Hotel.

Under the guidance of the acting Yeoman, **SSgt Simpson**, the EXCON facility was set up promptly and with no hassles. The Admin Sp Unit, under comd of the QM, **Capt Duncan**, took the majority of manpower and time, with **Cpl's Shackleton** and **Parham** deployed by **Sgt Towers**, to set up their guard force around the building. Although a menial sounding task, it was actually one of great importance. The wire was compromised a number of times, by local Polish people

While in Poland, another role of the Sqn was to establish and maintain links with the local people of Drawsko Pomorjskie. One visit involved a number of school children. aged 16 – 20, visiting the Conotop Hotel, in order to improve their English. **Lt Nicklin** and **Sgt Towers** were tasked to show the children around for the day, which proved most entertaining.

Although shy to speak English at first, the children soon engaged in numerous conversations, predominantly revolving around football and shopping.

The highlight of the day was the presentation of a drawing to the Sqn from the school, accompanied by 2 of the girls (aspiring singers) serenading a select few, by singing what can only be described as Polish Euro Pop karaoke, along with a CD player. All in all it was a good visit and the children definitely gained a lot out of it.

VISIT TO SZKOLA PODSTAWOWA SCHOOL

Prior to deploying on EX PRAIRIE EAGLE, the Sqn had organised a collection for any unwanted clothes, toys and games for children up to12 years old. Collected by the QM's department, families of the Sqn were most generous and we ended up collecting around 20 black sacks, full of clothes, as well as numerous toys and games. These were all shipped up to Poland with us and it was decided that they would be donated to the Szkola Podstawowa in Drawsko Pomorjskie.

This is a local school for children aged 6 – 12 years and is located in an extremely poor area of Poland. The school has 160 children and although poor, the school's spirit is regarded as one of the best in the area and has long maintained links with the British Army. The Headmistress, **Mrs Wiestoiwa Hnatewicz**, has 14 teachers, all of whom have master's degrees and live in the local area.

Capt Duncan, **Lt Nicklin**, **SSgt Newton**, **LCpl Button**, **Sig Stather**, **Sig John** and **Cfn Jewkes** made the journey to the school to deliver the gifts and the Headmistress was most grateful. They spent a couple of hours looking around, meeting a couple of the children and having tea and biscuits with the headmistress. With the aid of an interpreter, they established that the school is also in dire need of stationery, pens, papers and folders, as well as sports eqpt. The Sqn is due to return in the autumn of 2006 and will again be collecting as much as possible for the school.

BA(G) MINOR UNITS FOOTBALL CHALLENGE CUP FINAL ON 17 FEBRUARY - 24 REGT RLC *v* 4 ARMD BDE HQ AND SIG SQN

At The Oyster Pitch, opposite PRB Gutersloh, 4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (204) faced 24 Regt RLC in the Challenge Cup final. After team talks from team manager, **Sgt Dave Haskell** and team captain **Sgt Chico Towers**, the team started quickly with some well constructed play, cut the defence in two and gained an early goal by **Sig Max Toppin** on 2 minutes.

The early part of the first half was dominated by 204 and only a sterling effort by the goalkeeper of 24 Regt kept the score that way. 24 Regt then began to rally and play swung back to them, with their 2 forwards showing great promise. **Sig McKenzie**, our goalkeeper, played an absolute blinder and kept those talented lads from scoring in the first half.

Early in the second period, **Sig McKenzie** made another great save from a well worked corner, but was unlucky when the ball found its way to the feet of a 24 Regt midfielder, who slotted it past the recovering keeper. **SSgt Bri Wilson**, **LCpl Willie Bordon** and **Sig Kenny Horsfield** put together a string of very good passes down the left side, which put **Sig Horsfield** behind the defence and on goal, when he was cruelly chopped by the right back.

A penalty was awarded to 204, giving us the chance of the upper hand in this hard fought match. **Sig Max Toppin** stepped up with confidence to provide us with that small cushion. He missed, fate was against us, and the game was left still to be decided. The referee blew his whistle for extra time.

The Sqn's younger and faster side took the game to 24 Regt, with some very nice one and two touch football, however the ball could not be steered into the net. In the dying seconds of extra time, 24 Regt had a last chance to score but their free kick was comfortably dealt with and the whistle blew for the game to be decided by penalties.

The 5 takers were given their position and our goalkeeper made his way to the nets. The first 4 penalties for both teams went without a hitch leaving a score line of 5 all. Then a very well struck penalty by a member of 24 Regt was some how kept out of the nets by **Sig McKenzie**, which left us with the opportunity to take the game. Step up **Sig Max Toppin**, after the miss from the penalty spot in the second half; he was determined not to miss. With relaxed Caribbean swagger he approached the ball and masterfully guided it past the keeper. Final score: 204 Sig Sqn 6, 24 Regt RLC 5. Man of the match **Sig McKenzie** for goalkeeping, like his life depended on it.

CROSS-COUNTRY SEASON OF SUCCESS

Following much trg during and following the Unit's return from Op TELIC 5, the Sqn Cross-Country Team looked forward to the forthcoming events. The season got off to a successful start in the BA(G) 10km road race, with the A and B team gaining first and third place split by 1 AAC, for the minor Unit award.

The 1 Div Cross-Country League then commenced, and success continued with notable runs from **LCpl Jacko Jackson**, **Capt Alex Hutton** and **LCpl Ash Rodway**. The first taste of defeat was felt at the BA(G) Cross-Country Relay Championships where, despite an outstanding last leg run from **Sgt Taff Somerville**, the team finished 2nd to 1 AAC.

The Unit continued its winning way in the League and then achieved success at the BA(G) Inter Unit Cross-Country Championships with 1st and 2nd Minor Unit Team. Following this, it was back to UK, to compete in the Royal Signals Corps Championships, where a creditable 2nd place was achieved.

The next week, the Army Cross-Country Championships were held and we picked up an overall 3rd place there.

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj MS Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D Forrester**

This has been another busy period for the Sqn, combining numerous exs, comms, sport and eqpt care taskings. As in 2005, the Sqn supported EX LIGHTING STRIKE, providing a Bde Main HQ and setting a comd task for the Officer Cadets. On the comms front, **LCpl Holden** and **Sig Walsh** provided excellent BOWMAN tuition to 1 KINGS at Topcliffe, flying the flag for the Corps in the wider Army. **Sgt Luke Venni** led a team to victory in the 2 Div Basketball Championships. Sp Tp and **WO2(FofS) Lee Morrison** also led the way in the recent Eqpt Care Inspection, achieving an all-green pass with 'best practice' commendations in several areas.

SIGNALLER CUP QUARTER FINAL – *Cpl Pennock*

After easing through the previous round 7-0, against 11 Sig Regt, the Sqn was then drawn against 21 Sig Regt, in a tricky quarter final tie. With much of the first team away either on operations or courses, we were forced to field a very much depleted and inexperienced side.

It was so bad we had to draw on the services of retired players such as **Cpl Colin Opie** in goal, and **Cpl Hesketh** up front to partner the prolific predator **Cpl Andy Pennock**, who bagged a hat-trick in the previous round. In the absence of our regular captain, **Cpl Castledene** and Vice-Captain **Sig Neilson**, it was up to **LCpl Mikey Middleton** to take on the arm band of authority.

After going 3-0 down in a rocky first 35 minutes, changes had to be made. To the dismay of the crowd, **Cpl Pennock** was taken off (obviously the Sqn had conceded defeat and didn't want to score!) and the midfield was bolstered with the youthful legs of **SSgt (YofS) Polly Pollitt**. We then went in at halftime, 4-0 down, and **SSgt Dutton** made a raft of substitutions.

He then proceeded to debrief the team, declaring that it was obvious to him that we didn't want this enough, as we hadn't even given away a free kick yet. Taking this team talk on board the lads then commenced battle in the second half, gained numerous yellow cards and **Cpl Opie** was invited to leave the pitch. The game ended in a 6-0 defeat. Congratulations to 21 Sigs: we wish you well in the remaining games of the competition. After all, we're still the Corps Sevens Champions.

EXERCISE YOUNG PANTHERS JNCO CADRE COURSE *– LCpl Godfrey*

The 2006 JNCO cadre is considered extremely important for the grading of sigs within the Sqn, and so despite the Sunday morning start, we all had to pull some enthusiasm out of our back pockets and work hard. Day 1 consisted of the obligatory BFPA, followed by a Defence Writing lesson and a ticklish log run. We were, quite frankly, knackered before we started.

The following day, having shoehorned our admin into something approaching Bergen-size, we deployed by Chinook to Barry Buddon, near Dundee. A bumpy ride (or a sadistic pilot) resulted in plenty of vomit sloshing around the cabin as we landed. Arriving at the trg area, the sect comds coaxed their weary troops into a harbour area, laying guards and a track plan before going to sleep.

A fantastic range package, including pistol, SA80 and GPMG ran for most of the following 2 days. A moving target GPMG range, one of the sect competitions, provided the highlight. The assault course, another inter-sect challenge, provided some fantastic video footage, while being extremely demanding.

Afterwards, we kitted up and patrolled to an old farmhouse where each sect received orders for a night patrol to recover the next day's rations. Comd 19 Lt Bde, **Brigadier Evans**, accompanied one of the sects, as it navigated its way to the compo, without which the DS assured us that we would have starved for 24 hours.

The fourth day was used for battle prep for the dawn platoon assault on a disused lighthouse. Recces went out, during which time **Sig Condon** was startled by some distinctive birdsong at dusk. **Major Dooley** asked if he knew what species of bird would make such a curlew-like sound. "Well sir", the Welshman replied, "the only birds I know that come out at night are bats".

He was complimented on his omniscience. **Sig Wilkes** gave a cracking set of 'route one' platoon orders at 0300 hrs the following day. Bags of smoke and fistfuls of flares were distributed. The assault was slightly spoiled by a zip tied gate, which proved too much for the lead sect to fathom, but a break-in was achieved. The enemy, under **SSgt Clarke**, was eventually defeated, after they had mounted repeated ambushes and taken suicide pills.

Before returning to Gaza Bks, we were subjected to a gruelling BCFT, during which some regretted not heeding advice, to remove their warm kit. There were, however, some very god performances overall: **Sig McArthur** won the award for best sig, with **Sig Wilkes** in second place.

EXERCISE MERCURY CHAIN – *Sig Flintoft*

EX MERCURY CHAIN was a short deployment down to sunny Blandford, designed to test and asses the comd and leadership of young Royal Signals officers in a comms environment. What we were expecting from the ex wasn't quite the same as the reality on the ground however.

Come Monday morning, we were given no LIDS, no route card into location and had absolutely no idea what we were doing. This was not an encouraging sign of things to come. Eventually, having been given some moderately useful information over the standard issue, Dorset police loaned, CB radio we bumbled our way into location.

Through sheer brilliant operating skills on the part of **Cpl Muz Coyle** and **Sig Freddy Flintoft**, we managed to establish a working radio path.

This was all done without the correct frequencies or a reliable bearing. Unfortunately for our SAN group, this pattern was repeated on every move of location. By this point, we were all starting to think that this ex was a test of our skills as operators and not the comd we were receiving.

However despite that, and in all fairness to those who took part, the ex apparently went very well. We were, as they say, the exception. No-one can fault the enthusiasm the officers had for the ex, and, without doubt, we do not see all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes.

In summary, I'd like to think we all learned something from this ex, especially those for whom it was designed. We all start somewhere, and just as long as we all finish in the bar, nothing can be too bad.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC **Maj CM Vaudin**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Spiers**

Recent events in Northern Ireland have dealt a particularly heavy blow to all Royal Signals units in the Province and to the wider Corps. It is with deep regret for their untimely passing, that we mourn the deaths of **Cpl Andy Page** of India Tp and **Sgt Carl Stephenson** who recently left the Sqn on promotion to 8 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (218). Our thoughts and prayers are with their families, loved ones and friends.

ALPHA TROOP

OC Tp **Lt Parkes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Staff**

EX LIGHTNING STRIKE – 4 MARCH 06 – *by Cpl McFarland*

On a cold Thursday night, 5 members of 213 Sig Sqn left Lisburn for the sunny climate of Salisbury Plain, on EX LIGHTNING STRIKE, a recruitment drive by SORLS involving University Officer Training Corps (UOTC) from all over the country, as well as O/Cdts from Shrivenham. After a couple of small detours, utilising the rare opportunity to get back to the mainland, we finally arrived at Rollestone Camp.

There was little time to waste, as we went straight into setting up the Unit Stand at about 1700 hrs, in order to prepare for an early start. The stand was split into 3 areas: a brief from **Lt Parkes** about the roll of 39 Inf Bde Sig Sqn, a vehicle search conducted by **Sgt Walton** and an observation video run by **Cpl McFarland**. As a tiebreaker, **Sig Chambers** played the terrorist in a contact situation followed by a hasty contact report. This proved to be good fun for both the soldiers and the O/Cdts.

The competition day started early, at 0600 hrs, with the first students arriving shortly after 0700 hrs dressed very strangely. This seemed to be the order of the day for all the groups; it must be a student thing. The O/Cdts certainly had their eyes opened to the ongoing events that affect serving soldiers in NI, and also that there are many unique and interesting jobs and tasks to complete. With the tasks in hand, the O/Cdts were tested on their observation and awareness skills, which were both demanding and enjoyable. During the debrief at the end of the competition, 2 people were nominated from each university, to react to any incident. The first group reacted well, with only 2 people arresting the terrorist, but as the day progressed, it ended up with **Sig Chambers** looking over his shoulder to see 20 people chasing him. The day was a resounding success; with the students all saying that they enjoyed themselves. The best UOTC at our stand was Leeds UOTC…not that it had anything to do with them being fashion students!

BRAVO TROOP

OC Tp **Lt Northridge**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Johnston**

SHOOTING TEAM - *by Cpl Yapp*

It has been a busy time for the shooting team, who have so far competed in the Monro Cup (a sub unit level competition for all units in 39 Bde) and CORPSAAM this season. Selection for the Sqn team began in February and the usual suspects were rounded up. The team consisted of **Lt Northridge**, **Cpl Bibby**, **Cpl Buckingham**, **Cpl Crutchley**, **Cpl McFarland**, **Cpl Yapp**, **LCpl Fewtrell**, **LCpl Kingan**, **Sig Bootham**, and last, but not least, **Sig Ronner** as our young soldier. Despite the hectic schedule a trg week was squeezed in at Magilligan Training Centre (MTC). The trg went well and much was gained from the expert advice of Army 100, **SSM Jay Saunders**.

The first hurdle was the Monro Cup, which consisted of a 2 mile speed march followed by the Fire Team Assessment shoot. The team produced a sterling performance and finished in overall 4th place from a total of 18 teams; the bulk of which were from the Inf. Having beaten 14 Inf teams at their own game, and narrowly missing out on 3rd place, the team's spirits were high. The next competition on the hit list was CORPSAAM. This would be a real test for the team, as few had ever been involved in competition shooting before.

It was decided to travel back to CORPSAAM on the Friday, before the competition, and watch the TA CORPSAAM over the course of the weekend, in order to help prepare the team for what lay ahead. This would afford valuable experience in familiarising the team with the large number of ranges being used and also some of the more complex shoots such as the Roupel and Roberts Cups.

The Team departed NI on the 0730 hrs ferry on Fri 31 Mar and a mere 11 hours later arrived at Pirbright. The competition began in earnest early on Monday morning, although not for our team, as our first shoot was at 1400 hrs. Lacking in experience and the almost mandatory 3-week pre-competition trg on the Pirbright Ranges, the team gave each shoot their best. Despite this, the experience of the other teams meant that there was a large difference in scores; but we were holding our own amongst the minor units, who had a similar level of pre-trg and experience as ourselves. Trg in the evening was intense and after one particularly long day, **Cpl Bibby** was forced to listen to **Lt Northridge** reciting practice details in his sleep. On another day, after being frustrated by some consistently bad shooting, the team decided to pick on some civvies in a nearby 'Laser Quest' arena. As you can imagine, we were soundly trashed by a bunch of longhaired teenagers, which did not improve matters. **Cpl Buckingham** gave a good account of himself, although there were concerns about the number of his kills that were from back shots on his fellow team mate, **Cpl Yapp**. It was no wonder that **Cpl Bibby** was hesitant to go in front of him on the LSW Shoot the next day.

The Shooting Team

Over all there were a wide range of performances from the team members. The best-placed team member was **Cpl Buckingham** in 44th position, followed by **LCpl Kingan** in 52nd and **Cpl Crutchley** in 65th. **LCpl Fewtrell** won the Best Female and, as a team, we came 2nd in the Clay Target Competition and won the Minor Unit Championships.

A special mention goes to **Cpl Bibby**, who took 1st place in the honorary Fig 12 Conservation Cup.

The experience gained from both competitions was invaluable and it can safely be said that each individual's shooting skills have improved enormously. The team's eyes are now firmly fixed on NISAAM and the challenges it holds.

CHARLEY TROOP

Tp OC **2Lt Ash Jeyes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ralley**

On 22 March, the Sqn entered a team, aptly named "Team Extreme", into the National Swimathon to raise money for the Children's Charity, NCH. The team consisted of **Cpl Steve O'Halloran**, **Cpl Ollie Smith**, **Sig Burcie Goodgame** and **Cpl Matt Holmes** with the assistance of **Sgt Rod Rouchy** counting the lengths. The team even took place at Lisburn Station Leisure Centre and was a 5000m relay, with each swimmer taking turns to do lengths, until the distance was complete. After a gallant effort "Team Extreme" finished in a respectable 1hour 41 minutes, achieving the fastest time that day. Everyone who took part enjoyed the day and raised some money for the NCH in the process.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp OC **Maj S Harvey**
Tp WO **WO2(RQMS) B Sheard**

The start of another busy period is upon us yet again and to help with the task, the Tp would like to welcome our newest members: **Cpl 'Bart' Simpson** into the RQMS dept, posted in from 2 Sig Regt and **LCpl 'Pam' McCormick** (AGC) into the Admin Office from HQNI. We also say farewell to **Cpl Stratton** and family, off to 16 Sig Regt; numerous tours of Afghanistan ahead for him no doubt! Enjoy! Finally, congratulations to **LCpl 'Lee' Patterson** and his wife **Sarah** on the birth of their son **Jake**.

The RQMS Dept has been especially busy of late, with the draw down of the Royal Signals units in Province. Many late nights and long hours have been put in, with many more still to come no doubt! **Sig Kirsty Howe's** brew making skills will be tested to the limit!

Away from the normal routine, 4 members of the Tp have set off to Germany, to take part in some German beer tasting, cunningly disguised as "The Bruggen Ten", with 3 from the RQMS Dept (**RQMS Sheard**, **Sgt 'Mark' Donnachie** and **LCpl Hamid**).

Next on the list is the Sqn battle camp at the end of the month, and we are assured by **Sgt Jim Bonney** from Trg Wing that it will be a week of pain and pleasure. The problem is I think he may be right, we shall wait and see!

The **RQMS** is busy organising a charity event involving himself, and 4 other runners from the Bde, to raise money for the British Legion and the NI Cancer Fund for Children, in what can only be called a Mad Man's run! The team are taking part in the London Marathon, followed by a 7 day run up the country, back to the Province, and finishing with the Belfast Marathon. Good luck to all, and we hope you've got a good Vaseline supply!

Finally, the AGC Det has been busy putting the Sqn's new personnel onto the books. Even with all the associated paperwork, we have still found a bit of quality time, to do some extra-curricular events. **LCpl 'Becky' Davies** has played football on the mainland, **LCpl 'Jackie' Hodgson** participated in a sunny sailing trip to Spain and **Cpl Dave Ferguson** has continued whipping **LCpl Jim Black** yet again, in a couple of golfing days out! Some things never change!

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC **Maj S Nesmith**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PA Buckley**

The Sqn continue to have an extremely busy time; BOWMAN Conversion is finally upon us, with all personnel occupied with trg courses. Welcoming the BOWTAT team (Maj Turner and his gang) however, was an excellent excuse for an impromptu function that was enjoyed by all. We say congratulations to the Ops Officer, **Capt Liz Mortimore** (formerly **Capt Pointon**) on her recent marriage to **Aidy.** Unfortunately, the cake was so popular there was none left for SHQ.

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt P Hodgkinson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt C Barrass**

Over the past few weeks, Sabre Tp have been busy getting themselves ready for the return of the recently BOWMANised Fleet and the beginning of the BOWTAT phase. With the majority of the vehicles at Ashchurch being converted, Sabre Tp took the opportunity to deploy on a number of AT days in the New Forest.

The main activity was trekking, and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to get out into the countryside, to grab some fresh air after a busy period of work. Navigation skills were practiced, but most of the teams quickly realised that marching on a bearing was not always the quickest, or driest route! Lunchtime activities included a challenging football quiz where **Sig Mulgrew's** extensive football knowledge was tested to the limit. In addition, **SSgt 'Sid' Barrass** has been busy perfecting his sign language, after perforating both of his ear drums (ouch!).

February also saw the return of the prestigious Inter-Tp Competition. The football was fiercely contested and Sabre Tp secured victory, finding the back of the net (notably Bengal Tp's net) with the greatest frequency. Special mention for **Capt Pete Hodgkinson**, who scored the last minute winner in the grudge match, between the 2 radio tps - who said Officers can't play football?

Sabre Tp are now busy preparing themselves for the hectic exercise season which is just around the corner. With deployments to Italy, Holland, USA and Canada all within the next 6 months, the Tp is looking forward to racking up the air miles and topping up tans. There has been a high turnover of personnel within the Tp this month, and we say a fond farewell to **LCpl 'Jim' Thorley** and **LCpl 'Dan' Seager**, who leave us for 12 Mech Bde. We also say goodbye to **LCpl 'Buzz' Burrell**, who heads off to 102 Log Bde. We say a warm welcome to our recent arrivals, who include **Sgt 'Johna' Jones**, **Cpl Morris** and **Sig Beynon**.

BENGAL TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt A Eros**
Tp Sgt **Sgt S Welsh**

At the beginning of March, the Sqn held an Inter-Tp March and Shoot competition. This was organised in four parts; starting with

Sabre Troop begins the stretcher race

a stretcher race, followed by a Military Skills stand, then an 8 mile tab to Bulford ranges, with a scored shoot to finish. The competition immediately followed the Inter-Tp Rugby Match, held the previous day. This had left many of the team members unable to fully participate in the stretcher race or shoot, through injuries inflicted by Sabre Tp. The rugby competition was won by the lesser injured Sabre Tp and the March and Shoot by Sp Tp. We look forward to redressing the balance next month, in the Inter-Tp Chariot Race. Standby Sabre and Sp!

The past few months have been a turbulent time for the Tp and we've had to say goodbye to lots of Tidworth veterans. **LCpl Athey** leaves the Tp on promotion to19 Lt Bde and **LCpl Gallon** is off to Germany to the LWCTG. **Sig Day, Sig Lee** and **Sig Machin** have also left the Tp after being here 3 years, the latter on promotion. However, we welcomed **Cpl Bird** from 14 Sig Regt, **Cpl Thomson** from 1(UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt and **Sig Paige** from 216 Sig Sqn into the Tp. Finally **Sgt Shaw** has joined the troop from DSTL in Porton Down, where he spent the last few years recruiting "volunteers" for various "trials".

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp OC	**Capt M Webb**
RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) M Morgan**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Hunt**

With the implementation of BOWMAN, Sp Tp has been busy with its normal role of supporting the remainder of the Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, while the BOWTAG trg has got underway. The MT dept has been busy preparing for the busy ex period that is looming in May and the ECI which will follow.

Sgt Clint Challand seems to have forgotten where the office is, and spends most of his time in the gym or tabbing round the Plain on his strict fitness regime. MT has welcomed **Sig 'Taff' Gladdy,** who has joined us straight from the factory, but seems to think he has been posted in as a rugby player rather than a driver!

The QM Dept is in yet another busy period, with the BOWMANisation transition taking place, while begging and borrowing from all four corners of the globe! (Well not quite.) **LCpl Si Key** recently completed his MLT course (hopefully he will find his way to work now!) **Sgt 'Munners' Munslow** went for a jolly on his MLT. **Sig 'Woody' Wood** just got his Class 2 (he can count a few more things now!) and **Cpl Leanne MacLeod** presses on, putting the UET on to UNICOM (before she gets out!).

We also say farewell to **WO2(RQMS) Mark Morgan** who leaves us for 14 Sig Regt; we wish him all the best. A warm welcome is extended to his successor, **WO2(RQMS) Paddy Bickerstaff** and his family who join us from Northern Ireland.

Finally, the QM, **Capt Miles Webb,** has already ordered his 'Gilly' suit, and positioned the trenches for the forthcoming Echelon deployment to SPTA. What happened to slippers and 'bacon baps'!

Support Troop psyching up for the 1 mile stretcher race

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC	**Maj A J Parsons**
2IC	**Capt A Youngman**
OC Sp Tp	**Capt E O'Keefe** GREN GDS
RSM	**WO1(RSM) DP Sheerin MBE**

OC SQN – *by Maj A J Parsons*

The Sqn is currently mourning the passing of **Sgt Carl Stevenson**, who died recently while on the hills trg for his JSMEL qualification.

Although he had only been with the Sqn a short while, he had already made a huge impact and was looking forward to competing as 2IC in the upcoming NISAAM competition.

He will be sadly missed and our deepest sympathies go out to his family and friends at this time.

ALPHA TROOP

OC	**Lt A K Reid**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt C Vickers**

The last few months have been rather busy within the Tp, due to the proposed closure of the Bde and Sqn. The majority of the Tp have now received their posting orders and we are all working towards a successful hand over of G6 to 39 Bde and our Resident Bn.

Due to the de-scaling of manning, the Tp has only had 2 new additions; a warm welcome to **Cpl Lowe** and **LCpl Tom Blake.** On the other hand, we have had 5 members of the Tp who have managed to 'sneak' out early; **Cpl Carlos Walker**, who departed for ATR Bassingbourn, **Cpl Jamie Crooks**, posted to 2 Sig Regt, **Cpl Nige Brennan**, to 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, **LCpl 'Scouse' Wallace**, to 101 Log Bde, and **Sig 'Jim' Keery**, who is of to Civ Div.

Despite the hectic schedule, the Tp did manage to hold a 'Ready, Steady, Cook' event, organised by **Cpl Dave Moorhead.** The evening consisted of a cake making and decorating competition. This was judged by the Tp OC, **Lt Reid**. Needless to say, all competitors and the OC did not succeed in avoiding a frontal collision with the presented cream cakes!

The Tp would like to send our congratulations to **Sig Danny Lannon** and his wife **Izabella** on the birth of their second child. **Sig Lannon** is currently attending his Class 1 course in Blandford, after finishing second in the Corps, following the last 2-1 entrance exam. Some of us believe it was his plan to escape the endless sleepless nights he would be experiencing by now!

TRAINING WING

Trg SNCO	**Sgt Fraser**
Trg JNCO	**LCpl Shields**

We say goodbye to **Cpl Clancey**, who has left for sunnier climates in Cyprus. May he enjoy many a sweaty night! Also goodbye to **Cpl Micky Lane** RLC, who has been posted on promotion to HQNI. He has finally seen the light and is now currently changing his cap badge to Royal Signals and re-trading as an Instl Tech at Blandford.

The Wing has been busy with the routine weekly trg, as well as preparing a team for the upcoming NISAAM. We wish all the best in the competition to **Lt A K Reid**, **Cpl Murray**, **LCpl Brown (A Tp)**, **LCpl Brown (B Tp)** and **Pte Smith**.

ELECTRONIC COUNTER MEASURES (FORCE PROTECTION)

OC	**Maj AB Arthurton**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) J Saunders**

INTRODUCTION

In an ever changing world, we as soldiers, must be prepared to adapt continually; embracing new roles, within an ever changing Army. Ever since the attack on a British Army patrol at Warrenpoint, Northern Ireland in 1979, Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) have been in the forefront of that change, and so it continues today.

Along with the continued threat of RCIEDs within the Province, we have now seen our responsibilities for Force Protection (FP) and Trg spread worldwide. Most notably at the moment, in Iraq and Afghanistan, where we have a number of personnel deployed in sp of various formations. It was inevitable, therefore, that there would be an increase from Tp to Sqn strength. We cannot afford to be nostalgic, we are forced to adjust to the new threats that face us, and continue to provide the necessary protection to the soldiers that rely on our trg and eqpt to keep them from harm.

When **Field Marshall Erwin Rommel** was asked what his most potent weapon system was, he replied "The Radio". Were he alive today, he might well reply "ECM".

FORMATION PARADE

On 17 March 2006, during a parade at Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn, we said farewell to what has been well known throughout the Corps, as Romeo Tp, and COS HQNI **Brig C Chapman** (Late PARA) officially presented the new Electronic Counter Measures (Force Protection) Sqn standard to **WO2(SSM) J Saunders**, marking the start of a new era for ECM (FP) within the Corps.

The new standard for the new Squadron

Due to the manning draw down in the Province and the closure of 15 Sig Regt in May this year, the Sqn will come under command of 10 Sig Regt. There are plans in place to move the Sqn from NI back to the mainland in the future, leaving a det to provide the necessary expertise for troops remaining in Province. However nothing is certain and currently no dates have been finalised.

So in the words of Shinsecki, "You may not like change, but you will like irrelevancy even less". Should personnel be interested in a posting to ECM (FP) Sqn, they should apply through the normal chain of command on a Preference Posting Proforma.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS WING (DIGBY)

CO	**Lt Col DI Whimpenny**

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Sqn Ldr C Bruce**

EXERCISE AUSTRIAN ADVENTURE
- by WO1(Supvr R) Dean Butler

The aim of EXERCISE AUSTRIAN ADVENTURE was to provide a challenging trg medium, in which to introduce RAF Digby personnel to skiing, and to develop the skills of those personnel in the group who were at the intermediate level. Teamwork, courage and individual character development were attributes forged through an intense week of skiing in perilous conditions, on the inhospitable slopes of the Hintertux Glacier, Austria.

Volunteers for this epic adventure were; **Flt Lt John Cochrane**, **Plt Off Emma Levy**, **WO1(Supvr R) Dean Butler**, **SSgt (Supvr R) Nicky Beresford**, **Sgt Steve Rimmer**, **Cpl Lindsay Tolin**, **Cpl Geordie Lisle**, **Cpl Richie Casey**, **Cpl Jez Bedford-Turner**, **JT Ollie Perkins** and **SAC Melanie Illingworth**.

After a quick flight from Stansted Airport and a beautiful scenic 3-hour drive through Austria, not that anyone noticed, too busy sleeping, we arrived at Lanersbach. The necessary admin was conducted, ski eqpt hired, and once fed, an early night was in order so that we would wake refreshed and eager for the challenges ahead.

HAPPY SMILING FACES FROM THE DIGBY SKIERS

Day 1 began with everyone skiing off, in order to ascertain their various levels of competency. Intermediates and beginners attacked the piste and prepared to inflict their unbridled enthusiasm on the slopes. Unfortunately for us, the slopes had been watching and waiting for unsuspecting victims like us to arrive. Incredibly poor visibility, due to a wicked downpour of blinding snow and ice, together with an impenetrable mogul-style terrain, were not the conditions the groups were expecting. **Plt Off Emma Levy** became the first casualty of the battle; she only twisted her ankle, but it really hurt. Even so, the intrepid groups could not, and would not, be intimidated. Attacking the piste, the elements and their own fears, they tried to gain mastery over this unforgiving foe. After a valiant effort and faced with defeat, it was decided to call it a day and attempt mastery over a different, but potentially more treacherous foe, Austrian beer.

Everyone met at a local restaurant for the evening meal and it wasn't long before we all indulged in a beer or two, (ok, ok, maybe 5 or 6), and began to recount their harrowing, personal adventures of the first day. The highs, the lows, the accomplishments and the disappointments; all the painful tales were retold, bringing tears to the eyes of everyone present.

Actually, the tears came from all the laughing we did, as the tales of falling down at every twist and turn were retold. But it had been a difficult and treacherous day; the elements and the slopes had been against us. We contemplated the events of the day but as silence settled on the exhausted group, and when all optimism had dwindled, one man stood alone, to shake his fist at the shadowed mountain, a man who brought resurgence, with fire in his heart and determination in his soul, as he announced "Let's have another beer, I'm thirsty". From that moment, we knew we hadn't been defeated; we had the strength and determination to go on and beat any odds. We would show Austria and the skiing fraternity what metal the British Forces were made of and continue the battle, the next day.

So Day 2 started with a new dawn, although we didn't really see it as it was still snowing, as we marched with determination to our inevitable doom and destruction.

DOES IT EVER STOP SNOWING IN AUSTRIA

Actually, the weather deteriorated even more and the decision to try a different mountain, seemed the best course of action. OK, I admit I may have embellished a few minor details there (quite a few in reality), so I will try to stick to the facts from now on. To be honest, the conditions weren't that bad, but the skiing conditions on the other side of the mountain at the Hintertux range were better.

Anyway, Hintertux was a bus ride away from the accommodation, but the weather had cleared and everyone was in high spirits. It was a bright sunny day, the birds were singing in a cloudless sky, smiling faces were seen in abundance as **SSgt(Supvr R) Nicky Beresford** (newly qualified skiing instructor extraordinaire) finally got the opportunity to impart her knowledge and experience, on her devoted students. The lessons were fun and constructive, and we were thoroughly beasted on technique and body management. With the improved weather conditions and the piste bashers out on the slopes, everyone's confidence grew, performing various stunts and jumps, mainly from **JT Ollie Perkins** and **Cpl Geordie Lisle**, much to the dismay of our instructor. Luckily no-one was injured. Although how beginner, **Flt Lt John Cochrane** managed to stay upright, as he hurtled down a red run, top to bottom, after just 2 days skiing is anyone's guess.

The beginners group were making tremendous progress, constantly hammering the slopes with a passion. **Cpl Lindsay Tolin** injured her knee but continued to ski, so I don't think it was too bad really. The way she danced in the Tanner Bar, later in the day was a sight to behold! Eventually, **Plt Off Emma Levy** rejoined the fold. The group were doing well, even though they were taken out on a regular basis by the unstoppable madman skier, **Cpl Jez Bedford-Turner**.

The intermediate group continued to improve and could be seen performing the human slalom, in a confident manner, with style and finesse. The conditions allowed the group to attempt powder on a daily basis, with **JT Ollie Perkins** falling over even when stationary. They were inclined to enjoy the occasional pile up, when no one was watching, and even the instructor couldn't stay upright at times (isn't that right **Nicky**?).

Both groups were exceptional at singing and dancing, much to the dismay of every other nationality in the Austrian bars. Everyone joined in the fun, with moves on the dance floor that wouldn't be out of place on TV's "Strictly Dance Fever".

Although the weather conditions through the week changed from one minute to the next, from blizzards to sunshine, it didn't impair the groups' ability to learn and improve on, the skills taught. The week was a complete success, from start to finish. Excellent admin, an invigorating sport and an enthusiastic group of men and women ensured the success of this ex. During the week, I believe individuals not only learnt how to ski or indeed improve on the skills already acquired, but they experienced personal courage and teamwork which comes with the challenges this sport brings. It was an enjoyable adventure, which pushed the endurance of most of the group, and it was an experience everyone would happily repeat again in the future.

LONDON MARATHON

Good luck to **SSgt(Supvr R) Nicky Beresford**, who has entered this year's London Marathon on Sunday 23 April in aid of the British Legion. As everyone is probably aware the Legion is a unique organisation committed to protecting the welfare, interests and memory of ex Service men, women and their families. About

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (FALKLAND ISLAND)

OC **Maj DA Wright MBE**
USM **WO2 C Henson**

LIFE IN JCUFI - *by WO2(USM) Charlie Henson*

Life in JCUFI is an interesting and varied one, starting with the 9 hour flight from sunny Brize Norton to very sunny Ascension Island, for a brief 90 minute rest, before getting back on the happy bus to the Falkland Islands (FI), yet another 9 hour flight. Deep joy all round.

Once in the FI and processed through the international (?) terminal, I was met by a very happy **WO2(USM) Abbo Abbott**, who then proceeded to show the different departments that JCUFI hold, at warp factor 90, ending with a brief assault of the bar, just before I collapsed in my pit, a tired but socially happy man, ready for the next day. The following week was a blur of interviews and chats, signing of paperwork, that only the RAF can generate, and I had taken over the USM post and it was time to say goodbye to **ABBO** and wish him luck back at 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt. In the time it took to get back to my office, from seeing him off, the 2IC, **Flt Lt B Sharp** had hatched a plan, and it involved me doing lots of paperwork.

With all the paperwork that the 2IC gave me to do completed, it was time to turn my attention to other issues, e.g. getting on the ranges with some big bang sticks and letting the Navy and the RAF get on the GPMG. After instruction from **SSgt(UQMS) Paul Belcher** and myself, we set up the 100m range at Mare Harbour and waited for the JCUFI firers. Before long, we had the 'Gentlemen' from the RAF and the 'hobo's' from the Navy asking for photos of them hiding in ditches, pretending they were in the middle on war zone. The girls will love the pictures, I don't think!

Another task I received was to organise/run a 24 hour Bowlathon, in which all 3 services and the civil service were involved in putting 2 five-man teams in for the event. The final count for charity should be about £13,000. With all that past me in the first 2 months, and now on the down slope to going home, I think I will try and get a few trips around the Island and maybe organise a few more ranges and charity functions. Because life in general has been very good and I have enjoyed working with the other services, there is so much to do in the FI, that if you hear anybody say that they are bored, they only have themselves to blame.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Recently there has been a massive manpower change over; all for the better...we'll see. We said goodbye to **WO2 Abbott**, **Sgt Joyce**, **Sgt Pope**, **Cpl Craig Charlton** and **LCpl Morris**. We say hello to the new arrivals: **WO2 Charlie Henson**, **SSgt Dodds**, **Sgt Dawes**, **Cpl Jermey** and some bloke called **Briggs**.

This manpower turnover has become a source of concern for **Sgt Roscoe Lyons**, who has gone from having lots of experienced guys to none. This is not good, as we're into the ex season. With EX CAPE GRENADE kicking off in days few, we still don't have a comms plan. Prepare for a long weekend. Recently there was a theft of something most valuable, **Lister the Cat**, the FRT's infamous cat was stolen by the OC and his cronies, who have named it **Mr Tiddles**. I predict a riot.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO **Lt Col CJ McIntosh**
RSM **WO1(RSM) LS Crossing**

MAJOR UNIT LEAGUE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS 2005/2006
– by Maj Terry Crane

It all started back in September, as the call for footballers rang out around Ayios Nikolaos – 'step forward, dust off your boots and lets go into battle to wrestle the League Title and Cup from last years winners, CSSU'. It couldn't have been a better start, 2 victories against the QLR and an excellent win over last year's champs, CSSU, saw the team riding high at the top of the league with a great goal difference. From that point onwards, the gauntlet was well and truly thrown down, for the rest of the League to push us off that top slot.

However the other teams started catching us up in 'playing quality' and by Nov 2005, the standard of matches, throughout the League, became widely acclaimed and some titanic battles produced memorable games. None better, than the game JSSU played against CSSU, at home, in the quarter final of the Cup Competition; a battle of 2 teams with bursting pride, both determined to reach the semi final of the Cup and knowing that, if they beat the other, they stood a good chance of getting into the final.

Arguably the game of the season, the lead passed back and forth over the 90 minutes and extra time saw the home side nose into the lead with two well taken goals and with 5 minutes to go, looking forward to a place in the semi finals. Then a soft goal from CSSU, against the run of play, saw them back in the match, and then with the last kick of the game they scored another – so 4 each and penalties.

CSSU took the honours and eventually won the Cup. At times throughout the season, 'in form' sides have taken us to the wire (no pun intended) and JSSU has had to dig deep to fight for a draw. However with only one loss in the league, it is a record to be proud of. The final result was that JSSU were crowned Major Unit League Champions 2005-06 and with the prospect of the squad getting stronger over the next few months, it will be difficult for any team to capture the League shield from JSSU at Ayios Nikolaos next season.

MAJOR UNIT ORIENTEERING LEAGUE CHAMPIONS 2005/2006 – *by WO1(FofS) Colin Raynor*

Of the multitude of sports that are conducted on the island of Cyprus, it is the orienteering that not only tests the physical

The CO stands proudly alongside Maj Terry Crane and his winning football team

fitness, but also the navigational skills of the individual. It "offers an intellectual challenge in addition to ordinary physical exercise". With 10 league events, spread across 5 months, and only the best 5 to count, along with tough opponents from the 1RHF, 1QLR, CCU, UNFICYP and 62RE to compete against, the tri-service team had a mountain to climb.

The season started very well, after Dhekelia and Mount Olympus events, JSSU were sitting at the top of the leader board, with 1RHF being the closest rival. But it was at the third event, held on home turf at Ayios Nikolaos, which sparked the interest in the unit. Doubling as unit PT, the orienteering event was enjoyed by many, especially **WO1(FofS) Colin Raynor**, who having never tried his hand before, came in 2nd across the unit and took on the mantle of OIC, from **Capt Hannah Frost** as a result.

From then on, it was onwards and upwards; the unit's team grew from strength to strength with notable performances from the new and old OICs, plus **Sgt JP Thomas** and **Capt Bob Vowles**. On occasion, the CO, **Lt Col McIntosh** and Adjt, **Capt Rich Quinsey** also stepped up the challenge, scoring valuable points for the unit. New to the sport, **LCpl Stephanie-Clare Armsby** shone, as did **Maj Terry Crane**, proving a hard act to match on the B course. It was always going well for the team, sitting at the top of the leader board for the entire season; they were crowned champions for the 2005/06 season at the end of March.

Earlier in the year, aside from the league events, the UN at Nicosia played host to a highly successful night orienteering event, with **Sgt JP Thomas** and **WO1 Colin Raynor** taking first and second place respectively. On the team event, **Sgt JP Thomas** and **Capt Hannah Frost** paired up well, to take second spot, with **Maj Terry Crane** bringing up the rear as a result of a goodwill gesture helping a – lost – fellow competitor out, only to realise later that they were on different courses! All in all the season was well enjoyed by all, with a great ending; roll on next season!

HQ SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Terry Crane**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Gaz Middleton**

In early June, just as this issue hits the shelves, we bid farewell to the OC, **Maj Terry Crane** and family, who leave us for Andover. We shall all miss 'the dabbler' and thank him for all his efforts, especially in the football and orienteering. In his place we welcome **Maj Boyle** into the post.

JUNIORS DEVELOPMENT DAY – *by Sig Mitton*

On Wednesday 15 Mar at 0700 hrs, as the rest of the unit was rallying to go to work, a small group of 24 Juniors, ranging from Sig to SAC to full Cpl, were congregating at the unit rugby club for what was described as a day of fun and personal development, organised by HQ Sqn but open to the whole unit.

After 15 minutes of tense hanging around, **WO2 Middleton** called '3 ranks over here!' and the waiting was over. A register was called and we were split into 3 sections; red, blue and green. The organiser, **Maj Crane**, then proceeded to introduce a novel approach by which we could distinguish between sects, by wearing a different coloured bib. It was a nice touch, I thought, as we looked like convicts going for a chat in a prison visitors room. After an initial brief of the day's activities, it was time for us all to briefly introduce ourselves; who we were, where we worked and what Sqn we came from.

The day kicked off with my sect, the blues, at the Comd Task stand. This consisted of four comd tasks, each with a different leader appointed. The first took a little while, with the group incurring penalties for breaking the rules. Due to time constraints, we only managed to complete 3 of the 4 tasks, but the fun and morale was high. The second activity of the day, was for all of us to give a 10 minute presentation on a given subject; with it being recorded to make us more nervous. The group leader asked for a volunteer to start off the proceedings, and as luck would have it, at the same time, my Tp Comd entered the room; needless to say I 'volunteered' to go first. Nerves kicked in, my legs doing an Elvis dance; but I continued regardless. I got a little tongue tied in a few places but thought it was an informative subject; Cyprus 1974. At the end the instructor and my peers gave good constructive criticism.

The Juniors Development Day Command Tasks

The worst part of the day was over, but our final activity was the guided discussions, covering a wide variety of topics. The highlight for me was when, on one particular subject, one of the other students voiced an opinion, and by the end of the discussion had completely changed it to the opposite viewpoint. Before we sat down to enjoy a well earned BBQ, one more task had to be completed. In the form of a race, the scenario was that we had 2 casualties in a vehicle, trapped in a minefield. As a sect, we had to rescue the casualties and the vehicle. A lot of thought went into our rescue plan and we chose the longest route home, resulting in us being awarded last place! Overall the day was a resounding success, 24 of us started, 24 completed it and had taken away valuable lessons and experience from which we could put to good use in the future.

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

QM	**Maj Chris Hymas**
RQMS(T)	**WO2(RQMS) Lee Linton**

Farewell to **SSgt Gaz Sinclair**, **Maggie** and son **Cameron**, off to 7 Sig Regt on promotion to WO2. **SSgt John Webber** will be ably moving across to replace him. Also congratulations to **Sgt Pat Howie** from the Trg Wing, on selection for promotion to SSgt.

1 SQUADRON

OC	**Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Billy Kidd**

We say farewell to **WO2(SSM) Mac MacDonald**, **Teri** and the imminent birth of their first child; **Mac** is off to 3 Div Sig Regt to be Trg WO. Replacing him we say hello to **WO2 (SSM) Billy Kid** from 7 Sig Regt on promotion. Also on the arrivals front we welcome to **Cpl Fielding** from 14 Sig Regt, **Cpl Drummond** from DISI and **Cpl Burgoyne** from 721 EOD Ashchurch. Welcome all.

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Lt Cdr Neil Bassett**
A/SSM	**SSgt Ian Dickinson**

TMS welcomes **LCpl Chris Johnson** from 30 Sig Regt, (via RSS for his Class 1) into Line Sect and also to **Cpl Steve Hughes** from 4 MI Bn for at least the summer season, as he will soon be off again on his Class 1 trg. Also welcome to **Cpl Alistair Way** and wife **Laura**, direct from his Class 1 in Blandford. TMS also bid farewell to **Cpl Stu Hayes**, off to Blandford on his Class 1 Trg.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC	**Maj Dennis Weir MBE**
PSAWO	**WO1 John Farrell**

FUND RAISING

Since moving to Lincolnshire, the Unit has adopted the Lincoln 10km Road Race as one of its main charity fund raising events of the year. Following on from the success of last year, **WO1(Supvr R) Jock Robertson** and **WO1 Jeanette Jensen** began the hard task of enlisting volunteers from the Unit, to run in this year's event. For such a small Unit, the fact that 10 members signed up to run, speaks volumes for the calibre and dedication of JSSU(V) personnel. The runners, on the day, were split into 2 distinct groups;

WO2 Bob Wright and WO2 (Supvr R) Charlie Brown, "sucking it in" and raising money for the Royal British Legion

The "Hardy Runners", who ran the course in boots and combats, collecting money in buckets to add to the challenge - **WO1(Supvr R) Jock Robertson**, **WO1(Supvr R) Paddy Payne**, **WO1(Supvr R) Dickie Henderson**, **WO1 Jeanette Jensen**, **WO2(Supvr R) Charlie Brown**, **WO2 Bob Wright**, **CPO Kelly** and last but not least, **Cpl Claire Moll**.

The "Easy Runners" who took the painless option and ran round in shorts and trainers – **Majs Weir** and **Bailey**. Not only did the team finish in a very respectable time, but they also raised nearly £140 in loose change for the Royal British Legion (RBL) along the way, a highly commendable effort. With nearly 3,500 finishers, the Lincoln 10km is rapidly becoming one of the fastest growing city 10km races in the country. So if you fancy a nice flat 10km, searching for that PB, why not join JSSU(V) on the streets and cobbles of Lincoln next year.

Additionally the Unit has adopted **SSgt(Supvr R) Nicky Beresford**, whose husband **Bez** is soon to become the first RM member of the Unit, who is planning to run the London Marathon this year. The OC has led by example and with the majority of the Unit, sponsored **Nicky**. It is hoped that her London Marathon sponsorship, combined with the Unit's Lincoln 10km money will net over £2,500 for the RBL – well done to everyone. Well done to **SSgt (Supvr R) Beresford** for her effort and congratulations on her well deserved promotion to WO2.

The Triumphant Team at the end of the Lincoln 10km with a proud Maj Dennis Weir

ITD TRAINING

As another trg year ended, the Unit were concentrated at RAF Digby and were again taught and assessed by the Station's excellent Ground Defence Training (GDT) Flight. Wpn Handling Trg and activities on the 25m range took over the majority of the trg. The day finished off with the TACFT around Digby's old airfield and for those who had already passed this ITD, one of the OC's infamous runs.

The Unit is now concentrating its efforts on moving to the new Common Military Skills (Army) trg structure: Workplace Induction Programmes (WIPs) and Military Annual Trg Tests (MATTs) and with the continued support of RAF Digby's GDT Flight, it will surely be a seamless transition from ITD(A) to CMS(A).

Y SERVICES DINNER

A select gathering of the Unit's Officer Corps attended the Annual Y Services Dinner, which was hosted by RAF Digby's Officers' Mess and attended by past and present members of this exclusive organisation.

Guest of honour was the Master of Signals, **General Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**, Patron of the Y Services Garats Hay National Branch of the RBL. The evening also celebrated the 10th

Anniversary of the formation of the Y Services Garats Hay Branch. It was a chance for past and present members to swap stories and share tales of derring-do.

It was memorable for the Master of Signals, who met 3 members of the Branch (**Maj Dennis Weir**, **Capt Clive Sanders** and **Mr Bob White**) who were all in trg at Garats Hay in the 60s, when the Master was a young subaltern in 224 Sig Sqn, where by all accounts, he was a rarity in the Officer Corps, because of his footballing prowess!

All in all, an excellent evening, with the Master of Signals speaking to the assembled masses on the uniqueness of the Y Services and sharing his passion for Nepal with those present.

JSSU (V) Officers with the Master of Signals

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY

CCU GRIFFINS PERFORM WELL IN ROYAL SIGNALS 7'S RUGBY COMPETITION

The DCSA Cyprus Comms Unit (CCU) Rugby Union team have just returned from the Royal Signals Annual 7-a-side Rugby Competition in Cardiff.

The team left Cyprus with 12 players and due to trooper dates were able to complete 2 days trg at Bramcote, home of 30 Sig Regt, prior to the competition on 15 March. The freezing weather in the UK was a shock to all, and unfortunately the trg proved to be a little too robust, as the team suffered 2 injured players; **WO1 Andy Riglar** breaking a bone in his hand and **SAC Chris Jones** receiving a groin strain. Unlike professional sportsmen, we could not send them home, so at least we had 2 waterboys!

Undeterred, but down to 10 players with at least 4 games to play, the team headed for Cardiff and found itself drawn in a pool with 14 Sig Regt, 71 Sig Regt and 2 of the hot favourites, 21 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt.

The first game was against the eventual winners, 21 Sig Regt, who looked very sharp against a shocked 'first game' CCU team and comprehensively thrashed CCU, 47-0. With team morale a little low, but with a point to prove, our next opponents were 71 Sig Regt. Some great playmaking from **Cpl Jim Ritchie** and strong straight running from **SAC Mick Clarke**, saw CCU run in 2 tries in 4 minutes. Still needing to work on their defence a little, CCU allowed 71 Sig Regt back into the game just before half time. A good 'talking to' at the break focussed the players to the job in hand, and the defence really picked up. CCU managed to retain their possession and scored another 3 converted tries, to win 31-0.

Next up was 14 Sig Regt, who thought they would have an easy game against the 'sunshine boys', as CCU were now being called. CCU came out very aggressively, and managed to retain possession for most of the first half. Great ball recycling from **Cpl Chris Craven** and **Sig Steve Hargreaves** and more great running lines saw CCU build a 7-0 lead by half time. The opposition's heads were down in the second half and CCU capitalised with more aggressive running and ferocious defence; now playing with better cohesion. The final result was 17-0, which automatically qualified CCU for the main Cup competition, irrespective of the next pool game.

Next up was 30 Sig Regt, who again thought they would have an easy game. CCU were now playing good confident rugby and by halftime were leading 2 tries to none! Impartial sideline support was now cheering the underdogs on and 30 Sig Regt were now on the 'back foot', 'flapping' and they made at least 4 changes, bringing on their Fijian component to try and secure the game. With strong suspicion of too many substitutions, and too many players on the pitch at one time, the pressure finally broke CCU and 30 Sig Regt won 19-12.

Morale in the CCU team however was at an all time high, having easily beaten one major and one minor unit, and very, very nearly scalping the pre-competition favourites!

Suddenly the Quarter Finals were looming, and the lack of match fitness started to show. Against a very strong performance from 261 Sig Sqn, CCU could not keep up the previously ferocious defence, and the gaps started to appear. 261 Sig Sqn eventually winning by 27-0.

Although beaten, the lads were over the moon. They had played out of their skins, and reached the quarter final of the main Cup competition, beating some, and scaring other major units.

Special mention must go to **SAC Mick Clarke**, CCU players' 'man of the tournament', though he claimed he only ran where his fly half, **Cpl Jim Ritchie**, told him to! **Cpl Jim Luton** showed he has a massive rugby future as a strong 15s forward, with some great, strong running. **Sig Ollie Josephs** also showed huge potential, with some fantastic tries and awesome cover tackling.

So, having taken 4 over 35s, 3 non-rugby players, 1 non-rugby union player, only 1 player who has played rugby all season, and making it to the quarter finals, the CCU Griffins came back from Cardiff with a great sense of satisfaction. Bring on the Aki Tens!!

GRIFFON 500

It was again time for the DCSA CCU to lay down the gauntlet for the 2006 GRIFFON 500 endurance event. The event introduced to the island by **SSgt Torry Torrington** in 2005, is a 500 lap relay of a standard 400 meter athletics track, by a team of 10 carrying 30lb weight. The record was held by the resident Inf Bn (1 QLR), who completed the event in a staggering 14 hours 43 minutes and 33 seconds.

This year's GRIFFON 500 proved to be just as challenging, with 4 teams entering: CCU, 2 RRF, CSSU and JSSU. Starting at 2300 hrs on Friday 31 Mar 2006, the competitors set off at a blistering pace, lapping the track in less than 1 minute 20 seconds. As the night wore on, the pace did not appear to slow, but fatigue began to set in. As the sun rose over the Med, the teams felt the warmth of the sun on their backs and the end seemed a little closer.

As midday approached, it was clear that several of the teams had established considerable leads, and that the time held by 1 QLR was about to be smashed. The winning team 2 RRF crossed the finish line, smashing last year's time by a further 1 hour and 35 minutes; completing the 500 laps in 13 hours 8 minutes and 56 seconds. Next to finish, in a time of 14 hours 1 minute and 42 seconds, also beating the old record, were the CCU team lead by **SSgt (FofS) Lyndon Box** and **Sgt Wayne Stewart**, sporting their Team Shirts, kindly sponsored by DCSA and BT who work together to deliver DFTS. The CSSU and JSSU teams held on and also completed the event in very respectable times under 15hours 30minutes.

Once the GRIFFON 500 Event was completed, all teams agreed the event was far more challenging than they had first assumed. Happily, **SSgt Torry Torrington** had also organised an open day with food, refreshments and activities for all the competitors and their families. **2Lt Jim Boyden**, volunteering himself for the team, should now have an idea of what to expect in his new appointment as OC Dhekelia Tp! All monies raised throughout this event will go to the winning team's chosen charity.

EX WHITE GRIFFIN

During the period 27 Jan – 4 Feb 2006, 10 airmen and 8 soldiers from CCU travelled to Austria to participate in EX WHITE GRIFFIN. The aim of the exped was to train personnel to Basic Ski Proficiency Standard, whilst developing teamwork, leadership and individual skills. The exped OIC was **Flt Lt Steve Foulkes,** 2IC and instructor was **SSgt 'Taff' Lougher**, and **Sgt Ade Mills** who is a BSAI qualified instructor.

The long journey to Austria started from Episkopi on 27 Jan 2006 at 2300 hrs, with a coach ride to Larnaca airport. A flight to Frankfurt, followed by a another flight to Salzburg, meant we arrived in Austria at 1000 hrs the following morning, but we still had a 1.5 hour coach ride to our final destination – Zell-am see.

Tired and bleary eyed, we eventually arrived at our destination. A youth hostel provided our accommodation; we split up into rooms of 4 and 6 and claimed our bunk beds, before familiarising ourselves with the cramped and rather basic facilities. After a cup of tea and a shower and change, everyone felt better. A local sports shop sent a bus laden with excellent ski equipment to our hostel and we were expertly kitted out and issued with ski passes for the local area. We were now ready to go.

Our first meal in the hostel, followed by a couple of quiet beers, soon had everyone heading for their bunk beds. I soon realised that I had drawn the short straw in sharing a room with **Sgt 'Shuggie' White** and **Sgt Paul Richardson** – they were champion snorers.

Morning came quickly. Expectation was high and there was a buzz of excitement from everyone. With breakfast complete, everyone grabbed their kit and met at the hostel for 0800 hrs; the lifts opened at 0830 hrs. However there was a big problem, thick mist enveloped the town; would this jeopardise the skiing? A chat with the hostel manager allayed our fears, the town was located in a valley and was shrouded in mist every morning, but the ski areas high up the mountain were unaffected.

We made the short walk to the ski lift which would take us up 2000m, to the ski area. The cable car journey started in thick mist but soon took us into clear blue skies and glorious sunshine; it was time to get the factor 30 sun cream and sunglasses out. As we made our way up the mountain, the misty valley gave way to wonderful views of the Alps, what a sight they were.

SSgt 'Taff' Lougher and **Sgt Ade Cooper**, the instructors for the week, were delighted with the quantity and quality of snow and ski areas available. Each group was soon on the snow, going through various drills and exs. For most, it was their first time on snow, but the dry ski slope trg sessions, conducted by **Taff** at Episkopi, prior to the exped meant it was not the first time on skis for anyone.

The learning curve was steep for those who who had not skied before. Some were making very good progress, **Sig Danny Vassel**, **Cpl Dave Sanderson** and **Cpl Wayne Manville** making particularly good progress.

The first day nearly complete, tired and sore bodies made their way down the mountain, **Sgt Cooper's** group managed to ski all the way down, the last run being a very challenging 2km Red. The groups RVd at the bottom and joined a lively après ski crowd for a couple of gluweins. A local band played oom-pah tunes and the locals sang strange sounding songs. Everyone had enjoyed the day with the majority of the group progressing well.

Day 2 and everyone was up early getting breakfast, making rolls to take on the mountain and sorting their ski kit. Determined and enthusiastic everyone was on one of the first lifts to escape the misty valley and climb up the mountain.

Day 3 and the group were working on 'carving' turns, good progress was being made but there was still a long way to go. That evening, the whole group met up for an après ski beer, spirits were high with everyone praising **Tony** and **Paul** for showing determination to get skiing.

Day 4 was a consolidation day, the instructors were back with their respective groups, who continued to work on carving turns. That evening, everyone headed down to the 'halenbad' for a swim and a relax in a sauna.

There were a few surprised faces when we were told the shower/sauna area was mixed, and there was to be no swimwear worn! After the initial embarrassment and giggling, everyone settled down to thoroughly enjoy the experience of sitting in a roasting hot sauna, followed by jumping into an ice cold plunge pool!

On Day 5 we all headed for the Kaprun Glacier. An early start was required, as a short bus ride was needed to get to the Kaprun Glacier cable car. This took us up to 3200m and provided wonderful views of the glacier and the valley below.

The Kaprun Glacier has snow throughout the year; you can ski there in August. We knew conditions would be good and we were not wrong; everyone had a great day's skiing, although there were complaints about it being very cold, due to the high altitude.

By Day 6, the guys were suffering from lots of bumps, bruises and fatigue. The days had been long, and some had been burning the candle at both ends with late night socialising! Everyone however had made good progress with their skiing, so much so, that all personnel were assessed by **Taff** and **Ade** as having met the requirements for the basic Ski Proficiency Award.

The final day provided time to pack and clear the accommodation. There was also an opportunity to do a bit of sight seeing and visit the hallenbad, before we all met up in a local restaurant for the final night meal. Large schnitzel and steaks, washed down with a couple of local beers, were enjoyed by everyone.

The experience of skiing in the Alps had been an experience of a lifetime, and one which will not be forgotten. I was particularly pleased to see all members of the group show total commitment and excellent team work throughout the week. Awards for the most improved skiers went to **Cpl Wayne Manville** and **Cpl Dave Sanderson**, while the award for the individual who throughout the week demonstrated outstanding effort and determination went to **SAC Tony Bulmer**.

J6 MULTI NATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH EAST)

J6 MULTI NATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH EAST) – MND (SE)

The J6 Branch of MND (SE) is responsible for all CIS sp within the AOR for the MND. The SO1, **Lt Col Phil Osment**, is also responsible for all UK CIS matters, in theatre. Under him, are the SO2 Plans, SO2 DCSA (they do deploy, see) and the SO2 IX/IM. The NCC manages the deployed CIS services for theatre, including Project SYNERGY. ECM Sp Tp install, maintain and repair the ECM in theatre, with close support from the UK.

They also provide the trg of all FP troops, so that they can use it. IX/IM manage the information held on all CIS within MND (SE), in order to ensure that it is fully exploited. Project Design and Implementation Team (PDIT), is responsible for the installation, repairs and maint of the static comms infrastructure within theatre.

The Change Manager manages the requests for moves of CIS, ensuring that everything is moved in a timely and effective manner. All in all, a small team with a large job.

There are 35 personnel under the banner of J6, with other attached personnel from the Bde Sig Sqn, doing the job of a Div Sig Regt. We are Joint Service and we also have one Italian working alongside us.

We couldn't do this without the Civilians on Deployed Operations (CONDO) that work on the helpdesk, and are deployed across theatre and carry out the day to day work for Project SYNERGY.

We might not like the fact that they get tax-free wages, but some of the CONDO do actually earn their medals. I wouldn't like to spend a year in Al Amarrah.

NEWS FROM IRAQ – J6 MULTI NATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH EAST)

The last few months have been turbulent times in Iraq. The elections went well, but we didn't get to vote. Christmas and New Year passed almost without incident. The rains have come and (hopefully) gone, without too much interruption to the comms infrastructure.

Just a little dampness in the nether regions of the Installation Technician world, hopefully everything will dry out over the next few months lads.

The SOinC(A) came over for a visit, and managed to see many of the Royal Signals soldiers serving in Iraq. He made it to Shiaba Log Base, and Basra Air Station.

Knowing that he wouldn't be able to make it to Baghdad, **Maj Katie Caie** made it down to see him in Basra, and had a couple of days in the sun.

Capt Nick Wood organised a sumptuous meal for the Royal Signals officers and warrant officers in theatre. Many attended, and all agreed that the starter was fantastic, and that the facilities in Allenby were impressive. **SSgt(YofS) Rob White** managed to whinge enough to get an invite.

Maj Tom Hall received a Commendation from the General, for all of his hard work. He has managed to forge links across theatre and worked hard with the10th (Iraqi Army) Div. Planning many things for the future, and overseeing the operational comms, has been a breeze for him.

He was, however, the first to acknowledge the hard work and efforts put in by the rest of the team, which enabled him to get his award.

We've had a few changes in the manpower, as many finish their 6 months (or 4 months for DCSA and the RAF) and are replaced. **Lt Comd Dave Ellis**, **Maj Tom Hall**, **Maj Bruce Wylie** will all be missed. **Capt Kevyn Sturman** goes to 238 Sig Sqn (marching up and down the square) and **Flt Lt Paul Crosby** has returned to DCSA, having forged many links with the local contractors.

Lt Ian Dry RN leaves to be replaced by **Lt John Holt** RN as the Change Manager.

As people go, new ones arrive. We welcome **Majs Nick Morris**, **Al Lowry** and **Simon Meadowcroft**. **Lt Pete Lippe** RN and **Capt(TOT) Neil Hendry**, both add to the flavour of the Projects Office, and now we also have an Infra Plans WO, going by the name of **SSgt Taff Hamilton** RE

SOinC(A) visit to MND SE

SPORT

NORDIC SKIING MERCURY SKI CLUB

HALL OF FAME 2005/06

SSgt Mal Pavier Veteran, Assistant Coach, 16 Sig Regt
Cpl Kate Connelly Female, Senior, 11 Sig Regt
Sig Adam Milson Junior, 7 Sig Regt
Sig Rick Tate Junior, 7 Sig Regt

We have 4 athletes in the Corps who have achieved Top Ten National Ranking in Biathlon this year. It actually started for most, at last year's National Nordic Skiing Championships in Germany. That was when the individuals, who were to be part of the National Development Squad for 2005, were announced.

On a hot Friday in June, those individuals arrived at *RAF Kinloss* for the British Junior Development camp at the East Grange Biathlon Centre. The aim was to give them instruction on Biathlon shooting, roller skiing, physiology, trg techniques and programmes, to kick-start them into trg for the coming season.

Saturday started in earnest with admin, opening addresses, kit issues and lectures. The afternoon went straight into roller skiing, concentrating on technique. After dinner, it was back for more lectures. Sunday started early in the gym at 0630 hrs, for mobility exercises. After that, the students moved to the range for the first shooting practice. Much time was spent on shooting theory and setting up the rifle correctly for optimum performance. The rifles can be adjusted, in numerous different ways, to suit the firer's physique. The days all followed the same routine; with mobility and ranges in the mornings; each afternoon, however, had a different flavour; and evenings spent in lectures in the Biathlon Centre. Saturday and Sunday afternoons were spent roller skiing, with the emphasis on the leg action and the students being denied the use of poles.

Saturday was the first race of the camp; 5 running loops around Hill Range with 4 Prone shoots and a 45 second penalty for each missed shot. In this game, shooting is vital to a good race. On average, it took most athletes 30 minutes to finish the race, but the shooting spread the field out.

The winner was resident athlete **Gnr Kev Kane**, second was **LCpl Ewan Bartlett**, whose amazingly quick run time made up for his shooting, and third was RAF athlete **Fg Off Fay Potton** with her consistently good shooting. But surprise of the day went to **Sig Rick Tate**, who out-shot 2 of the resident GB Junior team, to put him in 6th place and third best shot of the day with only 4 misses out of 20.

During the second week, the students were taken through the stand shooting. The first hour was spent on positions and dry drills, with an old pair of skis on; just to get the feeling of course! The last day was to be a roller skiing combination race, with 8 stand shoots. The emphasis was on the shooting, as a relatively slow time of 45 minutes was set for the roller skiing; safety was our main concern. However, if you did go over time, a penalty was given for each minute. This time, the penalties for missed shots was raised to 1 minute. The scene was set, the athletes were ready and this was definitely a shooters' race.

A very exciting race followed, with no clear leaders at first and with some good and bad shooting, as the race went on. Winner of the day was **Cpl Kate Connelly** who out-shot everyone, missing only 12 shots from 40, second was **Fg Off Fay Potton**, and third was **Gnr Kevin Kane**. Girl power was truly evident that day! The last day was spent cleaning up, repairing and handing back kit.

The next camp was programmed for September, but only **Kate Connelly** and **Adam Milson** attended. This was to be a continuation from the last camp, with more emphasis on technique and shooting under duress, i.e. with a pulse rate over 160. **Mal Pavier** did not attend as he was in the Harz Mountains of Germany, organising and running the Biathlon Summer Trg Camp (BSTC) for Germany-based units. This was an invaluable opportunity for keen, first and second season skiers to prepare for the forthcoming season, with the emphasis on shooting and roller-skiing techniques.

The pre-season organisation had been a whirlwind of paperwork to overcome the red tape and bureaucracy; made exceptionally hard by new personalities in Embassies. But 16 Sig Regt had its transport, funding, eqpt and more importantly its athletes. Because several rising stars within the Corps did not have a Regtl team to compete with, **Cpl Kate Connelly** and **Sigs Adam Milson** and **Ricky Tate** were "bolted-on" to the 16 Sig Regt Ski team for the season, with a very welcome minibus from 7 Sig Regt as well.

The initial trg phase was based near Lillehammer, Norway. Unusually for this time of year, there wasn't enough snow to cut tracks, but 50km away in Sjusjoen, the locals had laid a 3km course with artificial snow and it was open for use. We were saved!

Cpl Kate Connelly in action

And so the trg began; a shake out for the experienced skiers, and tumbles for the novices. Four weeks were spent in Norway for this initial phase, learning the fundamentals of both the classic and skating techniques, basic biathlon weapon handling drills, for both prone and standing, and basic zeroing and combination trg

Cpl Kate Connelly showing how it's done

on the range. The experienced skiers had a more demanding schedule, with distances of 30km, hill sessions, intervals, more distance (another 30km), combination range trg, weight trg and pool sessions; all designed to optimise the time and facilities available to us. Most athletes were in bed by 2100 hrs each day!

After a short Christmas break, we started the next phase in Ramsau, Austria. We were in at an altitude similar to the Div Championships, in order to concentrate on Biathlon shooting and to sharpen up our skiing skills and speed. The 2 weeks in Austria did us the world of good, as the majority could now hit the targets (56mm disk for prone and 120mm disk for standing at 50m) and after 2 selection races, we were as fit as we would ever be. Next stop was the 1Armd Div Skiing Championships in Les Contamines, France We arrived with about 60 other teams (both Nordic and Alpine), but there was not much time to think, as the course inspection for the first race dawned. The first race was the men's 15km and the women's 10km Cross Country. It was a very cold morning and the right grip wax wasn't too hard to work out. After an exciting 45 to 60 minutes, all the athletes had finished.

Corps training race in Austria

Cpl Connelly had won the women's race and I was second, the team came a creditable 8th, which for a mainly Novice team was very good. The next races were the next day: the 10 km Biathlon Sprint for the men and the 7.5km for the women. The weather had warmed up a bit, and after a check zero for everyone, it was time to start. We were to start at 30 second intervals, just like the day before, with a blue loop shoot prone, twice round the red loop shoot standing and the blue loop to finish. We all gave it our best with varying results; **Cpl Connelly** won her race again, and I won the men's and the team ended up even better, in 6th place! Both myself, and **Cpl Connelly** were the Div Champions as well!

Next race on the calendar was the 4 x 10km Relay, a mass start, followed by 2 legs Classic technique and 2 skating. **Sig Meredith** braved the mass start unscathed but extremely icy and treacherous conditions saw us finish in 11th place.
Next was the biathlon relay; another mass start with 2 trips to the range (prone and standing). This time it was **Sig Howland's** turn, and what a great start he got, launching himself off the grid and maintaining his 6th place into the first trip to the range. Problem was he was so out of breath, he didn't hit too many targets. Our main aim at this point was to qualify for the Army Championships, and to do this safely, we had to maintain our 8th place. Our main rival was 26 Regt RA, who had a 4-minute lead on our last leg runner, namely me.

The target was set, and I went off like a man possessed, took 2 minutes out of them by the first trip to the range, unknowingly zipped past them, while they were in the penalty loop, at the second trip to the range and was dazed at the end, when the guys told me I had beaten them in

The last and final race was the dreaded Patrol race; a 20km march and shoot in winter whites, carrying a Bergen, 2 separate shoots and a couple of stands thrown in for good measure. Nearly 3 hours later, we had finished the race in a respectable 14th place. After the prize giving that evening, we would be off to Ruhpolding, as we had qualified for the Army Champioships and so had our individuals.

Now it was time to up a gear, as this was the home of the German National Team and venue to World Cup races. The hills were steep and numerous and the level of competition had risen with the arrival of the GB European and World Cup Teams.
As always, the first week was Cross Country; the first races being the 7.5km Double Pursuit races (classic leg, followed by a pit stop change of skis, into a skating leg). **Sig Milson** made a good show with his 5th place in the junior race, and **Sig Howland** was robbed of his 15th place in the Senior Novice race, when some foul play by another athlete caused him to fall.
Illness had forced **Cpl Connelly** to pull out of the Pursuit and subsequently, she could not take part in the women's 10km either. After such a good start at the Div Championships, things were looking decidedly shaky for her GB selection hopes. The next day we were at the start gate again, for the 15km Classic race and I had drawn start place 3. It looked like I was going to have a lonely race. I had come 4th overall, (2nd Army) and **Sig Milson** had come 42nd overall, (7th Junior). One thing I will say though, the hills in Ruhpolding are savage, taking no prisoners on the downhill runs. One competitor lost 2 front teeth on one of them. Next up, was the 4 x 10 Relay with **Ichi** on the mass start again. He did an excellent job, steering his way around the pile-ups. This steep and hard course saw our team come in 21st place, beating our Hors Concours Team.

After a rest day, it was time for the Biathlon; 20km for the seniors, 15km for the juniors and 12.5km for the women. There are no penalty loops in this race and with a minute time penalty for each missed shot and 4 visits to the range, this was most definitely a shooters' race. Unfortunately, we had some bad shooting in the team this time. **Cpl Connelly's** return saw her get 3rd place, but still not with the form she had shown in France. **Sig Tate** put up an excellent show in the junior race, out-shooting **Sig Milson** and finishing in 6th place. Unfortunately I shot badly (dropping 8 shots) and skied slowly finishing in 14th place. It looked like all that racing had drained my reserve tank; I was officially a spent force! The rest of the team put in a sterling effort, though the strain of all this racing was starting to show.

After a well-earned rest day, it was time for the 10km Sprint, 7.5km for the women. It was a cold start, and we were all shivering on the start line. Even after the first loop, many couldn't feel fingers or toes, let alone shoot, and the tracks were icy and fast. A mention must be made of **Sig Milson**, who even with his bad shooting (he missed 7 from 10) still got a top 30 place. It was a good day for all, with a really good team place of 16th for us.

Then it was straight into the 12.5km mass starts. You had to compete in the previous days' racing to qualify, and then you were set off in your different groups in a mass start, with 4 visits to the range (2 x prone, 2 x stand). Unfortunately in the women's race, **Cpl Connelly** had to pull out after fainting, but **Sig Milson** in the junior race secured himself a 5th place, even after missing 11 shots from a possible 20. **Sig Tate** came in 7th, only missing 7 shots. I managed an 8th place in the senior race, up amongst

Sig Milson on his way to 5th place

the European Cup Team members and in the novice race, **Sig Howland** come in 5th.

Now it was the biathlon relay. What a day it was, with record overnight snow falls, the race started in near whiteout conditions and steadily deteriorated. The snow was deep enough to start with, and was over the ankles of the last leg runners, making skiing slow and hard, but the team fought through into 14th position.

All that remained was the patrol race, and this was to be the mother of all patrol races; 30km this time. Clear skies greeted the team, but it wasn't long before grey clouds threatened. The first loop took us nearly 20km, with a first aid stand, and some welcome hot juice. However, by the time we came in for the first shoot, the snow was falling and our aim was off. After a shorter loop and some avalanche rescue procedures, it was in for the next shoot, for which our aim had improved. The last short loop was demanding, with the new snow sticking underfoot, making headway slow and laborious. However, we finished the race within the time given to us and to tremendous applause from the crowd. It had taken us four and a half hours and now it was time for that hard earned hot shower.

All that was left was the Prize Giving and departure the next day. It had been a long and arduous season, full of twists and turns, but a successful one. We had made it to the Army Championships, something most novice teams never get to do. We had 3 soldiers selected for GB Development Training (**Cpl Connelly**, **Sigs Milson** and **Tate**) and 2 Div Champions (**SSgt Pavier** and **Cpl Connelly**)

CRICKET

ROYAL SIGNALS CRICKET CLUB TOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA
- by Capt A Senneck

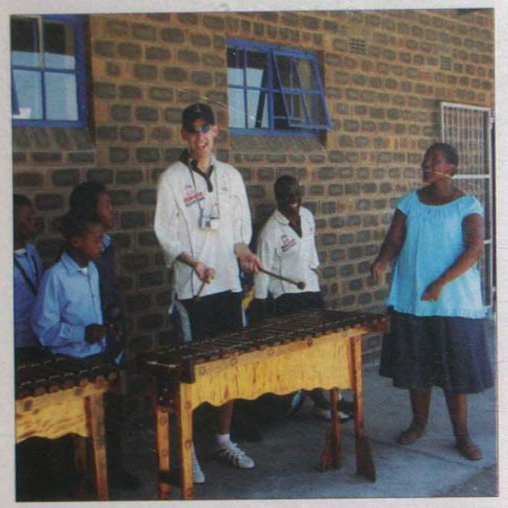
A squad of cricketers, representing the Corps, toured Cape Town and Pretoria, South Africa, over the period 4 – 21 March 06.

The aim of the tour was to conduct pre-season trg, enhance team cohesion and provide the tour party with the opportunity to experience South African culture. During the tour we played 6 matches against 2 township teams, 2 Professional Academy teams, 1 club side and the South African National Defence Force.

The touring party consisted of:

Lt Col Roddy Nicholson – Chairman Royal Signals CC
Lt Col Chris Ford – Tour Manager
Lt Col (Retd) Mike Warrren – Umpire
Maj (Retd) Bryan Campbell – Scorer
Capt Alex Senneck – Captain
Capt Peter Hammonds – Secretary Royal Signals CC
Capt Neil Matthews
Capt Daz Winfield
Sgt Hilary Glean
Sgt Dave Hudson
Cpl Stu Houghton
Cpl Keith Ford
LCpl Danny Wall
LCpl Stu Jackson
Sig Dave Wade
Sig Phil Thompson
Sig Bill Williams
Pte Kieran Pearce

After 2 flights and a day and a half of travel, we arrived in the beautiful city of Cape Town, and began the tour by settling into our accommodation, acclimatising to the 30 degree heat and preparing ourselves for some trg and our first match. On 7 March, after a mornings light trg, we jumped into the hire cars and drove out of Cape Town to Nyanga township for our first contest. The visit to the township started with a tour of the local area and school, where we hed a music recital from some of the pupils, which was warmly greeted by all the tour party.



Pte Kieran Pearce displaying musical skills to go with his cricket ability

After a tight 25-over match versus Nyanga Cricket Club, we ended up on the wrong side of a closely fought match and lost, in the last over. We had managed to post 139 from our 25 overs, which was quite a creditable score, considering the wicket and soaking wet outfield. Alas, the bowlers were unable to keep the opposition batsmen's run rate in check, and Nyanga won by 4 wickets. The match was most notable for the level of rustiness in the players and highlighted the difference in playing conditions that we were likely to experience throughout the tour. After the necessary post match presentations and beers, we beat a hasty retreat from the township, before night fall descended on us.
A trg day at the Western Province Cricket Club, with a professional coach (an Englishmen ironically), followed our loss, with plenty to work to do and lots of improvements to be made. The whole squad showed an excellent work ethic throughout the first trg session and the willingness to take on board advice was refreshing. A good days trg was had by all and the tempo of the tour was building up nicely, as we headed to our next game against the Western Province Academy.

A tough training day in Cape Town?

Bellville Cricket Club was the venue for our next match, against the young professionals of Western Province Academy. If nothing else, this match was going to be a good opportunity to learn from the professionals and good experience for the younger members of the touring party. As expected, the standard of the opposition was very strong and the skipper's decision to field first was starting to look a poor one. However, the bowlers stuck to their task and kept the home team down to a reasonable 271 from their 50 overs. With a steady start, and wickets in hand, we were confident that we could make a decent stab at the total. Alas the opening bowlers of WP Academy had other ideas and we were soon up against it, and behind the run rate. We were eventually bowled out for 153 with the last 4 batsmen contributing zero runs between then; on this occasion, the tail did not wag. Even more for our now slightly bewildered coach to work on in the nets.

Another full day's trg followed, and with the use of the latest in video analysis technology, all our players had either their batting or bowling techniques assessed/ ripped to shreds! Nobody escaped the exposé of their techniques and everybody was surprised with the obvious room for improvement open to all technically, and the over reliance on hand/eye co-ordination and good fortune, whilst out in the middle. It had become apparent very quickly why we were struggling against the strong opposition of the South Africans.

Talk of shark diving, Table Mountain, bungee jumping and just about everything else Cape Town had to offer had dominated many a conversation over the preceding 2/3 days, as we headed towards our first free day on 11 March. Five or six foolhardy souls thought a walk up Table Mountain was on the cards; it was only a steady hour's walk. That idea was dropped after 60 yards and a temperature of 35C, especially with no water or sun cream. They considered the likely headlines in the local press and decided that they could not face the embarrassment of being 'casevac'ed off the Mountain. They redirected their attentions to the scenery to be found on Clifton beach instead and apparently this turned out to be a good choice and a lot less strenuous. 4 brave members of the tour party went off for a shark dive and plunged into the depths of the freezing Atlantic Ocean, to go one on one with these master killers. **Cpl Keith Ford**, **LCpl Stu Jackson**, **Pte Kieran Pearce** and **Sig Bill Williams** departed for the trip of a lifetime, as most people were getting in from the night before. After a rough trip out on the boat in choppy waters, and 4 breakfasts had been revisited, they found the sharks and prepared to face their fears. All 4 went down, but **Cpl Ford** scared the first shark off, due to his size and good looks. Fortunately for the others, there were other sharks to look at, and get up close and personal with. All 4 definitely enjoyed the trip and were full of stories, as we met up with them later on at Newlands Rugby Stadium, for the Super 14 match between the Stormers and the Hurricanes of Wellington, New Zealand.

Our third match of the tour involved a drive out to the main wine growing region of Stellenbosch, against the Scorpions. With a noticeably warmer and dryer temperature, we chose to bat on what looked like a good wicket in the hope of posting a decent score, for the bowlers to defend. In the end we posted a reasonable171, which was just below par considering the wicket, and the bowling attack we were facing. Our opening bowlers soon got stuck into the top order of the Scorpions and we made early inroads into the opposition batting line up. Apart from a late flurry towards the end of the innings, it would not have been so close but we came away with our first victory of the tour. However, it became quickly apparent that the cricket match was merely a precursor for the rest of the evening's activities.

The Scorpions proved to be superb hosts, providing us with a lamb roast and plenty of Castle Lager and red wine from the local vineyard, to wash all the food down. Our opposition were certainly our best hosts and we had a lot of fun throughout the day, and certainly throughout the evening. It is difficult to visit the Western Cape without taking in a Wine Tour, and we did just that at the Groot Constantia Wine Estate, which was a short hop from the hotel, in the plush suburb of Constantia. An excellent tasting and even better lunch in one of the restaurants belonging to the vineyard ensured that we had an enjoyable afternoon, in such beautiful surroundings, tasting some of the best wines that South Africa has to offer.

The fourth match was quickly upon us and the thick heads from the vineyard were soon shaken off, in order to play a tough match against the young professionals of the Boland Cricket Academy. A good toss to win, on a damp wicket, led us to make early inroads into the top order of the Boland batting line and at 17 for 4, there was an upset on the cards. However dropping the Boland Academy's best batter on 15 was the difference between a low and a decent score. He then went on to make 85 and Boland Academy was able to post 201 off their 50 overs. The wicket had flattened out in the baking hot sun and we were confident that we could chase down the Boland score. Alas, not for the first time on the tour, the top order didn't get us off to the start that we hoped for, and we were soon up against it. The Boland Academy bowling attack proved to be far superior to our batting line up and the middle order soon followed the top order and we were eventually bowled out for a mere 76.

The Royal Signals Cricket Club Squad for the South African tour of 2006

With our impending visit to Pretoria and the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), the need for top level cover was increasing by the day. News of local media interest was coming through, as well as visits from senior SANDF officers and cocktail parties. Fortunately the SOinC(A) timed his arrival perfectly. It was a pleasure for the squad to have **Brigadier Thomas** taking the time out of his busy schedule to come and visit us and we all hope that he enjoyed his time in Cape Town and Pretoria.

Our last day in Cape Town was spent watching the best cricket team in the world (after England obviously!), live at Newlands in Cape Town. The whole touring party took the chance to watch Australia versus South Africa, on the first day of the First Test Match. Emulation is a superb method of learning, and if our players could take anything from the day by watching these 2 fantastic teams, then not only would we have had an enjoyable day out, but it would also have served as an excellent trg experience.

An early flight out of Cape Town to Johannesburg kick started the final leg of the tour. The last 5 days of the tour were to be spent in the hands of the SANDF. After 2 hours in the air and breakfast, we departed for the Mamelodi township for a Twenty20 match against the township representative team. After posting an excellent 151, we felt as though we were well in the game. At 95 for 3, off 13 overs, the match was very much in our hands, until the arrival of the opposition skipper who plays provincial cricket for Pretoria. He can seriously play! After 30 minutes of his gifted talent, the game had swung in their direction until his shock dismissal and the game was back in the balance. In the end though, the game went the way of Mamelodi Cricket Club with 2 balls to spare and they ran out winners by 5 wickets, which didn't do justice to the team's performance. After an endless round of speeches, it was back off to the hotel for a quick change to attend the Beating Retreat at the British High Commission. The team were down in the dumps after such a close defeat, until the point of getting off the bus at the High Commission. The annual summer party is a lavish affair and the squad's spirits soon lifted with each Pimms and bottle of red wine. However there was serious business ahead and we eventually headed back to the hotel for some rest, prior to the big match versus the SANDF the following day.

0930 is an odd time to start a cricket match, so an early breakfast was arranged to ensure our timely arrival at the Defence Oval Pretoria, for the final match of the tour versus the SANDF on Saturday 12 March. After winning the toss, the straightforward decision to bowl first was taken and early inroads were made into the SANDF top order. All was going well until the SANDF number 4 and 5 came to the crease and the bowlers appeared to implode and fed the two batsmen easy runs for the next 15 overs. Despite being plumb LBW second ball, this period culminated with the SANDF number 4 reaching his hundred in quick time. We managed a recovery during the last 10 overs and restricted the SANDF to 271, from their 50 overs. After losing the early wicket of one of our openers, the batsmen knuckled down to business and on a flat wicket started chipping away at the large SANDF total. Numbers 2-7 all contributed well with scores over 20 but nobody managed get more than 40. This proved to be the most telling statistic of the innings, if one batsman had managed to make a decent score, the game would have been ours for the taking. As it was, we ended up on 266 for 9, just 5 short of the opposition target and very disappointed at how close we came to securing a memorable win. The clinical nature and ultra competitive attitude of the South Africans proved to be the telling difference in the match.

Our involvement with the SANDF did not end with playing the match in Pretoria. Afterwards, we had a cocktail party in the Air Force Officers' Club. At this event, both teams were present, the senior management of both our touring party and the SANDF and some of the key sponsors that had enabled the tour and much of the hosting in Pretoria to happen. On Sunday, along with our South African counterparts, we then visited Sun City and its game park. Sun City is a mixture of Las Vegas and Clacton and the game park was not exactly teaming with game. Nevertheless a good day was had by all and it was a good way of building up a good appetite for our end of tour meal in Pretoria.

This was our second tour to South Africa and the trip reinforced how good a place it is to tour. The weather was superb throughout. Cape Town is a fantastic place to visit for any purpose. The cricket was tough and all the squad learned something about their own game, and the team certainly came together. The players' thanks go to **Lt Col Nicholson** (Royal Signals Cricket Club Chairman), **Lt Col Ford** (Tour Manager), **Capt Hammonds** (Royal Signals Cricket Club Chairman) for organising such a fantastic tour and to **Brig Thomas** for coming all the way to South Africa to visit and support us.

The aspiration of the Corps Cricket Team is to make touring a frequent event if possible. Touring enhances the playing standards of the players, brings the squad together, ensuring we player better cricket as a team in the summer and gives the players the opportunity to experience cultures and people that would not occur otherwise. We achieved all of these objectives during the tour and hope to be able to do the same in the future, whether it is in South Africa again or somewhere even more exotic.

ROYAL SIGNALS INTERNAL AND INTER-CORPS SWIMMING AND WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS 2005

- by Maj Tim Langford

The 17th InterCorps Championships were contested at Aldershot on 2324 Nov 05. As in previous years, we conducted the Internal Corps Championships at Colerne to select individuals to remain for a 1 week camp and then to represent the Corps at the Inter-Corps.

INTERNAL CORPS COMPETITION COLERNE 15 NOV 05

The Internal Corps Competition was held on 15 Nov 06 at Colerne and was only contested between BAG and UK this year, with ITO unable to produce a team. The swimming, as in previous years, was very close. Germany was victorious by 3 points. Notable swims for Germany were **Sig Sam Potts** in the 100m freestyle, both **Cpl Kirsty Burgmans** and **Sig Chris Vale** in the 50m backstroke, **LCpl Tony Davies** in the 50m butterfly and **Sig Becky James** in the 50m breaststroke. UK winners were both **Lt Vanessa Shipley** and **SSgt Robbie Love** in the 50m freestyle and **LCpl Helen Chamberlain** in the 50m butterfly. The UK water polo team proved too strong for Germany winning 114, although Germany were 32 ahead at the end of the first quarter. **Sig Chris Vale** scored twice for Germany with **SSgt Steve White** scoring 4 and **SSgt Robbie Love** contributing 3 to the overall total for UK. Selected individuals remained for a one week camp to prepare for the InterCorps.
Again this year we utilised the swimming pool at *RNAS Yeovilton* for the camp. Luckily this year we maintained the same trainers with **LCpl Helen Stanyer** training our swimmers and **Mr Mick Flaherty** continued the development of our Water Polo Squad.

The Water Polo team had 1 warm up game against *RNAS Yeovilton*. We won 84 with **SSgt Robbie Love** scoring 4 of our goals. With a good trg week behind us we moved to Aldershot on 22 Nov for a "look" at the pool where the InterCorps were being hosted. A gentle one hour session under Helen and Mick, and then off to Pirbright for feeding and sleeping.

INTERCORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Day 1 - all heats for the swimming and the league games for the water polo were completed. All our swimmers qualified for the finals being held on Day 2. In the water polo our B team lost all their 3 games. In two of the games they should have beaten the opposition but poor finishing proved their downfall. They lost 6 1 to the REME (who the A team would meet in the final for the fifth consecutive year) with **SSgt (YofS) Ollie Olver** scoring our goal, 3 2 to the RE with **LCpl 'Z' Zeederberg** and **Sig Sam Potts** both scoring one a piece, and in their last game 3 1 to the RLC with again **SSgt(YofS) Ollie Olver** scoring our goal. The A team won all their games, 9 0 against RE B team with **Cpl Sean Peart** scoring twice and 7 players scoring one a piece, 12 0 against the Infantry team with **Sig Chris Vale** scoring 3, **Maj Pete Griffiths**, **WOI(YofS) Tim Williams** and **SSgt Robbie Love** all contributing 2 goals each. In the last league game, we beat AMS 9 1 with **SSgt Robbie Love** putting 3 in the net and **SSgt Steve White** scoring 2. The female water polo had 4 entries so the semi finals and the final were all played on Day 1. In our semi, we beat AMS 6 0 with **Capt Kerry Larsen** and **Cpl Amy Phillippo** both scoring twice and **Capt Harriet Cairns** and **Sig Sarah Smyth** each contributing a goal each. In the fina,l the ladies met a very strong REME team to whom we lost 6 1.

Day 2 - all the finals. The second day commenced with the SemiFinals and Finals of the male water polo. We played the RLC in our semi. We knew it would not be an easy game with the RLC having 2 current Army players, including the Army Captain. No goals were scored at the end of the first quarter. In the second quarter **Maj Tim Langford** and **SSgt Robbie Love** gave us a 20 lead. In the third quarter **WOI (YofS) Williams** scored but the RLC pulled one back, 31. In the final quarter **Capt Ben Psaila** and **Cpl Sean Peart** both scored one a piece and the RLC managed a late consolation goal, 5 2 and we were in the final again. In the final we met the REME again! They had a much stronger team than in previous years so a good final was on the cards. The first quarter finished one a piece with **Cpl Ollie Smith** scoring for us. In the second quarter **SSgt Robbie Love** scored twice and **SSgt Steve White** once to give us a 4 1 lead. Unfortunately we had a player excluded for the rest of the game and therefore played a man down for over half the game! In water polo, it is extremely difficult playing a man down! However, under the calm guidance and coaching of **Mick Flaherty**, the third quarter ended nil all; amazing we did not concede any goals. This was due to desperate defending and some magnificent goal keeping by **Capt Pete Griffiths**. Into the last quarter and still 41 up, the REME through everything at us. They managed to score another goal but **Capt Ben Psaila** and **SSgt Andy Carnegie** both broke off, once each, and managed to bury the ball in the REME net, 6 2. A tremendous game and one that will be remembered by all the polo players in the pool that day!

The A Water Polo Team with the Inter Corps Cup

Into the swimming. The Individual Championships were fiercely contested by all competitors. In the female events, notable achievements were **Cpl Michelle Scott** winning the 100m freestyle and coming second in the 100m backstroke where she was beaten by a current Scottish international! The ladies finished fourth overall. In the male events our depth was superb. Although we did not win one race we were crowned Inter-Corps Champions. Notable swims were **Cpl Sean Peart** (100m breaststroke), **Cpl Dan Hine** (50m breaststroke), **LCpl Tony Davies** (100m butterfly) and **Sig Chris Vale** (200m individual medley) who all finished second in their respective races.

In the female sprint relays we again finished fourth overall. The 4 x 50m freestyle relay team of **Capt Kerry Larsen**, **Lt Vanessa Shipley**, **Cpl Michelle Scott** and **Sig Katie Holden** recorded 2mins 12secs and the 4 x 50m medley relay consisting of **Lt Vanessa Shipley**, **Cpl Michelle Scott**, **Cpl Amy Phillippo** and **LCpl Helen Chamberlain** recorded a time of 2mins 35secs and both finished in third place in their respective races.

In the male sprint relays we finished runners up, with superb swims from our 4 x 50m breaststroke team of **WO1(YofS) Tim**

The ladies swimming teams

Williams, **Sgt Matt Lee**, **Cpl Dan Hine** and **Cpl Sean Peart** who won the event in a time of 2mins 26secs, and just missed setting a new record.

Also, the 4 x 50m medley relay team of **Cpl (Chico) Ollie Smith**, **Cpl Sean Peart**, **LCpl Tony Davies** and **Sig Chris Vale** who just missed second position by less than a second.

Winning 2 of the titles on offer and finishing as runners up in 2 of the others was an excellent result. 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 within the Squad would like to thank **Mr Mick Flaherty** for his coaching and **LCpl Helen Stanyer** who coached and selected the swimming teams. My thanks also go to all individuals for their effort over a very hard week. The Inter Corps this year will be contested at Aldershot on 22/23 Nov with the internal Competition being contested at Colerne on 14 Nov.

The Water Polo will again include a female tournament where we would welcome some new talent. Anyone interested in representing the Corps should contact **Maj Tim Langford** on 943825839.

The winning 4 x 50m breaststroke team, Sgt Matt Lee, Cpl Dan Hine, WOI(YofS) Williams and Cpl Sean Peart

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

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President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Maj Gen AH Boyle CB

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General Secretary and Treasurer: Lt Col C P Conlon
Assistant General Secretary: --
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

HQ NEWS

Lt Col (Retd) Carl Conlon has been appointed General Secretary to succeed the late **Col Neil Donaldson**.

RSA AGM.

The 61st AGM of the RSA was held in the Victory Services Club in London, on Sat 1 Apr 06. In attendance was **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** (President) and **Maj Gen AH Boyle CB** (Chairman). 105 members representing 51 branches and 7 affiliated associations attended. Any Life Member wishing an electronic copy of the meeting minutes should send an e-mail request to me at: rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk, quoting their RSA LM number.

BRANCH NEWS

The "Air Formation Signal Regiments Assn" has been renamed as **"The Air Formation Signals Assn"**. **Col B T Seymour TD** is the new Chairman of the **254 Old Boys Assn**. **Ray Rigg** has stood down as Hon Secretary **Bristol Branch** and is succeeded

by **Mrs Jayne Tuck**. Our thanks go to **Ray** for his sterling work in office over the past few years. The **1960s 16 Sig Regt Reunion Club** has been formally affiliated to the RSA.

POSTINGS

Around 5,000 of the 14,000 Life Members on the RSA database have kindly submitted details of their postings, whilst with the Corps. The positive feedback from members makes this service worthwhile. I believe that this service is unique amongst Corps/Regt Assns (unless somebody would like to tell me otherwise).

Many contributing members have told me what happy memories are brought back when seeing the list of all those RSA members who served with them in their various units. Many former friends and colleagues have been put back in touch with each other, through the scheme. If you haven't yet sent in your posting details, may I invite you to do so now? E-mail them to me at: rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk or use the form on our website.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the recently enrolled Life members shown below;

Rank/Name	Service	Branch/unit
Cpl Steve Gosnold	1984-94	
Sgt John Coles	1956-76	
Cpl Chris Vallance	1991-00	
LCpl Russ Parker	1978-86	
Sig Darren Walker	1990-95	
Sgt David Briscoe	1990-06	
Lt Col Alf Thomas	1967-06	
LCpl Michael Hawkins	1950-55	
SSgt David Butler	1983-06	
LCpl William Law	1940-46	
Brig Dougie Rowlinson	1976-06	
Col Hugh Hancock	1972-06	
Maj George Blythe	1972-06	
Capt Karen Thomson	1991-06	
Sgt Neil MacPherson	1968-80	
Sig Stewart May	1966-66	
SSgt Mark Robinson	1983-06	
Cpl Malcolm Wright	1965-77	
LCpl Gary Whitaker	1980-88	
LCpl David Hill	1989-95	
SSgt Graham Easton	1966-90	
Lt Col John Hudson	1973-06	
WO2 Steve Bovan	1980-02	
LCpl Colin Barker	1997-06	
Sgt Peter Clements	1985-00	
Sgt Keith Blackburn	1958-81	
Sgt Gordon Maher	1984-date	Preston/Blackburn
Cpl Andy Thompson	1988-date	Preston/Blackburn
LCpl Ryan Lewis	2002-date	Preston/Blackburn
Sgt Andy Cole	1960-72	
Sig Michael Healy	1977-86	
Cpl John Pringle	1973-85	
Sgt Roy Sturgeon	1960-77	Darlington
SSgt Michael Harman	1984-06	
LCpl John(Mel) Jones	1990-01	
Cpl John Bannister	1980-06	
Cpl Kevin Ward	1977-84	
Sgt Kevin Walker	1976-89	
Cpl Paul Maidment	1982-95	
Maj Paul Gorford	1970-06	
Lt Rebecca Coles	2004-06	
Cpl Chris Milnes	1972-82	
Sgt George McMinn	1984-06	
LCpl Mark Jessop	1997-02	
WO2 Mark(Jack) Payne	1980-06	
Sgt Andrew Giffen	1982-06	
Pte Margaret Crook	1942-46	Cardiff
Sgt Martin Gill	1976-06	
Maj Terrence Crosby	1973-06	
Sgt John Golledge	1950-53	
Sig Barry Thompson	1955-57	
Maj Noddy Baugh MBE	1972-06	
Capt Sean Lumley	1998-06	
Maj Simon Green	1977-06	
SSgt Tommy Morris	1964-98	
SSgt Carl Robinson	1977-00	
Andrew Mortlock	1977-89	
Sig John Millington	2000-02	
Sig Andy Spokes	1983-90	
SSgt Scholly Martwich	1984-06	
Capt Del Postlethwaite	2004-date	Aberdeen
SSgt Kevin Burnett	1994-date	Aberdeen
Cpl Brian Hunter	1995-date	Aberdeen
Sgt Bill Knight	2004-date	Aberdeen
LCpl Shona Lister	1999-date	Aberdeen
WO2 David Riach	1999-date	Aberdeen
Maj Andrew Thompson	1990-date	Aberdeen
Sig Walter Barnett	1943-47	
Lt Col Bernard Barton-Ancliffe	1969-06	
SSgt Paul Jennings	1975-00	
Sgt Don Marsland	1939-46	
WO1 Vince Body	1980-06	
Cpl Terence Frogley	1950-52	
SSgt David Allan	1980-date	11 Sig Regt
SSgt Paul Ashford	1985-date	11 Sig Regt
Cpl Stephen Mackay	1997-date	11 Sig Regt
WO1 Ken Marsh	1982-date	11 Sig Regt
Sgt Terry McGrouther	1997-date	11 Sig Regt
LCpl Don Jackson	1947-49	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
Sig Cliff Bowler	1952-54	Chesterfield
Sig Les Gill	1951-53	Chesterfield
LCpl Kenneth Martin	1945-48	Reading
Capt Andrew Garrett	1982-06	
Capt Clive Ward	1979-06	
WO1 Tony Sartorius	1979-01	
Sgt Graham Stott	1984-93	
Sig Steve Jackman	1985-88	
Maj Steven Toms	1973-06	
Sig Stephen Cripps	1975-79	
LCpl Martin Hyett	1976-92	
Cpl Alan Finlay	1971-75	
Sgt John Laverick	1978-94	
LCpl Nathan Angell	1997-06	
Sgt Stephen Dunderdale	1953-80	
LCpl Jason Robson	1992-99	
SSgt David Torrance	1979-02	
LCpl Peter A Smith	1954-56	
Sig Peter Harrison	1950-56	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
Sig Alan Gelder	1949-51	Rotherham
Cpl Paul Routledge	1998-06	
Sig Susan Shand	1996-00	
LCpl Andy Bennett	1983-90	
LCpl Steven Thomson	1985-95	
WO2 Mick Willoughby	1969-93	
Col Ian Henderson	1967-02	N Ireland
LCpl Roy Norman	1947-49	
SSgt Fran Graham	1984-06	
Col Ray Bell	1955-90	3 Div Sigs Reunion
SSgt Dave Purver	1984-06	
SSgt Lee Davis	1992-date	14 Sig Regt
SSgt Janet Bennett(Burgess)	1979-94	
SSgt Andrew Phillips	1981-94	
Sgt David Cox	1983-05	
LCpl Harry Green	1951-56	
Sig Nick Mitchell	1990-98	
Cpl Peter Lee	1985-99	
LCpl Steven Holmes	1988-98	
Sgt David McKay	1968-83	
Lt Col John Oakes	1969-06	

DONATIONS

Alison Schofield and **Dorothy Presswell** in memory of **Maj P Rushton** WRAC	£20.00
Mrs Doris Holmes	£50.00
Salisbury Branch RSA	£100.00
Manchester Branch RSA	£100.00
Margaret Baxendale	£25.00
Graham Hamilton	£50.00
Mr A Coley	£5.00
Mrs CP Dewdney	£10.00
Mr Jack Hill	£20.00
Mr GC Pagan	£25.00
Mr TS Topping	£10.00
Mr RA Needs	£20.00
Mr WCJ Kidson	£15.00
Mr Eric Ball	£10.00
Col JWW Cock	£50.00
Rev George Paton	£20.00
Mr Edward Brown	£5.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Winchester Branch RSA	£300.00
Dennis Jones	£15.00
Ronald Firman	£50.00
Fred Grace	£10.00
Jimmy Wilds	£100.00
Edwin Wheater	£25.00
Dennis Wells	£10.00
Charles Reid	£25.00
David Walker	£5.00
Mr AG Elford	£50.00
Mr W E Levett	£5.00
Mr DWL Randall	£20.00
Inner Wheel Club of Shoreham and Southwick in memory of **Mrs D Browne**	£25
Bedford Branch RSA	£50.00
Struan James-Robertson in memory of those who passed out from 150 OCTU on 2 Apr 1946	£60
Col Robert Stark	£50.00
Michael Reynolds	£10.00
Kenneth Wills	£10.00
Mr REG Bates	£25.00
Mr R Waldron	£10.00
West Wales Branch RSA in memory of **Maj Derek Roberts** and **Mr Hugh John**	£50.00
56 Div (City of London Signals) OCA	£25.00
Probus Club of Poole	£25.00
Mr WL Giles	£80.00
Miss Gaynor Avery	£500.00
Mrs M Kenwood in memory of **Mrs D Browne**	£20.00
Maj M Stears	£20.00
Lt Col Gary Smith	£50.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
William Anderson	£20.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Alas, we have said farewell to **Joe**. For many years this Branch has had the unfailing support of **Joe Fairbairn MBE** and his wife **Jane**. As Garrison Sgt Maj he has afforded us the invaluable facilities of his Mess with its pleasant ambiance and willing hands. He has made a great contribution, serving on the Committee and introducing us to many activities in the garrison. Mostly, **Joe** will be remembered as a friend. On leaving the service, after a long and successful military career, **Joe** and his wife are retiring to the Kent coast. We gathered in a local hostelry for a farewell party. We wish **Joe** and **Jane** every happiness in their new home and environment.

In February, we enjoyed a talk on the Wey and Arun Canal given by **Jim Phillips**, a retired Royal Naval Officer, and arranged by **Neville Lyons**. An inland waterway familiar to many of us, the talk and many interesting slides gave us an insight to its administration by a Trust and their dedication to its preservation and improvement. The talk was followed by an excellent buffet served in the Garrison Mess.

In March, 40 of our members took a coach trip to London to visit the Houses of Parliament and the National Army Museum. Leaving early, indeed very early for some who had fair distances to travel to Aldershot, we set off for Westminster. We were given a most interesting tour, which included the audience chambers and both Houses; indeed a privilege since the hallowed House of Lords is infrequently opened to the public. Leaving the Embankment in a heavy shower, which had crept up unobtrusively while we were under cover, we proceeded to Chelsea to a snack lunch and a tour of the extensive and well organised Army Museum.

Our Annual General Meeting was held in the Garrison Sgts' Mess and was well attended. We were happy to welcome Associate Members and friends from the Reading Branch. After the meeting we enjoyed a traditional Sunday roast lunch. For this excellent occasion, we have to thank **Joe's** successor for making his Mess available and catering so adequately for us.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Allibone**
Secretary **Phil West**

The Branch started the New Year with an evening meeting in February, which was purely a social get together. The provision of a fish and chip supper however, seemed a very popular idea, as no doubt members had been on short rations during the preceding months.

The 2006 programme really started with the Branch AGM, which was held early in March. As an innovation, this was held at noon on a Saturday and a buffet lunch was available afterwards. The changed format seemed to be very popular as attendance was good. Our President **Brig Colin Brown** and his wife **Heather** attended and there were also some other members, who travelled long journeys to be there
After the meeting a Branch photograph was taken, which will be sent by the Gurkha Welfare Trust to be on display, when our sponsored pensioner collects his pension. Various memorabilia were on display, which members found interesting and the changed timing and style of the AGM appeared to be very successful.

Members have been provided with an events calendar for the rest of the year with some interesting highlights, so we are just waiting for winter to loosen its grip for the older members to come out of hibernation. The Branch Secretary is always pleased to hear from anyone wishing to join.

BRISTOL BRANCH

Chairman **Mr Chick Cheetham**
Secretary **Mrs Jane Tuck**

Welcome to all RSA members. Time for an update of the Bristol Branch. We had our annual dinner on Friday 4th November 05,

again at the BAWA Club. The meal and wine were again excellent and everyone enjoyed themselves. We have now returned to 39 Sig Regt (V) at Horfield Common for our Branch meetings and although the Unionist Club looked after us very well, I think the majority of members are pleased to be back at the TA Centre.

Our good Sec organised a visit to the Imperial War Museum in London, on Saturday 1st October, where members had a very good day out.

Four of our members helped to sell poppies at various places, for the British Legion which they find very rewarding. Some of our members attended the Remembrance Day Parade in Bristol, where a wreath was laid by **George Fairful**.

Ray Rigg, our Hon Sec, after 7 years of sterling work in the job, has decided it is time to call it a day. He has done us proud and has organised many trips over the years. Thank you very much **Ray** for all the work you have done. **Jane Tuck** has stepped in and taken over the reins from **Ray**. In fact, **Jane** has already done a stint as Sec previously. Welcome aboard once again.

Last Post. Regrettably two more of our members, **Ken Rivers** and **Reg Ayres** have passed away. Our condolences to both their families.

Finally serving and all ex-members are welcome to join us, or visit us at any time. As stated above we are now back at the TA Centre and meet 2000 hrs on the last Thursday of the month in the Sgts' Mess, with the kind permission of the RSM.

Yours Aye, CERTO CITO.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

Nineteen Members of the Branch attended the Marlow Theatre in Canterbury, where they were entranced by a performance of Snow White (on ice), by the spectacular Russian All Stars. **Donald Crisp** was a nonattendee on this occasion, celebrating his umptyumpth birthday elsewhere, but he produced his vision of the icebound proceedings, should the All Stars be replaced by Members of our Committee. The Hon Sec will be transmitting a copy of this unlikely event to the Editor, by electronic means, in the hope that our Notes will be enhanced.

On 12th March, 64 Members enjoyed a sumptuous lunch at the Princes Golf Club at Sandwich, overlooking the Links and the English Channel in all its millpond glory. An interesting talk by a Guest Speaker, good food and the usual bonhomie ensured another successful occasion.

Lt Col Mike Barrett and his wife **Jo** celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary early in April and **George** and **Stella Overton** celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in February. The Branch Welfare Officer presented both happy couples with floral tributes, on behalf of the Branch and it was during the tea and biscuits discussion with **George**, that he discovered that whilst **George** was busy in the HQ BAOR Signal Office in Bad Oeynhausen in 1946, he himself had been busy with dots and dashes in the Wireless Room around the corner.

A bulging charabanc transported us on a long weekend break to Daventry in Northants. on 7th April, when 40 of us defied the frustrations of motorway travel and eventually arrived in a really smart, and well established hotel, which welcomed us with open arms.

A great deal of food was consumed over the weekend which, of course, had to be accompanied by a suitable quantity of alcohol. Our Chairman was brave enough to involve us in long forgotten games, such as a Beetle Drive, which was riotously undisciplined and over which he had little or no control. But great fun, as was the whole weekend, which we all agreed was another great success. Where next, we ask?

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Paul Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

As part of our "Guest Speaker" programme, at our branch meeting in February, **Maj Peter Chase MBE** gave a talk on his life, from being brought up in Barbados through his personal insight on the intricacies of Sandhurst to being a newly commissioned officer in the British Army of the 1950's.

On 11 March, around 140 Branch Members and friends attended our annual Dinner and Dance. Guest of Honour was the Assistant Regimental Secretary, **Lt Col (Retd) Carl Conlon**. Our other notable guest was the 2IC of 36 Sig Regt, **Maj Mark Baker**.

The evening began with Grace being said by **Mrs Brenda Eggleton**, and after an excellent meal, toasts were offered to The Queen and The Princess Royal by **Derek Manning** acting as Mr Vice. The formal part of our evening was then concluded by speeches from our Chairman, **Paul Burton** and our guests. After that we enjoyed the presentation of the "Best Troop Trophy" which was won for the year 2005, by 748 Sig Tp. They were represented at the dinner by their Tp Comd **Lt Wood**, **Sgt Thorndike** and **Sig Kelleher**.

Maj(Retd) Barry Greenwood and Mrs Anita Keen with their RSA Honour Membership Certificates

An additional special presentation was then made to 2 of our members, **Maj (Retd) Barry Greenwood** and **Mrs Anita Keen** by **Lt Col Conlon**, who surprised them both with an RSA Honour Membership Award, for their dedication and service to the Branch over the years.

Denny Austin, singer and DJ, kept us thoroughly entertained both during the meal and afterwards, when the dining area was transformed into a dance area by members of the Social Committee and helpers, so quickly that a lot of guests had not even left the room to replenish glasses, before it was time to return again.

Our Closing Ceremony was performed in traditional style with **Barry Greenwood** parading the Standard, to signify the end of another very enjoyable evening. Congratulations to the Social Committee for another yet another well organised event. The next one in October is eagerly awaited.

To see the latest news on all our future events, please visit our web pages at
www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon/index.htm

We always welcome more members and encourage any potential members, living in East London or the South and East Essex area to join us. We are aiming to be inclusive and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-servicemen and women from other Arms, Regiments and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts' Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

The annual Burns Supper was held on Saturday 28 January 2006. Compered by the Branch Standard Bearer **Bill McNamara**, in the HQ of 32 Sig Regt with kind permission of the CO, **Lt Col R J H Sutherland TD**.

The programme/menu produced this year, had a front cover in colour, showing Burns standing beside his horse and sheep dog. Inside, the menu was a song sheet. Some being sung by a band named *Quaich*, in between the main performers' turns. The band was hired for the event by the Compere; which was something new to entertain the assembly.

As the piper was not available to play at the arrival of the Top Table guests, the assembled Members and guests clapped hands, as if the piper was playing. As the piper was still not available when the Haggis was brought in, it was accompanied by music, supplied by the flautist of the band *Quaich*, playing the tune "*The Sailors' Hornpipe*". Unusual, but the Compere is not one to let the side down. Fortunately the piper did arrive later, to play several tunes during the evening.

Capt G Reith, (a one time RSM who still has an RSM's parade ground voice), addressed the Haggis with his usual gusto, waving a sword around like a Dervish warrior, before using it to puncture the poor wee Haggis. The portrayal of The Immortal Memory by **Peter McGuire**, was his own version and seemed to go down well with the company. **Drew Dickson** recited "*Tam O' Shanter*", and **Mr John Lynch** gave his version of "*A Toast tae the Lassies*", responded to by the Branch Secretary, **Ms Ivana Muir**, (she loves this opportunity). The final turn was **Drew Dickson's** reciting of "*Holy Willies Prayer*", word for word, as written by Burns. For this, of course, he dresses up in a nightgown and nightcap, with a lit candle in an old fashioned candleholder. During the festivities, *Quaich* played and sang several tunes. Finally the assembled company all sang "*The Star of Rabbie Burns*".

The evening had been very successful with the help of 'John Barleycorn'. The Branch President, **Colonel A S Petrie** in his Vote of Thanks, thanked the Chefs, **Cpl Debbie Carruthers** and now promoted **Cpl Christine McCormack**, the band, the performers, members and friends attending, and the CO of 32 Sig Regt for providing the help and accommodation for the function. The President also presented each of the performers and members of the band, with a small box, containing a miniature bottle of whisky and whisky glass.

On Tuesday 21 February, Branch meeting arrangements were made to hold a Ceilidh on 6 May. The Branch Treasurer, **Eric McWaters** gave a satisfactory report on the Branch funds, prior to having them audited. **Eric** also reported that the income from the raffle at the Annual Dinner/Dance, amounting to £191 had been sent to Erskine Hospital. The Area Representative for the Association in Scotland **Lt Col(Retd) RF Rutherford** was introduced to, and welcomed by the Branch Members.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Secretary **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

Our last 2 write-ups talked of the pending 50th Anniversary Dinner. Well now I can report that it was held on 3rd March in Clonaver TAVR Centre in Belfast and was, happily, a great success. It took a lot of planning and hard work, but was very much worth the effort put in by our 50th Committee, chaired by **Jackie Donaldson** and comprising **Carole Cameron**, **Andy Leishman** and **Sammy McMurray** with assistance from Hon Sec **Ian Wolfe** and Hon Treasurer **Debbie Wolfe**. Our top table Guests were The Master of Signals. **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and **Lady Cowan**, the Chairman of the RSA, **Maj Gen AH Boyle CB** and **Mrs Boyle**, the RSA Membership Sec, **Mr Peter Cuckow** and **Mrs S Cuckow**, the Lord Mayor of Belfast, **Councillor Wallace Brown** and Lady Mayoress, **Ms Eileen McDougal**, CO 40(U) Sig Regt (V), **Lt Col SD Hodges** and **Mrs Hodges**, **WO1(RSM) DM Abson** and **Mr M Abson**. It was good to have **Peter Cuckow** with us at last, as we have been trying to get him over for a long time to show our appreciation of his help over the years.

The evening opened with a sherry reception followed by a steak dinner, ably provided by our Chef for the evening **Sgt Harry Miller** RIR, while the award winning Ravenhill Temperance Flute Band provided musical entertainment. Thanks are due to the Band and Bandmaster, **Mr George Hawthorne**, for at my request, arranging, practising and playing the Royal Signals Regimental March (from sheet music kindly provided by The Royal Signals Band) as we walked in to dinner. Waiting staff provided by 40(U) Sig Regt (V) were professionally supervised by **WO2(RQMS) M Fitz-Patrick** as major-domo for the evening.

After coffee, toasts were to The Queen, The Princess Royal and The Royal Signals Association. Speeches were by The Branch President, **Maj(Retd) RN Johnston** and the **Master of Signals**, who also handed over the new Branch Standard and 50 year pennant to Branch Standard Bearer, **Billy Dickson**.

The Master also presented Honour Membership Certificates and badges to **Maj(Retd) RN Johnston** and Branch Hon Sec **Ian Wolfe**. **Piper Cpl JR Wilson** provided after dinner entertainment. Finally the birthday cake was cut by **Lady Cowan**. After dinner it was good that our top table guests were able to meet many of our Branch Members and other Guests including those from 40 (U) Sig Regt. (V) and the OC and members of 8 Inf Bde Sig Sqn.

Maj (Retd) Johnston, Mrs Johnston, Mrs Lightfoot and Lt Col (Retd) Lightfoot at the 50th Anniversary Dinner
Courtesy of Belfast News Letter

On the Saturday morning, while the **Master** and **Lady Cowan** visited relatives and **Mr** and **Mrs Peter Cuckow** left to stay locally with friends, a party of RSA(NI) Members and the CO and RSM of 40 Sig Regt accompanied **Maj Gen** and **Mrs Boyle** on a tour of Belfast City Hall, which coincidentally is celebrating its 100th birthday this year.

The very interesting tour was conducted by a most efficient Guide and we were delighted that the Lord Mayor, **Councillor Wallace Brown** and Lady Mayoress, **Ms Eileen McDougall** made a special effort to stay with us for the duration of the tour. Each visitor came away with a very acceptable City Hall memento. As

this goes to press we have just heard that Belfast's Lord Mayor **Councillor Wallace Brown** has been elevated to the House of Lords. NI Branch Members would offer our congratulations to him on this well deserved recognition.

Having rested from the hard work of organising the dinner, the next problem for the Committee will be to arrange the dedication of our new Branch Standard and 50 year pennant.

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 Branch programme for 2006 has been gaining momentum, and as this report is written, we are looking forward to any even busier time. Our informal lunches have been well attended, and there was a good turnout for the Annual General Meeting in mid-March. We were well cared for by the staff of Caversham Heath Golf Club, and the agenda was dealt with in good time, so that we could enjoy the excellent lunch that followed.

The Branch is obviously happy with its management, and the Committee was re-elected, with only one change. Full details may be found on the Branch Web site. A few weeks after our own AGM, 4 members of the Committee represented the Branch at the RSA AGM in London. There was much of interest on the agenda that day, and no doubt there will be a full report elsewhere in 'The Wire'.

Our plans for a trip to London, for a flight on the 'London Eye' and a river trip to Greenwich were thwarted, when the travel company was unable to confirm the date and the exact itinerary. However our Social Secretary, **Thelma Wakefield**, has been very successful in organising an outing to the Edinburgh Tattoo in August, when a party of 12 from the Branch, will be sampling the delights of the Scottish capital. Before then, however, the Branch will be represented at our neighbours' functions, including lunch with Southampton Branch, and the annual quiz at Aldershot Branch. We haven't done too well in the Aldershot quiz, in the last couple of years. We hope to do better this year, now that the Chairman is giving us some extra coaching!

One of the highlights of this year will be the Branch Garden party, which will take place just as this issue of *The Wire* is published. Organisation of the event is well under way as we write, and the Chairman has ordered the appropriate weather. However there is a wet weather programme in case her incantations fail!

Full details of Branch events etc can be found on the website, ably administered by our web master **Col (Retd) George Verdon** and if you would like to know more about the Branch, have a look at
http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/reading/index.htm

TORBAY BRANCH

Chairman **Dougie Tait**
Secretary **Doug Piper**

Welcome to the Branch newsletter. This last month or two has seen us attend the Army Presentation Team briefing, at the Grand Hotel in Torquay. This was a very popular event, with the organisers having to break the masses into two separate groups. While one group received the brief, the other enjoyed the company of personnel from some of the local Regular and TA Regts.

The main brief was exceptional, with very professional speakers giving there own experiences of the Army today, and how it will restructure to fit the ever changing world around us.

May I thank all the personnel who organised and participated in this most enjoyable event, not forgetting the staff of the Grand Hotel for the outstanding selection of food and service they provided for us all.

We would also like to congratulate **Bob** and **Ruth Thompson** who recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. When asked what was the secret of their long marriage, **Bob** replied "keep talking (or shouting at each other) or in Corps terms keep communications open". Well done to you both.

The Branch is now looking forward to our annual pilgrimage to Blandford for the RSA Weekend; hope to see out old comrades again this year. We are also in the process of organising a trip in the coming months to the Bovington Tank Museum.

The Branch meet at the St Marychurch Conservative Club, Manor Road, St Marychurch, Torquay on the first Wednesday of the month at 2000hrs, all newcomers welcome.

Contact **Dougie Tait** on 07795425285 or **Doug Piper** EMail **dougtalk21@btinternet.com**

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Our Annual General Meeting, held in March, would never be the same without our excellent fish 'n chip repast, generously supplied by the Branch and organised by **Sheila Ruff**.

It followed the meeting and made a fitting end to what had been another successful year of Branch attendance.

Earlier in the year our Chairman, **Ron Miller** and his wife **Pat** suffered the loss of their daughter **Janet** who had endured a long illness. They have the sympathy of us all.

254 OLD BOYS ASSOCIATION

SOUTHERN CHAPTER DINNER

Twentytwo ex-boys homed in on the Upland Park Hotel, Droxford during the afternoon and evening of Friday, 17th March. With wives and guests, 42 sat down for dinner. As always, **Brian Lay**, had arranged a comprehensive choice of food, from which it was difficult to make a choice!

John Martin arrived in the afternoon, but was unable to stay for dinner as **Jo** was not too well. **George Severs** carried the news that **Ken Brown**, who had planned to attend for the first time, had been admitted to hospital with respiratory problems. For once, **Derek** and **Joan Cropper** were also unable to be with us. Derek had been knocked down by a car and his elbow was fractured, making gearchanging painfully difficult!

In his welcoming words **Pat Soward** noted that **Tony** and **Evi Taylor** and **Peter West** were attending for the first time. **John Ashman** and **Lilian Bower** had both lost their spouses since the last Droxford dinner and their presence was greeted with a round of applause. **Brian Fisher** carried fraternal greetings from **Toby Seymour**, **Paddy Clark** and **Dennis CollingwoodGittins**, who had recently met in reunion at Hawes.

Brian Fisher was invited to take custody of the Standard, but in true ex-boy style managed to persuade **Jim Braid** that he would do a better job. In silent ceremony **Pat** handed the Standard to **Jim**, whilst members partook of the port provided graciously by **Brian Lay**. Perhaps **Jim** will parade the Standard at Blandford in July!

A late night was followed by a hearty breakfast and members drifted off to all points of the compass, to the universal cry of "Have you booked a date for the next dinner?" and the short answer to that was "Not yet. I'll let you know!"

REUNIONS

THE 60s 16ers REUNION CLUB

Chairman **Gordon Reme Harper**
Secretary **Ken O' Hagan**
Membership Sec **Laurie Torrie Moore**
Wire correspondent **Audrey Grainge**

In 1996, **Chris Bartlett** started a reunion club for the ex members of 16 Sig Regt, who served in the 1960s. The first reunion was held in Southend on Sea and was attended by 35 members, out of the 57 contacts he had made using various methods of advertising. In 1997, 25 members returned to Germany for a reunion at Bradbury Barracks. In 1998 and 1999, our reunions were held in Alton and our membership was beginning to grow and in 2000, we returned to Germany, but this time to Rheindahlen, the then home of 16 Sig Regt. Sadly that weekend our founder member **Chris** died, but we decided to soldier on and a committee was set up to take on the responsibility of running the club. Over the next few years, the membership grew and grew, and by 2005 we have a total of 107 paid-up members. The membership fee in 1996 was £5 and has risen to just £10, which is not a bad rate of inflation! Our reunion is usually held in October and at a different venues each year; we have an average attendance of 100, both members and their partners. The committee has also grown to include all the usual officers, plus a very lively entertainment committee, to make sure the weekend is enjoyable for everyone. But we still leave time to meet and talk to each other and share our memories and photos. At the AGM in 2004, it was suggested we became affiliated to the RSA. We were accepted to become affiliated at the RSA AGM on 1 April 2006. Anyone out there who served with the Regt in the 1960s and is interested in finding out more, you can view our web page at www.the60s-16ers or call Membership Secretary on 01209 719897

OBITUARIES

STUART - Sig Bernard Desmond Stuart (Des) died 23 January 2006

It is with deep regret, that Rotherham and Sheffield Branches report the passing of one of their stalwarts. **Des Stuart** was born in Monaghan, County Monaghan, Eire in 1934 and moved to England in the early 1950s. He was conscripted into the Royal Signals in 1959, and saw service in Catterick, Ripon, Chester and Krefeld. **Des** was a member of Sheffield Branch of the Association, and was the founding Chairman of the Rotherham Branch. He was also a member of the Dispatch Riders Association. **Des** sadly passed away in Calow Hospital, Chesterfield on the 23rd of January 2006. He leaves behind a widow, **Jean**, 4 children and 6 grandchildren, along with many friends and pals. The funeral took place at Rotherham Crematorium. The standards of both Branches led the coffin and a guard of honour of over 80 ex-servicemen from Sheffield and Rotherham Branches, and the Fellowship of the Services, led by **WO1 Mark Simcock**, RSM 38 Sig Regt. Both Branches extend their deepest sympathy to the family. He will be sorely missed. God Bless you **Des**.

JAMES - Capt WB James (Bill) died on 10 January 2006

It is with regret that the Hull Branch of the Association reports the death of **Bill James** on the 10th January 2006. **Bill** served with the Corps from September 1939 to April 1946, during which time he served with the 53 (Welsh Division) from Normandy to Hamburg.

For a number of years, **Bill** served as the Secretary and Treasurer of the 53 (Welsh Division) Associations and visited their friends in Holland, whom they helped to liberate. They also visited those they fought in the Reichswald, where they were treated with no animosity, in spite of the destruction of Goch and the surrounding villages.

In the Hull Branch, **Bill** was a staunch member and acted for some time as Treasurer. He will be sadly missed by his friends. We extend sincere condolences to his family and friends.

STEPHENS - Maj PJW Stephens (Pat) died March 2006

Pat Stephens joined the Army in 1938 and was commissioned in 1940 into the Somerset Light Infantry. Whilst serving in East Africa in 1942, he transferred to Royal Signals – perhaps influenced by **Maj Gen WA Dimoline** of the Corps, who was a brigade and divisional comd in that theatre, and with whom **Pat** served.

Pat remained in East Africa throughout the war and until 1948. This service was mainly with African askaris of East African Signals (subsequently Kings African Rifles Signals). **Pat** became a fluent Swahili speaker and developed a great affection for, and understanding of, the African soldiers. He served throughout East and Central Africa, including Abyssinia and 2 years commanding the Somaliland Signal Troop.

Subsequently, **Pat** served all over the world: FARELF, Cyprus, Malta and a year in Baghdad, but perhaps the highlight was a return to East Africa for 3 happy years in the early 1960s, to command 1 Signal Squadron, Kings African Rifles.
Pat ended his uniformed service with 2 years in BAOR, and then stayed on in Germany for a further 10 years as a Retired Officer in HQ BAOR. In retirement back in the United Kingdom, he was an assiduous caseworker for SSAFA and the Officers' Association.

Pat was a soldier through and through; born into the Army in India, the Army was his life. Always caring and considerate, there was no mistaking his Army background; invariable dapper, whatever the circumstances, he upheld old-fashioned standards. Above all, he believed in service to others. That he was widely respected in his Suffolk community was clear from the large turnout at his moving funeral service in March 2006.

DUTHIE - Sig Peter Ewing Duthie died on 9 March 2006

It is with great regret that the Glasgow Branch has to announce the death after a long illness, bravely born, of 22814223 **Sig Peter Ewing Duthie**, at the age of 71. **Ewing** as he preferred to be known, died on 9 March 2006 in the Strathcarron Hospice,

Denny. The funeral service was held on the 16th March in the United Free Church, St Ninians, Stirling.

The **Rev Martin Keane** conducted the service and also at the graveside, in the cemetery at Alva, where **Ewing** was interred in the family grave. **Piper George Ponton**, ex Scots Guards Piper, played Laments at the church, and the tune Flowers of the Forest at the graveside.

Fourteen members of the Branch attended with the Branch President, **Lt Col AS Petrie** and **Mrs Norah Petrie**. Branch Members also acted as pallbearers. The coffin was draped with the shroud in Royal Signals colours, with **Ewing's** beret on top. The Branch Standard Bearer, **Bill McNamara**, paraded the Branch Standard in the church and at the cemetery. At the Branch meeting on 21 March, Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan**, asked members to stand in silence for two minutes in memory of **Ewing**.

Ewing served a regular engagement as an Operator Wireless and Line, from July 1952 to July 1955. After reserve service, he joined the Stirling Sqn of 51st (Highland) Div Sig Regt TA, in Stirling in 1957, as a Driver Operator until 1968. He served in the UK and Hong Kong. .

Ewing joined the Glasgow Branch of the Royal Signals Association on the 18 April 1995. A very active member of the branch, regularly attending the monthly meetings and functions run by the Branch, travelling from his home in Stirling.

He was also very generous with his contributions of gifts, to be put in the raffles run by the Branch. **Ewing** was well liked and popular with the Branch members, and for many years attended the reunions at Blandford. He will be sadly missed at the monthly meetings.

As the manager of two busy public houses, he was known as a very good organiser. It was well known in his community that if anything was organised by **Ewing**, it would go without a hitch, as he would make sure every detail was seen to before the event. **Ewing** was a Deacon member of the Skinners Guild in Scotland, dealing with the Provost and Councillors of Stirling on formal occasions, meeting Dignitaries and VIP's visiting the area.

The Glasgow Branch members offer their deepest sympathy to **Ewing's** daughter **Sandra**, son in law **Allan**, granddaughters **Jenne** and **Alix**, family and friends at their sad loss.

MILLER - William Miller (Dusty) died on 14 February 2006.

Dusty Miller died, aged just 51, on the 14th of February 2006. He served for 22 years in the Royal Corps of Signals, latterly with the 21 Sig Regt in Colerne, Wiltshire. He left the Corps in 1995 and made his home in Chippenham.

Following a short illness, **Dusty** was taken from us – far too early. He was my best friend, a husband to **Lynn**, father to **Michelle** and **Martin** and his step children, **Sean** and **Matthew**.

Dusty always lived life to the full and his standards and disciplines, in whatever he did, remained high. After leaving the Corps, **Dusty** worked for BT and was regarded as a valuable member of the team. He will be sadly missed by all those who worked with him.

Dusty is buried at Hardenhuish Church, Chippenham. Over 200 people paid their respects at his funeral and being a true Scot, a piper played him out. A fantastic person, whose life was cut short, is very sadly missed and loved by so many. His wife **Lynn**, his children and I are keen to hear from anyone who knew **Dusty** and may have stories to tell of the times they shared with him.

Please send any information you may have to me via email donandgar@tiscali.co.uk We would be truly grateful.

SCOTT – LCpl Peter Stewart Scott (Scotty) died on 1 April 2006 aged 24.

Peter Scott joined the Royal Signals in 2001 as a Royal Signals Electrician carrying out his Trade Training in Blandford. **Scotty** was then posted to 16 Sig Regt in Rheindahlen, where he completed various exs and in 2004, an operational tour to Iraq on Op TELIC.

In April 2005, **Scotty** was posted to 15 Sig Regt in Northern Ireland as part of Romeo Tp (now ECM (FP) Sqn) where he was employed in the Tp MT Sect. In December 2005, **Scotty's** application to transfer to the Royal Engineers was accepted. He was over the moon about this and in February 2006, he went to Gibraltar Barracks, Camberley to carry out his Engineer trg.

An avid Glasgow Rangers supporter and a gladiator on the football pitch himself, you would often find him, letting the other Scottish members of the Tp know, first thing on a Monday morning, how his team got on that weekend.

Scotty was a well-liked and respected member of the Sqn and will be sorely missed by his family and friends.

LAST POST

Name and Rank	*Served Years*	*Died Date*
Adams - Cpl GM Adams	*Served* 1945/52	*Died* ??/08/05
Aird - SSgt RG Aird	*Served* 1938/46	*Died* ??/08/05
Baker - LCpl AA Baker	*Served* 1939/45	*Died* ??/02/06
Barclay - Sig J Barclay	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* 27/03/06
Beckett - Sig CL Beckett	*Served* 1941/45	*Died* 23/01/06
Brook - LCpl RV Brook	*Served* 1948/53	*Died* 06/02/06
Brown - Cpl KE Brown	*Served* 1943/54	*Died* 29/03/06
Crossley - Sgt FL Crossley	*Served* 1947/70	*Died* 22/02/06
Daniel - Maj HC Daniel	*Served* 1932/58	*Died* 2004
Debenham - WO2 GA Debenham	*Served* 1942/64	*Died* 27/02/06
Dignan - Capt J Dignan	*Served* 1935/68	*Died* 09/03/06
Dixon - Sgt MEK Dixon	*Served* 1933/43	*Died* 12/01/06
Gaulkner - LCpl JE Gaulkner	*Served* 1940/45	*Died* 22/01/02
Hard - LCpl CJJ Hard	*Served* 1938/46	*Died* 26/12/05
Harding - JV Harding	*Served* 1935/74	*Died* 14/02/06
Houldsworth - Pte N Houldsworth	*Served* 1942/46	*Died* 08/09/05
Hunter - Sig GR Hunter	*Served* 1938/45	*Died* 05/03/06
Jones - Sig TR Jones	*Served* 1952/54	*Died* 22/03/05
Ketley - LCpl DW Ketley	*Served* 1948/50	*Died* 30/03/06
King - ?? SR King	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 20/02/06
Lewis - Sgt GH Lewis	*Served* 1936/46	*Died* 1991
Lutter - LCpl RA Lutter	*Served* 1946/49	*Died* 12/08/04
Miller - Sgt W Miller	*Served* 1970/95	*Died* ??/02/06
Mitchell - Sig P Mitchell	*Served* 1947/49	*Died* 06/03/06
Rose - Lt Col JA Rose	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 14/07/05
Shields - Lt JA Shields	*Served* 1933/45	*Died* 06/05/05
Simmonds - Sig W Simmonds	*Served* 1944/48	*Died* 19/03/06
Stephens - Maj PJW Stephens	*Served* 1937/74	*Died* 04/03/06
Stevens - Cpl HG Stevens	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/11/05
Tanner - Col RJ Tanner	*Served* 1954/84	*Died* 19/02/06
Thomas - WO2 MP Thomas	*Served* 1953/78	*Died* 03/05/98
Tilson - Lt R Tilson	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 10/03/06
Tregoning - Maj A Tregoning	*Served* 1957/77	*Died* 18/02/06
White - LCpl B White	*Served* 1941/46	*Died* 2003
Wingrove - Lt EG Wingrove	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* 21/10/05

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

From: **Mrs Frances J Turnbull** (Née Carlisle)

Can anyone help me find my old pal, **Frances Meredith** (WRAC)? **Fran** and I were Com Cen Ops together in 1965/6 with 240 Sig Sqn, York.

The main thing I remember of those days is that we were always laughing. After my demob in 1966, **Fran** was posted overseas, I think to Cyprus.

It was about that time that we lost contact; I would love to hear from her just to know she is alive and well.

Thank you....

James Longwill is trying to make contact with anyone who had contact with his father **James Longwill** during his long years in the British Army.

He served in France 1915-18, Egypt, Palestine, India on the North West Frontier 1928-36, Singapore 1938-42, as a POW Far East 1942-45]. Are there any readers of *The Wire* who remember him?

If so, please contact **James Longwill** at : james.longwill@btinternet.com or drop a line to James Longwill, 608 Yarm Road, Eaglescliffe, Stockton on Tees TS16 0DQ

Alexander Barnes is seeking the whereabouts of **Maj Charles Lewis** and **Maj "Doc" Watson** R Signals, from NATO Op Teamwork/Bonded item in Norway 1976.

Please contact Alexander at Alexander.barnes@us.army.mil if you can help.

I am making enquiries regarding my grandfather, who served in World War 2. I believe he was a LCpl and possibly a dispatch rider.

His name was **Robert Hicks Parker**, born 29 September 1911 in Haswell, County Durham. I believed he served for about 7 years. I would like to speak to anyone that knew him.

My father **Robert Parker** has no recollection of any medals my grandfather received, and he also served in the Signals in National Service from August 1960 -1963.

I would also be interested in any paperwork or records relating to him as I am currently researching the family tree. My father stated that my grandfather served with a **Bert Tunnecliffe**, from Huddersfield and an **Alfred Spires**.

I am a serving Police Officer, PC156, with the Durham Constabulary, presently working on the Prime Minister's armed protection team at Myrobella House, Trimdon.

From: **F A Oxbury**, 55 Ripley Close, Kingston upon Hull, HU6 9JY

I am trying to trace a pal I spent time with in the Army. We were in the Royal Signals at Catterick Camp.

He would have served from 1947 - 49.

The details as follows:

Haydon Chell
Of Bircotes
Nr Bawtry
Doncaster
West Yorkshire

Royal Signals
Le Catou Lines
Catterick Camp
North Yorkshire

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

Mrs Anne Bucklow, the widow of **Lt Col Ian Bucklow** who was killed in a paragliding accident in September 2005, has asked for the message below to be published in *The Wire*.

"**Anne**, **Richard**, **David** and **Rachel Bucklow** would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to all members of the Corps who have been so kind and supportive over the last few months.

The many letters of support we have received have been truly appreciated. **Ian** took great pride in being a member of the Corps' family and this family has been a great source of comfort to us throughout."

From: **Alison Schofield** (formerly Captain WRAC)

Dear Editor,

In addition to the obituary of **Major Patricia Ruston** WRAC, please would you add a tribute from some who were trained by her on the "Q" course at Catterick and served with her in 19 Army Gp Sig Regt in the fifties. We wouldn't have dared to call her **"Aunty Pat"** and nor would anybody else, regardless of their rank! **Pat** was highly respected by those who served with her and was their champion as well as their commander.

She was tireless in her pursuit of perfection in operational performance and those who were then operators in the classified section, a constantly changing population of National Servicemen, swore that she could smell out a security violation before it even happened! She was equally insistent upon a high standard of personal turnout in her WRAC squadron and woe betide an operator coming off night duty if her uniform was not "just so".

Pat was equally loyal to Royal Signals and to the WRAC but never hesitated to take up the cudgels in defence of either, if she felt that her officers and staff were being put upon by the other;

she was determined that all for whom she was responsible should progress as far as was possible within their ability and urged them to set their sights ever higher. The attached photograph shows the officers of the regiment at the time and has been kindly provided by **Capt Ian Fry** R Signals.

Yours .....

SULTAN'S ARMED FORCES ASSOCIATION DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL PLAQUES – DECEMBER 2005

I was fortunate enough to be one of a party of 84 members of the Sultan's Armed Forces Association, average age 65 years and 10 months! who enjoyed a wonderful visit to the Sultanate, between 6 and 12 December 2005. The welcome and hospitality afforded us was quite outstanding and many old friendships were further cemented, at a huge variety of events that had been organised.

One of those events, was an invitation to attend an evening Service of Dedication on 9 December at the Ruwi Cemetery. Principally the reason was to unveil three remembrance plaques but it was also to remember all those who gave their lives in the service of the Sultanate.

Gen Sir Michael Walker GCB CMG CBE ADC, Chief of Defence Staff (UK), whose visit to the Sultanate coincided with our own, dedicated the plaques. I was surprised and moved to find that one of the plaques dedicated was for a former member of the Royal Corps of Signals.

He was **Sig RG Avers** and he was killed in March 1958, while attached to 13/18th Royal Hussars (QMO). The address given by **Gen Walker** included these words:

"To quote one of my predecessors, **Field Marshal Carver**, '*Only those who have served in Oman can fully appreciate the severity of the conditions in which these people fought and flew. At times extreme heat, at others cold, wet or in permanent cloud; and rugged terrain the equal of which it would be hard to find anywhere. Those who fought there, including those who were wounded or died, did not fight in vain.*'

These memorials and graves are proof, if that is needed, of the close association and friendship, both in peace and in times of war, that has long existed between the United Kingdom and the Sultanate of Oman. We reap the rewards today of that sacrifice and your proud achievements. I am honoured to be able to play a small part in this story by dedicating these plaques"

The service was conduced by one of our party, the **Reverend Roger Bayldon MBE TD**, a former DAA and QMG of Dhofar Brigade. During the service, the Corps Collect was read and a coloured facsimile of 'Jimmy' was on the back cover of the Order of Service. Finally, a photograph of the plaques and the full address give by **Gen Walker** are published in the March 2006 edition of *The Journal of the Sultan's Armed Forces Association*.

Yours .....

Maj (Retd) E H LeQuesne

The Wire has a copy of the Order of Service which might be of interest and welcomed by the family of **Sig RG Avers**, contact the Editor at RHQ if required.

From: **PW Cowley**

Dear Sir,

I found a copy of "The Wire " in the waiting area at my dentist. Glancing through the many interesting pages spurred me to write to you with some of the memories your magazine rekindled.

I entered the Corps in 1960, as a Junior Leader in The Junior Leaders Regt Royal Signals which was located near the Devon village of Denbury, not far from Newton Abbot.

Two and a half years later I moved to Catterick Garrison where I learned my trade as a telegraph operator. I was in 24 Sig Regt for the duration of my stay, but 11 Sig Regt was also there, as was the School of Signals. I then moved to BAOR, where 1 was attached to 94 Locating Regt RA, being a member of 639 Sig Tp.

This lasted 5 years plus, after which I was posted to 214 Sig Sqn in the Persian Gulf. I then came back to England, to what was then 30 Sig Regt stationed at Blandford Forum, Dorset. This was in the old camp, with the wonderful wooden "spider" barrack rooms. I had been posted to AMF Radio Tp, which had been formed at the time to do the comms for NATO, and we had some very interesting exercises in a very cold Norway, and not so interesting exercises in Turkey. The new, or present, camp was being built whilst I was at Blandford, and had just about been finished when my 9 years were up.

I left for civilian life in October 1971 and returned to my home town of Northampton. I did bring a small piece of Blandford home with me though. My wife of 33 years was a Blandford girl, so I have much to thank the Royal Signals and 30 Regt for.

From: 23614097 **Sig M Pluchino** (1959 – 1961)

No sooner had I been posted to 7 Sig Regt in Herford, Germany, there appeared a notice on the notice board saying "Printer Wanted". As I was a printer in civvy street, all the lads said "go for it, it's a good skive". Having been taught "never volunteer", I declined the invitation. However, a few weeks later, the notice appeared again. This time I decided to investigate. Apparently the CO had the idea of printing the weekly newsletter (up to then printed on a Roneo duplicator). He also wanted to print Dance Tickets, Boxing Programmes etc. on the "Regimental Press". He had bought a printing unit and when I saw it, my jaw dropped. I had been used to large printing machinery with all the mod cons. What I saw was an 8 x 5 Adana Letterpress bench top machine with no rubber rollers, no setting stick and no type cases for the cold metal type. I decided to accept the challenge, cross my fingers and volunteer!

Printing the weekly newsletter was not possible, as some copy came in too late to be hand set in time. Remember no plates, no lithography, no computers etc. in those days (1960). However, I did print Boxing Programmes, Dance Tickets etc. and these two booklets, about the Regiment and the visit of HRH The Princess Royal. It really was a labour of love, as I had to set one page and print it, then dispose of the type before I could set the next page, and so on. It took ages, and a lot of hard work pressing down on the lever to print a sheet. Finally, when all was set and printed, I took everything to a local printers in town, to be folded, stitched and trimmed.

I had an assistant with me in the print room, **Sig Gage**, also a National Serviceman. He was a carpenter by trade back home. As the saying goes, "I taught him everything I knew" and by the time I left the Regt he was a competent printer.

I am very proud of the Regimental Press and its achievements with so little resources. The icing on the cake was when HRH The Princess Royal visited the printing unit on her rounds, and complimented us on a job well done.

Unfortunately these are the only two copies in existence. Could you please return them to me as I would like my grandchildren to hear the same story about 7 Sig Regt and the art of letterpress printing.

Yours ....

ADVERTISEMENTS

Bernard Bush is keen to be in touch with former members of 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn who were in "The Divided City" of Berlin in 1960 – 1963. His intention is to organise an all ranks reunion.

You can contact **Bernard** at his office
Tel: 01767 650711 or
Email: bernard.bush@tns-group.com

Or contact **Frank Thornley**
Tel: 01664 564710 or
Email: francisthornley@yahoo.co.uk

JOIN THE ST DUNSTAN'S RUNNING TEAM AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

St Dunstan's, the charity that provides support and assistance to blind ex-Service men and women, has a number of running places up for grabs in this year's British 10km London Run on 2 July.

The Charity is looking to recruit service personnel to take part and raise funds for St Dunstan's and is asking runners to raise a minimum of £100 but of course, if you can raise more...that's even better!

The British 10km run has quickly become a world class event attracting the finest athletes, celebrities and charity runners from across the globe. The route takes in many of London's most famous landmarks such as Big Ben, Palace of Westminster, Trafalgar Square and more poignantly for service personnel, the Cenotaph, before finishing at Whitehall.

The 10km route will be suitably dressed for the occasion too with giant Union flags displayed around the route, creating not only a stunning backdrop, but adding to the very special atmosphere for the runners. Along with the historic landmarks, great entertainment is laid on - patriotic anthems like Land of Hope & Glory, I Vow to Thee My Country, Jerusalem and many more will be played by live bands along the route, to rouse the runners along.

Former British 10km London St Dunstan's runner, **Sergeant Christopher Price** based at Signal Platoon, Land Warfare Centre in Wiltshire, but now serving in Iraq, said:

"The London 10km was a brilliant day out with a fantastic atmosphere and so much support all the way around the course. I will never forget running into Whitehall at the finish line with music playing and the crowds cheering me on. I chose St Dunstan's as it does a fantastic job and relies solely on public donations to help blind ex-Service men and women."

If you're interested in finding out more, please contact **Lynsey Coles**, Fundraising Officer at the Charity on 020 7616 7966 or email; lynsey.coles@st-dunstans.org.uk

90TH ANNIVERSARY

Exercise Mercury Challenge

Mercury Challenge 2006 is a round the world sailing expedition starting this June.

Apply now for Leg One Gosport – Canaries to:

Capt Rachel Thompson or **Sgt MJ Holt**

Mercury Challenge Project Office
Catterick Building
Blandford Camp
Blandford
DT11 8RH

Mil: 94371 2421
Civ: 01258 482421
Mob: 07875391577

Email: info@mercurychallenge.mod.uk

THE wire

August 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE wire

August 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE VISIT OF MASTER BRADLEY STEPHENS

On Tuesday 9th May we were delighted to welcome young **Bradley Stephens** and his parents, **John** and **Amanda**, to Blandford Camp. **Bradley** is 7 years old and lives in South Wales; he was diagnosed with cancer at the age of 3 and despite two operations, he is only expected to live until summer this year. In **John's** words, **Bradley** has been "army barmy since he could walk and talk"; fortunately, over the past few months family friends and relatives have helped to 'engineer' trips to various Army units and bases.

Bradley Stephens with his parents and the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals

Lyndon Jones, ex Royal Signals SSgt, came to hear about **Bradley** and his love of the Army, so called on past connections to organise a trip to Blandford Camp.

We were all determined to make **Bradley's** day with us as much fun as possible and so started out with **Bradley** inspecting the Guard, with a little bit of help from **Provost Sergeant Powell**. **Bradley** had the honour of wearing **Sgt Powell's** best No 2 dress hat, which he then decided he would like to keep for the rest of the day!

He them went on to the Corps Band, where **Bradley** took over from the Director and conducted the Band in their Practise Room; best of all though was playing the drums! A spot of marching followed with **Bradley** leading the way with the Drum Major.

No visit to Blandford is complete without seeing the Museum and so **John** and **Amanda** were left to their own devices to show **Bradley** around; they were so engrossed in the stands and exhibits that we had to call a halt in order to have time for a 'Museum burger' before venturing onto the Airfield for a display by the White Helmets.

A volunteer for the White Helmets – Bradley Stevens

The display was of the amazingly high standard that those of us who live here have all come to expect; the real treat was watching **Bradley's** face as the rides progressed, he was so thrilled but did get worried at one point – during the ride where two members of the team lie under the ramps whilst the bikes go over the top, **Bradley** whispered to his Mum "that's not a very good idea, is it?"! Before his visit to the White Helmets was over, he joined in the famous pyramid.

And then had a chance to drive the quad bike with a little help from a friend. All too soon it was time for **Bradley** to head home to South Wales complete with a bag of goodies from the Museum and his very own No 2 dress hat (thank you QM Tech!). It was a wonderful day and sincere thanks go to all those who helped to make it a memorable one for **Bradley** and his family. No-one who met **Bradley** could fail to be touched by his spirit and sense of fun.

I could do this on my own really

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http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/thewire/

Subscribers
All enquiries regarding subscriptions and despatch of *The Wire* should be made to: 01258 482087 or 94371 2087 (mil) Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

EDITORIAL

As we go to press, it is with great sadness that we note the deaths of **Cpl Peter Thorpe** and **LCpl Jabron Hashmi** Int Corps on operations in Afghanistan. Our sincere condolences go to the families and friends of both men.

On a brighter note, I believe that the article on the inside front cover describing the visit of **Bradley Stevens** to Blandford is worth reading. The latest news is that **Bradley** is doing well, although the long term prognosis has not changed. His visit to Blandford was a great success and in its way, an exemplar of the generosity of spirit of our Corps.

As Editor, my plea to the many in our Corps currently serving on operations in Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere is for good photographs suitable for a front or back cover in the October or December issues.

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FRONT COVER

Mr Bill Crabb, late The Manchester Regiment lays a wreath at the Kohima Memorial on 2nd Division Annual Kohima Memorial Day. Sig Samir Rai stands guard

BACK COVER

GOC 3 (Uk) Div, Maj Gen Richard Shirreff CBE, 202 Sig Sqn and Vets pose in front of the divisional Red Tricorn in Caen, after one of 6 commemorative D-Day Parades in Normandy 5-6 June 2006.

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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HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR CORPS FUNDS?

The purpose of Corps Funds, otherwise known as the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund, is to:

Relieve hardship among serving and retired members of the Corps and their dependants. Support the activities of other charitable organisations involved with the welfare of Signallers and their dependants. Enhance the efficiency and morale of the serving Corps by funding activities such as sport, adventurous training, social events etc.

The main source of Corps Funds income is the One Day's Pay Scheme, under which all regular serving members of the Corps are asked to subscribe one day's pay each year. In addition, officers are invited to contribute an additional fl of a day's pay, whilst SNCOs/WOs are asked to give an extra / of a day's pay. TA units make a financial contribution to Corps Funds in lieu of the Day's Pay on behalf of their volunteers. Finally, retired officers are asked to pay an annual subscription of £25 and from time to time we receive donations or legacies from ex members of the Corps.

Corps Funds are regulated by a Trust Deed, registered with the Charity Commissioners, which sets out the main purposes for which these monies may be used. For ease of administration, and to ensure equity, the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund is split into four separate funds:

The Corps Fund – which primarily supports soldiers' activities.
The Officers' Fund – which funds officers' activities and heritage.
The Sergeants' Messes Fund – the purpose of which is to enhance R SIGNALS WOs' and Sgts' messes throughout the Corps.

The Association Fund – the main role of which is to support welfare and benevolence.

INCOME 2005/6

Total income into Corps Funds in 2005/6 amounted to **£1.023M,** most of which **(£657K)** came from Day's Pay subscriptions by serving soldiers and officers. Because most contributors have completed a Gift Aid Declaration (previously known as a Covenant) we were able to reclaim the tax paid on subscriptions, which brought in **£180K.** Income from the Corps investments amounted to **£158K,** loan repayments came to **£6K** and finally, donations and legacies accounted for the remaining **£22K**.

EXPENDITURE 2005/6

The following significant expenditure was incurred during the year:

Welfare Last year **£345K** was spent on welfare in support of the both the serving and retired Corps; this included a grant of **£36.1K** to the Army Benevolent Fund, which gives the Corps valuable support in meeting its commitment to those in need.

Sport The Corps Games Club authorised expenditure of **£67K** to support Corps sport, whilst the Royal Signals Yacht Club received a grant of **£10K** and **£16K** was set against the replacement yacht programme.

Adventurous Training Grants totalling **£26K** were made to support members of the Corps taking part in adventurous training activities. This allocation will increase to more than **£40K** in the coming year.

Music The Corps Band was subsidised to the tune of **£7K** whilst the Northern Band and Pipes and Drums received allocations of **£10K** and **£6K** respectively.

Publications The WIRE magazine attracted a subsidy of **£26K**, which enabled the magazine to go 'full colour' this year and provided free copies for all units.

Heritage/RSI The Heritage Committee approved capital grants of **£9K** from the Officers' Fund for the purchase of Corps paintings and silver. A further **£37K** was spent on insuring and maintaining Corps property and on Royal Signals Institution (RSI) activities, including subsidising the cost of lectures and providing Corps prizes. A capital grant of **£40K** was made to the Corps Museum in support of their successful bid to the Millennium Commission for an interactive exhibit.

Entertainment and Visits A total of **£56K** was spent on visits and entertainment, including Royal visits to units, the Royal Signals Association (RSA) annual reunion at Blandford and the 2005 Scottish Reunion.

Running Costs Finally, **£128K** was spent on the running of RHQ, which includes the salaries of Corps employees such as the Corps Accountant, the Welfare Secretary and the RSA Secretary.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Corps Funds enable RHQ to provide much needed financial support to the serving and retired Corps and to make a significant contribution to the relief of hardship and sustainment of morale. Our ability to continue to do so, however, depends upon the willingness of members of the serving Corps to contribute under the Day's Pay scheme.

SOinC(A) expects that all R SIGNALS soldiers and officers will wish to contribute to Corps Funds at the rate appropriate to their rank. Any serving regular member of the Corps not currently contributing should contact the Corps Accountant, **Mr Alan Wilkinson** on 01258 482086, who will arrange for contributions to start.

Anyone wishing to know more about Corps Funds and how they are spent should contact the Corps Accountant (as above) or visit the Corps ArmyNet website via www.armynet.mod.uk.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, JUNE 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col RP Giles	DII FD CSDC
Lt Col NP Harrison	CBMJ6 CBM
Lt Col AAS Harwell	HQ 2 Div
Lt Col NJ Makepeace	Student at Overseas SC and NDC
Maj CS Alexander	22 Sig Regt
Maj JC Boyle	JSSU(Cyprus)
Maj S Brant	37 Sig Regt(V)
Maj EJ Bruce	AG HQ
Maj BH Bryan	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Maj IA Buchanan	LAIPT
Maj AD Clixby	G6 HQ Land
Maj JR Collyer	J6 DCBM J6 POL
Maj OTB Courage	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (216)
Maj AKT Crapper	DCSA DST Strat Change
Maj DA Deegan	RSS
Maj BJ Fitch	MOD A Block
Maj JC Fraser	15 Sig Regt
Maj OER Gardner	BOWTAG(N)
Maj KA Jeeves	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj JR Jennings	RSS
Maj RM Jones	CSDC Sys Dev
Maj GNF Knight	JSU Corsham
Maj JO Lambeth	RSS
Maj DW Larkam	HQ Defence College of CIS
Maj CR Lawrence	BOWTAG (JT)
Maj PJ Mcelwee	32 Sig Regt (V)
Maj PRD Muir	HQ SOinC(A)
Maj L O'Rourke	RSS
Maj HJ Scott	RMCS Courses DA
Maj AD Shakespeare	HQ ARRC
Maj NRD Shenow	ATR Lichfield
Maj AJ Smith	SP POL STRAT
Maj BG White	2 Sig Regt
A/Maj DC Ball	SANGCOM
Capt AOH Biggs	628 Sig Tp
Capt KE Cochran	RSS
Capt SG Davis	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt J Fradley	7 Sig Regt
Capt LM Halstead	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt S Howe	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
Capt SM Lockwood	15 Sig Regt
Capt CP Smith	2 Sig Regt
Capt GA Stanger	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt JM Wadia	31 (City of London) Sig Regt (V)
Capt N Watton	JSSU (V)
Capt RN Wilson	16 Sig Regt
Lt P Andrews	Army Foundation College
Lt DS Burnett	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)

OFFICERS, JULY 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col PJ Oldfield	OCE HQ Land
Lt Col J Carmichael	RCB
Lt Col PA Osment	CPAC
Lt Col DG Proctor	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts	SP CISR IPT
Lt Col DA Sullivan	OCE HQ Land
Maj RJ Anderton-Brown	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (216)
Maj G Blondel	HQ ARRC
Maj HL Bosley	3(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj MJ Boxall	HQ DFTS, DCSA
Maj CE Caie	CVHQ Royal Signals
Maj P Deans	JFC Naples
Maj AR Fawcett	SP SCM IPT
Maj L Golley	RSS
Maj JA Kennedy	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Maj DC Laycock	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj JP Nichols	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj GJ Oliver	1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj LJ Plumb	BATCIS IPT 1
Maj GL Richards	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Maj JL Smart	DEF Attache Beijing
Maj DM Stachini	35 Sig Regt(V)
Maj PJ Waddell	DAAVN
Maj AM White	40 Sig Regt (V)
A/Maj BM Bingham	HQ 1 Sig Bde
A/Maj TP Crane	BATCIS IPT
A/Maj KE Emmerson	1 (UK)Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
A/Maj JM Osborne	CSD
A/Maj SJ Tyler	ACFT TGDA
Capt MJ Bentley	19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209)
Capt K Bolam	Training Officer
Capt LJ Brereton-Martin	ATR Lichfield
Capt WJ Cardwell	10 Sig Regt
Capt J Chatmen	30 Sig Regt
Capt PD Crawley	JSSU(Cyprus)
Capt GP Drake	30 Sig Regt
Capt CM French	RSS
Capt CJ Fulthorpe	2 Sig Regt
Capt LC Gallacher	19 Light Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209)
Capt LS Giddings	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt MW Harris	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt RS Jacques	JSSU Digby Log Flt
Capt PS Meehan	DCSA Service Ops
Capt BL Psaila	36 Sig Regt (V)
Capt KNL Rhodes	RSS
Capt LF Smith	ATR Lichfield
Capt DA Whitaker	22 Sig Regt
Capt GP Wills	Trials HQ SOinC(A)
Lt AR Nicklin	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Lt RJ Nicklin	SORLS HQ SOinC(A)
Lt TJC Walton	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Lt CK Whittley	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt

WOS AND SNCOS, JUNE 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 FofS RE Paterson	DCSA Cyprus
WO 1 FofS AJ Riglar	RSS
WO 2 FofS CJ Brankin	DCSA Gibraltar
WO 2 FofS DR Crowther	BMATT
WO 2 FofS AJ Miller	2 Sig Regt
WO 2 FofS LJ Morrison	DISC SU
A/WO 2 FofS RM Avery	7 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 FofS LD Box	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 FofS PJ Challis	31 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 FofS SE Colbeck	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
A/WO 2 FofS MW Ind	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/WO 2 FofS SS Welch	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt FofS JA Burnham	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS JE Butt	33 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS LJ Clark	HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt FofS C Ferguson	DCSA Cyprus
SSgt FofS JD Gill	Bowman Trials
SSgt FofS M Gordon	15 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS AJB Gray	DCSA Cyprus
SSgt FofS MA Holloway	HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt FofS LA Jay	10 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS DJ Mulheran	HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt FofS NJ Rogan	16 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS PR Sorrell	38 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS L Stevenson	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt FofS S Thomas	35 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS ML Ward	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt FofS GJ Watkins	10 Sig Regt
SSgt PT Ashford	2 Sig Regt
SSgt RA Beel	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt PA Cooper	21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt JK Hannah	19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt MA McNamara	HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt PMK Richards	21 Sig Regt (AS)
A/SSgt A Carter	238 Sig Sqn
Sgt EL Dignall	2 Sig Regt
Sgt IN Fincham	16 Sig Regt
Sgt AS Green	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt SJ Groom	HQ DISC
Sgt GR Inns	15 Sig Regt
Sgt PC Kobra	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt IJ Lawson	SC&IS (Gibralter)
Sgt CM Nichol	DCSA (G)
Sgt S Osmond	RSS
Sgt FR Randerson	600 Sig Tp
Sgt BRG Saxton	19 CTT
Sgt NA Simmons	33 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt LPW Wilson-Cochrane	17 CTT
A/Sgt MC Burton	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt SD Hopkins	33 Sig Regt (V)

WOS AND SNCOS, JULY 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 FofS SD Metcalfe	HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde

A/WO 1 FofS SW Crowther .... SC&IS (Gibraltar)
WO 2 FofS RL Cleminson Jt Staff Div Cyprus
WO 2 FofS MP Clish ... ... 2 Sig Regt
WO 2 FofS RA Dickinson RSS
WO 2 FofS SG Prendergast .... 32 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 FofS LM Openshaw .... 40 Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS JE Ashman ... DCSA Cyprus
SSgt FofS JG Setchfield HQ SOinC (A)
SSgt CE Crompton ... ... 21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt D Kilgallon ... ... 16 Sig Regt
SSgt SJ Munro .... RHQ AFNORTH
SSgt SC Swannick ... ... AFCO Carlisle
A/SSgt RS Bird .... 7 Sig Regt
A/SSgt KP Umney ... ... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt MF Beasley .... SC&IS (Gibraltar)
Sgt SP George .... 33 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt AN Good .... RSS
Sgt SN Hayward ... ... DSMRC
Sgt CER Hoggard ... ... 12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn(228)
Sgt RA Howe .... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt TB Knight .... 14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt MA Lodge .... 2 Sig Regt
Sgt SP Mundy .... USSO
Sgt PW Munslow ... ... CIS Brunssum Sector
Sgt AG Nuttley .... CIS Brunssum Sector
Sgt RB Reid .... 2 Sig Regt
Sgt ID Robson .... JSSU (Cyprus)
Sgt R Singleton .... 30 Sig Regt
Sgt BR Steadman ... ... DCSA (G)
Sgt MP Taylor .... RSS
Sgt SR Tomblin .... 243 Sig Sqn
Sgt TN Treadwell ... ... CIS 243 Sig Sqn
Sgt M Watkins .... OCE HQ Land
Sgt KG Welch .... 4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
Sgt IJ Wells .... 2 Sig Regt
A/Sgt S Fitzgerald ... ... ATR Litchfield
A/Sgt JJ Maguire ... ... 7 Sig Regt

RETIREMENTS

JUNE 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Barton-Ancliffe - Lt Col BJ Barton-Ancliffe	17 Jun 06
Hancock - Col HAR Hancock	08 Jun 06
Oakes - Lt Col JW Oakes	01 Jun 06
Ratcliffe - Maj CJ Ratcliffe	01 Jun 06
Rowlinson - Brig DE Rowlinson	17 Jun 06
Thomson - Capt K Thomson	01 Jun 06
Toms - Maj SM Toms	30 Jun 06

JULY 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Baugh - Maj NE Baugh MBE	31 Jul 06
Garrett - Capt AK Garrett	01 Jul 06
Green - Maj SC Green	13 Jul 06
Lumley - Capt SC Lumley	01 Jul 06
Thomas - Col G Thomas	01 Jul 06
Ward - Capt CM Ward	01 Jul 06

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC **Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt **Capt RA Moody**
Team Sgt **Sgt AS Butterfield**

THE FIRST ROAD TRIP – *by Sig Chris Sowiak*

With the Opening Show complete and behind us, the Team put in some hard trg, and were ready to embark on their first road trip. It was to comprise 4 shows at the Newark and Notts' County Show, 14 days worth of shows on Op DRAGONS MARCH and 4 shows at the Merseyside Military Show.

Our first stop on the road trip was RAF Digby, where we were accommodated for our Newark and Notts' shows. In preparation for all of the fire jumps that the Welsh contingent would be doing in Wales, **Sig Jonny Mustoe** was the first through the fire for all 4 shows.

After finishing at that show ground, we departed for Sennybridge trg camp in preparation for Op DRAGONS MARCH SOUTH at Margam Park. On arrival, we found out that we were scheduled for 2 x 10 minute show each day for the rest of the week. Being in Wales, it was of course the turn of **Sig Jonny Mustoe** to be first through the fire again. The first 2 days went well, until the unpredictable Welsh weather decided to take a turn for the worse. The heavens opened, and stayed open for the rest of the week. **LCpl Chip Mooney** aptly re-named us the Royal Signals White Helmets Jet Ski Display Team!

Sadly, we lost **LCpl Chalky White** half way thought the week; as his fiancée was due to give birth. The rain kept on coming and by Thursday we were wading through the show ground, which was one great puddle. We moved onto Op DRAGONS MARCH NORTH at Chirk Airfield. The rain kept on coming, so we were forced to cut the show down dramatically. With the ground being slightly water logged, a few of the riders lost control of their tricks. The best 2 were from **LCpl Al Huish** on the Double Jimmy who managed to get his bike to flip over and snap a foot peg, and **Sig Shea Dawson**, who pulled his front break during the Eagle and collided into the arena barriers.

Everyone breathed a sigh of relief as the road trip was nearly over. This was the longest time we were away and was quite a shock to the new members of the team. Finally, we set sail to

Cpl Jim Brown jumps an RMP car at the Merseyside Show

Merseyside for a 2 day military show. When we arrived at our accommodation in Altcar camp, we were granted a well deserved day off. We played a game of Fozzie's Random Rounders, with no rules and no means of scoring, before most of the team set out around Liverpool or Southport to take in the sights.

The next day, we arrived at our showground and carried out 2 full shows in our trademark blues, the first time we could wear them due to the heavy rain which would have otherwise ruined them. Unfortunately, the last day didn't go so well, as **LCpl Chip Mooney** and **Sig Carl Potter** had a 'slight' collision. The show came to a complete stop as everyone rushed to help them up and get their bikes out of the arena. As they say "the show must go on," and it did just that. The rest of the show went well until **Cpl Baz Fullerton** decided to do his end of show wheelie and pulled his bike up to much, causing him to fall off the back earning him the black peak.

Congratulations and best wishes go to **LCpl Chalky White** on the birth of his son **Oakley**, and to **LCpl Julie Jones** on the birth of her son **Noah Joseph**.

STOPPIE SCHOOL - *By LCpl Al Huish*

On 12 and 13 June, a select group from the Team were asked to be guinea pigs for 'The South Coast Motorcycle Stunt School's new 'stoppie' bike. We were a mixture of experience and novices, so that **Neil** from the school could get an idea of how his new frame bike would get on. To those less familiar with bike stunts, a 'stoppie' is when you lift the back wheel off the floor when breaking and roll along, basically doing a wheelie in reverse. The Stunt School has developed a pioneering frame for practising this, which will not let you tip the bike or spin the rear end around. It is the only piece of this eqpt in the country and really does make you feel very safe and confident.

The lucky 6 were **Cpl 'Fozzy' Forster**, **Cpl Jim Brown**, **LCpl Al Huish**, **Sig Dave Kitchen**, **Sig Shea Dawson** and **Sig Mel Quinn**. I was slightly apprehensive to start with, as it is not a natural thing to be doing, but after the first 'stoppie', I realised I was quite safe and so went for it. With my extra weight I was managing to get the back end up quite high, and it certainly felt good, whether it looked it or not I don't know. After the second morning, most of us had the hang of getting the wheel up, but were not travelling any distance. We were told to speed up and **Cpl Jim Brown**, **Sig Dave Kitchen** and I actually managed to get a few 'stoppies' rolling along for a bit!

The Stoppie School is a good addition to **Neil's** existing wheelie school, and I think all of us that tried it, gave it the thumbs up. I wonder how long it will be before we try stoppies on the Triumphs?

If you think you have what it takes to become a member of the White Helmets, and you like the idea of road trips and stoppies, then contact us now and reserve your place on the next selection course being held November 2006. Details about the selection course can be found in SOinC(A) PD 204, held in every orderly room or from the HQ SOinC website. If you have any questions, and prefer a friendly voice, you can call the office at any time on mil: 94371 2365 (civ: 01258 482365) to discuss a potential tour with The White Helmets.

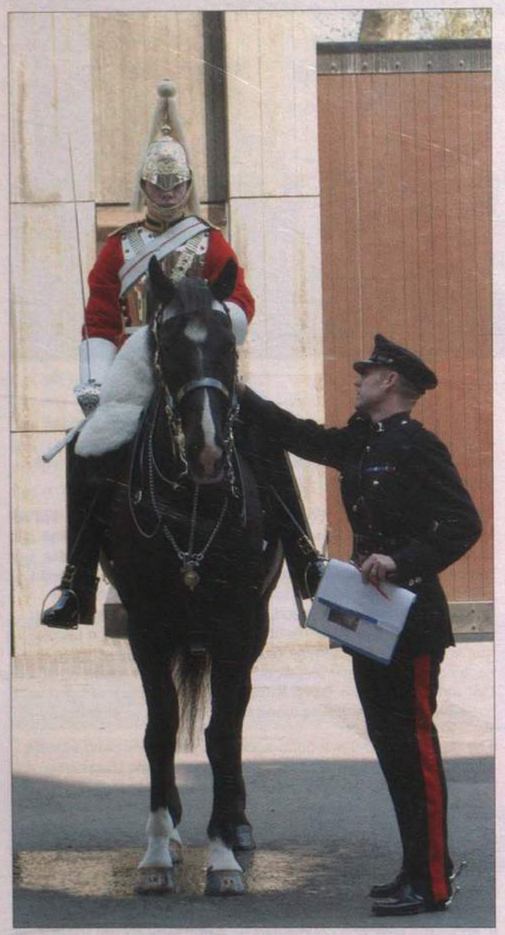
BLANDFORD GARRISON SUPPORT UNIT

CO **Lt Col Rab Young**
GSO **Capt (Retd) Jane Stockdale**
GSM **WO1 Neil Jennings**

Still in its infancy, BGSU continues to grow and we have recently taken QM (Tech) and TM Troop under our 'wing' much to **Maj John Mackay's** horror as he moves to take over as QM (Tech) – there's just no escape! We are all thinking of moving out onto a golf course, as then we might have a chance of seeing a bit more of our CO! The GSO has just moved into her 4th office in under 3 years – is there a message there? We welcome **Rachel Crees** into the fold as our Conservation Officer, taking over from ex - **WO2(FofS) Steve Davis**. **Steve** has moved onto pastures far greener than ours – he now works for the Dorset Wildlife Trust.

GSM ON PARADE

For those of you who watched the BBC documentary the "Household Cavalry", you will be aware of the highly competitive tradition between the 2 mounted Regts of the Household Cavalry. The Blues and Royals and Queens Life Guards compete annually for the prestigious honour of winning the Princess Elizabeth Cup, also known as the "Richmond Competition".



WO1(GSM) Neil Jennings checking the detail

The Cup is presented by Her Majesty the Queen to the best turned out Trooper who is serving on ceremonial duties. There are 12 nominations from the Troops, 6 Blues and Royals and 6 Life Guards. The Troopers spend 6 months at riding school and have to have been on ceremonial duties for at least 2 years to be nominated.

WO1(GSM) Neil Jennings was invited up to Hyde Park Barracks on the 4th May this year as one of the guest inspecting officers, to decide who should be presented with this award. However it wasn't as easy as that, as he only had 48 hours notice and the dress for the inspecting team was "No1". As ever, the QM's Dept (with the help of The White Helmets) pulled out all the stops and got the GSM kitted out.

The inspecting team arrived on the morning of the inspection and were given a tour of the Barracks by the CO and the Regtl Cpl Maj, culminating with a period of instruction of how to inspect the horses and the Troopers and what to look for, white socks, a clean brow band and clean nostrils (and that's just the horse!)

The Troops were paraded at midday for the Inspection, which lasted over 2 hours; the inspecting team then retired to the CO's office to deliberate over the findings with a glass of champagne, apparently this is all part of the tradition.

Finally, after much consultation and adding up the scores, **Trooper Taylor** won the Princess Elizabeth Cup for the Blues and Royals. This is kept a highly guarded secret from the Troops until it is presented by Her Majesty the Queen at the Royal Windsor Horse Show.

Since the GSM returned he is always missing on a Monday morning; we finally tracked him down, he is up at the Garrison stables on parade with the resident horses (well, a Shetland pony).

EXERCISE CANYON DRAGON 2006 - *by WO1(FofS) Metcalfe*

On 1 May, a 10 man team from BGSU and DCCIS set off on a 2 week trekking exped to the Grand Canyon.

The party comprised a number of old, bold and knobbly kneed old timers such as **WO1(FofS) Si Metcalfe**, **WO1(FofS) Steve Moore** and **WO1(IS Supvr) Daz Evans** as well as the more youthful and exuberant contingent led by the Adjt of 11 Sig Regt, **Capt James Landreth**. The expedition involved trekking in both the Havasupai Indian reservation on the West Rim and in and around the South Rim hiking trails of the Grand Canyon

After 2 days of planes, trains and automobiles, our adventurous band of brothers finally arrived at the trail head at the top of the west Rim and set off down the 10 mile hike to the Havasupai Indian village and campsite. As the temperature was a rather tasty 100 degrees Celsius for most of this initial hike, it was a very happy group of signallers that finally arrived at the campsite.

This was near the Havasu falls, which is one of a series of spectacular waterfalls located within this part of the reservation. After pitching tents the party went for a much needed dip in the beautiful green pool which lay at the foot of this 130ft water feature. We stayed down the Havasupai Reservation for a few days exploring the fantastic trails in and around this tributary of the Colorado River. The scenery and setting for the trail down to the Colorado River were truly spectacular with clear blue pools and bright green vegetation, which were entirely unexpected inside somewhere as notoriously barren as the Grand Canyon.

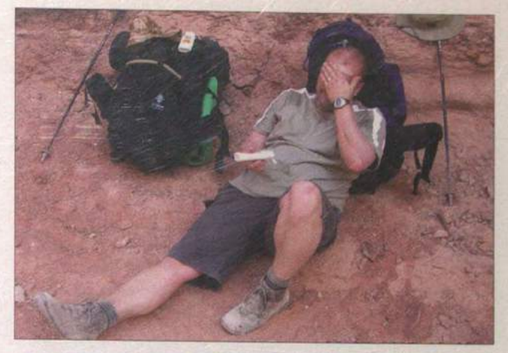
The old and the bold

After a fascinating couple of days in this environment, we hiked out of the Canyon and drove along the Arizona section of the old Route 66 to the more famous South Rim. The first view of this part of the Grand Canyon is, to employ a much used Americanism, "awesome" and words just cannot do justice to this incredible place.

We trekked in and around the Canyon along the Bright Angel, South Kaibab and Grandview trails, stopping at such well loved camping spots as Horn Creek, where the nearest water was two and a half miles away.

After hiking around this amazing area for a further 4 days the group packed up the camp and headed back along the Route 66, over the Hoover Dam and back for a stint of R and R in Las Vegas, before heading on the long journey home back to Blandford.

We all had an amazing time and have now well and truly caught the AT 'bug'! Where next.....?



An exhausted WO1(FofS) Si Metcalfe hopes sun screen will help him find who he is going to jiff with the writing of the PXR

NEWS OF TRAINING

COMMAND SUPPORT DIVISION BLANDFORD

CI	**Lt Col Charles H Turner**
SIO	**Mr Kevin Mather**
SL	**Mr Robin Cooper**
DSM	**WO2(SSM) Bob Lawrence**

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES GROUP (CSG)

OC	**Maj Noddy Baugh MBE**

DIVISIONAL SUPPORT TROOP - *by WO1(FofS) S Moore*

It has been a busy and challenging period for the 1st line technical maintainers and supply specialists of Div Sp Tp. The primary role of ensuring availability of eqpt for trg has been successfully carried out, at the same time as achieving creditable results on both the annual RSIT and Screening Inspections. Under the guidance of the OC and his trusted sidekick, **SSgt(FofS) Musgrove** in the Div Eqpt Cell (DEC), Tp personnel have also assisted on various projects. Examples include the building of a new classroom facility for Cormorant generator trg, stripping out the Clansman ComSim facility in preparation for a new Bowman simulator and taking delivery of the first tranche of LR Based Trg Aids (LBTAs); the platform of choice for future, classroom based Bowman eqpt trg.

As a sign of his appreciation of the hard work carried out, the OC Tp recently 'shut shop' for a day and with 11 members of the Tp walked a section of the south coast path between Lulworth Cove and Weymouth. **SSgt Mark Chivers** led from the front, impressing the younger members of the Tp with stories from his 264 days. One poignant moment came when **Cpl 'Dangerous' Davis** arrived at the exact spot where he proposed to his fiancée and decided to share all his romantic patter with us. Tech Sect bonded well throughout, even taking the time to assist their wksp Sgt **'Fitzy' Fitzmaurice**, up the steeper climbs. The coastal views were outstanding, as were the refreshments taken at the 'Smugglers Inn', Osmington Mills. This provided a much needed energy boost before tackling the final leg to Weymouth. The day was rounded off with a hearty pub lunch, **Cpl 'Cherry' Cerioli** providing the entertainment by stripping off to the waist in public, much to the delight of a bunch of pensioners on a ladies' day out. It was unfortunate that **Fitzy** and his team ate all the food in the kitchen, leaving the Tp OC and **FofS Musgrove** to settle for a more traditional fish and chip takeaway, whilst indulging in a rendition of 'Oh we do like to be beside the seaside'.

Div Sp Tp take a break at Durdle Door

TECHNICAL TRAINING TROOP (TTT) - *by Cpl Grigsby*

OC	**WO1(FofS) S Robinson**
HIO	**Trg Manager Mr Gary Smith**

The Tp would like to welcome **Sgt Dave Hudson** into the fold and extend hearty congratulations to **Sgt Tony Livsey** on passing the FofS selection board and **Sgt Dar Offord** for success on the Sgt – SSgts promotion board.

TROOP DAY OUT TO LONDON

On Thursday 25 May, TTT embarked on a visit to the Imperial War Museum (IWM), the Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms in London, primarily as a Tp bonding ex. The day started early, which in itself caused a few problems for certain members of the Tp; however we finally made it out of the gates, picking one up en route and leaving one behind! We arrived in London and enjoyed a few hairy moments, when our driver thought he was in London's version of the Monaco Grand Prix, before we pulled up

outside the IWM. We spent a thoroughly enjoyable 3 hrs in the museum, where all personnel had a chance to see the superb displays of vehs, wpns and lots of other memorabilia. Those who made it to the Holocaust Exhibition found it particularly moving and thought provoking.

After a quick lunch we made our way to the Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms. We had two and a half hours there, where members of the Tp explored the underground bunkers, in which the most important decisions of the War were made. We had approximately 2 hours to make our way to Chelsea Barracks to meet our driver, so this meant a lively debate on whether to jump on a bus or follow **Sgt Paul Smith** (who was once posted at 238 Sig Sqn), who assured everyone that it was only a 15 minute walk. We set off in blissful ignorance that this was to be the start of an hour long tab through the streets of London! Still it made that first pint taste like "Ice Cold in Alex"!

After an hour's rehydration, we made it back to the minibus bang on time, much to our driver's delight. This however, was not to last! After 15 minutes on the road, while planning the evening's entertainment, **Sgt Phil Bainbridge** decided to take a turn for the worse which resulted in the remainder of the Tp's day out being spent in A and E! After 4 hrs, he was released and we eventually headed for home. Despite this, everyone had an excellent time and enjoyed a well deserved break.

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES GROUP (CSG) COASTAL WALK - *by SSgt Guy Padfield*

On 03 May 06, CSG conducted a coastal walk from Swanage to Sandbanks, followed by a late lunch in the newly refurbished George III bar/restaurant on Blandford Camp. The main purpose of the day's activities was to get personnel out of their offices and enjoy some much needed team building, the opportunity was also taken to say farewell to **Maj Noddy Baugh MBE** after 35 years of dedicated service to the Corps.

The weather started off overcast but dry, perfect weather for the long walk ahead, transport arrived on time and by 0815 hrs, we were on our way to Swanage. On arrival, the obligatory group photo was taken, and the arduous journey began. It did not take long for the group of 40 to spread out, with **WO2 (DQMS) Paul Jordan** setting an SF pace. After an hour and half of hard going over mountainous terrain with spectacular views, including a rather large rock called 'Old Harry', we reached the half way point, a public house called 'The Bankes Arms'. However we only had time for some light refreshments and were once again on our way.

The second half of the journey was far less demanding with a 4km walk along a sandy beach through Studland and Shell Bays to South Haven Point. After holding back the chain ferry for 10 mins waiting for **Maj Baugh** to bring up the stragglers, the short (free!) ferry trip to Sandbanks passed without incident. Hence we reached the last watering hole of the walk, the 'Haven Hotel'. This

The CSG retreat from Studland

was supposed to be the end of the trek, so tired walkers rubbed their weary feet, complained about inadequate footwear, while still managing to down pints of ice cold beer. Unfortunately, the journey was not quite over as a further 800m walk to the coach was needed.

CSG Coarse Fishing Club - *by Cpl Lee Marsh*

Let's forget popular myths of boring old men sat on canal banks, getting cold, with the old tartan thermos and cheese and pickle butties. Coarse fishing is the biggest participation sport in Britain and is growing steadily. The sport is a game of wits, man against nature and her inhabitants. It covers fish as small as gudgeon (eyeballs) through to aggressive perch, shoaling roach and monster carp, all of which can be found in most commercial fisheries. Blandford Garrison Angling Club competes in Group 2 of the Army Angling Federation (Coarse) League and participates in 10 fishing matches throughout the season. The matches are held in canals, rivers and commercial fisheries such as the Viaduct and Todber Manor. The team competes against all types of angler, from amateur all the way up to Tri-Service level. Currently the team is ranked 7th out of 17 and we are only halfway through the season. The challenge is to get a team or individual into the top 5 of the league, which will then enable either or both to compete at the Army Championships.

Coarse fishing is a challenging experience, which demands the ultimate in patience, practice and skill. The achievement after a hard battle between man and nature is a bag full of glittering gold, silver, bronze and green striped fish: all colours of the rainbow. For the competitor – not unlike a box of treasure.

The team consists of the following personalities: **Sgt Kit Knight**, the current Corps champion, **WO1(RSM) Bruce** – Corps RSM, **Sgt Taff Skey**, **Sgt Stu Willamson**, **Sgt Dave Dunn**, **Capt Dave Farragher**, **Cpl Buck Rogers** and the Team Captain, **Cpl Lee Marsh**. We are looking forward to the Corps championships being held on 30and 31 May 2006 at Larford Lakes. More results to follow in the next exciting edition.

ENGINEERING DIVISION

Chief Instructor	**Lt Col Steve Turnbull**
DSM	**WO2(SSM) Al Chester**

IS GROUP

OC	**Maj (Tfc (IS)) Paul Sinderberry**
Trg Ops Officer	**Capt (Tfc (IS)) Fiona Nelson**
Trg WO	**WO1(Supvr (IS)) Daz Evans**

EXERCISE MERCURY DRAGON 06 - *by Cpl Morley*

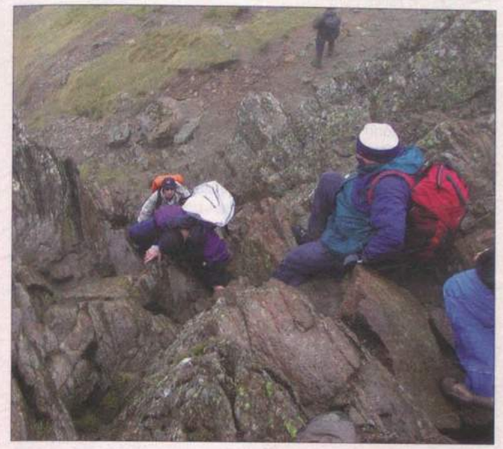
Ex MERCURY DRAGON, organised by **SSgt Sammy Moore** RA, was held from 30 April to 05 May 06, in Ambleside, Cumbria.

Maj Paul Sinderberry, **Lt Kev Smith** RN, **SSgt Rob Frapwell** RHA, **SSgt 'Toyah' Wilcox**, **Sgt 'Fitz' Fitzpatrick**, **Sgt Nath Hadley** and **Cpl Daz Morley** took part.

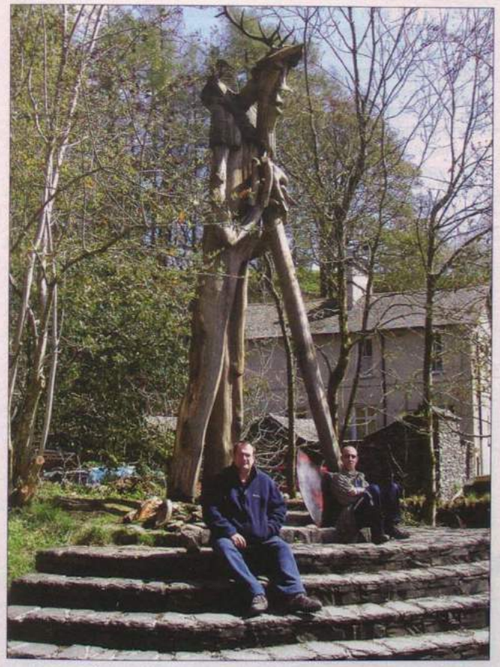
The journey up to Ambleside was somewhat disconcerting. Two minibuses were taken for use on the ex but during the journey one of the drivers became confused as to which road they were travelling on.

They couldn't work out if they were travelling on the M4 or M5, and that was before we started map reading in the Lake District. On arrival we were delightfully surprised at our 5 star accommodation; a 15 berth hut, a kitchen, 2 toilets and a washroom.

On Day 1, our aim was to climb Striding Edge. As we set off from the hut, the heavens opened and the rains came down. Unfortunately this did not improve as we got higher. Before we reached the summit, we encountered snow on the ground and finally when we reached the top, we were greeted by freezing fog, and visibility down to about 5m. We were all grateful when we got below the cloud line and the weather improved. By the end of the day we had completed 10 miles of walking.



Climbing Striding Edge



The Old Man of Grizedale

The next day we woke to an improvement in the weather. The aim was to walk the Fairfield Horseshoe and as the climb got higher, we were able to see Lake Windermere and Ambleside behind us, as well as the low cloud line and fog in front of us. Like Day 1, the fog was cold and there was low visibility. Thankfully the weather and view improved as we descended below the cloud level, we could now see the lake and town, but our spirits were still dampened as we still had a long way to go before the finish. On completion of this walk, we had managed to achieve another 10 miles.

On the third day, the planned activity involved mountain biking through the Grizedale Forest and the weather was bright and sunny for a change. Overlooking Grizedale Forest car park is a giant wooden statue called the Old Man of Grizedale. We had the opportunity to take some pictures for our photo albums here.

At the end of the day, our legs were stretched off from doing the biking and we were looking forward to another day of walking.

On the fourthand final day, the plan was to walk Langdale Fell. With the sun shining down on us, we all felt a sense of elation; it was a chance for some of us to get the suntan lotion out. As we reached the summit of Bowfell, the views were magnificent and the weather stayed in our favour. This was the most arduous day of all and we managed to complete 15 miles.

Overall, we had a great time. We completed some arduous activity, took in some wonderful views and countryside and slept like 'logs' each night! Our thanks go to **SSgt Sammy Moore** for organising the week.

HADRIAN'S HIKE 31 MAY – 05 JUN 06 - *by Cpl Morley*

WHAT WAS HADRIAN'S HIKE ALL ABOUT?

Hadrian's Hike was initially intended to be a sponsored 86 mile (120km) run along the length of Hadrian's Wall within a 24 Hour period, to raise money for Victim Support Dorset. To make this sponsored event more enjoyable a walking team would join in with the event. They would walk the entire length of the wall within 4 days.

THE TEAM

The following members of IS Gp, Eng Div took part in this momentous event:

Admin Team: **Sgts Lee (Ginge) McMahon** and **Dave Wood**, **Cpl Alfie Garnett** and **Mr Colin Cavanagh**.
Runners: **Majs Paul Sinderberry** and **Richard Barker** and **WO1(Supvr (IS)) Daz Evans**.
Walkers: **Lt Kev Smith** RN, **SSgt(Supvr (IS)) Lorna Banks**, **Sgts Mark Avery** and **Matt Davis**, **Cpls Eddie Kerr**, **Daz Morley** and **Rob Spencer**.

THE EVENT

On Day 1, we woke to an overcast sky, which had ominous looking rain clouds but thankfully as the minibus made its way to Bowness-on-Solway, the weather improved and the sun started shining. We reached the start of the wall in Bowness and had some photo opportunities before we set off. Today's leg was to walk from Bowness to Newtown, a distance of 35km. The terrain was fairly even and along the route, we were welcomed with fluids and food, provided by the admin team.

During the day, we actually walked on top and along the Wall. We reached Newtown at 1730 hrs, where the admin team were waiting to take us to a campsite near Brampton, our sleeping quarters for the night. The second admin team including the runners had set off from Blandford, in the morning, and met us at the campsite, where to our delight a BBQ with chilled refreshments were waiting for us.

The next day, the sun had come out to play again, just like blisters on the walkers' feet; both putting smiles on our faces. The route for the day would take us from Newtown to a viewpoint

near Haltwhistle Common, a distance of 25km, but this would be the most arduous leg of the walk. This was the day that we would actually start seeing parts of the wall.

The Walking Team at Hadrian's Wall

We had a photo taken at the first substantial part of the wall. The terrain was difficult, as we had to climb steep hills and walk along footpaths that were made up of loose rubble. I marvelled at the design and engineering of Hadrian's Wall. As I walked along, I imagined what it would be like to be there during the build and what the wall would have looked like once completed.

On Day 3, the walk was from the viewpoint to Heddon-on-the-Wall, a distance of 41km. The CI Eng Div, **Lt Col Steve Turnbull**, had joined us for the remaining days. Luckily for the CI, we had saved the best views and longest route for him. While walking along the wall, we heard that the runners had set off at 1000 hrs from Bowness. The further east we walked, the less of the wall we saw. The hardest part of this route was walking past Albemarle Barracks, where we had stayed for the first night. At least the trail was fairly flat, compared to the day before. The runners finished their first leg, at Carrow Farm, a distance of 50 miles at 2215 hrs.

On the last day, we woke to an overcast sky; it didn't improve until later into the final leg of these momentous few days. The final part of the walk was from Heddon-on-the- Wall to Wallsend a distance of 20km. By the time we had started, the runners had already set off from Carrow Farm at 0600 hrs, so we expected them to pass us at some point in Newcastle. For the first 8km, the heavens decided to open; this was a welcoming relief from the merciless sun. What a different sight we had as this day went on. We had gone from open countryside to the built-up industrial city of Newcastle, passing the 6 Tyne Bridges and the Millennium Bridge. To our delight, we reached Wallsend, without the runners passing us. The walkers completed Hadrian's Hike in 33 hrs. The runners completed Hadrian's Hike in 21hrs 3 min and 33 secs. Hadrian's Hike was an opportunity for members of Eng Div to raise money for Victim Support Dorset, a local charity supported by IS Gp. **Sgt Dave Wood** did a marvellous job with the publicity for the event, which resulted in articles in the local press and on radio. At the time of going to press, the exact amount of money raised is not yet known, but the team would like to acknowledge the generosity and support from all those within and beyond Blandford Garrison.

FOREMAN OF SIGNALS SELECTION BOARD 2006

- by Sgt Dave Wood

On 04 May 2006, 3 members of Eng Div at the RSS were selected to attend Foreman of Signals Course 77 which is due to commence in September 2006. **Sgt Steve Templeman** and I attended the Selection Board in 2005 and were deferred to the 2006 Board. It was suggested by the Board that a posting as an Instructor to the RSS would be of great benefit and improve our chances of future selection.

We were posted shortly afterwards to the RSS as Military Trade Instructors, about the same time as **Sgt Lee McMahon**, who would be attempting Selection for the first time in 2006. My posting took me to Applied Skills Section of IS Gp to instruct Technicians on their Class One course in theoretical and practical aspects of Network Engineering. The set working hours and location next to the ICT Faculty was beneficial for completing the distance learning package. The close proximity to subject matter experts was of great help to my studies.

Once the distance learning aspect of Selection was completed, the School was a more than ideal location to complete the necessary revision for the Entrance Exam, which was taken in February 2006. When I was not instructing, there was sufficient time for me to study and my Line Manager provided huge support to both myself and **Sgt Lee McMahon**.

Prior to my posting to the RSS, I had the same belief as many other members of the Corps, that a posting to Blandford could be seen negatively and would not help my further career progression. This could not be further from the truth. I was given support by everyone in the Group in which I work; had access to subject matter experts; and had time to study. It is worthy of note that in my small Section of around 10 personnel, 90% of those leaving over the last 2 years have either been posted on promotion or posted to the Foreman, Yeoman, or Supervisor Information Systems courses.

There have been some new arrivals in IS Group and we would like to welcome **Sgt Matt Davis** and **Cpls Eddie Kerr** and **Rob Spencer** to the team. We would also like to congratulate **Cpl Alfie Garnett** on his selection for promotion and **Sgts Lee (Ginge) McMahon** and **Dave Wood** for their successful selection for the Foreman of Signals course.

We must also mention that **Sgt Mark Avery** got married to **Louise** and **Cpl Daz Morley** had a baby girl.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT LICHFIELD

OC **Maj MP Parke**
SSM **WO2 PA Reed**

The last 2 months have seen major successes for the Sqn and the Corps at ATR(L) in a number of areas! Recently, all the Royal Signals Sgts at ATR(L), eligible for promotion, were selected. This meant that 3 Sgts in 1(Trg) Sqn were selected) for promotion to SSgt as well as 2 Sgts in C(Trg) Sqn, which is an amalgam of Royal Signals and Royal Engineers. Not a bad success rate, when you consider that there are only 7 Royal Signals Sgts here. Congratulations go to **Sgts Mark Wilcock**, **Lucy Mason**, **Stu Rowbottom**, **Trigger Smith** and **Taff Lean**. Congratulations must also go to **Sgt Dave Dowson**, who was recently promoted in post from Cpl, and has now moved into a Tp Sgt's job within 1(Trg) Sqn. If anyone is looking for evidence that the Phase I Instructor is valued and that a posting here enhances and doesn't harm your career, what more proof do you need? This result reflects the quality, commitment, professionalism and hard work of all these individuals, well done to them all!

There have been other successes as well. **SSM Reed**, who in the not too distant future is to leave us as the new RSM of 22nd

Sig Regt, recently completed his fifth London Marathon in aid of MENCAP. A huge achievement in itself, it was made even more so when you consider that he had only had 3 weeks trg in preparation, having just climbed Mount Everest in aid of SSAFA. We have also had members of the permanent staff run a half marathon in Paris – which was not a jolly!. This is as well as continuing to attend the numerous military courses that are essential for our role here, and which also have the additional benefit of filling the 'Spec Quals' box on the CRs, which are so important for giving that edge on promotion boards! As this article is written, we also have a number of JNCOs deployed on a 4 day package in London which will see them undertaking a number of educational and cultural events. The aim of this is to enhance their understanding of the wider army and in line with Comd Initial Trg Groups main effort, better prepare them as Junior Comds for return to the Field Army.

We have also recently seen a move from the old 12-week CMS(R) to a new 14-week one, which brings with it a number of changes we need to adjust to. The Sqn continues as it was towards the end of last year, and is running at full capacity with the rewarding job of trg the newest members of our Corps.

If you are interested in becoming an instructor at Phase I Trg then speak to your Adjt or Sqn 2IC and ask them to get you a copy of SOinCs Policy Directive Number 19, which gives guidance on the selection of Phase I and II instructors. Alternatively contact **SSM Reed** on 94422 4237.

EXERCISE PENINSULA RIDE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA

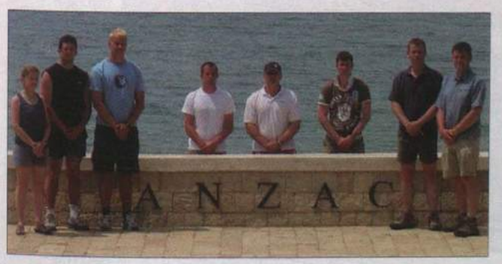
- by Lt Ted Lowe

On 22 May 06, a number of the permanent staff deployed to Turkey, to conduct a Staff Ride on the Gallipoli campaign. The aim of this was obviously to study the campaign, but most importantly to try to draw lessons from it that we can continue to use now. We boarded a coach to start the long journey on a chilly Monday morning at 0200 hrs and most were sleeping by the time we got to the motorway for the drive to Heathrow.

The first day on the peninsula wee took a 5 hour boat ride along the Dardanelles so that we could see from the sea, the landing sites that faced our heroic soldiers some 91 years ago. This put into perspective the mammoth task that had lay ahead for the forces as they tried to breach the coastal defences.

Prior to the deployment, we had all been given a baptism of fire by means of a battle inoculation. This involved us all experiencing what it was like to be on the beaches on the morning of 25 April 1915. We all waited in the Butts at Kingsbury Range and felt and saw the effect that SMLE rifles and Vickers and Maxim machine guns had on the sand bank in front of us. To ensure we fully appreciated what our forefathers went through, the grand finale also included Bat Sims and smoke. This really set the scene for what we would be studying.

Like every other spring, the Gallipoli peninsula was again covered with green grasses. Poppies floating over the peninsula were accompanied by the screaming of seagulls. This place is where one of the bloodiest battles of history was fought. The peninsula, whose every inch was turned into a battle field, is full of the things that the war has left behind. Shrapnel parts stuck in trees, ships' cannonballs, bullet cases and shells spread all over the place; riddled flasks, fallen badges, buttons, bits of uniforms and blood stains… It was difficult to accept that this piece of land covered in wild spring flowers was where so many brave soldiers fell.



The party at Gallipoli ANZAC memorial

The week allowed everyone to reflect on the battles fought and to remember the individual acts of heroism, loyalty and selfless commitment shown by all those who fought on this far away soil. The lessons learned were confirmed in syndicate presentations at the end of the week and all agreed that there was much that could be taken away and utilised within recruit trg; in particular lessons regarding the demonstration of Core Values and the exercise of leadership at all ranks.

A special thanks needs to be mentioned to **Capt Neil Powell** (AGC ETS) for the organisation of this fantastic Staff Ride.

PARIS SEMI-MARATHON 06

On a cold March morning, 4 budding athletes from 1 Sqn deployed to the romantic city of Paris to compete in the 14th semi-marathon. With work commitments at an all time high, the team consisting of **Cpls John Carey**, **Ashley Jackson**, **Lee Mason** and **Nicholas Piff**, trained exhaustively in their own time to reach the required standard in order to compete in the gruelling 21.1km road race. This race sees many of the world's class athletes competing for a rating on the international athletics circuit.

The 'Fantastic 4' were accommodated in "Fort De Neuf" military barracks located southeast of the city and it was here that they had the opportunity to bond and take in the breathtaking sights prior to the start of the race at the "Parc Floral" on the Sunday morning.

The morning of the race found the team raring to go, after a hearty French military breakfast of croissants and hot chocolate, the team set off to the start point. Wearing their British Army running tops, the team worked hard and battled their way through the 22,000 competitors. They proved their abilities to the crowds and fellow runners; and with aching bones they crossed the line with extremely commendable times.

All team members carried themselves well and took a lot from the event and the Sqn now has future intentions of taking a larger team and competing in further European marathon events.

A special thanks must go to **Lt Col Le Chanoine**, the French liaison officer at HQ SOinC(A) Blandford for his invaluable assistance in sourcing and sorting the accommodation for the team.

THE ITGIS EXPERIENCE – *by Lt Marcus Skeet*

It was with more than a little scepticism that I attended the Initial Trg Group Instructor (ITGIS) course at ATR(L) a mere 2 weeks after arrival on this my second posting. This is a mandatory course attended by all permanent staff who work within Phase I trg from Pte to Brig. I had been pre-warned with horror stories of being taught about tree hugging and a touchy feely approach to trg. This was an entirely new approach that no one had seen fit to employ during my own basic trg with the Guards.

Day 1 came and initially it was as if the rumours I had heard were true. There was talk of 'coaching', 'action plans', 'the GROW model' and, God forbid, the 'carrot instead of stick' method. I have to admit at this point that as much as I tried to resist all the civilian business language being used, I was finding myself drawn into the theory behind it. I had thought I was going to cover a lot of old ground or be taught things I really did not want to know but by the end of the course, I was converted. Hitting you from all

angles, the ITGIS instructors, some of the best I have ever come across, managed to get me into the mind's eye of a recruit and to understand the approach that is taken to Phase I Trg. I came out of the course a far more informed individual than I had been when I arrived, and I am sure a better prepared instructor.

It was clear during the course that despite very common misconceptions, Phase I trg is still conducted in much the same manner as it always has been. There is now a more 'intelligent' approach to it and much thought is applied to the methods used. There is a lot less use of negative motivational techniques (although this does still have its place) and much more thought is put into the positive techniques that could be used. The overall aim is to produce recruits who are ready to move on to Phase II trg, who are equipped with the basic soldiering skills and are fit, motivated, well-disciplined, and team players.

SMITH TROOP PASS OFF – 11 MAY 06 - *by Sgt Mark Wilcock*

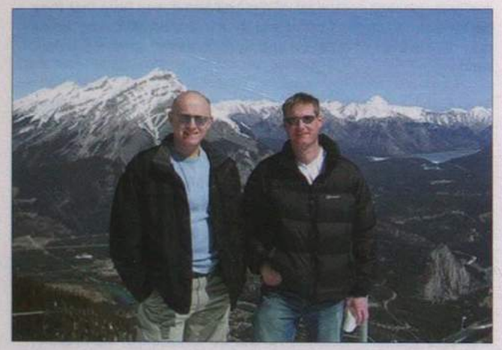
The Reviewing Officer **Lt Col MJ Fensom**, CO 11 Sig Regt saw 25 Royal Signals and 5 Royal Engineers 'Pass Off' from ATR(L) with Smith Tp, after completing the 12 Week CMSR. Prior to the actual parade, around 220 family and friends, including **Spr St Jean's** family, who had travelled all the way from St Lucia, watched 3 stands conducted by the Trg Team and Recruits. They was a PT stand in the Gym, a Sect Fire and Manoeuvre stand and of course the Officers' Ration Pack stands which always goes down a treat.

The Pass Off started with the Clyde Military Band, for whom it was their very last performance prior to being disbanded. The Tp marched on to the square at the stroke of midday, to a blaze of glorious sunshine and the parade went off without a hitch. The following recruits were awarded the following prizes by **Lt Col Fensom** for Best Shot: **Sig Johnson**, Best Drill: **Sig Lee**, Best Physical Fitness: **Sig Briggs**, Best Endeavour: **Sig Joslin**, Top Recruit: **Sig Hilton** and the Soldiers Award went to **Spr Jarvis**. Congratulations to them all.

This was also the last parade for **Sgt M Wilcock**, who is moving to NI on promotion and **Cpl J Andrews** who is moving on to Civvy Street after completing 12 years service. The day finished with all the Trg Team, Recruits, Family and Friends in the NAAFI Bar for a congratulatory and farewell drink, before they went home for a well earned weekend, before going on to Phase 2 Trg.

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD (BATUS)

SO2 CIS	**Maj Owen Finnie**
YofS	**WO2(YofS) Craig Scott**
BSM	**SSgt Pete Watson**
Ops SNCO	**Sgt Andy Conley**



Maj Finnie and Capt Jolly in the Rockies

- *by SSgt Watson*

Capt Taff Jolly visited BATUS to conduct formal career reviews on 2 of the 3 Royal Signals permanent staff soldiers, and to offer career advice to the third. The visit was extremely useful and his input resulted in 2 confirmed postings that both soldiers are extremely happy with. He did not spend all his time liaising with MCM Div however. He managed to get away to the Rockies with **Maj Owen Finnie** to sample the benefits of a posting in Canada. Congratulations are in order for **WO2(YofS) Scott** who has been selected for promotion and will move on this summer to Blandford. **WO2(YofS) Scott** is also congratulated on received his LS and GC Medal, this was presented by **Brig N J Caplin** (late AAC). Congratulations also to **Sgt Conley** who is selected for promotion and will also move to Blandford at the end of the summer.

The BOWMAN System Support Team (BSST) deployed to BATUS in April to carry out pre Op HERRICK BOWMAN trg. BATUS is viewed as an ideal trg location as it offers a variety of platforms, extensive real estate and the sp facilities for trg troops.

The BSST was headed up by **Maj Jim Knight** and **WO1 Si Jones**, who organised and produced a full and thorough trg package covering all BOWMAN eqpt and its applications. BATUS provided a range of vehicles, from armd to lt role with a variety of veh fits. This enabled the new members of the BSST to get to grips with a new and complex system. A new intake of soldiers from across the whole Army meant that the old timers had the chance to pass on their extensive knowledge, which had been built up since the formation of the USSO. It also tied in the Germany based BSST, who used this opportunity to train along side their UK counterparts.

The BOWMAN System Support Team after 3 weeks training at BATUS prior to deployment on Op HERRICK

So amongst the noise of Challenger 2 and Warrior engines and the thick blue and grey smoke, an intensive trg package took place. Many of the trainees had little or no experience of BOWMAN. This was soon put to an end with a confirmatory comms ex on the Prairie, which tested all the newly learned skills and put some people through their paces on the driving front. Although the days were long, the BSST members managed to sample Canadian life. This trg package also benefited the Permanent Staff here at BATUS.

It gave the non-comms orientated QM(T) staff the chance to ask questions and become more familiar with what kit did what, and indeed what it actually was. As ever the BSST provided second to none sp for the small 'over stretched' sigs det in BATUS and gave guidance on the finer points of writing the huge BATUS comms plan, courtesy of **Mr Stu Little**. A rear party was left behind to advise and help the permanent staff REME comms techs, who had joined in on some of the more complex lessons. They learned a lot of useful skills to get them through the next Med Man season.

Overall it was agreed that it was a successful and enjoyable trip for the BSST and indeed the staff in BATUS. The recommendation is that the trg should be repeated annually. This opportunity for the BSST to train in BATUS showed once again the diversity of trg that can be carried out in Canada and the flexibility of the unit to cater for all types of trg. Oh! And thanks for the present. It is not often I am stuck for words. In the middle of May a team of seven Royal Signals soldiers from 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn, 1 Mech Bde Sig Sqn and 3 Div Sig Regt deployed to BATUS and joined two Royal Signals Temporary Staff, at very short notice, to assist with BOWMAN work on the entire BATUS veh fleet. Over 17 long days, the team identified and rectified BOWMAN faults and initialised platforms ready for the ex season.

It had been identified that there were outstanding BOWMAN issues from the previous season, hence the need for the deployment. Their hard work has ensured that this year's preparation for trg is on track. Despite working up to 14 hour days the team still found time to sample the social life in downtown Medicine Hat. The highlight of their visit was a couple of days in the Rockies after the work was complete, a well deserved break. The team gained extensive BOWMAN experience working on all types of BG vehs and they return to their Units very confident with BOWMAN.

NEWS FROM REGIMENTS

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

CO	**Lt Colonel DG Robson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) McGachy**

It has been a busy period for the Regt with the onset of PROJECT ROBERTS, a large scale re-organisation of the Sqns and their respective assets and a lot of running, swimming, shooting and climbing mixed in. It is definitely not all work and no play at 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt – we find the time to do it all!

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj L Keily**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Joyce**

THE BISMARCK CHALLENGE – *by Lt MacIntyre*

21 May 2006 heralded the arrival of the newly named 'Bismarck Challenge', formerly the Herford Half Marathon, which drew almost 200 runners to the start gates.

Starting at Wentworth Barracks, competitors faced a 14.1 mile run over undulating terrain, with the final climb to Bad Salzuflen proving to be the test many were looking for.
Runners were pleased with the light rain and cool temperature on the day; but this blessing proved to be less advantageous when runners realised that running up a dry hill is infinitely easier than running up a wet muddy one!

Scores of markers provided great encouragement along the way; their DPM attire however, ensured that more than one runner got a fright! First place was taken by **Mr Sascha Velten** in a remarkable time of 1 hr 21 mins, followed in second place by **WO1 Barry Stoddart** with **Lt Hugo Evans** in third. First for the ladies was a new arrival to 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt, **2Lt Laura Champion** with **Cpl Arkley** in second.

At the end of the race, runners were presented with a highly collectable 'Bismarck Challenge 06' T-Shirt and moved quickly to the stands providing bratties and, more importantly, some refreshing fluids!

Once all the runners had finished, trophies were presented by the CO, **Lt Col Robson**, to the winners in each category. The entire event was a huge success with over 1000 going to local charities – a big thank you to everyone involved. Planning for 'Bismarck Challenge 07' has already begun and we promise an even bigger and better event!

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj CE Caie**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Churchward**

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON PACEX - *by 2Lt Rick Day*

No sooner had we returned from Regtl Battle camp, than it was it time to pluck the Sqn's creative strings and bring to life the PROJECT ROBERTS vision. PROJECT ROBERTS is the name given to the British Div HQ new and improved design; essentially replacing the conventional Diamond 1 with a Div Main and 2 smaller Fwd HQs (FHQs). The Div Main HQ will now be in a static location further to the rear while the FHQs will have the ability to jump around the battle space. It is now 211 Sqn's responsibility to provide both FHQs, as well as a Radio Rebroadcast facility while 212 Sqn provide the Div Main.

This new system will allow the Div Main not only to provide senior staff with a more comprehensive, robust and comfortable HQ, but

also to extend their reach further fwd and have both FHQs working in different locations on different tasks. Personnel located in the FHQs can bid farewell to the age old BFOT and enjoy their replacement, the rather posh sounding 'penthouse'. Each armd staff veh (ASV) is equipped with one of the penthouses, which link up to the others to make a larger complex. The result is a rather splendid looking HQ, segmented inside like a honeycomb giving each veh its own space.

Achieving the 'Roberts effect' however was not without its complications. After a full day and more of trial and error, both FHQs were fully erect and ready to begin doing their business – displaying the 2 different options for the new layout. After further tweaking of the tents, we were up and running and ready to begin testing. All that stood between us and a hard earned stand down was a series of inspections by the OC and later the Regtl Ops team. The purpose of these was to make the ultimate decision on which of the new layouts was preferred, so that both the FHQ Tps could adopt the same structure.

The PACEX finished at close of play on Thursday, after a rigorous day of maint on the vehs and eqpt. Overall it was a busy but rewarding week, with problems being solved and new ones discovered. As always there is more work to do but we are on the right track.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Gray**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wilson**

THE EVEREST WEST RIDGE EXPEDITION 2006
DEVELOPMENT TEAM - *by Lt Anna Williams*

Lt Anna Williams was part of the Development Team for the Everest West Ridge Expedition 2006. It was the most successful Development Team since the Joint Services began running them along side a Main Team. The Development Team was involved in helping the Main Team establish themselves at Tilmans' Camp and then successfully climbing their own objective, Lhakpa Ri, a 7042m mountain in its own right. This is her account of the exped:

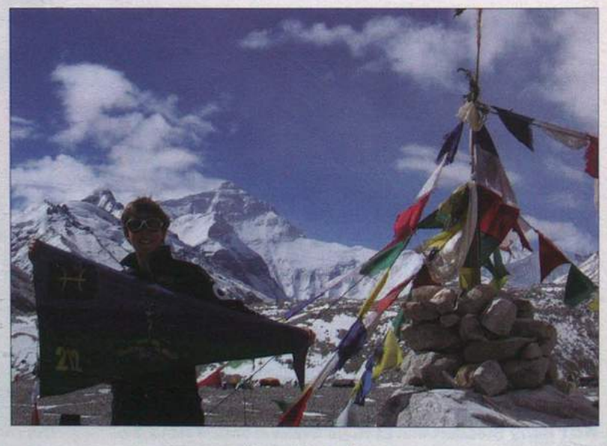
I applied for the exped two and half years ago whilst still at Sandhurst and was invited to a selection weekend in January 04 at Indefatigable, North Wales. I was surprised that there was no battery of psychometric or physical tests. I had an interview with 2 of the leaders of the exped and then much time spent at the climbing wall, having fun, which I discovered later had also been part of the assessment. I was elated when I was informed that I was on the initial squad for the Development Team. This was a team of people who had some mountaineering experience but no high altitude experience. The plan is that we will be part of the next generation of high altitude mountaineers. The Army is running out of experienced high altitude mountaineers, so the Development Team is part of the plan to start developing the next generation. The assessment stage wasn't over though. During the next year we spent time at weekend meets and on longer meets in the Alps and Scotland, where we were taught the necessary skills and drills and got to know each other. In May 05, the final cut was made and again I could hardly believe my luck when I found out that I'd made the final squad. We spent another intensive 2 weeks in the Alps that summer and then suddenly it was February and we were meeting up to pack the freight. Finally the day arrived and we were all at Heathrow with all our kit at our own special check-in desk, as there were so many of us, all in our sponsorship fleeces covered in badges so that we looked like Grand Prix drivers.

When we arrived in Nepal, we spent the first days at the Summit Hotel in Kathmandu, making the last few arrangements and buying last minute things like toilet paper. We then travelled across into Tibet to Nyalam, 3750m, a dirty cold town on the way up to the Tibetan plateau, where we spent 2 days acclimatising. This meant gentle walks up the nearby hills up to 4400m. Himalayan mountaineering is very different to anything else I've done. It's all taken very slowly. You cannot afford to go fast, as the altitude will quite literally kill you. There is a lot of sitting around and waiting for your body to acclimatise. It was at Tingri that we saw our first view of Everest, still 60 miles away but clearly the biggest mountain around. After we climbed to 4700m, we could clearly see the West Ridge and the potential campsites from Camp 2 upwards. It was very exciting to finally see it after so long. Everest Base Camp was a wide, flat area surrounded by glacial moraine which narrowed to the head of the glacier, drawing the eye inwards and upwards to Everest, where it appeared to dominate even the sky. Arriving there was quite emotional. The splendour of Everest is set out before you and it takes your breath away to be that close. Amazingly after 6 weeks there, we became quite blasé about it, and it was only when newcomers arrived that you looked at the scene once again as if with fresh eyes.

After acclimatising at Base Camp and helping the Main Team get organised, we joined them at Tilmans' Camp at 5500m. This was a sheltered camp tucked into a bowl in the moraine and it was pleasant to be away from the other expeds and to watch the start of the challenge of the West Ridge. From there, the route for the attempt on the West Ridge was in full view as well as the whole North Face in all its glory. Unfortunately, the Development Team were tied to a schedule and while there, the weather turned bad and there was no time to wait it out to help ferry kit and eqpt to Camp One on the glacier. We returned to Base Camp for another couple of days rest before setting off on our own exped to climb Lhakpa Ri.

We took 3 days to get to Advance Base Camp, the camp for the standard route up the North Col. Once there, while we were acclimatising, the weather again turned and it snowed for 3 days. This meant that there was lots of fresh snow on the mountain and it was touch and go as to whether we could actually attempt a summit bid, without endangering anyone with avalanches. Our attempt was delayed for 2 days and while we waited for conditions to improve, the wind thankfully came in and swept much of the loose snow off the mountain. What was worrying was that we were again tied to a schedule with the yaks. The only way up and down to Base Camp was on foot with yaks to carry the heavy kit like tents. These yaks had to be booked in advance and there was very little lee-way. As a result we were very fortunate that the weather window finally arrived with a day to spare and the summit bid was set for the day before the yaks turned up to bring us back down.

Whilst we had been waiting, **Heidi** became very ill with altitude sickness. The only cure for it is to descend and she was too sick



Always have a flag

to descend by herself. It was decided that I should assist her down, having volunteered to do it. I was very disappointed to miss out on the opportunity of summiting, a goal we had all worked towards for 2 years. I felt strongly, however, that on these mountains it's not all about summiting, it's about being a team and making sure everyone comes back safely. We travelled back down by yak, as **Heidi** was too sick to walk and we picked up another Sherpa who was also critically ill from altitude sickness. It was a lesson in itself to see how quickly both recovered after descending to Base Camp, although the Sherpa needed oxygen and time in the Gamow bag, a portable chamber to reduce altitude without actually moving anywhere, before he recovered.

The team summited at 1107 hrs in the morning. It was very exciting as this meant we were the most successful Development Team since the Joint Services began running them alongside the Main Team and the main exped objective. Once the team returned, we spent another few days at Base Camp before getting the transport on a bone-racking 12 hr journey to the border. We walked across the Friendship Bridge into Nepal and stayed at a wonderful wooden chalet retreat up in the terraced hills above the border. The beds, sheets, sit-down toilets, running water and showers were all greatly appreciated after 6 weeks of basic living conditions in tents. On return to Kathmandu it was souvenir shopping and eating lots of steaks before heading back to the UK and normal life once again!

The exped was ambitious and challenging. The Junior and Development Teams all achieved their objectives. Unhappily the Main Team was beaten back by dangerous snow conditions just below the summit. I have taken away a multitude of lessons in how to plan and organise an exped of this size, how to climb in the Himalayas, and a passion for more of the same!

1 (UK) ARMD DIV SIG REGT BATTLE CAMP 2006
- by 2Lt Laura Champion

The 2nd and 3rd weeks of May saw elements of the Regt deploy to Haltern for its annual Battle Camp. The ex afforded soldiers the opportunity to practise and develop their military knowledge, skills and experience. Each week was attended by two Sqns from within the Regt, which were divided into 4 Platoons. This allowed those with a comd appointment to practise their leadership and teaching styles. The first 2 days focused on wpn handling and involved a moving target shoot, pistol shoot, fire team assessment and the chance to fire the LMG and GPMG. For many, this was their first opportunity to get 'hands on' and was enjoyed by all. Day 3 was PT day, designed to be physically challenging, promote teamwork and test individual logical and navigational skills. Main events were a stretcher race, navigation ex and a series of comd tasks. The stretcher race, motivated by a healthy bit of Sqn rivalry, showed everybody putting in maximum effort. The pain of the previous 6 miles was quickly forgotten once the finish line was crossed and the times came in!

The comd tasks were completed in varying amounts of time and with a good range of original and bizarre styles! A bayonet

212 Signal Squadron in the final stages of the stretcher race

lesson allowed for a release of aggression from all, but also identified a few worrying characters; all in the name of motivation of course! Day 4 was focused around a series of sect attack stands and lessons. As the day progressed the drills and aggression improved dramatically and despite being exhausted and a few people becoming too familiar with leopard crawling for their liking, the day was very beneficial to all involved.

The finale to the week was a competition day, encompassing all the skills learned and practised throughout the week. Platoons were rotated through a bayonet range, first aid stand (complete with Oscar winning performances from **Lt Jo Copeland**), sect attack stand and dismounted armd attack; with each sect being marked on their performance at each. Luckily the rain which persisted for most of the day maximized the trg benefits for everybody! The 1st winning sect was from HQ Sqn led by **Cpl Pitcairn** and the 2nd sect was from 212 Sqn led by **Cpl Doyle**. Many thanks to the Trg Wg staff and DS for their hard work throughout the fortnight - we had a ball!

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS

Welcome back IS Tp, which is nearly back to full manning with the return of personnel from Op TELIC 7 and OCCULUS. The Tp will soon return to minimum manning as they all skip off to warmer pastures on POTL, but return just in time to start preparing for the ex season. Double congratulations to **Sgt Jayce Faulkner** and **Sgt Kerr Laye**, who were not only selected to attend the next Supvr IS course but also selected for promotion to SSgt.

Congratulations are also extended to **Cpl Iain Good** who is posted on promotion to 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.
Big changes are afoot in the MT with **SSgt Tony Caprio**, **Sgt Taff Mayer** (soon to be SSgt) and **Cpl Geordie Watson** leaving for pastures new. Congratulations to **Cpl Cole** on the CO's challenge, although we suspect he used his car as he looked far too clean crossing the finishing line.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

The Regt is currently gearing up towards Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS where Cormorant will be in play alongside 30 Sig Regt.

As the picture below shows we are becoming well versed at rolling out of the gates, and hope to be able to do it for real very soon.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MS Tivey**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) D Leask**

CO's CUP RUGBY SEVENS

Everyone had been looking forward to a hard game of sevens. Some soldiers, particularly the Gurkhas, were being introduced to

The Cormorant Regiment on display

rugby for the first time. 219 fielded a strong side and soon stamped their authority on the first game beating 214, who seemed to consist mainly of footballers.

The game between 246 and HQ was untidy but provided the 246 lads with a taste of the hard hitting game of rugby. They never shied from the tackle and proved just how fit they were, but the experience and guile of **Capt Paul Downie** and **Sgt Key** proved too much.

The big clash of the day was between 219 and HQ led by **Sgt Ginger Latham** and **Cpl Drewry** respectively. There had been a lot of banter before this game about how 219 would smash HQ, but despite all the talk, it was HQ who won the game two tries to one. 246 then played really well against 219, coming close to scoring by using their key tactic of mobbing the rugby ball and using their fitness to cause problems.

The final was a rematch between HQ and 219, with a lot of pride at stake. From the off, both teams gave no quarter, with big tackles coming from **LCpl Kama**, **Sgt Latham**, **Capt Downie** and **Sgt Key** and HQ came out victors. The afternoon was a great success and the Regt identified some hidden talent.

CO's CUP - COOK OFF COMPETITION

Once the admin instruction had been sent out for the inaugural inter-sqn Cook Off Challenge, the phone never stopped ringing with people asking "What's in the mystery box Chef?", or "What do we have to do?"

The teams arrived at the location looking very keen and excited to get on with the new challenge. All the team captains got stuck into sorting out the menus with their allocated Chef, while the rest of the team set up their field kitchens. 214 came with a 'ringer' in their team who used to be qualified Chef. HQ set about creating a gastronomic delight, then realised that the kit the Chefs get to work with was antiquated, so **Sgt Patterson** ran home to get his own knives! 246 were concerned about the originality of their menu when **Sgt Hem** decided to knock up a Biriani, then proceeded to do a little bit more cooking than was originally planned. From the start 219 seemed to have most things running smoothly, although they did have a bit of difficulty understanding, "A starter and main course, **or** a main course and a sweet!"

The CO, **Jimmy Knowels** (ex-ACC Catering Officer) and the Master Chef kindly volunteered to be impartial judges. The team leaders were asked to lay out their food and explain their menu choices to the judges, as they tasted each dish. After much eating and a bit of deliberation, 219 took first place, 214 came second.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

KOHIMA REUNION

Tuesday 25 April saw the annual 2 Div Kohima Reunion take place in York. The day started off in the Garrison Sergeants' Mess to give the Veterans and their families a chance to catch up with old friends, and for Regimental personnel to have the opportunity to hear some interesting stories. Under the watchful eyes of the RSM, all those involved boarded the buses to go to York Minster where an impressive service had been put together to honour those who fought in the battle. A wreath was laid and a short service of remembrance delivered before everybody got back onto the buses to return for a curry lunch and to tell more stories. The day culminated in a sing-song with The Road to Mandalay being the highlight.

CO's MARCH AND SHOOT

On a Friday, towards the end of May, 16 intrepid explorers from 214 Sig Sqn set out on a long a dangerous journey to Strensall. Their purpose; to compete in the March and Shoot Competition, part of the CO's Cup. The impending rain did not dampen their spirits. However, little did they realise that the run would take them through some of the deepest puddles in the whole of England; rain would not be a significant concern. After their 1.5 mile run, their attention turned to their rifles, which they had been carrying around all day and not yet used. Now was the time to keep their breath steady and their aim true as they fired their rounds from the 300m point, advancing to carry on the onslaught of fire from 200m, before delivering the final blow at 100m. Those intrepid explorers spilt blood, sweat and tears as they competed and a sterling effort was put in by all those who took part. Sadly the Sqn finished in 4th place out of 4. Though said through gritted teeth, well done to 246 who deserved to be the winners.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) NL Hunt**

On 21 May, 40 keen members of 219 Sig Sqn set off for a week long AT package to Ballater in Scotland. The week consisted of 2 days hill walking, 1 day mountain biking and a day of various activities; including orienteering, a trip to the Royal Lochnagar distillery and Balmoral Castle, the Scottish home of the Her Majesty the Queen. The hill walking consisted of a route around Cairngorm National Park with an ascent of Carn a Mhaim (1037m)

Snow in May means it must be Scotland - fortunately 219 were prepared for all eventualities

by way of Corie na Poite (1014m). At this height, the weather was cold, windy and snowy but the views from these mountains were simply amazing. In total, we covered a distance of 21km and a height gain of 600m in 5.5hrs. **LCpl Proudman** had the comment of the week "I am not entirely sure why but I really enjoyed this week, and actually I quite like hill walking" - wonders will never cease.

The mountain biking was a 26km bike ride, which started off at quite a fast pace towards Glen Tanar House, however, once we got onto the hills, the ground changed into big boulders and the pace slowed considerably. On reaching the top of the hill at some 243m we were then treated to a 5km downhill stretch. Most people went for it but there were a couple of the group that did not have the confidence. A number of the Sqn managed to fall off their bikes, most notably **2Lt Simon Gray** and **SSgt (SQMS) Head**. Remedial mountain biking is clearly needed!

On the last day we conducted an orienteering competition around the woods of Ballater, with the aim of collecting all 23 check points in 1hr 30mins. The route was a mixture of tracks and cross country routes, thus testing everyone's ability to navigate on a bearing using a map and compass. **Sig Nimmo** had the fastest time completing the course in 54 mins getting all check points. Most importantly it was enjoyable and no one got lost.

To finish off the week we visited the Royal Lochnagar Whisky Distillery, where we were shown how whisky is made. We then went to Balmoral Castle where we had the opportunity to see inside the Castle and view the grounds, and were given a detailed history of the estate and the monarchs associated with it.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DM Stoter**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Kedar**

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT ATHLETICS COMPETITION 2006

The Regtl Athletics Competition took place at Catterick Garrison Athletics Track on Thursday 11 May 06, ably organised by **WO2(QMSI) Denise Richards** and the Athletics Officer, **Capt Andy Slack**. The men's competition was an Inter-Sqn team event with women's competition being an open programme, to encourage as many competitors as possible.

On a gloriously sunny day, the programme began with the Trial Event – Hammer-chucking. **LCpl Daz Fry** soon showed he had superior strength but inferior technique! If points were awarded for hitting the cage, all the throwers would have scored massively. To save embarrassment, no points were allocated to this event. As the day moved on, it became a 2-horse race between 214 Sig Sqn and HQ Sqn. Notable stars included **Sig Young**, who can turn his hand to any event; **LCpl Rafemayo**, who destroyed the opposition over 100m – an unheard of 25m advantage at the finish, and in the women's competition, **LCpl Gurung**, **Cpl Hallsworth** and **Capt Robson** took most of the spoils.

Things changed in the afternoon in the men's competition; HQ Sqn had obviously had their strongest events in the morning and 214 Sig Sqn got their second wind. They started to pull away and it became a fight for second place between the rest. It was eventually all down to the relays and with 246 Sig Sqn performing so well, they pipped HQ Sqn to the runner-up spot. The final result was 214 first, 246 second with one point between HQ and 219 for third and fourth places.

To end a successful day, a Chain of Command race was run over 4x100m. Despite a strong start 214 faded towards the end. RHQ pushed from the rear. After a shaky handover at 200m, HQ Sqn wilted, and with age on 246's side, they stormed through to win it.

AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT TO EDEN CAMP
- by Sig Kama Limbu

It was a cold and misty morning when 16 members of Sek-Kong Tp headed towards Eden Camp. It is a unique Museum, which transports you back to wartime Britain. It used to be a POW Camp and the buildings have been kept in their original state with fascinating construction throughout. In early 1942, a small contingent of Army personnel erected tents to house the steady flow of enemy POW captured in North Africa. The first inmates were 250 Italian prisoners, who were put to work constructing a larger permanent camp, consisting of 45 huts.

We experienced the sights, sounds and even the smells of those dangerous years and felt that we were taking part in history. Today there are 29 Huts altogether and every hut covers a different aspect of the story; starting with the rise of the Nazi Party, Hitler and the Outbreak of War. Realistic pictures, with moving figures, authentic sounds and smells have been created to "transport you back in time". There are collections of WW2 operational vehs on display, moving figures of women at war

Sek Kong Troop at Eden Camp

coping with rationing, clothing coupons, black markets, black outs and working in weapons factories, while their husbands, sons, brothers and loved ones were fighting abroad.

You also get to see major conflicts worldwide after the end of WW2. It gives a good account of the men who were on National Services in Palestine, Malaya, Korea, Suez, Kenya, Singapore, Aden, Falklands, and The Gulf. There are pictures of Little Boy and Fat Man, which were the first two atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the B-29, 'The Enola Gay'. The trip was educationally valuable, interesting and thoroughly enjoyable.

SHOOTING - *by SSgt Bharat Shrestha*

The 2006 shooting competitions started with CORPSAM 06 held at Pirbright and Ash Ranges over the period 30 Mar – 07 Apr 06. All Royal Signals Units from all over the world had come for this event. A total of 5 firers from 12 Major and Minor Units teams took part at the competition.

2 Sig Regt has been performing extremely well over the last few years and this year was no exception. As always there was fierce competition and the Regt managed to bring some silver home but lost the unit team championship to 30 Sig Regt.

In the individual competition **SSgt Bharat Shrestha** became the Champion shot in the Royal Signals, as well as the Overall Combined Corps Champion. The 2 Div SAAM followed at Altcar Ranges. 2 Sig Regt once again retained its title as the Champion Regular unit in 2 Div.

Royal Signals personnel on Ex Protea Lion (British Army Combat Shooting Team South Africa) SSgt Bharat Shrestha 2 Sig Regt, Lt Oliver 2 Sig Regt, LCpl Saroj Rana 30 Sig Regt, Capt Kell 33 Sig Regt, LCpl Brock 2 Sig Regt, Cpl Devprakash Gurung 30 Sig Regt, Sig Sachin Thapa 30 Sig Regt

Royal Signals personnel have been performing extremely well over the last few years and 3 members from the Regt were selected to represent the British Army Combat Shooting Team (BACST) in South Africa: **Lt Olivier**, **SSgt Bharat Shrestha** and **LCpl Brock**.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col A G Hill**
RSM **WO1 Wakeling**

IN FOCUS

The last 2 months have been spent with the emphasis on preparing 206 Sig Sqn for their upcoming tour in Iraq. The majority of the Sqn will deploy to Baghdad, with a handful (including the CO and a select band of RHQ staff) going further south to MND(SE). Needless to say, we wish them a safe tour and look forward to a SITREP in the next issue of *The Wire*.

REGIMENTAL BOXING NIGHT

On Thursday the 1st of June 2006, the Regt gathered in the Nuffield Hall at Picton Barracks for the last time for at least a year. Op commitments mean that this year's Inter-Sqn Novice Boxing Championship was the last 'gathering' until everyone safely returns from TELIC and OCCULUS in 07. The setting was perfect, the ring was immaculate and the Nuffield itself had been decorated so as to be unrecognisable. The QMSI, **WO2 Rab Lundie** and **SSgt Andy Dawson** and all their team are congratulated on the work they had done.

The boxers had been training for 6 weeks under the tutelage of **SSgts Timothy Bishop** and **Jim Bean** and were fit, confident and ready to go. The opening bout was a cracker **LCpl Sarawaka** (202) and **Sig Davidson-Page** (206) went at each other from the opening bell, with the former ending as the winner. Fight 3 had everybody on their feet as **Lt Vanessa Shipley** stood toe to toe with **LCpl Kerry Cummings**. With neither taking a backward step, the Judges had a real problem separating them but eventually went for **LCpl Kerry Cummings** by a majority verdict. **Lt Vanessa Shipley** was rewarded with the 'Most Gallant Runner Up' award. Best boxer went to **Cpl Gillard.** Other outstanding boxers included the physically domineering **LCpl Tideswell** (206) taking on the technical skills of **LCpl Lee Evans** (HQ) with **Evans** gaining the upper hand; forcing a standing 8 count and eventually coming out as winner by unanimous decision. An excellent night's boxing was concluded by a luminous sticks display from the Drums of the DWR and everyone left the arena suitably satisfied with the evening. The Div Boxing Officer, **WO1 (SMI) Best** APTC, remarked it was the best boxing night he could remember. Congratulations to all who contributed particularly the boxers themselves.

NORMANDY MARCHES – EXERCISE IRON TRIBUTE
- by 2Lt Nick Purdy

In early June, members of 202 (Armd) Sig Sqn deployed on Ex IRON TRIBUTE to take part in the 62nd Anniversary Commemoration of the D-Day landings.

The Sqn were extremely fortunate and privileged to have 6 D-Day veterans with them, 5 of whom were from the 3rd British Inf Div, who stormed the beaches of Normandy back in 1944.

The first day was spent on a Sqn Battlefield Tour, visiting various places around the region, including Pegasus Bridge, Sword Beach, Arromanches, Omaha Beach and Colleville the American cemetery. Seeing the huge American cemetery was breathtaking and very different to the smaller British cemeteries. The first memorial parade took place on the afternoon of 5 June at the British Memorial Gardens in Caen. There were representatives from the Div HQ, including the GOC and CRA as well as the Regt 2IC and the Sqn hierarchy. We were also fortunate to have our own Piper, **LCpl Matt Bailey** and Bugler **Sig Matt Vine**, who

The 3 UK Div Boxing Team!

RSM with Vets

played their hearts out. Parades also took place over the next 2 days at the Chateau Ducal Memorial in Caen, Sword Beach, La Breche, Hermanville British Cemetery (where French children laid flowers on each British serviceman's grave), Periers-Sur-Le-Dan, and Sannerville Memorial. Needless to say, all were very moving and the Sqn performed magnificently in the sweltering heat.

EXERCISE APHRODITES RUN 2006 - *by Capt Cat French*

Ex APHRODITES RUN was an Army Triathlon Association (ATA) warm weather intensive trg and race camp held at RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus over the period 3 -17 May 06. The 19 triathletes ranged in standard from elite to novice and were drawn from across the Army. **Capt Cat French** and **Sgt Lee Jakeman** from 3 Div Sig Regt and **Cpl Tipps Tipperwell** from 30 Sig Regt made up the Royal Signals contingent.

The first days trg was designed to acclimatise the athletes to the heat of Cyprus and consisted of: a 50km bike ride up and down hills (well mountains really) followed immediately by a 20 min run in the morning and then a 2300m pool session in the afternoon. That set the pattern for the rest of the 2 weeks.

In all we covered over 450km on the bikes, over 30km swimming and 30km running. The trg was both fantastic and varied, with pool and sea swims, cycling up mountains, demanding track sessions for the run and the all important transition trg. Also included in the programme was a local Cypriot triathlon in Limassol, another triathlon hosted by the K1 Club in RAF Akrotiri and 2 x 10 mile time trials on the bikes. The trg was obviously working, with a number of athletes recording personal best times at the competitions and every single athlete improving their time on the second 10 mile time trial.

DIVSAAM - *by LCpl Matt Bailey*

The Regimental shooting team competed in the DIVSAAM from the 10 – 12 May 06 at Bulford ranges. The weather was glorious sunshine with no wind. This along with the team's recent success at the CORPSAM led to morale being high and the team confident of doing well in the competition; hopefully qualifying for CENTSAAM. The notorious Para Regt cup proved to be a challenge with the sun beating down on the team the whole way round the course. **Sig Jonny Whitmore** paraded with his factor 60 sunblock, especially formulated to protect his acute gingerness. Despite the sun (and aforementioned gingerness), the team did well, completing the 2 mile course in 18 minutes and shooting well; finishing 8th and 9th out of 58 teams. **CSgt Mark Cooper** managed to achieve the highest possible score (HPS) on the Roberts Cup but had to reshoot against the other HPS competitors. Once again he achieved a HPS, helping the team as a whole to secure 1st place, as well as achieving the individual 1st place for himself.

Sig Tom Elliot shot exceptionally well and achieved joint top score in the Roupell Cup of 38, having to reshoot, but this time came second by the narrow margin of one point. His high score helped the team achieve 3rd place. Other successes during the SAAM, were **Sig Jonny Whitmore** - Best Young Soldier, and **CSgt Mark Cooper** and **Sig Tom Elliot** finishing in 2nd and 3rd respectively out of 260 firers. The team as a whole performed exceptionally well with the 2 fire teams finishing 1st and 7th out of 58 teams, so with a combined score we finished in a very respectable 3rd which was good enough for entry to the CENTSAAM.

INTER SQN ATHLETICS - *by Lt Chris Moody*

On 3 May, the Regt travelled to the world famous Tidworth Oval to partake in the Inter-Sqn athletics competition. Here the competitors would fight it out for a chance to participate in the Regt's Morrison Cup team.

Lt Alex Manley clears the water feature

The day was carefully organised by the Regtl Gym staff under the close eye of **WO2 (QMSI) Lundie** assisted by the sterling efforts of HQ Sqn who supplied tentage and the burgers; both vital ingredients to any athletics competition. During the event we were lucky to see the return of **Cpl Jackie Davies** who took a day out of her usually hectic Bobsleigh trg to compete in a record 7 events for HQ Sqn.

This assistance was greatly appreciated by the Sqn as they had only 4 other female competitors, and undoubtedly helped them to secure 1st place overall. The day was a resounding success and the final competition results were as follows:

1st place	HQ Sqn – 221pts
2nd place	202 Sqn – 190pts
3rd place	222 Sqn – 189pts
4th place	206 Sqn – 188pts

A trophy was also awarded for the best individual performance of the day. The winner was **Sig McGrath** from 202 Sqn for the gutsy efforts throughout the day, having taken part in the less than popular 5000m and 800m and winning both events.

EXERCISE ROBUST RHINO - *by LCpl Paula Walker*

206 Sig Sqn's preparation for the upcoming OP TELIC deployment has not been the easiest, particularly in conjunction with the never ending in-camp maintenance. We deployed to Caerwent Camp, just outside Chepstow, on Sunday 19 March 06. The camp is made up of a number of disused ammo compounds, a legacy from WW2, supported by tracks of varying standards and made all the more difficult by the tall banking separating most of the buildings. The first 4 days consisted of various stands, covering topics such as IEDs, convoy drills and some basic patrolling techniques. The 'gentle' soon gave way to the 'hectic', with a further 6 day ex period.

The patrolling was conducted in a mock civilian environment, with 2 different faction groups represented. As the ex continued, it soon became apparent who the main characters were: Mustaffa Sherrife (**WO2 (SSM) Plested**) and Imran Hook (**Capt Luke Webber**). I think I speak for everyone when I say that it did not seem to take them much effort to annoy and provoke the exercising troops! Either it came very naturally or they are very good actors.

The ex culminated in a 5 hour final attack, where we seized control of buildings, captured and killed enemy, as well as taking a few of our own casualties. It ended in a small, but well defended compound; with the inevitable result; that 206 Sig Sqn were the victors.

AND FINALLY

Congratulations go to **Sgt Will Browning**, **Cpl Sarah O'Reily**, **LCpl Ginge Crossman** and **Sigs Leanne Knott** and **Steve Mead** of the RRT for the commendation they received from the Master and SOinC for their outstanding work in the field of recruiting. We also offer our congratulations to **WO2(SSM) Tony Caufield** on his promotion and selection as RSM 1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM	**WO1 TJ Lappin**

Half the Regt is currently deployed to Afghanistan and the other half trg actively to take over in September.

These notes give some early impressions and experiences from the deployed troops and cover the myriad of activities continuing in Elmpt.

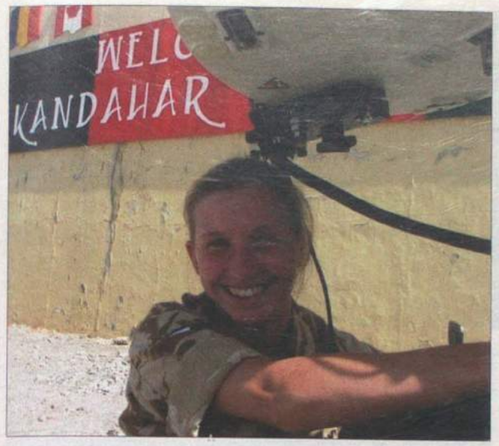
231 SIGNAL SQUADRON GROUP - AFGHANISTAN
- by Lt McGuckain

After nearly 2 months of waiting for this deployment, we finally got the chance to breathe in the air of Afghanistan. On arrival at Kandahar airfield, the Sqn spent much of its time organising its eqpt and eagerly awaiting onward deployment fwd into Helmand province. The airfield was the staging area for the fwd move and allowed us time to acclimatise. As we were hosted by the Americans, trg in a gym the size of a supermarket, the transition was altogether a formidable experience.

It was not long before the recces were complete. All plans were fully hatched and sites were ready to be occupied. The sites varied from the town environment in the centre of Lashkar Gar to the barrenness of Camp Bastion.

A small team deployed to HQ ISAF forming the sp staff for the transition period, ISAF VIII, (Italian led) to ISAF IX, (British led). This culminated in an interesting parade led by the Italian Padre with God on his side and a very confused **Cpl Schiedecker** who didn't know whether to move or standstill and frequently forgot whether he was British, German or Italian.

In Kabul, the Sqn was met by welcoming children who waved and stuck their thumbs up. This display of affection was because their parents had told them that the British Army had driven the Taliban away. The task in hand meant a steep learning curve. As a range of new skills had to be acquired and the difference



Sig Atherton testing the Bantam dish at Kandahar

between life back in camp and an op environment quickly became apparent. Although our task was straight forward, to provide COMDBRITFOR and his staff with the comms infrastructure to fulfil their mission in Afghanistan, the op environment placed a new incentive on us.

Down at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Price, elements of 231 Sig Sqn Gp began an altogether different tasking, providing comms for 3 Para Regt and the Pathfinders. After a few initial teething problems, like us arriving a week before the eqpt was flown in under a Chinook, we busied ourselves with laying the quad. The elements were a challenge in themselves, as the heat was overwhelming. However **Sgt Smith** came to the rescue with a make shift water re-hydration system which seemed to do the trick.

Camp Bastion provided an entirely different setting. It spread across an entirely unforgiving landscape. This was the biggest British deployed base since WW2. Working closely with the Gurkhas and the Royal Marines has provided the opportunity to go out on veh patrols in the area. As well as trg the Afghan National Army and taking part in veh patrols, we also found time to set out and maintain all the secure strat comms for the deployed elements at Bastion.

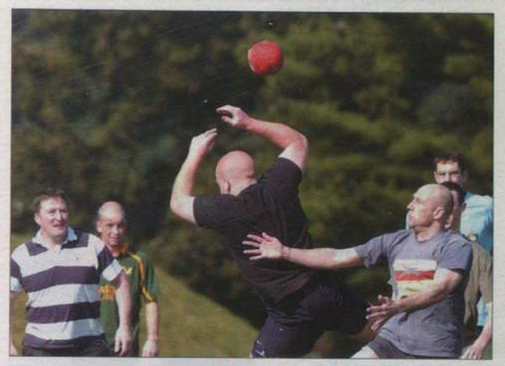
Sig Chapman finishes a patrol with the Gurkhas

Last but by no means least elements also deployed to Lashkar Gah. Thanks to the efforts of **Cpl Dave Burford**, our TALON links were in within a record 2 days. We were ready to provide telephones and JOCS terminals to the Staff Officers.

Although for some the pace has begun to slow down, as we look forward to the R&R phase. Inst Techs have been working all hours across the entire Theatre in order to get the permanent fits for the different HQs installed.

ANZAC DAY – 25 APRIL 2006 - *by Lt Aldrich*

The officers and soldiers of 7 Sig Regt commemorated ANZAC Day, Australia's most important national occasion, in style. The day started early with gunfire and ANZAC biscuits being served in the soldiers accommodation by Officers and Warrant Officers. Following this a dawn service was attended by the Regt. **Maj Murray Thompson**, Royal Australian Army, spoke of the sacrifice given by the thousands of ANZAC soldiers who lost their lives not only at Gallipoli in 1915 but in every conflict since then. The relevance that this commemoration has to soldiers serving today was brought home to everyone and we thought of those deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Balkans. The PTIs ran an excellent sports competition with an Antipodean twist. Aussie Rules Football, Rugby League, volleyball, "Throw the Shrimp on



Aussie Rules Football proves popular

The Barbi" to name but a few. Tps and Sqns entered teams of 15 and the fun began. We even had a competition to translate bizarre Australian slang words into English.

229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn proved to be the most 'Aussified' with a team winning the Aussie Rules Football Competition, and the overall winners of the day being the 229 Sqn Seniors and Officers Team known as KFC (Kylie Fan Club!) headed up by **Sgt Steve Miners.**

The weather couldn't have been better for the BBQ and live entertainment in the afternoon. An engaging Kiwi comedian kept the masses laughing with his very Antipodean sense of humour, interspersed with which was some excellent live music provided by **Maj Herbert** and his band. An excellent thought provoking day of reflection, remembrance and celebration. Thanks must go to **Sgt Matt Hulbert** and **Lt Talitha Kelly** for their weeks of hard work to make a great day run so smoothly.

– and they're off!

BRUGGEN 10 - *by Cpl Lester*

Saturday 8 April 2006 was the date of this year's Annual Bruggen 10 Road Race. Registration began at 10 o'clock in the morning, where competitors from all over the EU came together and met up with familiar faces from previous races and many from units around the Corps. Following registration was the long, stomach-churning wait for the race to begin. Runners paced with apprehension as the start of the event loomed closer with every minute.

The race was started by CO 7 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Blackwell**. The wind was behind us as we ran up the airfield following the BFBS camera crew, giving us a pretty good start. Whilst running through the married quarters we were cheered on by the families giving encouragement to all.

Making our way back on the airfield, the long soul destroying road that circles Javelin Barracks beckoned us. We counted down the miles as each was marked by large red signs. The overcast sky promised a hint of rain to cool us all off; however the strong winds in the wide-open spaces slowed even the quickest of runners. My 10 mile run turned in to a plod as I passed the 7 mile mark and the quicker runners disappeared into the distance. Spurred on by the families as we once again passed through the quarters, the last mile loomed. Turning the final corner, the finish line was finally in sight, but the 800m or so to it felt like another 8 miles as the wind was blowing into our faces. Relief overwhelmed me as I crossed the line and took on some all important fluids. Even though my legs didn't want to, I quickly made my way to the finish line to watch others cross.

7 Signal Regiment's tired PTI crosses the line

WO2 SSM Whitworth was the first person from 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn to cross the line with a time of 1hr 5mins, **Cpl Chacksfield** crossed with his black Labrador puppy **Molly** (looking like she was going to bite her owner!) **Mr Arjan Beije** 'the Dutch road-runner' was the winner of the men's race with a time of 55 mins 9 secs. **Miss Hollie Rowlands** crossed the line in 1 hr 1 min 35 secs leading the women's race.

After stretching off, showering and generally relaxing, we returned to the start line for the after-race party. Having chowed down on the tasty burgers supplied by NAAFI, the Fosters began to flow like the Rhine. The DJ began to pump the tunes out and it didn't take long before the dance floor was full of party animals. The day couldn't have finished off any better and I'm sure it was enjoyed by all who attended and I, like many others, will be returning in 2007 to better my time.

LS AND GC PRESENTATIONS - *by 2Lt Archibald*

Brig N A W Pope, Comd 1Sig Bde visited Elmpt Station's WOs' and Sgts' Mess on 28 March to present 5 Long Service & Good Conduct medals. The recipients were **SSgt McMullan**, **SSgt Watson**, **Sgt Ward** and **Sgt Purdon** from 7 Sig Regt and **Sgt Rickard** from 16 Sig Regt.

The presentations were followed by lunch and drinks held in the Mess to celebrate a total of more than 75 years service in the UK and overseas, including numerous op tours around the world. The wives and children of the recipients were invited to attend the afternoon. Thanks to the excellent hosting and running of the event by all at the Mess, a great afternoon was had by all. Congratulations and thanks to all the recipients.

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM **WO1(RSM) T Henry**

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC **Maj DE Cain**
SSM **WO2 MA Bell**

CORPSAM 2006 - *by Sig Doherty*

Volunteers for the Regtl Shooting team were asked for back in March. **Sig Thomas**, **Sig Rourke** and I submitted our names and were selected to represent the Regt. We started trg almost immediately and met our fellow team mates **SSgt Padfield** and **Cpl Redfern**, with **Cpl Sabiston** and **LCpl Naresh**, who were shooting as individuals.

As trg started almost immediately after SYSEX, we had to get to know as many of the shoots as possible in a short time. To achieve this we spent every free day we had practicing. The first week we headed down to Bulford ranges where we put our marksmanship principles into practice and squadded on to ranges to do the various shoots. The trg itself was hard because

Sig Doherty proudly shows his CORPSAM medal for Best Young Soldier

we had to remember all the shoots in a routine format, i.e. the number of rounds per target and when to run down to the next firing point. The trg consisted of both dry and live shooting. The dry trg we practised at the 'airfield' in Blandford, where we learned the format of the shoots. This helped us understand what would happen when we carried out the actual shoots with live ammo and allowed us to concentrate on shooting straight. While practising shooting on the ranges we were able to observe other Regts. This was interesting, as we saw how poor some of them were and that made us feel a lot better!

After 2 week's trg had come to an end, we knew it was time for the actual competition. On the Sunday we gathered with our bags for the trip. Monday morning came and it was straight into it, the first few shoots only minutes away. The shoots were action packed with teams rushing here and there to get their last team talks in. It was at this point that our preparation came into play. Considering this was the first time that we had ever tried anything like this, we had a good start after the first day. It also gave **Cpl Redfern** the chance to show off his skills by winning the Pool Bull, which he had taken part in

The next few days were just as good as the first, with hard shoots like the LMG Match, this took a lot of physical effort as it was running and shooting, The Para Cup which was a fire team assessment and The Association, a high scoring points match. The whole week was a good chance for the team to shoot other weapons that they would not normally be able to – the HK range and some historic weapons, e.g. the Lee Enfield No4 from WW2.

Thursday night was the prize giving for all the individual medals. We had a curry and got to swing the lantern and tell the others how it all went. It was here that I was told I had won a medal in the Association Match, as best Young Soldier. For me and the team it was a good end to the week. All that was left to do was get back to camp and square away all our admin!

RAF COSFORD MARCHES 22-23 April 2006
- by Cpl Mackay (Rhino Troop)

11 Sig Regt will be entering a team into the forthcoming Nijmegen Marches in July this year. Team trg has been taking place since February. With the increasing numbers of people wishing to take part in the Nijmegen Marches, qualifier marches take place before the main event. The UK qualifier marches took place at RAF Cosford (near Telford) on 22 and 23 April 06. 11 Sig Regt entered a team with the aim of qualifying for a place in Holland.

The RAF Cosford Marches consisted of two 25 mile road routes over undulating terrain. Awoken at 0430 hrs, the team sprang into action getting ready for the first day of marching. The march was to take us 25 miles to the north east of the camp. After breakfast, the next stop was the parade square to register and await the start of the march. Teams from various units (cadets and regular units) lined up, eager to get away. Spirits were high as the team headed out of the camp, with a salute and an eyes right for the inspecting officer. Once onto the small country roads, the pace picked up. Some outrageous overtaking later and we were striding ahead of many of the other teams.

Pace and squad discipline, controlled by two of Military Leadership Group's finest, showed no signs of diminishing and marching continued through small villages, the grounds of a country house and rolling countryside. The final section of the day's marching took the team 6km downhill, with the gigantic, silver, aircraft hangar in sight. The harshness of the tarmac underfoot was beginning to take its toll. The team marched on, still at a good pace, to the camp. RAF Cosford is about 150km long, well at least that's what it felt like to get from the gate to the parade square. There, the team marched smartly on, in two ranks, gave a final eyes left and salute to the inspection dais and the first day was over. The route had taken just over 7 hrs, but some were feeling the pain in their boots. With one day completed and one to go, we had a few swift pints of Guinness and a burger. Blisters were patched up and after a briefing was given, everyone was ready to rest.

Day 2 started with Reveille at a similarly disturbing hour, 0345 hrs this time. This march would take the team over the same distance on an equally undulating and tarmac route. Heading out

11 Signal Regiment marching team with their medals after the 50 miles trek in Cosford

Lt Col M Fensom presents the Gordon's Cup

to the west of the camp, the Gurkhas broke into song to speed the team on. To put on boots and start marching for a second day, given the state of the "hobblers" from the previous night, it was a brave team effort to keep going. Not a single person wanted to drop out from the squad. This took enormous will power from **Sig Fletcher** and **LCpl Gent**, and tremendous exertion to stay with the squad.

The pace didn't slow, even though many had adopted a "funky" style of walking towards the final stages. From village to village, the team approached the conclusion of the weekend's work. Masses of military squads, all with similar gaits, pushed on through the final village and on towards the finish. The pace didn't slow as the finish line approached and the end was in sight. We marched across the final metres of parade square, paid final respects to the inspecting officer and then it was over.

Presentation of the Medals took place about 40 mins later, with all of the team receiving a medal, having achieved the Marches. The team got 2nd place for Best Squad which ended an impressive weekend: when the going was tough, the complete team finished. The 11 Sig Regt team qualified for the Nijmegen Marches and will be departing for Holland in Mid-July. A brilliant effort by all involved with the marches and support.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Carter**
SSM **WO2 M Tench**

THE GORDON'S CUP 2006 - *by SSgt Hounsell (Iron Troop)*

11 Sig Regt holds a Military Skills Competition every 6 months. The three Sqns spend an enormous amount of time honing their skills, so that they put on a good show and more importantly win the prestigious Gordon's Cup and the admiration of all. The day got underway for 2 Sqn with the March and Shoot, which involved a 4 mile forced march carrying 15 lbs plus weapons, followed by a 90 round per person shoot. Each teams had a female participant, 2 Sqn's female was 16 year old **Sig Miller**. She put in a great display and when the team came in, she was leading from the front, proving that she can certainly hold her own in the tabbing stakes. After the NBC, First Aid and Map Reading stands came the Asslt Course.

They delivered the goods by winning by a clear 1 minute and 20 seconds. Following a few more events, the Log Race reared its ominous head. Two things were riding on the outcome of this: retaining the Log Race title itself and maintaining the pride of the Sqn. The race started at the sound of a claxon. All 3 teams sprinted like greyhounds out of the trap, grasped the toggles and picked up the logs. The course was a gruelling 2 miles of hills and uneven terrain.

The spectators were in absolute suspense, as the teams thrashed it out out of sight and then we saw the teams in the distance. They drew closer and my heart soared then sank as I realised 3 things, 2 Sqn were in front by 50m and it looked like a great victory. Then I then realised that the log was a man short, which would mean a 2 min time penalty. 2 Sqn Log Team put all they had into a very close and hard run race, but unfortunately one member of the team slipped into a pot hole and dislocated his shoulder. He tried to carry on, because letting his team mates down was something that **Sig Pichlingi** did not want to do, but the medics on hand said that it was too serious an injury for him to carry on.

The last event was the Commanding Officer's Event. No one had any idea what this entailed apart from the team size which was 32, including 1 SNCO, 3 JNCOs and the rest made up of Phase 2 Trainees. We all made our way to the start, where I was briefed on the task. It turned out to be a gun run with a punch. An FFR LR det was set up at one end of the field. It was completely cammed up and one of the wheels was missing.

There were also casualties who required attention. Our task was to de-cam the FFR, pack up the det, put the wheel on, patch up the wounded and push the LR and trailer across the 200 meter field, while carrying the casualties on stretchers. On reaching the other side of the field, we had to set up the det in exactly the same way and the event ended when comms were established with a radio check. As this was the most important event of the day, it was the one that everyone wanted to win. The whole team worked well together, the JNCOs proved their worth with clear and level headed commands and 2 Sqn were declared the winners. It would be wrong of me not to congratulate 3 Sqn, as they won 8 of the 10 events. Well done 3 Sqn on retaining the Cup, 2 Sqn were 2nd for the 3rd time. This was my last attempt...good luck **SSgt Fraser** for the next Gordon's Cup!

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Jones**
SSM **WO2(SSM) JM Swanston**

GORDON'S CUP 2006 - *by Cpl P Richardson (Ulster Troop)*

3 (Harrogate) Sqn's trg started weeks prior to the competition, with in house dry trg followed by a weekend confirmatory ex on Salisbury Plain, which was exceptionally organised by **Cpl Dave Tuck**. On the day of the competition, all the Phase 2 Trainees were tearing at the bit to show off all their trg and eagerness to retain the Gordon's Cup.

Straight from the start, all of the previous trg showed through with 3 Sqn comfortably winning 8 out of the 10 events and retaining the Gordon's Cup. A big thank you to **Cpl Dibbert** for his excellent leadership in organising all of the pre- trg and team selection for the day itself.

4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj MW Ruddock** R IRISH
SSM **WO2(PM) GM Rowan**

Following the move of Military Leadership Group (MLG) from Comd Trg Div into 11 Sig Regt last year, further changes have now been put into place to improve our delivery of military trg to the Corps and to cement our position within 11 Sig Regt. To the outsider the most obvious change has been our renaming as 4 (Military Training) Squadron, which has a rather familiar ring to it!

The SQMS, **SSgt Ian Chappell**, is managing to keep the Sp Wksp staff in overtime as they struggle to keep up with our requirement for yet more signs! All of our military trg activities are now centred on the Scarborough Building, in the woods just down the hill from the Corps Museum. Internal reorganisation has seen the Sqn develop into 3 Tps, each with a discreet role. NCO Trg Tp, headed by **WO1 Tony Ward**, is responsible for delivering Junior and Senior Comd Leadership and Management trg. **Capt Scott Macpherson** is OC Military Trg Tp, providing Induction Trg and Military Trg Refresher courses to Phase 2 Trainees and the Royal Signals Leadership Course, which is delivered by the newly named Leadership and Trg Advisory Team. Activities at the Gym and all AT are the responsibility of PAT Tp lead by the Master At Arms, **Capt Allan Brown** APTC.

You may have noticed that we no longer have a TA trg team. In order to streamline use of resources and recognising that op tours for TA soldiers are becoming increasingly common, the responsibility for delivery of TA military trg courses has been switched across to NCO Trg Tp. The aim is to deliver courses that are very closely aligned with the current junior and senior regular courses and are delivered by the same trg teams.

Here in 4 Sqn we have a wealth of experience in the field of military and leadership trg. If units out in the wider corps need advice and assistance in planning military trg activities, we are more than happy to help where we can. Please feel free to contact our 2IC, **Captain Tony Barry**, on Blandford Military 2185 as the initial point of contact.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col SJ Vickery R SIGNALS**
RSM **WO1(RSM) J Reid**

We're all feeling rather proud of ourselves at 14 Sig Regt (EW) at the moment. In addition to sustaining all our normal op and high readiness commitments we have added a LEWT deployment on Op HERRICK to our op portfolio, won the Birtwhistle Pennant for recruiting and come rather close to sweeping the board at the Morrison Cup.

Many congratulations to our female athletics team and the male 680kg Tug of War team for winning their events, and to the male athletics team, the 640kg Tug of War team and the female Tug of War team for all coming second. A word of praise should also go to our LAD who are now international REME football champions! Not a bad few months.

224 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Brown** INT CORPS
SSM **WO2(SSM) G Shuck**

EXERCISE PREMIER SKIRMISH II - *WO2(Supvr R) Marrs*

Having escaped the hustle and bustle of the Ops room to replace **WO2(Supvr R) Porter** in D Tp, I soon realised I had a fairly steep learning curve to negotiate. My first port of call was with the military trg side of life and luckily for me, **Lt Blackmore** and **SSgt(Supvr R) Badger** were running just the sort of ex I needed.

Sgt Edge 'Contact, wait out'!

Ex PREMIER SKIRMISH II was to be a confirmatory ex, proving Sqn military skills were up to standards for overseas deployment, as laid down by the Regtl Trg Offr. Having relinquished my title of Ops WO for the week and instead taking on the salubrious title of 'Crewman', I set about stagging on, stagging on and er, stagging on! During deployment orders **Sgt Gav Wilson** was designated by the DS as Det Comd, **LCpl Rose,** 2IC and under their rather firm comd, we deployed in convoy to Stanta trg area and set up.

Having spent the previous night constantly re-jigging our Det instead of sleeping, we ensured the next set up was a much more professional affair. We knew we'd cut the mustard when the Mitchell brothers, **SSgt(Supvr R) Badge**r and **SSgt Willumsen** of the DS visited and left sporting grins from ear to ear! Our team, now settled into a routine, dealt with the many varied scenarios thrown at us during the ex. The trg was superb and saw us having to deal with mine attacks, media intrusions and rioting, amongst other things, and culminated with a 4hr long FIBUA battle prior to Endex. The FIBUA attack featured many highlights of which perhaps the best was **Sgt Gav Wilson** going 'rogue', attempting to clear 27 rooms on his own and having to be taken out by **Sgt Orme**, his sect IC!

Goodbye to **Sgt Tina Whale** who departs for Brawdy on promotion**, Sgt Gav Wilson** who starts a new career with the Australian Army in August and **Cpl Lonsdale** who is off to Y Sqn, Plymouth. In addition, **Sgt Marcus Baldwin** is joining 1 UK Civ Div. The Sqn would like to wish you and your partners all the very best for the future!

LEWT DEPART FOR Op HERRICK 4

Since November 2005, the LEWT have been trg extremely hard for their op deployment on Op HERRICK. This has included OPTAGs, SOP validation and exs with 16 Air Asslt Bde and the PF PI. This hard work has finally paid off with the initial elements deploying in April and the main body in May. They have settled into Theatre very well and are proving valuable force protection and int to soldiers and comds on the ground, including some novel usage of EW eqpt.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj PR Flavell**
SSM **WO2(SSM) MS Morgan**

EXERCISE WESSEX WARRIOR - *by LCpl Greener*

Victor Tp have recently participated in the very useful Ex WESSEX WARRIOR with 12 Mech Bde, and the ex allowed both

The Sqn Tug of War team take the strain

sides to gain a greater understanding of the practicalities of working together – something that we hope to be capitalising on in time for deployment on Op Herrick. On the home front, Regtl tug of war and athletics featured highly, particularly our female team who excelled, winning all events, but sadly this was not enough to allow the Sqn to drag itself into first place. **Sig Tuppen** won all of her events – her fantastic fitness and commitment to regtl level sport continues to amaze the less sporty among us. Congratulations go to **SSgt Gleave** who was recently promoted, and to **Lt Coates** on inheriting the crack team that is V Tp! Welcome also to **Sig Fawbert** who joins us from Blandford. He has the great chance to see the whole Regt deploy in all its glory on Ex GRIFFINS FOCUS soon!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj SG Scott**
SSM	**WO2 KN Smith**

EXERCISE MOUFLON SPRING - *by LCpl Halsall*

Over the period 8 – 12 May, members of 245 Sig Sqn deployed to Templeton trg area and other sites within the local area. This ex was designed to train and test both our armd and Spearhead Lead Element Sqn components, in order to prove our R5 status and to ready us for Ex RHINO CHARGE in Poland in November this year. The ex scenario was designed to prepare the Sqn for the possible deployment to Afghanistan next year. For once the ex planners got it right and booked perfect sunshine all week, so the armour spirit was evident throughout. It was another real opportunity to get hands on the kit and the SLE under **Lt Godfrey** proved to be more than competent at their tasking. The ex was a success by all accounts as none of the armour broke down and all the objectives were met.

5 DIV FEMALE 6-A-SIDE FOOTBALL COMPETITION, WARMINSTER

On 5 April, a confident team of 8 departed Brawdy at the crack of dawn for a day of adventure that would take us ..... to England! Posted at the end of the world in West Wales you have to cling on to any such excitement. Having never played as a team before, and some never having kicked a ball, we were going purely to enjoy ourselves and make a difference to the competition.

Despite playing 6-a-side on a full size pitch, we had a good time, especially with the sun blazing all day. With a strong performance from **Cfn Shep Shephard** and the go-gadget arms and legs of goalkeeper, **Cpl Maddy Mills**, we managed to finish third in the competition. A big thanks to the 245 Sig Sqn team members **Lt Godfrey**, **Cpl Mills**, **LCpl Hunt** and **Sig Delauro**, as well as **Cpl Whitmore**, **LCpl Morrison**, **Sig Rai** and **Cfn Shephard**.

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) S Littlefield**

DISBANDMENT OF 15th SIGNAL REGIMENT

HQNI & 15th Sig Regt has now completed the final hand over of ICS provision to 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) as part of the 'Normalisation' process under Op BANNER. With the transition and transfer completed seamlessly, it was time for 15th Sig Regt to close once more. To mark the occasion a number of events were arranged over the weekend 12 and 13 May 2006.

HISTORY

Before WW2, Egypt consisted of three coys: 1st and 3rd Coys in Egypt and 2nd Coy in Palestine. In response to the deterioration in the internal security in Palestine in 1938, responsibility for ops was divided between new Div HQs (7th and 8th). When 8th Inf Div was broken up in Palestine in February 1940, its sig units combined with others drawn from units in Egypt to form 3rd GHQ Sig Regt for GHQ MELF at the Cairo HQ of **General Wavell**. The Regt remained in the ME for the duration of WW2.

The Regt moved from Cairo to Moascar in the Suez Canal Zone in 1947 and from there to Episkopi in Cyprus in1955. The arrival of GHQ ME Comd was split into 2 new comds, divided by the Suez Canal. British Forces Arabian Peninsula formed at Aden, and ME Comd in Cyprus.

The latter was renamed Near East Comd in 1961. In Cyprus, the Regt supervised the work of the deployed radar and surveillance troops of the Royal Artillery. As its responsibilities were largely confined to Cyprus, the Regt was renamed 15th Sig Regt and took over the duties of 29th Sig Regt in September 1960. With the end of the terrorist campaign and the subsequent run-down of the British Forces in Cyprus, 15th Sig Regt was run down during 1962 and disbanded on 31 March 1963.

The Regt reformed in Aden on 22 January 1965 from 254 (Aden) and 255 (Bahrain) Sig Sqns, and 603 (Mideast) and 643 (Comms Security) Sig Tps. One sqn manned the COMCEN, and one sqn provided radio links with operational units. A third sqn remained in Bahrain. The Regt's role was to provide sp for the substantially increased garrison in Aden, whose task was to maintain order for a smooth transition from British rule by 1967. The Regt disbanded in October 1967, and the Rearguard Sqn remained for another month, before all signals personnel left Aden in November of that year. 603 Sig Tp reformed in Oman, and remained there until March 1977.

15th Signal Regiment marches past

OPERATION BANNER

15th Sig Regt was reformed at Lisburn in Northern Ireland on 1 February 1990 and absorbed the two Sqns, 225 and 233, that were already in Province. It has provided continuous sp to Op BANNER up until 12 May 2006, when it once again formally ceased ops.

To mark the closure of 15th Sig Regt and in order to celebrate what the Regt has achieved on Op BANNER since 1990 as part of the wider Royal Signals Community, a number of events were conducted on the 12 and 13 May 2006.

The recent Regtl history in association with the troubles is short, but in that time a great deal has been achieved. Even though the Regt has ceased ops, there are still many Royal Signals soldiers who continue the task of comd sp in NI. The ICS has been transferred to 39 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (213) to complete the transition towards the end of Op BANNER and Normalisation. On 12 May 2006, 15th Sig Regt closed after 16 years in this, its latest form.

DAWN PARADE

Early on the morning of 12 May 2006, the Regt gathered to hold a Dawn Parade, where we held a Drum Head service. This gave us the opportunity to reflect and pay our respects to our fallen colleagues and everyone who has been affected by the troubles. As well as the good times, we took time to reflect on the sad events and those members of the Regt who have died on ops or have lost loved ones whilst serving in NI. Either in pursuit of their responsibilities, or while constrained by the limitations of life in an op theatre, there has been a great sacrifice. The recent deaths of 3 Royal Signals soldiers, in the space of 2 weeks in 3 different incidents has certainly focussed our minds.

BAND CONCERT

On the evening of 12 May 2006, the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals under the direction of **Capt Guy Booth** entertained the Regt and all personnel within Lisburn Station with an evening "In Concert". Despite attempts by the weather to thwart proceedings the evening was excellent.

15th SIGNAL REGIMENT ON PARADE

The Regt formed up on Saturday 13 May 2006. The reviewing officer for the parade was the GOC NI, **Lt Gen Sir Redmond Watt KCVO CBE**. After being inspected for the final time, the Regt marched past in slow and quick time.

This marked the first formal event as part of the drawdown of troops under the Normalisation process. The GOC was very complimentary about the standard of drill and thanked those on parade, including past members of the Regt, for their contribution to Op BANNER. The work the Royal Signals has conducted has contributed significantly to the success over the years across the Province. This extends to the continued work that the ECM (FP) Sqn is committed to in sp of British troops deployed across the world.

The Regtl flag was lowered, presented to the RSM, **WO1 Littlefield** and the Regt marched off for the final time.

BEATING RETREAT

As the final finale before the evening Regtl function, the Royal Signals Parachute Display Team jumped into Lisburn Station for their first jump of the season. After Team Capt, **Capt Si Bristow**, made a presentation to the SOinC(A), the Royal Signals Band marched on to Beat Retreat. With the flags lowered for the last time the Regtl Officers, WOs and SNCOs and guests moved through to the mess to toast the Regt, past and present. We were fortunate that 5 previous COs were able to join us as part of the celebrations.

WO1(RSM) Littlefield receives the Regiment's flag from the GOC

Previous COs: Col(Retd) SM Siddall, Brig(Retd) DE Rowlinson, Col GMS Shipley, SOinC(A), Lt Col MC Smyth-Roberts, Col GJT Rafferty and Brig(Retd) C Le Gallais

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Jase Goldsworthy**

16 Sig Regt is currently deployed on ops in Afghanistan, providing ICS sp to both Op HERRICK and HQ ISAF IX missions. 16 Sig Regt Gp is an amalgamation of 7 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt and ARRC Sp Bn soldiers, led by the CO of 16 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**.

There are also 52 soldiers providing force protection to HQ ISAF and the surrounding area. In addition, HQ Sqn 16 Sig Regt makes up the Kabul Sp Unit, whose task is the life sp for the Comd British Forces and his staff and controlling stores in and out of theatre for Op HERRICK. 16 Sig Regt Gp has almost 400 soldiers deployed across Afghanistan. Here is an update from the various locations.

ISAF IX SIGNAL SUPPORT GROUP HQ ISAF KABUL
– Cpl Andy Rousell

OC **Maj Al Long**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Andy Maylett**

The Signals Support Group (SSG) consists of 7 depts. These are the Comd Post, Comms Dept, Sys Admin, Line Sect, Help Desk, Crypto Dept and the ICN det (NATO radio det). Based in Kabul, they provide ICS for HQ ISAF. All depts work hard, but SSG does find the time to unwind with some PT and sport. Football is a favourite, with SSG representing Serbia and Montenegro in the ISAF charity World Cup. We were spectacularly dumped out of the group stages, after thinking we were clear favourites.

The Manager, **WO2(YofS) Si Boase** was disappointed to miss out on the first 2 games, but proud of his lads for winning the final game of the group 6-0.

2ND LINE PRT - *Sig Luke Chadwick*

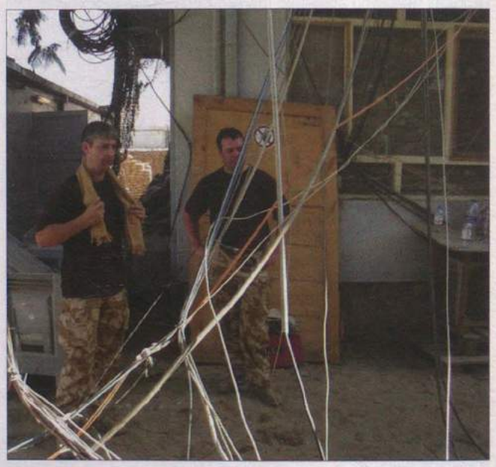
The 2nd Line PRT team consists of 11 men, under **WO2(FofS) Neil Mitchell**. Our main mission is to provide a sp element for all the PRT teams around the entire country. This usually means a lot of travelling out to the sites to carry out the work. When at HQ ISAF, we provide a "helpdesk" service, and give info on the eqpt which is used by all PRT and Forward Support Base (FSB) sites. We also monitor the IS and SATCOM connections between sites. When out on a project, we strip the comms infrastructure out of an old site and rebuild it in a new, more permanent location. This normally means setting up a new Bandwidth Management Equipment (BME) Network. This is left to the Techs and installing the entire cable infrastructure is taken care of by the Inst Techs. The IS Engs are responsible for setting up the network between all the users, routers and switches.

During the past month, I have managed to visit 3 of the sites we control: Chagcharan, Kunduz and Herat. Kunduz was very hot, reaching 56 degrees C around midday and never dropping below 30 degrees. **Sgt Rosy Roseveare** and I certainly felt the heat when pulling over 200m of fibre optic cable, through a pit and duct system. Nevertheless, it was a good experience and it was great doing what we have been trained to come out here and do.

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM (RCST) (NORTH) – MAZAR-E-SHARIF - *by LCpl R Westmoreland*

We are a small team of 6, responsible for providing Close Sp to NATO comms at Regional Command North, which is in sp of the German military who operate in this area. We are all enjoying the building site we call home (for 6 months anyway!) The camel spiders don't make the best neighbours but you get over them. At least we are with the Germans, so we can gloat when we win the World Cup.

2nd Line PRT



WO2(FofS) Mitchell and Sgt Goulbourn find some atrocious cabling to sort out

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM (RCST) (WEST) – HERAT – *by Sig Gareth Cockburn*

After spending 3 days at HQ ISAF getting the best of trg from the SSG, we were whisked off to our location in the Western Region of Afghanistan to use this first class trg for real on the CIS eqpt in FSB Herat. The Camp we arrived at was remote and desolate but on the first night, we made good friends with the Italians. This friendship blossomed when they helped blow our tent back up, after it had deflated into what looked like a massive giant sleeping bag with 6 compressed squaddies inside, frantically looking for the air holes to pump it back up.

Our job up here as the RCST(W) is to maintain NATO CIS eqpt for op purposes. We cover the 4 provinces of the RC(W): Herat, Farah, Baghdis and Ghor. The only way down to the locations is by a Spanish Cougar Helicopter and **LCpl Hart's** grin as we brushed over the mountains was as big as the Cheshire Cat's. Although he is 21, we still think he is 12, and he has already been christened: 'Fascia De Bambino' by the Italian contingent.

We have just completed the move of the whole of the CIS Comms from the FSB to the new reformed RC(W) HQ which is operational from 1 June 06. We have had a lot of praise and thanks from the General Staff using the CIS eqpt.

As we were so hard working, professional and committed to the move, **Brig Gen Errico** (Italian Army), Comd RC(W) sent his personal praise to our OC, **Maj Long** and **Col Davis** SO1 CJ6.

The COS ISAF, **Maj Gen CC Brown CBE**, was in our location for the ceremonial handover of the new RC(W) HQ on 1 June 06. As part of the ceremony, **Sig Cockburn** presented the NATO flag to the COS ISAF for presentation to Comd RC(W). **LCpl Hart** raised the flag and the handover of comd of the Western Region was complete.

Although it sounds like hard work over here, we have had been invited to a number of social evenings, including ones with the Italians, Spanish, Lithuanians and the Slovenians. With the World Cup is on its way, there has been friendly rivalry with the Italians and Spanish.

FORCE PROTECTION – HQ ISAF – *Lt James Osterloh*

170 Force Protection Company (FP Coy), the majority of which is made up of soldiers from 16 Sig Regt has begun to make a positive impact in their AOR, only a few weeks after arriving in theatre.

After the expected chaos of a handover/takeover on 4 May from the Italian FP Coy (who we discovered never did foot patrols), the new arrivals very quickly found themselves a part of a tough rotation; and this with much of the coy still awaiting flights from Germany. Within 2 weeks however, the coy was at full strength and **Lt McMillan's** platoon who had already done a month of unglamorous internal security (IS) duties were able to share the load with the rest of the multiples.

Lt James Osterloh meets the locals on patrol in Kabul

16 Sig Regt soldier, 26 year old Sig Adam Mahady-Iddins meets Afghan child while on patrol on Bibi Mahro Hill, one of the poorest suburbs in Kabul

The tasks now vary from QRF, patrols and guard duty to IS at HQ ISAF. At the writing of this article, three and a half weeks into the tour, some of the multiples have already done well over 20 veh and foot patrols.

The average patrols are approximately 2 hrs long and with one multiple on the ground at almost all times, the relatively small AOR is thoroughly covered nigh on daily. Our recent int and wpns find successes, as well the deployment of the QRF to help with several incidents, have put the coy in a favourable light. It is expected that the AOR will be significantly enlarged. This will tie in with the Macedonian reinforcements currently expected in early June. In their time off, the soldiers make good use of the excellent internet, gym and sporting facilities offered by HQ ISAF. They have been dominant in the recent 'soccer world cup' tournament which has been running over the last couple of weeks.

For those inside the wire, HQ ISAF is certainly 'cushy' by op tour standards. However, the FP soldiers are under no illusions as to the humbling poverty and daily struggle the rest of Kabul undergoes to survive. The patrols are generally welcomed by generous locals who regularly offer food or tea, while children swarm around offering water, trying to sell chewing gum and screaming 'Mista mista, how are you, how are you' or asking for 'cacao' (chocolate).

This glimpse into the reality of the country: clustered dirty villages covered in rubbish with hundreds of stray dogs, donkey drawn carts, with open sewage and hand water pumps had several soldiers remarking that it put their own 'tough' childhood into perspective. It has been a cultural learning curve and the FP Coy expects the first tranche to end by late September.

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT KABUL SUPPORT UNIT (KSU) – CAMP SOUTER

OC KSU **Maj Mark Schofield**
Camp SSM **WO2(SSM) Jim Lyons**

With the addition of **Capt Ewan Watson** and **Sgt(SI) Edd Chwieseni**, the HQ element has been boosted to a massive 5 personnel. **WO2(QMSI) Marc Corner** APTC insists on inflicting circuit trg on us 3 times a week. **Capt DE Watson** has found his niche and has found enjoyment in assisting **Sgt(SI) Chwieseni** in conducting ranges. **WO2(SSM) Lyons** is first to get a spot of R & R in, leaving **WO2(QMSI) Corner** APTC in the role of the "camp Sergeant Major" (pun intended).

CLIMBING GHARIB GHAR – *by Sgt(SI) Chwieseni*

After my eventual arrival in theatre and finding out what my job entailed from the SSM, he suggested doing a range recce. "A good idea", thinks I. So 2 days in theatre and trying to suck oxygen in at 1800m, I joined a group of guys heading off to do a little walk up the hill at the back of the range. "You'll be able to see all of the range from up there", quipped **WO2(RQMS) Mo Morris** with **WO1(RSM) Jase Goldsworthy** chuckling as we looked up at the 2263m peak! "A Gurkha lad did this in 27 minutes", we are told. Not trying to break this record in any way, shape or form, we set off up the hill. In dribs and drabs we eventually reached the top (after 5 false summits) and set about taking the obligatory happy snaps of our achievement. Now the only problem was getting down again! All in all, a good welcome to theatre; range recce complete, we all slept well that night.

INSTALLATION TECHNICIAN SURGE TEAM - *Sig Jase Buley*

The task was said to be simple; 6 weeks of graft then back to Elmpt Station. We were put on standby; due to leave in 2 months time, near the end of April they said, and a day later we were sat at Ramstein airport, awaiting movement. For the team leader, **LCpl Pearson**, it was his last mission before leaving the Army. **LCpl Williams** was eager to work and expand his already glowing reputation. **Sig Johnson** and **Sig Buley** completed the team.

Working in Kabul, Kandahar and Camp Bastion, we were stretched and pushed to the limit. Luckily we had **Sgt Pope** as the planner, who gave us guidance through the challenges – and there were a lot of those during the tour.

Sheltering inside from the sandstorm at Camp Bastion, Sig Johnson checks fibre optic cable

KSU WORKSHOP – CAMP SOUTER

OC Wksp **Capt Brian Jones**

AN ARMOURER'S VIEW
- by LCpl L Slingsby (ARRC Sp Bn LAD)

Between 23 and 30 March, the hand picked, highly trained specialists and fitters (sorry VMs) from ARRC Sp Bn, 7 and 16 Sig Regt LADs were deployed to Afghanistan to form the Kabul Support Unit Workshop (KSU Wksp). This left just a few personnel to arrive at later dates, including 1 from 14 Geo Sqn RE and 1 admin case with a passport problem. Altogether, we form a twenty strong Wksp to provide first and second line sp to the KSU.

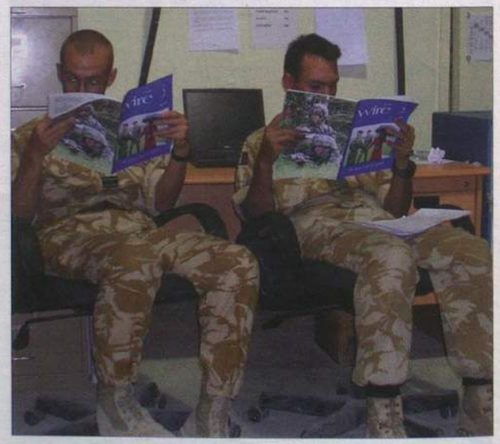
On arrival in theatre, the Wksp personnel bonded quickly and attacked the vast work load, spanning all trades (less the Electrician, Admin **Sgt Ro Lyon**). This even included us armourers getting our hands dirty on the odd occasion (difficult to believe, but true!) Our initial working hours were said to be 0800 until 1800 daily.

However these hours were pushed well beyond that on almost every day, due to the well used and 'mature' vehs and other In-Theatre eqpts. These were generally being brought to the Wksp at 1745 hrs daily, at which point a distraught **Sgt Timmaay Linthwaite** would start running around screaming: "It's another priority vehicle, all hands to the pumps so we can knock off!" Myself and **Sgt Ray Atkinson** were always kept gainfully employed cutting new keys for all depts; this must now be running well into the 1000s (no mean feat for a camp measuring less than a sq km). Just like ECM kit, the key cutting machine appears to be a vital part of our op capability!

We are currently well into our second month of the tour, with the majority of the teething problems solved and the veh workload reduced to more manageable proportions. To all our customers around Kabul the message is: 'look after your eqpt' but don't be afraid to pop by for a brew (depending on rations) and any eqpt advice you may need.

TACTICAL COMMUNICATIONS WING (TCW) – A VIEW FROM THE LIGHT BLUE SIDE – *by Flt Lt James Cummins*

TCW has been here in Kandahar for over 2 years providing the main comms infrastructure for the UK elements. Recently, it has continued in this role, providing a much larger comms lay down for the whole of Kandahar.



Flt Lt Phil Butler and Flt Lt James Cummins enviously read The Wire

Working with 16 Sig Regt Gp and the Royal Signals proved extremely interesting! As an RAF formed unit, it was unique it be working with what is essentially an Army Regt. Overall we coped well and managed to retain our RAF ways, despite the best efforts of the Royal Signals personnel.

I very quickly adopted my position in the CS Sqn CP and we started fighting the many fires resulting from the unusual demands of the Staff Officers throughout theatre.
It was very obvious that I would fit in well, with the bad language, loud voice and abusive banter I had brought from TCW, as it fitted in perfectly with the Royal Signals CP. The atmosphere within the CP was always bright, full of character, with people always angry with one thing or another. This proved for a very active and amusing time with **Capt Ali Biggs** calling for 'pie and chips' every lunchtime and **Maj Pete Cubbin's** call to 'get naked' at every opportunity.

Over the course of the deployment, I do believe the Army attitude has rubbed off on me, and I feel in a way I was able to show some of the RAF methods also, although I was accused of cheating by having a comms degree.

Motivation always seems an easy thing to impress upon people in the tightly disciplined world of the Royal Signals. In the middle of the tour, my guys were all feeling the strain of working in such a high level HQ and **Maj Bever's** suggestion of a "loaded march" worked wonders at reasserting the work ethic into my tired workforce again. I found the Royal Signals extremely good fun to work with and well worthwhile.

OP HERRICK 4 JOINT NETCEN – KANDAHAR

Joint Netcen is the nerve centre from which op comms for UK forces across theatre is controlled. At the helm sits **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE** and his Ops team. The CO has the honour of commanding the Close Support (CS) Sig Sqn which is mainly made up of 7 Sig Regt soldiers. **Maj Martin Bever** is the OC CS Sqn and he is in charge of 16 Sig Regt group troops at our FOBs, Camp Bastion, FOB Price and Lashkar Gar.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Lloyd Golley**
SSM **WO2 Simon Lithgow**

The Sqn bids **WO2(SSM) Mick Brown** a fond farewell and all the best in the future, where ever it may take you. In turn we welcome **WO2(SSM) Simon Lithgow**

EXERCISE RED HAND DRAGON II – SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING - *by LCpl Greg Taylor*

244 Sig Sqn arrived at Halton Trg Camp after an excellent range package at Warcop. Ex RED HAND DRAGON 2 was devised to allow the Sqn time away from the garages to a less formal environment, where we could all get to know each other better. This was undertaken while doing 3 different activities, which would challenge each and everyone and we would all learn something about our inner selves. When the troops arrived they were split into 3 gps to do a round robin of the activities, with 2 days spent on each. Activities were climbing, hill walking and kayaking. The climbing was on a seam of rock along a valley near Ingleton, with gorgeous views for miles around. The second day's climbing comprised a series of tricky walls at an indoor climbing wall in Ingleton. The hill walking took place around Helvellyn in the Lake District. This involved an overnight stay at a campsite, while crossing some terrain that was a lot less than easy! The final activity kayaking, started with basic skills and drills on Lake Coniston. The second day saw a progression onto moving water, consisting of a bump and grind session down a river from Elter water to Lake Windermere. Both days managed to incorporate a bit of naked car park changing.

For the duration of the week we were blessed with sunshine, which added to everyone's enjoyment. The ex was a great success with kayaking awards being gained and peoples' appetite being whetted for at least one of the activities. I am sure every person has at least one good memory of the week: e.g. **Cpl Nicki Colbeck** being sea sick on a kayak, **Cpl Alan Taylor** being tied off mid climb during lunchtime, for being cheeky. The highlight of the climbing was a female civilian falling off the rock and her belayer demonstrating the correct technique by letting her fall to the floor. A great week was had by all.

EXERCISE ACTIVE IMPROVEMENT

On 1 June 2006 all the JNCOs from 244 Sig Sqn deployed on a "team building ex". This ex was to take place over 2 days. Day 1 would take place at *HMS Raleigh*, working in the Navy's damage control unit, and the second day would be at Blandford taking part in their comd tasks. So with a mild sense of fear we boarded the minibuses for Plymouth.

On arrival at *HMS Raleigh* and after a short ferry crossing to give us a taste of what was to come, we were visually introduced to our watery grave that is *HMS Havoc*. We were all ushered into a classroom and told how we would all drown. Then we were given a "dry" walk through/talk through of what would be expected of us. Our fear was only heightened by the graceful bowing out of the task by the SSM.

There were 2 scenarios, one was based on the mess deck and the other in the engine room. We would only attempt one of the scenarios, so we were split into groups of 3 or 5 and told which scenario we would take part in and dressed in fetching white coveralls, helmets and miners lamps. Armed with only a hammer we stepped into the breach.

The challenge was to save the ship from sinking, after an anti ship missile strike. So once herded into the smallest room in NATO, we awaited our fate. "BRACE! BRACE! BRACE!" A large explosion sounded, and all hell was let loose, jets of water, smoke, no light and, just to make matters worse, the whole thing started pitching.

Both groups had the same tasks, to plug shrapnel holes with match sticks (wedges) and a 2lb hammer. Trying to put the wedges in all the holes was like trying to fit a round peg in a square hole. Everyone was hammering away feverishly for about 20 mins, while the guys in the engine room got the extra value experience of total submersion. With this **LCpl Col Corry** decided to impersonate the man from Atlantis to save the previously mentioned wedges; top marks for heroism and all the best in the world free diving championships.

On completing the task, the ship was saved and all members of the group were alive, if a little green around the gills. We boarded the minibuses and departed for sunny Blandford, where everyone bomb burst to the infamous "Tiffs" where so much liquid was consumed that we would have sunk a battle ship with or without shrapnel holes.

The next day, under a warm morning sun, all the NCOs got together by the asslt course in preparation for the comd tasks, although for some people the first comd task was just to keep breakfast down. There were 5 different tasks to be completed in

the usual time given for such events, and in fact given the state of most people, all 5 tasks were completed with relative success.

It was a great couple of days and enjoyed by all. The only thing that spoiled the ex was the baggage truck breaking down about 10 miles from camp, thanks to **Sig Laidlaw** and quote "my truck never breaks down", yeah cheers.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj GB Lamb**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) W Dunbar**

Once again 220 Sig Sqn Ops Travel Agency have had an influx of late bargains to all sorts of exciting spots around the globe. Not wanting to miss out on any of these exciting opportunities, **FofS Paul Landregan** quickly booked himself in for an 'all-inclusive' trip to Afghanistan. Left all alone in the Sqn Ops room, **YofS Andy Mount** found he couldn't cope without his trusty side kick and packed his bergen and went to join him.

If winter sports are more your thing you don't have to miss out. **Cpl Smudge Smith** found himself off to Norway recently in support of Ex CLOCKWORK and can't wait to get an advance booking in for next season. His customer comments are noted below.

Of course many people prefer to camp out in the UK over the summer and the Sqn is only too keen to help out. To this end, we have recently received new DRASH tentage and have already had the opportunity to erect it on several occasions.

A great improvement on the rather leaky affair we had previously, it comes with all mod cons and was the envy of the RAF when it deployed on Ex MOTLEY SPEAR in STANTA.

Activity holidays are also a specialty and the Sqn swimming team managed a plucky 4th in the Inter-Sqn competition. Revenge will be sweet once we resurrect the nobbly knees contest.

The Sqn says hello to a number of recent arrivals. **SSgts Cooper** and **Richards**, **LCpls Beacham** and **Hunt** and **Sigs Richards, Martyn** and **Williams** have all been added to our customer database and can no doubt expect to have a call from Ops with a holiday offer they just can't refuse very soon.

EXERCISE CLOCKWORK 06

On 20 February 06 **Cpl Smudge Smith**, 220 Sig Sqn, and **LCpl Nigel Mansell**, 244 Sig Sqn, deployed to the deepest darkest wastelands of Bardafoss, northern Norway, on Ex CLOCKWORK. The pair were there as part of the MAOT team, supporting JHC who were on their annual FOB Ex. **Cpl Smith** was not an arctic fox like **LCpl Mansell** and so had to do the 2 week CWSC which consisted of hours of fun briefs followed by a week frolicking around Bardafoss mountain trg area, learning how to survive on what you can carry.

Once the CWSC was passed and put to the back of their minds the real fun began with the helicopter landing site recces high up in the mountains that surround Bardafoss camp. Under the direction of their team leader, **MACR Dex Mann**, from RAF Benson, they proceeded to move from landing site to landing site, by a few varied methods of transport. These ranged from the trusty BV 206 or NATO ski planks to the good old favourite of just falling down and letting gravity take you to where you need to go, usually straight down the mountain.

With all the recces complete the MAOT crew were then able to work on their LPC and Rigger Marshall skills by hooking, de-hooking and laying out countless landing sites and loads, to aid the aircraft who were practising their Arctic flying skills. Though the days were long and hard, they were very enjoyable, even when the temperature did drop below - 30 degrees. The whole 6 week experience was fantastic and **Cpl Smith** and **LCpl Mansell** have both said they would love to return next year.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JA Kennedy**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Surendra**

The Sqn bids **SSgt(FofS) Colbeck**, **SSgt Dhan**, **Sgt Un**, **Sgt Suresh**, **Cpl Min**, **Cpl Deepak** and **Cpl Washer** a very fond farewell, who all left the Sqn after successful tours. In turn we welcome **SSgt(FofS) Vishal**, **Sgts Man** and **Bhabindra**, **Cpl**s **Santosh**, **Autar**, **Debendra** and **Yam**, **LCpls Roop**, **Bhim Lawati** and **Dipak** into the Sqn.

21 SIG REGT (AS) DET ON OP TELIC - *by LCpl Milan*

Joint Helicopter Force Iraq (JHF I) is based in the Basra Air Station. The Det from 21 Sig Regt provides special comms sp to the JHF on Op TELIC. The Det is at the forefront of providing ground-to-air tactical comms to RAF, RN and Army sp Helicopter Forces. We provide VHF, UHF and SATCOM comms to the aircraft. The satellite system in use is called Blue Force Tracker (BFT). BFT is a tracking system designed for special field missions, where portability and rapid deployment are required. It is a US system which we use to track airframes and also providing emergency AID in the event of an accident. It has the capability to pass on very short messages, not voice.

Currently, more then 14,000 soldiers are deployed in Iraq, very far away from their homes, their families and mates. In order to maintain morale among the soldiers, lots of fun events, social activities and last but not least charity events take place from time to time. On 26 February 06, we took part in a Charity 'FireTruck Pull' at Basra Air Station, organized by the Fire Section. The main competition was for 6 man teams and there was also a Charity Pull with a maximum of 10 men per team. Our team's name was '21 Sigs Massive' and we took part in the Charity Pull. We helped to raise money for the Great Ormond Street Hospital (Tiger Ward) Children's Burns Unit. **LCpl Milan** led the '21 Sigs Massive' team on behalf of the Tp OC JHF (I) J6, **Lt Burnett**. It was a very tough and challenging competition and was all about physical strength, stamina and also mental effort.

All together 12 different teams from different depts took part in this event. Two teams came joint 1st in the event. **Jerry Harrem** and "21 Sigs Massive" completing the course in 1 minute 7 seconds. Jai 248 GSS!

ADVENTURE TRAINING TO CORNWALL - *by Sig Ek*

The very first AT for the newly formed 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, Ex KUKRI BEAUFIGHTER was held at Newquay, Cornwall from 30 April – 5 May 2006. After a hectic year and most recently a very successful RSIT inspection, the majority of the Sqn managed to get away for a well deserved break.

The first day was an organised trip to the Eden Project and Newquay town centre. On 1 May, we were divided into 3 groups; the activities included hill walking along the costal path, cycling along the famous Camel Trail and a day out on the beach. All the events were exciting and adventurous. On the last day were sports followed by a BBQ, which we had all had been waiting for eagerly. We spent the morning visiting the local areas, especially the Cider Farm, and then played sports in the afternoon with a BBQ to finish off. As usual the weather was not on our side but we still managed to cook the BBQ It was a pleasant time for all of us. We all enjoyed the whole so called ex and it was very memorable to have such a Sqn level gathering with entertainment away from barracks for a change. The ex was well organised by **Sgt Sanjeev** and all the qualified instructors. An excellent and challenging week of fun was had by all and we hope there's more in the near future.

22nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

22 SIGNAL REGIMENT IMPLEMENTATION TEAM
- by SSgt DG Rudd

Firstly, the Implementation Team would like to announce and warmly welcome the arrival of **SSgt Danny Rudd** from 11 Sig Regt, **SSgt Bagbir**, **Sgt Paya** and **Sigs Bhim** and **Tek**, all on 'loan' from 30 Sig Regt. One and all have now settled in and are being gainfully employed assisting the QM with his taskings, as well as advising on Gurkha issues as the project develops. This now takes us up to a total of 11.

SSgt Bagbir and his team have already commandeered the WO's and Sgts' mess kitchen and taught **Mark** one of the Mess chefs, how to do a traditional Gurkha curry. They then hosted the entire team for a welcome curry night in the Mess.

The Implementation Team enjoying their curry

UPDATE

Since the last issue of *The WIRE*, a sum of just under £4M has been approved as the 'get you in' pack. This is to include a face lift on the single accommodation (all of which are single rooms), converting the Sgts' Mess Annex, the secure garaging and the troop office areas, as well as a list of minor works.

The Regional Prime Contractor, Carillion has already started detailed studies, ready for the release of funds for the main works. The QM's team, lead by **Maj Tom Smith**, has now split off into their own dept and are busy preparing to take over buildings and eqpt in close conjunction with 143(WM) Bde staff. The RQMS, **WO2 Russ Heynes** is still busy running around trying to make sense of the various inventories in order to furnish our buildings. After a quick '*mission analysis and estimate*' in late April (you can tell that the CO works in the J3 Section of JFHQ!), an outline plan has been drawn up, and the first SITREP was distributed around the Corps and the key agencies involved in creating the Regt.

The RQMS, WO2 Russ Heynes, supervising stores checks

This will allow planning to be refined in light of expected deployments – the key will be the ability to move 222 Sig Sqn and 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn in early 07, whilst balancing ex commitments, the deployment of a Tp to Op TELIC and individual's posting and family needs.

The team are expecting several key LAD and RAO personnel into Stafford between July and September. They will begin to establish the locations and processes for key Regtl functions, working closely with units, HQ LAND, HQ SOinC(A), and MCM Div on a host of issues. Local relations are being established with Tactical Supply Wing (TSW), the RAF unit on camp, and we are now starting to get used to the sound of helicopters popping in to refuel on their way about the UK.

The Team have also been busy making an appropriate contribution to Mess life and the local disco scene!

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) McGaw**

This quarter has seen the Regt realize some notable achievements, from further developing our Cormorant capability to sporting success in the Morrison Cup Athletics and Tug-of-War competitions. The most welcome of all was the award of the Birtwistle Pennant of Merit for Sport. This was a fantastic result that reflects the breadth of the Regt's participation across the sporting spectrum and the consistently high standards achieved.

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JHN Harrington**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Lokbahadur Gurung**

An extremely busy Sqn in great shape with the Joint Task Force HQ (JTFHQ) role being deployed to a series of high profile exs. Soon after the successful Ex JOINT VENTURE 06 at South Cerney, the Sqn is again deploying on Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS at Swynnerton for the period 05 – 23 June 06. In addition, the CO's

WO2(SSM) Surje Gurung - I used to be a proud Sergeant Major but not any more!

Challenge (Inter-Sqn competition) began for the year 2006 with the Athletics, Military Skills, X-Country, Orienteering, March and Shoot and Swimming competitions etc. Despite the many other high profile commitments, 250 Sqn has managed to attain 1st position in Athletics and runner-up in the March and Shoot competition. 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn is also supporting other charity events, especially for the Gurkha Welfare Trust; the main events being 'Trailwalker 06' (100km race) on the South Down Way and 'Gurkha Highlanders' (walking Mallaig to Stonehaven), which start in July and August 06.

We congratulate the following: **2Lt DG J Finch** on his recent promotion to Lt, **WO2(SSM) Surje Gurung** on his commissioning to Lt(QGO) and **SSgt Lokbahadur Gurung** on his promotion to WO2 and taking over the SSM's role – well done to three Musketeers. Sadly we say farewell to **WO2(FofS) Collin**, **WO2(YofS) Dilnot** and **SSgt Churchward** and welcome **WO2(FofS) Mayer**, **WO2(YofS) Watts** and **SSgt Sombahadur Chochangi** .

EXERCISE JOINT VENTURE 2006 - *by Lt A D Morris*

Ex JOINT VENTURE was a large ex, designed to practise and develop the UK's planning ability for ops overseas, which would include all three Services. The ex aimed to use the Joint Task Force HQ (JTFHQ) and the Component Comds in a fictional scenario. A large number of supporting arms and services deployed to provide sp for the ex, and 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn provided the key piece in the jigsaw, by supporting the Staff in JTFHQ.

The girls 'digging in' on their way to victory

This was a big challenge for us; it was only the second time that the Sqn had deployed on ex to provide comms and infrastructure sp to JTFHQ and the first time that the staff had used the HQ. Three weeks were allowed to build the HQ, followed by 2 weeks of actual ex. This meant it was a long ex, and most of the Sqn were involved in it at one time or another. In the preparatory phase, there was a lot of hard work and we worked long hours, but the HQ was set up in good order for the ex phase. The hard work paid off. The ex went extremely well, with comms running smoothly and all the Staff Officers supported as well as we could. 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn was able to offer traditional QGS hospitality, with a delicious Gurkha curry (Bhat) on the last evening, which was widely appreciated by all the Staff Officers.

This ex proved that 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn has the trg and work ethic to provide a high level of service and sp to a big HQ. The Sqn also proved that we are now ready to deploy anywhere in the world to support JTFHQ.

CORPSAM 06

This year's Royal Signals Skill at Arms Meeting (CORPSAM) proved to be one of the most successful in the Regt's history. We entered 3 five-man teams of a similar standard, each containing

The Regiment's tug of war teams with trophies at the Morrison Cup

at least one young soldier with under 2 years' service. It was the Regt's C team, comprising **Cpl Devprakesh**, **LCpl Shiva** and **Sigs Sushil**, **Balbahadur** and **Narayan**, which performed particularly well to become aggregate rifle match champions. The team almost swept the board, winning the LSW match, the fire team assessment and 3 of the 5 rifle matches, losing narrowly to 2 Sig Regt in matches 3 and 17.

Not to be outdone, the Regt's B team, comprising **Capt (QGO) Nirmal**, **LCpl Saroj** and **Sigs Turnbull**, **Raju** and **Rajendra** received their just rewards with a win in both the Corps and Inter-Corps Combat Snap competition and a hard-fought 2nd place in the LSW match. The Regt's A team, comprising **Lt Horton** and **Sigs Sachin**, **Yubaraj**, **Gibson** and **Roshan**, was kept off the podium by the superb performance of the other 2 teams, but were well placed in the overall championship.

In the pistol competition, 2 teams drawn from the B and C teams, were placed 2nd and 1st respectively in match 11, while **Capt (QGO) Nirmal** was crowned overall pistol champion.
In addition to the team results, the final analysis of individual scores made impressive reading. **Cpl Devprakesh** achieved the highest aggregate score of rifle, LSW and pistol matches to win the 'Champion at Arms' competition, **LCpl Shiva** was the 'Top Class B Soldier' (soldier over 2 but less than 5 year's service) and **Sig Balbahadur**, in his first competition, performed fantastically to win the 'Best Young Soldier' prize. The team wishes to thank **Capt (QGO) Nirmal** and **Cpl Devprakesh** for their time and patience in arranging the trg and spending time with the less experienced members of the team. As a final word, the Regt would like to wish **Cpl Devprakesh**, **LCpl Saroj** and **Sig Sachin** the very best of luck in their forthcoming trip to South Africa, as members of the British Army Combat Shooting Team.

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT TUG OF WAR - *by Sig Sladen*

After 10 weeks of arduous mental and physical trg, involving hours of gantry work, tyre work and 'live ends', the Regt's TOW squad managed to show what they were made of when it came to the Morrison Cup.

The Morrison Cup was not the first competition since the start of the trg. Trg at Twyford with the local farmers, using their techniques, improved our staying power and showed the newer squad members how hard it would get against other teams in future competitions. When it came to the TOW Federation events, our teams competed against stronger teams like World Champions 4x4 Holland and Leek. 30 Sig Regt still managed to put up a good fight and after 2 or 3 different competitions, our team managed to beat them in the 4x4.

The girls' trg was made harder by having to compete against the lads in live ends but despite this, the girls remained undeterred.

When it came to the Morrison Cup, the men's 680kg team made it to the finals after a highly exciting and tiring play-off against 11 Sig Regt. In the final there was tough competition but 14 Sig Regt beat us down and took 1st place. This left the girls' 560kg team with something to prove. Except for their first, they won all their pulls, and being under weight by 40kg, the girls went through to the final against 14 Sig Regt. This time our girls ensured that 14 Sig Regt was not going back with another winner's trophy. Despite **Sgt 'V' McIntosh's** anchoring with broken ribs and girls with other injuries, they walked away with 1st place.

CO'S CADRE COURSE 11 APRIL – 5 MAY 06 - *by Sig Randall*

The Cadre Course started on 11 April with an entrance test; which consisted of a CFT, BPFA and a Military Knowledge exam. These were conducted over a 3 day period and at the same time we received lessons from the DS to brush up on our inf skills. Following this, we had a 3 day rest over the Easter weekend before deploying to Sennybridge trg area.

Sig Goulding and Sig Price supervise Cpl Parivins attempts at painting

On arrival at Sennybridge we were split into 2 sects; each was given a 10-man room. So let the late nights and early mornings begin! The first week was mostly PT early in the morning, then straight into lessons, which consisted of all military trg objectives, practical and theory. We were taught new skills such as Methods of Instruction and the Orders process. We also had various kit inspections that would be converted into a point system, which would in turn contribute to the top student award.

The second week was a progressive range package, starting with grouping and zeroing, APWT, fire team assessment, fire in defence, close quarter battle lanes and culminating in a live fire sect attack. During these range days, concurrent activities were taking place. All of this was in preparation for our final ex.
The final ex was conducted over 4 days; the main focus was to become competent at giving orders. Comd positions such as Sect Comd and 2IC were swapped regularly. Also included was a Platoon advance-to-contact which resulted in attacks on 5 in-depth positions. The day of the final dawn attack arrived and everyone was psyched up and ready to go, knowing that this was the last big push. The attack went well and the enemy were destroyed with no casualties on our side. The pass out parade went well with the whole of the Regt watching. The top student award went to **Sig Pritam** who took great pleasure in drilling the course and falling us out for a well deserved weekend.

F TROOP - *by Lt J Barr*

At the end of March, we handed over our JTFHQ duties to 250 QGS Sig Sqn, and hoped for a slightly less busy time. This was not to be, as first of all sent one of our FFRs on Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS, and then had an influx of Cormorant eqpt into the Tp. At the same time, the Tp were involved in a local community project, called the 'One Project' at a run down local school. We became involved in this project through **Sgt Jeff Farnes** and a local Church in Bedworth. The aim of the project was over a one-week period (10 – 15 Apr 06) to turn Ash Green School, a 60's monstrosity, into a pleasant working and learning environment. So for a week, we rolled up our sleeves, got out some paint brushes and hung off some scaffolding, to help renovate the place. Particular mention should go to **Sig Kirsty Price** and **Sig Jenny Goulding** who spent all week working with difficult kids and did a great job with them.

A few weeks after the project some of us had the privilege to go back and be shown round their 'new' school by some of the pupils. Congratulations go to **Sgt Farnes**, who has been selected for promotion to SSgt, and **Cpl's Tweedie** and **Neal** who have been selected for promotion to Sgt. The beginning of April saw us welcome **SSgt 'Griff' Griffiths** from 18 Sig Regt, "welcome to the green army!"

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

ARMY

CO **Lt Col SL Streete MBE, TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGrail**

31 Sig Regt has seen a large number of changes over the last few months, with personnel coming and going and the summer season of marriages! In summary those coming, going and getting hitched include **WO2 Craig Marlowe**, the RQMS who arrived from Blandford in May, **Capt Andrew Haines** (ex Irish Guards but no hard feelings) joined us as the Regimental Recruiting and Retention Welfare Officer (RRRWO – who thought of that title?) also joined us in May, closely followed by the new RAO, **Capt Gary Jennion**, AGC (SPS) and in June the new **FofS WO2 Peter (Max) Challis** joined us, replacing **WO2 Craig Brankin**, who is now off to sun himself in Gibraltar. We said farewell temporarily to **YoS Eddie Cochrane**, who is currently doing a tour on Op HERRICK but he is ably substituted on 'stores loan' from 94 (BY) Sig Sqn, by **SSgt Richard Lloyd** and his dog **Noah**. Sadly we had to say goodbye to **Capt Hannah Owen**, who not only left the Regt and the Army but on a happy note. She and **Maj Alan Owen** are expecting there first child in June – update in next issue.

As to the marriage season, we have had three recently and more to come! First was the CO, **Lt Col Sarah Streete**, who married **Jonathon Cray** on 6 May. The Guard of Honour, in the form of **Capt Keiron Francis**, **WO2 Paine**, **SSgt Shevels**, **LCpl Reader** and **LCpl Whittaker** was provided by 56 Sig Sqn, where she had been OC. The honeymoon was spent on the Southdowns, followed by a 2 (NC) Sig Bde CPX. Now that is commitment!

This celebration was quickly followed by **LCpl Ottis Whittaker** (83 Sp Sqn) and **Karen Hogan** (ex 83 Sig Sqn) who were married on 15 May in Tasmania. Finally for this report, **Capt Mike Zazzi** of 83 Sp Sqn – more in the Sqn report.

Finally on personnel issues, we would all like to wish **Capt Keiron Francis** from 56 Sig Sqn a speedy recovery after his bout of life-threatening double pneumonia.

The Regt have also been very busy with a number of activities, over and above 'normal' trg, including Courage Trophy, Executive Stretch, CORPSAM, AT in BATUS, of which more below.

REGIMENTAL ADVENTURE TRAINING

– by Lt Mike Curtis-Rouse

Ex GRIZZLY HUSSAR saw 12 soldiers from the Regt head to Canada for 2 weeks AT at Trails End Camp . This camp normally supports personnel from BATUS, but op tempo meant that a 2 week slot was available to several Regular and Reserve units, including us.

The troops flew out from Manchester to land in Canada, and after a brief visit to Calgary, where **LCpl Kidley** felt the need to purchase a cowboy hat, which resulted in much posing, the troops headed out to the wonderful countryside of Banff National Park to begin their chosen AT activities.

The majority opted to spend their first week on Ex FAST AIR, a free fall parachute course. For the first jump most of the soldiers were perfectly eager to willingly climb out of a plane into 120mph winds whilst holding onto a flimsy wing strut, but some were more reluctant, including HQ Sqn's **Sig Walcott** who developed a firm relationship with the aircraft wheel.

By the third and fourth jumps, most were raving for more, with the exception of 56 Sqn's **Sig Mark Bint** who needed directions

The happy couple with the Guard of Honour from 56 Sig Sqn

to reach the ground. By the end of the week though, all who took part in Ex FAST AIR would agree that climbing out of a perfectly good plane at 4500 ft, letting go and trusting one's life to an extra large sheet of polyester is a wholly normal and sensible thing to do.

Others took part in Ex BEAR DAWN, a multi-activity package including white-water rafting, kayaking, climbing, trekking and abseiling. Few on this package had done anything like this before but that didn't stop the emergence of stars such as **Sig Nina Stickley**, who proved that even blindfolded she could shoot up a near vertical rock face. Meanwhile during the mountain biking **Sig Paul See** found the edges of cliffs all too attractive, falling off on a regular basis to the amusement of his group.

While some people fear heights, others find fear in trusting yourself to a beast that is 5 times your size, 5 times as strong and with a distinct mind of its own. This was the option taken by those who elected to go riding. Ex ROUGH RIDE, a 5 day horse riding package in the Canadian Rockies involved a trek through spectacular scenery in glorious weather. The thrill of cantering up and down near vertical slopes at 30 miles an hour proved to be equally as exciting as falling out of plane. However **Lt Mike Curtis-Rouse** struggled to see eye to eye with his long suffering horse, resulting in hilarious antics for all watching and **Major Carolyn Murison** discovered that her mount, Red Cloud had three speeds: go, go-faster and go through the woods at fast speed!

In the second week, the troops got involved in other AT packages that included Ex WAPTA GLIDE, a 5 day ski-mountaineering exped in the BC ice fields. **Sig Simon Machin**, who had only learnt to ski earlier this year with the Sqn, found that his same technique for getting down green runs could be applied with more or less equal success skiing black diamond runs!
Troops on Ex GHOST RUN, an open canoeing exped had a crash course, quite literally, in navigating their way down exciting rivers. Fortunately the instructors made sure that everyone got enough time to practise rescuing each other, as this became a necessity for all. **Sgt Clare Goodwin** discovered that the art of steering lay in good communication with her partner in the boat, but despite this her boat spent the majority of the time upside down, being swept downstream – was this due to her navigation skills or due to the fact her co-pilot, **Lt Curtis-Rouse**, didn't know right from left (typical officer!). Fortunately, **Lt Steve Hall** from 21 Sig

Regt was on hand to rescue people as necessary! After 2 weeks, we were ready to head back home for a rest but all wearing grins which couldn't be wiped off and bursting to tell everyone the stories of our AT.

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM TAKE TOP HONOURS IN CORPSAM

The Regt entered 4 teams of 5 into this years CORPSAM and all the hours of practice paid off as they came away with a large amount of silverware including:

Team A, made up of **Capt Lee McEvoy**, **SVWO WOI Matt Cahill**, **Lt Alex Orr**, **LCpl 'Tich' Tichner** and **Sig Cheryl Glover**, won the FIBUA Match and the Team Rifle competition. In addition to team efforts **Capt Lee McEvoy** was the Champion Rifle Shot and **Cpl Elizabeth Lafferty** won the Best Other Arms.

5 (QOOH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Ruth Empson**

The main event from the Sqn was the exped to Canada where 8 of the 12 on the trip were from 5 Sqn and **Lt Mike Curtis Rouse** was the OIC of the trip.

Ex GRIZZLY HUSSAR - *by Sig Machin*

The idea of AT is to challenge yourself in new and exciting activities. This can definitely be said about the 2 weeks I spent in Canada at Trails End Camp. The first week, I did Ex FAST AIR, which was an introductory course on free fall parachuting. This involved learning how to exit the plane, i.e. climb out of the plane and hold onto the wing brace before letting go at 4000ft. First we had theory lessons, swiftly followed by our first jump the same day.

The first time climbing out of the plane was such an adrenaline rush that the nerves didn't have a chance to kick in but is was such a relief to look up after 6 secs to see my canopy correctly deployed. Next problem was landing without breaking any bones. Luckily everyone landed safely. The rest of the week was spent perfecting our jumping position and after 7 jumps, I think I cracked it!

Change over of activities happened back at Camp over the weekend. You could see how all the different groups had bonded together through their own experiences during the week.

The second week, I participated in Ex WAPTA GLIDE. This was sold to me as a skiing package in the BC icefields in Jasper

Taking a well earned rest after a gruelling mountain bike trail – Sigs Paul See, Nina Stickley, Mark Bint and Cpl Jon Godwin

National Park. This was to gain basic proficiency in mountainous and glacial terrain. Wow what a con trick – and 5 of us fell for it – 2 from 31 and 3 from 21 Sigs. The first day we were thrown into the deep end by skiing up, yes up, Parker Ridge peaking at 9000ft and half way up we had to learn about avalanche rescue, as there was a high risk of avalanches further up!

If we thought skiing up was hard, coming down was even harder as we went off piste on a black diamond run in soft slushy snow, due to the wonderful sunny weather. Considering I had only learnt to ski in March it is a miracle I survived to tell the tale. The rest of the week involved glacial trg, crevice rescue trg, ice climbing with crampons and ice axes and mountaineering. By the end of the week we were dead on our feet but overwhelmed by what we had achieved.

We returned to Trails End Camp for the traditional social and bragging session before heading back to UK. Looking back over the 2 weeks, I feel I could not have chosen 2 more contrasting activities to do. One a complete adrenaline rush and the other a more physically and mentally demanding challenge.

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj John Kendall**
SSM **WO2 Ian MacKay**

Due to the new role that the Sqn holds within the Regt, along with the new soldiers we have recruited recently, the main effort for recent exs has been giving the soldiers, new and old, the opportunity to learn/revise the skills they require to operate Lanward.

Some of the more experienced operators have been demonstrating to their new colleagues how to pass (and extract) info over the long range comms links. In fact, **Sig Gail Wise** was particularly proud of her 3.5 hour conversation with an American counterpart (cut short because she had to closedown and turn the veh around).

The Sqn has also supported the Regtl shooting team both at TA CORPSAM and LDRAM. Apart from occasional trophies, the main highlight for all concerned was **Lt Sam Osei-Agyemang's** exceptional performance on the LSW Match, showing that young officers can be relied on to run around with heavy kit and that they have no memory for pain – by the time he had walked back the 400m plus from the furthest firing point he was smiling (and limping) as normal.

On the social side of life, the Sqn has been kept very busy with a number of traditions (new and old). The Princess Louise of

Capt Lee McEvoy and the rest of the teams from 31

Kensington dinner was very well attended this year by the whole Sqn, as was the more recent tradition of the Sqn tour of Twickenham prior to (and after, come to think of it) the Army *v* Navy rugby match. Another event that has become tradition in celebrating St George's Day with a party, ably led by **Cpl Warren O'Driscoll**. All were welcome (and a dragon did attend), but despite various offers, **SSgt Willie Loch** could not be convinced to put his Scottish heritage on hold for even one evening. In his spare, spare time, **Cpl O'Driscoll** has also organised a diving holiday open to all members of the Regt – we all look forward to one of his infamous slideshows when he returns.

The group at the top of Parker Ridge

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Anthony Lamb**
SSM **WO2 Jim Paine**

The Sqn continues to train hard in its new role to provide comms sp for 2 Inf Bde within the context of UK Ops, with particular focus on preparing for annual camp. The troops are busy familiarising themselves with the new eqpt, and the emphasis is on ensuring depth, as well as breadth of experience. We also welcome 884 Tp from Brighton, whose full integration into the Sqn is due to be completed in September.

Recruiting remains strong and the Sqn is at 96% strength; a result of excellent public relation efforts and the continual presence of the Sqn in the public eye. Between November and May, 22 recruits were attested and upwards of 60 are presently being processed through the system, a testimony to the effectiveness of the Sqn's recruiting and PR. The Sqn hosted a young farmers open evening, which was well attended, and has provided specialist sp to Eastboune College CCF; activities which serve to further increase out links with the local community.

Within the Sqn itself, **LCpl Ben Meads** is serving with 97 Sig Sqn in Bosnia. The Sqn's 2 subalterns have also been active. **2Lt Christopher Lower** completed assessment for 63 (SAS) Sig Sqn and has assumed comd of D Tp. **2Lt Andrew Jelinek** was awarded Dutch military parachute wings, after completing the Netherlands military jump course. Members of the Sqn have also been busy in AT with **Sig Mark Bint** having just returned from BATUS and **Sig Hazelden** having completed her basic parachuting course.

The Sqn's thoughts have recently been with our 2IC, **Capt Keiron Francis**, who has unfortunately been seriously ill. We look forward to his speedy recovery and return to Sqn life.

ADVENTURE TRAINING – CANADA STYLE - Sig Mark Bint

When I was told that my name had been confirmed for the exped to Canada, nothing could have prepared me for what was to come. A walk in the park it was not! We were not given much information at the start, but we were told that it might involve walking, water sports and a trip to the Rockies.

The first week was the multi-activity exped. This was particularly challenging and pushed me to the limits. I used both physical strength and courage mountain biking through the Rockies at high speed, at the edge of 20ft sheer drops. The kayaking down the white water of the River Kananaski was just one of the high points, as I had only kayaked once before (on a lake), so capsizing on the fast water and floating down river upside down was very testing; but also fun at the same time. Not to mention the rock climbing blindfolded, mountain climbing and white water rafting.

Covered in cuts, grazes and bruises, but pumped with adrenalin the second week was by far the most adventurous. As I arrived for the week of sky-diving, I couldn't help but remember the introductory briefing, when the Admin Sgt informed us that by definition, AT has a risk of death. You cannot understand how small and unstable the plane feels until you are geared up, parachute attached and secure and you are about to take off. At 4000 ft, when the door opened was the point I realised that I could not turn back. Hanging off the wing of the plane, feet dangling in the air, I had only one option – to let go! Safely on the ground was when the feeling kicked in. I have never had so much of a buzz.

83 (CITY OF LONDON) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj Alan Walton**
SSM **SSgt Woodhouse**

The Sqn has had a busy few months supporting Regtl efforts and our own Sqn activities. Some of the key activities have been taking part in the Regtl Shooting Team, sending members off to Canada AT and welcoming **Cfn Ollie Noakes** back from his adventure being part of the Development Team in the Everest Exped. Finally **Capt Mike Zazzi** married **Dr Lindsay Queen** on the 3rd June, again ably supported by the Sqn members.

Another happy couple with an Honour Guard from 83 Sig Sqn

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Keith Williams**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Mark Carrick**

EXERCISE MARTIAL MERLIN

34 Sig Regt (V) deployed 2 teams on Ex MARTIAL MERLIN, the 15 Bde Patrol Competition, held on Catterick Trg Area and Feldom ranges. Both teams were lead by 49 Sqn officers, **Lt McKerr** leading Team 1 and **Lt Anderson** leading Team 2 which was predominately made up of 49 Sqn.

After a morning of last minute skills and drills trg at Darlington TAC, Team 2 deployed on the competition, which was started by a test fire stand on the DCCT, to simulate the start of a patrol into enemy controlled areas.

After orders, we deployed to a DUP and tabbed with full CEFO to a border crossing point where we were to RV with friendly agents to move close to an enemy location to conduct a CTR. Most of the movement was conducted at night, in appalling rain, sleet and wind in near zero visibility which made navigation very difficult. We covered a long distance in these conditions to meet with friendly agents and undertook tasks, such as foreign wpn identification and med evacs.

During the move I think most people found that **Lt Anderson's** 'just another 3k', wasn't always strictly true, but the team managed to keep going, even developing new techniques to cross barbed wire fences. The ex ended with a move by TCV, which was contacted by the enemy and we carried out anti-ambush drills before moving at speed to Tac HQ for the int debrief and movement back to Darlington.

The team worked exceptionally hard in very testing conditions and were awarded a very creditable Bronze Medal, despite losing one soldier to injuries and having to miss one stand - a great achievement for the team. Team 2 was made up of **Lt Anderson**, **Sgt Ford**, **LCpl Pasco**, **Sig Freer**, **Sig Ness**, **Sig Patchett**, **Sig Fahey and Sig Cambridge**, all of whom will not forget this challenge in a hurry!

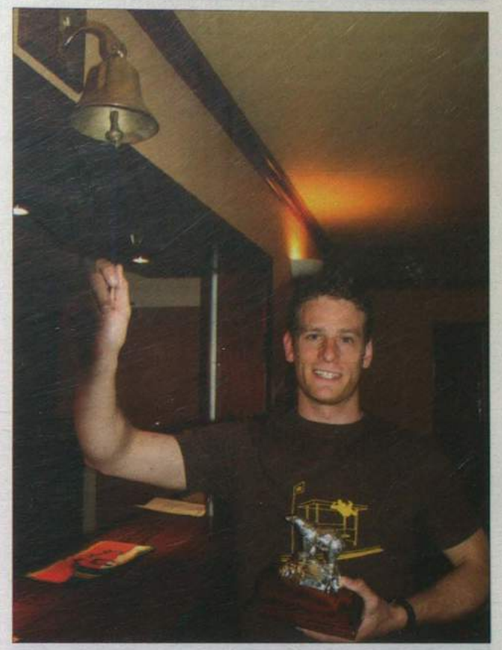
EXERCISE NORTHERN WINDY SAILS

Members of 49 Sig Sqn and HQ Sqn set off to sunny Gosport to the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre to partake in a week's Offshore Sailing. Home for the week was the 55 foot Nicholson yacht, called Kukri. The team braved the cold and wet of the Solent, while visiting a number of costal towns including Cowes and Yarmouth. **LCpl Melissa Bertuzzi** had decided within half an hour of arriving that she was not going to buy a single round all week, by sending her purse for a swim to the bottom of Gosport Marina as soon as we arrived!

One of the crew should also have gone to *Specsavers*, as they could not distinguish between a boat and the many static forts around the south coast.

All in all, a fun week was had by all the crew, who on their return to dry land were looking forward to being warm again.

The Sqn said farewell to **Lt Daryl (Doc) McKerr** who is transferring to the Regular Army. We are sure that **Doc** will enjoy his time at Sandhurst and wish him all the best for the future.



Lt McKerr ringing the bell for the final time

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Smith**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CA Phillips**

MEDAL PRESENTATIONS

Brig Davies, Comd 11 Sig Bde, visited 34 Sig Regt presenting the LS & GC medal to **SSgt Deano Leech** and the Wills Trophy for the Best SPSI in 11 Sig Bde to **SSgt Jamie Martinez**.

SSgt Martinez receiving the Wills Trophy from Brig Davies

Congratulations to both for their consistent high standards and dedication. **Brig Davies** also updated the Regular Staff on the Corps status, and the importance of the TA in their sp of Regular soldiers on ops.

Cpl O'Brien has recently returned from Op TELIC with a commendation for his hard work and commitment in Iraq, well done **Freddy**! There will be a further medal presentation in due course for members of 50 Sig Sqn, who have returned from ops in sp of the Regular Army. **Brig Dennis**, Comd 15 (NE) Bde will be presenting medals to: **Lt Jo Burke**, **Sgts Brack**, **Carr**, **Middlemiss**, **Standing** and **Wightman**, **Cpls Graham**, **Jones**, and **Wilks**, and **LCpls Elsdon** and **Hutton** and **Sig Robson**.

IN THE PUBLIC EYE

50 Sig Sqn undertook a recruitment drive in Newton Aycliffe and the Darlington area, scouring the streets for potential new recruits with relish. **Sig Clark** was seen out and about, braving the wind and rain, for the Mayor's opening of a revitalised area of Firth Park in Darlington. Despite the less than welcoming weather, there was a climbing wall, activities, refreshments and plenty of the public in attendance. Members of 50 Sig Sqn also turned out to get down and dirty with the clean up of Skerne Park in Darlington.

The clean up gang: LCpl Prothero, FofS Sanderson, Sgt Watson, SSM Phillips, Cpl Paterson, Pte White and Sig Rolls

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Denning**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Hunter**

EXERCISE SUMMER FALCON

Ex SUMMER FALCON provided 90 Sig Sqn with the opportunity to exercise the Trunk Node in full. As usual the weather consisted of rain, rain, a little bit of sun, and then some more rain.

Sgt Karina Knibbs pulled not only an all-nighter but an all-weekender as the only Switch Operator. **Sgts Rossy Ross** and **Eddie Waring** dashed about completing recces, before deploying with the Central Det. With **Cpls Stewy Wilson** and **Millie Millington** and **LCpl Metty Metcalfe** proving effective on the Radio Relay dets, 90 Sig Sqn, as usual, showed the rest of the Regt how to communicate quickly, efficiently and professionally. What this also showed was that **Maj Paul Denning** had made the right move when he joined 90 Sig Sqn.

GUNFIGHT AT THE OK CORRAL

Last weekend, **Sgt Ross** organised an excellent range day using the moving target range in Catterick. However the question that has to been asked is: "Why does he always arrange for torrential rain to coincide with his range days?" To be fair, **Sgt Ross** obviously hadn't anticipated exactly how much rain was going to fall, or else he wouldn't have lent his waterproofs to **SSgt Mark Yuill**! **Cpl Kev Pountain** proved to be the best shot of the day, and ate **Sgt Ross's** Mars Bar as his reward!

Congratulations to **LCpl Paul Liddle** on his recent marriage to **Karen**. The occasion brought back some old 90 Sig Sqn faces, including ex - **Sig Rachel Wilkinson** and **LCpl Simon Huntington**.

Good luck to **Sgt Cranny Cansfield**, who has moved over to 50 Sig Sqn to be with the Newcastle Tp. Even though he was only with us for a very short period of time, he will be missed. In his place we welcome **Sgt Harrison** and hope he will enjoy his time with us. Welcome back to **Sig Murph Murphy** and **Sgt Graham Belt** from their recent tours in Iraq. They made contact with **LCpl Tatey Tate**, who decided the weather over there just wasn't hot enough for him. We wish him the best of luck and a safe tour.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

FORWARD TOGETHER

It has been some years since we have had the pleasure of the CO providing the opening article of the Regtl Notes on at least one edition during the year. Happily the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, is now restoring this tradition.

This will become a regular Regtl feature, allowing the CO to highlight areas of importance or significance that affect the wellbeing and structure of the unit and its personnel, both military and civilian, as well as keeping us up to date on current and future events or changes.

Lt Col CW Edwards TD, the new CO

CAPACITY

Two years ago, the Regt stood at 54% recruited against establishment. We supported all initial TELIC requirements with this happy few. Things needed to change. Our poor capacity to recruit and train was a problem. With strong Regional Forces direction, recruitment was pushed up very high on the agenda. The Regt now stands at 74% recruited, after some exceptional recruiting events across the AOR. More changes are likely, led by the newly appointed RRRWO, **Capt Bob Bath**.

Breathing bodies is one thing and our capacity to train these recruits went from 2 – 3 per course to 20 – 30 and the RRTT took up the challenge and continues to produce excellent results at ATR.

In the past 18 months, we have recruited 250 recruits. These have not all been converted, due to medicals and "not for them" issues. In reality some 160 recruits are in or have passed through the system. Today's held strength totals 374 of which 68% are Fit For Role (FFR).

CAPABILITY

The influx of new recruits is starting to filter through the system with our first trade trg event resulting in 30 newly trained FFR soldiers that will increase our capability. Trg opportunities have been tripled across 12 Sig Gp and the Regtl Yeoman of Signals has been tasked with another Trade Trg event, specifically for students. In two Sqns they are now requesting Ptarmigan kit to be recovered from Ashchurch, which is reassuring.

In summary, members of 35 Sig Regt have turned their Regt round, from one in decline to one that is growing and they are to be commended. We must be aware of false horizons, however, and recruiting cannot be a tap turned on and off, but must flow continuously. Given this, the resources must be allocated to boots on the street to ensure this flow continues and we move forward together.

The CO and 2IC with visiting employers

A DAY AT THE RACES

With the World Cup competition about to kick off on Saturday, it left most of the planning staff in the Regt with a sense of unease as they began the final preparations for our annual camp deployment to Wales. The Trg Maj, **Maj Neil Turnbull**, in particular became slightly anxious as he continued to scrutinise seemingly fluctuating Sqn nominal rolls. Annual Trg this year, under the cover of Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS, required a Friday night start on 9 Jun with expectations of a good attendance. Clearly an incentive or a compromise had to be reached with our many football fanatics, who were already declaring foul play at the timing. Fortunately our first field locations, selected by our astute **WO2(YofS) Pip Crowder** were not too far away and concentrated around the area of Ludlow, in the picturesque Shropshire countryside with our main location based at Ludlow Race Course. With this in mind the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards**, pulled his master stroke by announcing that the first phase of the ex would be suspended to allow our fan base to watch the crucial England *v* Paraguay match. Having said that many fell asleep mid way into the second half – induced no doubt by the less than inspirational performance of both teams. Nonetheless in most field locations in Shropshire, elevated TV antennas

SSgt Ken Barker shows Mr Dave Pennington of O2 how we do it.

sprouted up all over the place and contraband TV sets were finely tuned to watch England win their first game.

This naturally provided a significant boost to morale with a majority declaration that the CO was man of the match! Now I am not saying that this boosted camp attendance in any way but our earlier fears subsided with a level of attendance that was normal for a UK annual trg camp. Camp certainly kicked off in style with a day at the races, although **Sig Amy Smith** – a keen rugby player commented that the food was better than the match while **Maj Ivan Thomas** (our founder member in his last year of service) preferred to sweep the back of his BSV. This however was the first phase of a camp that would continue with its vital comms trg over the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountain and then conclude with Military, Leadership, Recruit and AT at Merrion Camp, Castle Martin during Phase 2 as well as hosting some significant visits by our Regional Comds. But more about this in the next edition of *The Wire*!

EMPLOYER SUPPORT VISITS

Without the sp and understanding of all employers who have members of the TA on their payroll, the TA would simply not function, nor be able to carry out its recruiting, trg or op roles. They provide the key to opening the door for those members of staff who are members of, or are considering joining, the reserve forces in allowing them to engage in and fulfil their TA commitments and meet their trg obligations. In addition, they provide essential sp and encouragement when members of the reserve forces volunteer for, or are selected for, mobilisation and indeed many suffer manning shortfalls as a result. We were therefore delighted to host 3 key employers during the first phase of our annual trg when they visited Ech at Ludlow race course on Monday 12 June, in a sweltering heat wave. The visit was organised by our Employer Support Officer, **Maj Les Radcliffe**, who after contacting most of our key employers, managed to entice Human Resource staff or area managers from O2, Jaguar and Land Rover to visit the ex area and show just how useful and beneficial TA trg is to the civilian working environment. The visitors were accompanied by the West Midlands RFCA Sabre representative **Maj Sylvia Parkin.** On arrival at Ludlow they were greeted by the 2IC, **Maj Rick Logan**, before being treated to the full Regtl brief by the CO in the comfort of an air conditioned Ops BSV.

The magnificent Orienteering Team

Following the brief, they were given the grand tour of all assets situated on Ludlow race course and the opportunity to meet their employees before moving to other field locations. **SSgt Ken Barker** of 89 Sqn who works for O2 was delighted to host his Area Manager, **Mr Dave Pennington**.

Dave was quite impressed by the efficiency of the SCRA system, despite its age, and was equally impressed by how quickly the location and comms were established. Elsewhere on site, **Capt Alan Lunn** and **WO2(SSM) Albert Mair** took great pleasure in explaining their ex role and function to **Mr Rob Lummis**, the Human Resource Manager for Land Rover. Finally **Cpl Pete Gribben** of the LAD was equally pleased to explain the intricacies of the remote control unit of the Wrecker to **Mrs April Wickens**, the employer liaison representative from Jaguar.

The visit proved to be a tremendous success with all visiting employers agreeing that they now had a much greater insight into the importance of the Reserve Forces, what advice and guidance we could provide by keeping them informed, how we operated in support of the Regular Army and the clear and wide ranging transferable benefits to themselves.

ORIENTEERING – THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES

The Regt continues to make its mark on the orienteering scene and is much respected on the wider orienteering circuit because of its continuing successes against some tough and consistent opposition. In the 4/5 Div league, the success has been a little muted but we continued to accumulate league points with our persistent and consistent performance and we achieved a satisfactory final position of 9th in the Major Unit league.

This is in no small way thanks to the organisation and map reading skills of **Maj John Middler**, **SSgt Dave Arnot** and **Maj Tom Jeffries** and other team members including **SSgt Colin Richards**, **Sgt Jacko Jacson**, **WO2 Drew Thomson** (our newest member) and **LCpl Jim Turner** and last but not least the RSM, **WO1 Jim Coupland**.

Special honours are reserved for **SSgt Dave Arnot** (who is participating in his last season) for achieving the award of M55 winner in both the league and individual championships. On the penultimate event of the season, the team acquitted itself extremely well by putting in a remarkable performance that earned them overall 2nd place in the 5 Div Relays held at Hankley Common and Ludgershall during early May. Finally the team travelled to Otterburn to take on all comers during the Army Championships held on 18/19 May.

Here they excelled themselves once again in competing against 13 other units and achieving overall 3rd placed major unit – a magnificent success for a TA unit at perhaps the toughest and most demanding orienteering competition in the country – well done to all team members!

THE SEASON OF CHANGES

Permanent staff changes continue apace with many significant changes taking place during the month of May. From RHQ we have said farewell to **Capt Steve Lockwood** who moves on posting to 15 Sig Regt. **Steve's** expertise will be sadly missed as he has just guided the Regt through an intensive Board of Officers and leaves behind major improvements to our Health and Safety management structure. Elsewhere we have said farewell to **SSgt Mick Holloway** who moves on posting to the LSRC in Blandford. **Mick** will be remembered for balancing his FofS duties between 48 and 89 Sig Sqn, where he provided tremendous technical sp to both Sqns, making significant changes and improvements to their technical management structure.

We have also welcomed his replacement **SSgt(FofS) Scott Thomas**. 58 Sig Sqn also lost **SSgt(FofS) John Ford** on posting to 600 Sig Tp and welcomed his replacement **SSgt(FofS) James Burnham**. Finally we have bid a sad farewell to **SSgt Pops Poppa** who leaves on posting to 16 Sig Regt. One additional change that leads to a special congratulation is to **Sgt Helen Tweed (nee Caplin)** on her recent marriage. Once again we wish all of our new arrivals a happy and rewarding time with 35 Sig Regt and to our leavers, good luck and good fortune for the future.

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col M Smith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KD Gratrick**

EXERCISE ENDURING HELP 19 – 21 MAY 2006

Cpl Daz Sladden of 36 Sig Regt LAD organised a team from the Regt to take part in this year's Ex ENDURING HELP. This is a 24 hour endurance event that tests the mettle of riders and machines across a challenging cross country route on Weavers Down, Longmoor trg area in Hampshire. This is the fifth consecutive year we have raised a team and taken part in this event, which raises money for ChildLine and other charities.

This year, funds were also raised for St Dunstan's, a charity that supports blind ex-service personnel. Since its inception, Ex ENDURING HELP has raised over £100,000 for charity and helped to give valuable off-road motorcycle trg and experience to thousands of service personnel.

The 36 Signal Regiment Team for Ex ENDURING HELP

This year's team comprised: Team Captain - **Cpl Daz Sladden** (LAD) with Riders: **WO2(FofS) Kev King** (TM Tp), **WO2 John Creake** (CUOTC), **SSgt Daz Mawson** (PSI 45 Sqn), and **SSgt Kev Elliot** (45 Sqn) and Pit Crew: **SSgt George Shand** (SQMS LAD), **Sig Dan Lawrence** and **Cfn Smudge Smith** (LAD).

This year our team had the honour of being Team Number 1. Before you read too much into this, it had nothing to do with our position last year or our performance on any qualifying events; it was simply that we got our application in first! The event kicked off at midday on Saturday and the riders were set off by **Esther Rantzen** representing ChildLine. The Le Mans style running start put our first rider, **WO2 John Creake**, into the thick of it with over 100 other riders jostling for position, round what turned out to be a rather challenging and varied course.

The riders' comforts, brews etc. were on tap, provided by **SSgt Shand** and his assistant **Mrs King** and the evening container meal was supplemented by a **Foreman King** BBQ. It's surprising how many visitors you get when the barbie fires up! **Sig Lawrence** and **Cfn Smith** tended to the needs of the bike and kept the POL flowing throughout the weekend. **SSgt Elliot** gave us an alternative meaning of the term 'pit crew', as he was under the misapprehension that the pit in question was his bed. The event ended midday Sunday but not until after rain had given everything that was almost dry, a decent soaking and making the course even more interesting.

The bike performed well and I'm sure it will wash up as good as new, as will the riders. Injuries this year were minor. Nothing more than a few black toes, a swollen hand, various bruises, etc. but nothing major, thanks to body armour and padding for some.

NEWS FROM 44 SIG SQN

OC **Maj Rowson**
SSM **WO2 G Bathurst**

- by SSgt Peter Froggatt

Three ex 44 Squadron soldiers, including twins, **Jane Derby** and **Helen Davies**, and **Carly Smith** recently completed their recruits' course at ATR Winchester with flying colours!

The intensity of the trg is reflected in the fact that the 3 girls only finished the field ex the afternoon before the pass off parade with their spare clean combats packed in their bergens – not much time for prep and pressing and bulling. But they did it and the parade went off without any dramas or anyone falling asleep.

Jane and **Helen** were affectionately known as the "Dinner Ladies" by the instructors who praised the effort put in by all 3 girls.

ANTARCTICA 2006 - *by Sig Georgina Miles*

I'm sure that part of the reason I got my job with the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), was because of my being in the TA. They needed a scientist who wouldn't mind living outside their comfort zone for a while and could cope with re-hydrated food for a few weeks.

At the beginning of January, I left the UK to travel to Antarctica. My task was as lead scientist, co-ordinating a team ice-core drilling along the Antarctic Peninsula, to look at the affects of the changing climate. My scientific kit sailed south 4 months before, along with specialised warm kit issued by BAS to all of its personnel pre-season.

The route down was via Madrid, Santiago and Punta Arenas, before arriving at the Falklands. After 5 days the weather was clear enough to fly to Rothera, the main British base in Antarctica, 1000 miles south. After a 5 hour flight we landed at the base, which is more like a hotel than the Antarctic outpost you'd imagine. In the height of Southern Summer it has to support up to 100 people for up to 4 months, but still be comfortable enough to house 20 people snowed in, over the dark cold winter. Across the runway from the base was a steep glacier that led up to a ridge. This was used for recreational skiing and boarding, but also for field trg. By far the best part of trg was diving headfirst down a 40m wind scoop to practice ice axe arrests and learning to ice climb.

I'd spent a year planning the expedition in minute detail, but one thing I quickly learned was that you can't really plan for anything in Antarctica, you can only prepare for eventualities. Everything is dependant upon the weather, which changes hourly. After a week waiting for a weather window, we left for Rothschild Island, 200 miles south. We were to drill the ice cores in a col, between two spectacular mountain ranges. The pilots are specialised in landing on snow or ice with a plane that has skis, and often in bad weather.

Sig Miles collecting core samples

When the plane left us, we pitched our tents and had a meal. By 2100 hrs we were ready to begin drilling. Still high summer, the weather was good, but I hadn't anticipated the sun setting below the nearby mountains. It soon became very cold with a chilling wind removing heat from any exposed skin. As the scientist there, I had to handle and bag the ice cores which meant wearing thin sterile gloves and surgical mask; these quickly froze.
It was in a word, uncomfortable. As we were scheduled for pickup at midday to fly to the next island, we had to drill through the night. After a couple of hours sleep, we were able to drill one last core and pack up the kit. On a white and very flat Latady Island, we found our 5m weather station, deployed the previous season, almost completely buried. We spent the next 2 days digging a 6 metre hole to remove it, as well as drilling more ice cores. After 16 hours of digging and drilling, we watched the sun

Taking weather readings

set and rise in one movement. At 0300 hrs, brew in hand; we sat in an open-sided igloo we'd made from excavated snow blocks. As the sun skirted along the horizon everything turned pink and blue and you couldn't tell where the snow ended and the sky began. With no wind, there was perfect silence.

The next day we packed up the plane and were deposited at a fuel outpost, an hour to the east. Rather like an alpine lodge, it sat precariously on the edge of a scree-sided mountain. It was called Fossil Bluff because every other rock you picked up was a fossil dating from when Antarctica was at a more temperate latitude. Cooking was done on an Aga, powered by aviation fuel. It was designed in the 1960's to support 4 people, but at times there were up to 14 there. After 4 days waiting out the weather we returned to Rothera, with one more island still to be reached.

After a week of rest and preparation, we were off again to a place called Sky Blu, 75 degrees South at 4500ft, to wait for Smyley Island to clear. A blue ice field, it's used as a jumping off point for deep field parties, and most of the season is spent transporting fuel there for storage. As a meteorologist I kept myself busy giving hourly met reports over the radio for the aircraft.

Others spent days digging out fuel drums and skiing. The average summer temperature hovered around -20 degrees C, but when the wind blew (which it often did) it felt far colder. Accommodation was mainly tent-based, apart from a melon hut with a stove, which tended to get quite crowded at the start and end of the season. Keeping a steady supply of enough melted snow for water was a full time job. After 4 days we left for Smyley. From the plane, it looked absolutely clear and calm. However, within 100m of the surface we were engulfed in a fog of 30 knot blowing snow. Visibility was less than 20m and every part of the body had to be covered. We spent 12 hours drilling, taking it in turns to rest in the plane and have a hot drink with our pilot-turned-cook. The downside of this was that very quickly clothes became wet from melted snow, and I spent most of those 12 hours having to inspect my hands and feet to make sure they were still there. In such conditions there is zero contrast between the sky and ground, and the previous year a RN helicopter crashed into a snow rise for this very reason. Our pilot was nervous about taking off but more nervous about staying, so he deployed a runway of flags every 20m and made an otherwise blind takeoff.

Sig Miles 'chilling out' with one of the locals

After returning to base I had the chance to go snow caving in a 100 year old crevasse, and boating to get a close look at the icebergs and wildlife in the bay. We even held a chilly half marathon up and down the runway. Most days, lost penguins could be seen wondering around the place and fat seals would lie on sea ice in the bay, basking in the sunshine. It was an incredible, peaceful place. There was a great deal of perspective learned from living in such isolation, which I hope not to lose.

The cleaners, cooks, mechanics were as vital to the community as the pilots, doctors and professors. Everyone helped out where needed and as a result things usually ran very smoothly. When I left Antarctica after 6 weeks, I was quite sorry to go, but very grateful for the experience.

NEWS FROM 45 (ESSEX AND CINQUE PORTS) SIG SQN

OC	**Maj M McKenzie-Bell**
SSM	**WO2 N Back**

RECRUITING

The early part of 2006 saw the Sqn concentrate on recruiting and preparing to take up our new role following TA Rebalancing. A huge effort went into recruiting and we reached the milestone of being 100% recruited. Our task now is to convert all our new soldiers to tradesmen.

AMALGAMATION

Following TA Rebalancing, Southend Tp became OPCOM 45 from 44 Sig Sqn, which added a further 34 soldiers to our number, giving us a recruited strength well in excess of our establishment, and TA Centres at Southend, Ipswich and Colchester. As the two sqns had amalgamated, a new title was chosen for the squadron and from July will be 45 (Essex and Cinque Ports) Signal Squadron

NEW TRADES

From the beginning of April, we set about trg our soldiers for their new role as part of 2 (NC) Sig Bde, although some had already taken part in Op FRESCO during last year and many had already taken up new trades, so the transition began with us well ahead.

IRAQ MILESTONE

The Sqn has had a stream of IRs sent to Iraq since 2003 and it is notable that since Op TELIC there has been someone from the Sqn in theatre every single day and we passed the 1000 day mark, back in January. With our currently deployed personnel not due back until June, our total will rise to close to 1200 days unbroken service.

ESTUARY ENDEAVOUR 18 - 19 MARCH 2006
- by LCpl Kelleher

After the disappointing news that our weekend trg had almost been cancelled and had been changed from a weekend of FIWA to a weekend in the TA Centre, we were all surprised to find how relevant and interesting the improvised trg was.

On arrival, we were split into our 4 sects and noticeably every team was lead by an inexperienced L/Cpl or junior soldier, which was great! I was put in charge of a sect and was really looking forward to testing myself. The weekend's activities were split into 5 events, veh check points, comd tasks, mine awareness, first aid and a shooting competition.

On Saturday morning my sect was first to do be assessed on the Veh Check Point stand. Although I had been involved in veh check points in other trg events, I had never realised how hard it was when in comd! With the SSM acting as the media and **SSgt Jones** as the Arabic driver, I'm sure you can imagine the scene. Each group learned a lot about comd and control and it was a massive eye opener.

The second activity was the comd task, possible the funniest event; I've never seen so many people hanging from ropes. My personal favourite was watching one of the new recruits trying to pull himself across a rope bridge backwards! A feat achievable only by a chimp! It didn't pay off and the new soldier found himself at the bottom of the imaginary ravine, to the delight of everyone!

The third activity for our group was mine awareness, conducted by **SSgt Bland**, who had us navigating a dummy mine field, round the Sgts' Mess garden. This taught us the basics in getting out of a minefield but it could have looked like a sketch from a Benny Hill show. The fourth event for us was shooting. Once again my target looked as if it had suffered a fit with a shotgun, but I do keep trying. I'm better off giving my rounds to other soldiers and charging my target with a bayonet!

On the Sunday, our sect had the first aid stand. We had been given a realistic scenario, "we were a QRF team in the TA centre and had been given a report that there may have been an incident in the garages, involving a shooting." On arrival at the scene, we were confronted by very realistic casualties and a mad gunman. It was great fun manhandling the gunman and standing on his back! I'm sure he must have loved that after the fourth group went through. We followed our first aid drills with the whingeing casualties and learned a lot about following the procedures under pressure.

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MPE Angove**

53 (WELSH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Symmons**
SSM	**SSgt Thomas**

EXERCISE DRAGONS AIR 19 – 21 MAY 06

Ex DRAGONS AIR was designed around trg up our new Sigs and showing the new members of the unit what being in the Royal Signals was all about! The Sqn paraded at 900 Sig Tp in Brecon and 4 comms dets were formed – **Cpl Rachel Prosser**, **Cpl Sam Rignall**, **LCpl Reah** and **LCpl Dan Child** were the lucky volunteers. Given the current limitation on passengers in the rear of GS LR, we managed to acquire some rather 'Gucci' 4 x 4 (rumoured to be loaned from somewhere in Hereford) for the weekend – don't worry SQMS we won't be asking any questions! Extra CNR and Airwave eqpt was loaned from RHQ – a key enabler for the weekend!

The remainder of Friday night was spent dusting off some of the comms cobwebs with 20 min round robin lessons on veh navigation, PRC 320, BATCO, and Airwave so as to prepare everyone for the following day. Then followed an O Gp where the Det Comds received a brief on the Op COMPASS scenario – the Dets would received trg at 3 locations and then be deployed in sp of 160 (W) Bde BRT. It was pure coincidence that BRT were also on ex – and when hearing this they soon pulled our recruiting Det in Margham Park, Swansea into their plan!

Saturday morning found the DS deploying early on SENTA to set up SCP (**Sgt Tim Haughton**), Medical stand (**Sgt Pete Langton**), Cam and Concealment (**Sgt Steve Flaherty**) and Improvised Antennas (**SSgt Steve Humphries**). The Dets then moved around the 3 trg stands and 2 task locations mid-way between SENTA and Swansea from radio orders passed over CNR. They spent 1 hr on a task or stand and then 1 hour moving between them - this gave the Det Comds time to do some OJT and improve the skills and drills of their crew. Dets and DS then recovered at 1900 hrs back to 900 Sig Tp for a well earned BBQ and a few beers.

We're looking forward to Ex DRAGONS AIR 2 which will "up the ante" with the det and comms skills with some different stands – the Sqn Ops team are already planning hard!

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj K Metcalfe**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) R Francis**

Over the last couple of months, 67 Sqn has been continuing its active recruiting role by attending various open days. These have included trips to local job centres, colleges, town centres and shopping centres. On top of doing a lot of this recruiting, we also deployed on the Regt Ex REYNARDS REWARD which was a weekend designed to get as many people as possible through the MATTs and to help qualify for bounty nice and early. All who turned up were glad they did as it was a well run and enjoyable weekend. The 2 most other noticeable events in April were over the bank holiday weekend. On Sat 29 April we went and took part in the Gaydon Land Rover fair. We took over a few vehs for the enthusiasts to look over and held a competition, testing people's ability to cam a land rover up in as fast a time as possible. This was a fun day, but ultimately not as productive for recruiting as we'd hoped. On the Bank Holiday Monday, we went and held a tug-of-war competition at Stourbridge Fair. This was an excellent day for both recruiting and the running of the competition. And, to top it all off (and with no cheating) we actually won the tug-of-war; beating a local pub team in the final.

Continuing into May, the recruiting carried on at its high pace including a visit to Stourbridge College career day. This also gave **SSgt Adie Sims** an opportunity to browse for future employment, even though he has still got 2 years left. The weekend of 13 and 14 May 06 saw the Sqn busy again. The Saturday was spent getting in early to complete some maint work. The reason we were in early was to finish in time for the FA Cup final. The Sunday was another chance for us to raise the profile of the Sqn by taking part in the Stratford Dragon Boat Race. We entered 2 teams this year and after a rather cloudy start to the day, it soon brightened up and this was another brilliant event to take part in.

Our 2 teams didn't do as well as previous years; finishing 7th and 19th but the main aim was to raise our profile, along with raising money for charity. We might have done better if **Sig Jase Day** hadn't tried to put as much of the river's water into the boat as possible. We actually managed to raise nearly £1000 for the Anthony Nolan Trust, a local cancer charity. On top of our present busy schedule, the date for the rebuild of the TA Centre has been confirmed for next month. So now we are busy packing kit away, in preparation for that - no rest for the wicked. Also this month **Sigs Bear Marshall** and **Lauren Beardall** passed their recruit cadre and are now fully members of the Sqn. Congratulations to them.

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

The last couple of months have been hard work for 96 with the Sqn undergoing a few major changes in its Tp structures. The majority of our Det Comds are new in role and the crews are now being filled up with newly traded operators. This is no bad thing, though as it creates new challenges for the Tps on the ground, as well as the comd team at Coventry. This was starting to come

together when we deployed the Det Comds on Ex SUMMER DAWN based in Coventry TAC and the windbreaks at Bramcote.. The whole aim of the ex was to encourage the new Det Comds to start employing the attitude of getting in, detailing people to prep the Det, checking the kit and get out on the ground to start providing comms, something that has never been happening as quickly as we'd like. To that end, **SSgt Mick Robinson** took the lead in the trg at Bramcote and acted as a Det Comd to show them what is expected. The tps deployed out with IMMARSAT, TELULAR, RAS, AMSCERP and AIRWAVE as they would do in the event of a Civil Emergency and for the majority, this was new kit.

They were happy to see something other than an error message from AMSCERP and felt quite novel making satellite calls, whilst sat in a field. While this was happening, **WO2 Jez Bromley** was running the remaining Det Comds through COMMCEN procedures getting a full COMMCEN layout in one of the classrooms. The kit being used was very similar and again they all took pleasure in utilising kit that rarely gets deployed or utilised on these weekends. The resulting comments from the ex showed that everyone, without exception, felt that they had benefited from an ex being run purely for Det Comds without the crews there because they could ask any questions they wanted without feeling stupid. Even ones such as "Why is there a can of Kerosene with that Kero heater, what do we need that for?" Ummm.

PROMOTIONS

Sig Edwards (BLMF), **Sig Gibson** (Kosovo) and **Sig Warren** (Sarajevo) to L/Cpl. Congratulations to you all (and get to the bar).

97 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM	**SSgt A Shrewsbury**

The Sqn arrived in Banja Luka, Kosovo and Sarajevo in 2 waves. First 'up the beach' were the Comd Team and Hds of Departments on 22 May 06. We arrived at Banja Luka Airport, where we said goodbye to **Lt Clay's** Kosovo team, who moved on to the Olympic Training Ground, otherwise known as Slim Lines for trg for the next Olympiad. The majority moved on to Banja Luka Metal Factory (BLMF). As **L/Cpl Collins** will say we were greeted warmly by 201 Sqn the outgoing unit, the weather was bright, dry and full of summer promise. But then the rest of 97 Sqn arrived on 25 May 06 and the heavens opened! At this point the Sarajevo 'A' Team of **Sgt Garry** and **Sig Warren** made their excuses and moved on, wallets in hand.

FRT

After briefings, and a show around the camp, we got to chill out and sort ourselves out, ready for the next day when the work would start. A simple office to work out of, and wait for faults to appear. The guys who we were taking over from are a good bunch; they showed us around the containers that we would be taking over from and other areas of camp. When Tuesday arrived, the rest of our Sqn joined us, and the process of integrating with us started again, and feelings of being together as a Sqn could be felt. The evenings in BLMF would appear to seem dull, but there were things to be getting on with. We were introduced to Circuits on a Tuesday night, which this time was run by the Green Howards' PTIs, and it was an excruciating, but worthwhile workout. For the less physically inclined people who chose simpler methods of fitness, there's the gym, which has an awesome amount of eqpt for every imaginable exercise going. When Saturday came, it was a mix of different emotions.

An ex was planned which involved us being tested on different situations that the previous sqn had met, and how we would deal with the problems. All in all, the ex went well, with us fixing various faults. After the ex, our emotions completely changed, as a 9-mile 'fun run' would take place soon after lunch, something not everyone was looking forward to. All in all, the Sqn performed well in the run, considering we hadn't had any pre-trg for running that distance or in that climate. I'm sure we're all looking forward to the 11-mile 'fun run' and the impending Half-Marathon in June. It was an interesting first week, so the rest of the tour should be great for us.

SQMS DEPARTMENT

The handover went very well initially. We had the opportunity to get round the camp and meet some key people and depts within BLMF. **LCpl Powers** has had the opportunity to get out and about on the Crypto runs by helicopter. Unfortunately she found contour flying not to her taste. Still, she was able to see some of the countryside from the ground and the air, a great experience for her first op tour. We have had the opportunity to frequent Banja Luka town to shop, eat in the restaurants and sit in the cafés to watch the world go by; well for a couple of hours at least. Very busy in the QM's dept, so time is going fast, lots to do and get our teeth into so as we can ensure a perfect handover in October.

ARMY

40th (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

EXERCISE EXECUTIVE STRETCH 2006 – THE P TEAM

In May 2006, a professional planning unit was sent to prison by a military court for a crime they didn't commit. These men promptly escaped from a maximum security stockade to the Derry countryside. Today, still working for the government, they survive as soldiers of fortune. If you have a problem, if no one else can help, and if you can find them, maybe you can hire – The P Team.

Sinead McAvoy	**Sarah McConnell**
Brigid McGlincey	**Simon Wheeler**
Malachy McCrystal	**Mark Lee**
Maria Caughey	

The two non-planners

Brian Hockley **Jonathan Charlesson**

It took 2 days to escape and it certainly wasn't easy. We were transported to the security stockade on Friday 12 May by an RAF Puma helicopter at 2300 hrs. We were escorted to our barracks, briefed and given standard issue kit, which was to be worn at all times. With the formalities finished we could now mix with the rest of the inmates to find out who the trouble makers were and who would be good to know. The plans for escape were already underway. Several team members went to bed early to ensure they were ready to make a run for it. Some however continued to occupy a small area in the bar.

With a 0530 hrs start on Saturday, our team got ready to make our way to the far edges of the camp to look for a quick exit. However our escape attempts were quickly scuppered when we came across a horrific accident, just outside the camp. Knowing that we couldn't be seen to have tried to get away, we were obliged to carry the casualties back onto Army property, in order to get them an ambulance. Through quick thinking and great teamwork, we made a makeshift stretcher and moved all those needing medical attention inside the borders of the compound.

Unfortunately having requested an ambulance, we also drew the attention of the Army staff, and so were recaptured and marched back. However, while walking the long way back to the gate, we formulated another plan to make a break for freedom. After some expert guidance, we broke through a gap in the trees and made a run for it. However this time, we ran straight into a terrorist trg camp. With most of us never having fired more than a spud gun, we took advantage of the opportunity in front of us.

Keeping our heads down, we let off several live rounds of 9mm pistol, SA80, LSW and GPMG ammo and threw a few grenades. Just when we were about to get sworn into the terrorist gang, our guards arrived looking for us and hell broke out, with bullets flying everywhere and grenades blowing up left right and centre. We commandeered a helicopter to get out of their but were left short when we realised that we didn't know how to fly it.

We managed to make some distance though, and got just far enough to find an abandoned Spartan. We cammed up ourselves and the Spartan and laid up until we felt it was safe. After the helicopters stopped flying around us, we left the tank and took the road towards Benevenagh Lake, hoping we could hitch a ride with some locals. We arrived at the lake only to find another disaster had occurred and we were the only ones there that could help. **Simon**, quickly found out what had happened and formulated a plan. Four children had wandered away from their parents and got lost in a minefield. They were stuck on a cliff ledge which could only be accessed by abseiling from the cliff above. We kitted ourselves up and abseiled in pairs. At the bottom, each pair worked together to make a safe path up the river out of the gorge, keeping the children safe.

Once again the situation had attracted attention and we were quickly rounded up by soldiers and flown by Puma back to the stockade. It was probably for the best anyway, as we had forgotten to bring lunch and when we got back, the stew was just being put on the table. With everyone suitably fed, watered and rested we looked for the next course of action. During lunch we had spotted a hole in the fence behind where the officers were standing. Making our excuses, we dashed for the fence and landed right at the mouth of a cave.

We hid in the trees while we debated whether to take a route through the cave or look for another way out. Suddenly we were confronted by an officer looking for help to transport his injured colleague through the caves and also to move the samples of captured weapons that the terrorists were using. We moved quickly, keeping quiet so as not to attract attention from terrorist snipers trying to ensure their weapons were not given to the Army or police. It took 18 mins to manoeuvre through the complex tunnel system, which should have taken 30 mins. When we reached the end of the caves, we ran for the safety of a Red Cross camp to get the injured officer medical attention and hand over the nuclear weapons.

Without stopping for a breath, we continued on the road to the nearest veh that we thought we could drive. Unfortunately the closest one was a drop lorry used for transporting goods and this one was sitting beside a dump of nuclear waste. Being the Public Servants we are, using voice activated controls we guided the drop lorry to move the waste into a control zone, where it would be safely destroyed. An officer standing nearby received a call on the radio to say that there was a potential nuclear disaster at the power station, not half a mile from us. Reacting to this, the officer who had observed how well we had done with the drop, put us into a bus and sent us to avert the disaster at the power station. When we arrived, we were kitted up in protective gear and thrown into the deep end.

We needed to restart the generator for the cooling system, in order to stop the proton rods from overheating. The only way this could be done was by good planning, clear comms and listening to instructions. With another tragedy avoided, we took a bus to try to make our get away. Sadly, we got lost in the maze of roads and eventually ended up beside a L105 Lt Gun. That stopped us in our tracks. With no-one around, we disembarked and began to prepare the gun for battle and fire a couple of blanks into the air. With all the excitement of the find, we forgot that the noise would attract the platoon responsible for the wpn. Within moments of the second shell being fired, we were rounded up and packed onto our bus.

On arrival back at camp we got fed, watered, showered, changed and started to look for something to do in the evening. After a short recce mission, we ended up at an officers' informal cocktail party. Hoping to find some useful info, we snuck in and started to look for some 'rosy' faces. We soon got some info but it was not the quickest route out of the stockade. Instead we got the plans of a terrorist organisation, holding a UN hostage in a nearby farm. Having got this, we agreed that we could not stand idly by and let an innocent civilian die at the hands of terrorists. To ensure that we didn't forget what we had been told, **Simon** attempted to bring the source of the info with us, but in vain. We enjoyed the rest of the evening, aware of what would have to be done in the morning.

We rose early on the Sunday, to give ourselves time to prepare for the assault and ensure that we had all the info and eqpt we needed. All was present and correct with the exception of our radios. Today we would just have to shout and hope that people would hear us over enemy fire. We boarded a Lynx Helicopter and were flown to the landing area, close to our objective. Within seconds of touching ground, the terrorists opened fire. We swiftly moved towards the beach to collect the wpns and ammo that had been dropped there for us. Taking our lead from **Jonathon** we headed through the fields towards the farmhouse holding the hostage. We were constantly under fire from the enemy, but we all made it alive. As we crested the hill, we commandeered some quads and continued at approx 90 kph to our goal. We freed the hostage and made our escape back to the barracks.

Realising over lunch that our best efforts over the last 36 hours had resulted in great teamwork, we involved the rest of the inmates in our plan and in no time at all we had commandeered 2 coaches and headed out of the area back home.

It took a lot of hard work, a lot of energy and a lot of commitment to make our escape, but I don't think anyone who was there will disagree when I say we would all do it again this weekend. The skills that we showed during the 2 days earned us a second place medal in the Saturday competition and credit is due to everyone on our team. Especially to **Maria** who regardless of her fear of heights and claustrophobia gave her all and completed every task in expert fashion.

VICTORY FOR 40 SIG REGT AT CORPSAM 1 – 2 APR 06
- by 2Lt Lindsey Jones

Late on Thursday evening a party of 7 departed from Belfast and travelled across to Pirbright to participate in the annual TA Corps Skill-At-Arms Meeting. Much of Friday was spent zeroing the weapons and introducing the young and inexperienced team to the types of shoots that made up the competition. From our team of 7 only **Sgt Gordon** and **Cpl Hagan** had represented the Unit before at this competition. By the end of the day, and thanks to **Sgt Flash Gordon**, we were all very much more aware of what was required.

Up early on Saturday morning, we were straight into the competition with the FIBUA Match. The day absolutely flew by while we worked our way through the pistol match, Roupell match, LSW gun run and Association Cup.

It was difficult to gauge how the team and the individuals were performing throughout the day and it was a very welcome surprise, when we consulted the Stats board to discover that we had taken the team prize. This was not to the liking of 31 Sig Regt, who had taken almost everything else!

Much to their credit and very well deserved **Sig Harper** won Best Young Soldier and **Sgt Gordon** and **Sig Harper** took the LSW

gun run, a very physical and demanding shoot. **Sig Harper** also scored well enough to be put through to Sunday's Roberts Cup. On Sunday we cheered on **Sig Harper** and took part in the falling plate competition. Sadly we couldn't match the success of Saturday, but for a team that was made up of mostly novices who had only one real practice day, it was a real triumph.

All that remained was to collect our prizes from **Brig Lithgow**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde and to make the long journey home. Team Participants – **2Lt Jones**, **Sgt Gorgon**, **Cpl, Hagan**, **Sig Harper**, **Sig Johnston**, **Sig Youll**, **Sig Colgan** and **Sig Manson** (Admin Party).

85th SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by SSgt Dale King*

OC	**Maj I Craig**
SSM	**WO2 T Johnston**

The Sqn has undergone a big change in their role thanks to the arrival of NCRS. This system replaces the Euromux, which has been in use for the last 100 years! Getting the guys in the 85th to adjust to their new role has been a piece of cake. That's actually a lie. As anyone who has served with the TA can tell you, it takes an age to change their thought patterns and traditional ways of working. That said, the kit is here to stay. The wise words from RHQ were: "... we must adjust, make it work or die" and so we continue to move steadily forward enhancing our knowledge for our new role.

During April, we deployed 1 of our 2 shiny NCRS dets to Kirkcudbright to be enlightened by some experts from 61 Sig Sqn (V). This was good stuff and many thanks to them for helping out. By the way, **Sgt Campbell** asks "Did they keep hold of the back door keys?"

Of course it's not all hard work and no play in the TA and there are some fun elements to trg such as **Sgt Andy Carter's** swansong, which was a weekend of FIBUA training up at Magilligan.

This was a really good insight and a useful introduction into Urban Ops Skills and even the Paras would have been proud of the 85th. For many of the hardened warriors, young and old alike, and an even older SSM, throwing grenades and practising the long lost art of fire and manoeuvre, under the grim and critical eye of **SSgt Dale King**, was not an easy task. **Sgt Blair** was on hand to give anyone suffering with a heart attack some defibrillation if required but in fact we only suffered minor cuts and grazes (from maximum effort of course) and lost the odd pint of sweat. **Sgt 'Savaloy' Sanlon** didn't get stuck in a window of the skills house, so the LAD recovery veh had a quiet weekend. "Mind you they were big windows!" said **Sig Ferguson**.

The day's activities concluded with some handballing which should have been tactically sound from the lessons learned, but true to form this was obvious payback to the Permanent Staff!

The 85th bids farewell to one of its PSIs in **Sgt Andy Carter**, who is incidentally posted on promotion to a cushy place in London, expecting his first child and will probably win the lottery next month too!

A warm welcome goes **Sgt Matt Gill** who comes from Blandford and replaces **Sgt Carter**. He appears to be confident that he can whip the guys into shape, good luck fella!

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC Sqn	**Maj C Wood**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) J Krikorian**

Another busy period for 1 Sig Sqn with 12 of the Sqn's Operators deployed on dets world wide. The remainder of the Special Communicators have been trg and preparing for future deployments. This trg has included navigation and fitness trg in Snowdonia and several range days using their personal wpns, the P229 Sig Sauer pistol. We have also managed to fit in a battlefield tour and some Sub Aqua Diving in Egypt as well.

We say a fond farewell to **WO2(YofS) Steve Milne** who leaves us to take up a Sqn YofS post at 30 Sig Regt; we all wish him the best of luck in his next job. We welcome his successor **SSgt(YofS) Sean Avis**.

EXERCISE WANDERING LYNX – *by LCpl Mike Jones*

Members of 1 Sig Sqn deployed on a three day trip to Snowdonia National Park to take part in some adventurous hill walking across the mountains of Wales. Despite severe weather warnings on arrival, the sun prevailed to cheer up the group.

The purpose of the trip was to raise awareness of mountain safety and to improve our map reading and mountain skills. This was done under the watchful eyes of **SSgt Gaz West** and **LCpl Paul McLoughlin**. The trip also gave us the chance to bond as a unit, new and old Sqn members alike.

The hills were testing at times, especially the trek up Crib Goch which turned out to be more rock climbing than walking, or as **SSgt Gaz West** liked to put it, scrambling. Everything was running smoothly until **Sgt Sam Osmond** decided to tell the group, when we were on top of the hill, that she was scared of heights. As for the duty poser title, that was well and truly taken by **LCpl O'Connor** who jumped in front of a camera at every opportunity.
The ex was a great success with everyone improving their map reading and basic navigation skills, as well as building on the excellent team ethos that exists at the Sqn

SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT COURSE 1/06

The second week in May saw 9 potential students arrive in Bletchley for the first Special Comms Assessment Course of the year. The students wasted no time upon their arrival as they were thrown straight into a typing test so we could assess their progress throughout the week and to allow them to gauge what level they were at.

During the week, the students conducted many exs including fact based presentations, discussion groups, PFT, essay writing, class

3 trade tests and comd tasks. It was to the students' credit that they all put 100% effort into it and as such some achieved commendable results in all disciplines.

The aim of the Special Comms Assessment Course is to select suitable candidates for the Special Comms Course, which is 21 weeks long at present, and once completed entitles the student to serve a 4 year tour with 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (Special Comms). It is stressed that no formal preparation is needed to attend the assessment course and we are always willing to accept candidates at short notice.

Once posted into the Sqn as an operator you can expect varied, exciting and challenging work in a mature and professional environment with excellent career prospects. Other advantages include living accommodation which is second to none and excellent financial incentives.

Congratulations go to **Sgts Stu Welton** and **Billy Merrick**, **LCpl Adie Hankin** and **Sig Liam Donkin** who were deemed suitable for Special Comms trg and will be joining us in October for the long course – well done.

For more info on service with Special Communications call: Recruiting/Training Cell on 94240 8517.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO ARNHEM - *by Cpl Anna Yates*

The Sqn recently took part in a Battlefield Tour covering movements during Operation Market Garden. Starting at the LZs and DZs, we were shown the route that the British Airborne Forces took during the Op. As it was such a sunny day we took in the beautiful Dutch countryside. Stopping at the key locations where various units formed up during the Op, our tour guide **Jeff** went into great detail about the Op, including the planning stage and lessons learned afterwards.

Along the route we stopped off at the Airborne Museum. After looking round and purchasing all sorts of memorabilia, we had lunch at a nearby café which was used as a dressing station by both Allied and German forces during the war. Continuing with the tour we debussed and walked along the alleyways, following in the very footsteps of General Urquhart. This included the house, where he shot a German soldier, to the house, where he was hidden, unbeknown to German forces, at great risk to the Dutch family.

Driving past the hotel, which was used as Bde HQ, we ended the day's tour at Arnhem Bridge. The current bridge is an exact replica of the original bridge, including gun emplacements. The original bridge was destroyed by the RAF in 1945.

The next morning we embarked on our return journey back to the UK. On route we stopped off to sample the delights of a Belgium chocolate factory. After loading the bus up with chocolate we headed for home.

It was a very enjoyable and informative trip. This is the second year that 96 Sqn have arranged a battlefield tour and invited us along. The weekend was a huge success and we look forward to many more such weekends.

1st MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

This has been another extremely busy time for 1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (215). Yet more BOWMAN exs, this time with the Bde Staff Officers and two VIP visits to keep everyone on their toes. Thrown in, we had a Div SAAM with the team led by **Lt Eros**, a well earned win at the inter Bde Unit Hockey Competition, thanks to an outstanding hat trick by **LCpl Simmons** and some serious ECI prep. Then to round off, some well earned Easter leave was had by all.

Very sadly we say goodbye to **WO1(RSM) Bukkers Buckley** and wish him all the very best at 7 Sig Regt. He goes to Elmpt (or is it Butlins?) Station to help them sort out all their veh problems as MTO. We understand he may also get a suntan from some imminent foreign travel into the bargain. Remember to keep your head down! We know he is definitely gone because the Sqn dragged him out of camp on a 43, just to make sure. Best wishes also to his wife **Jill** and **'The Bump'**.

We also say a very warm welcome **WO1(RSM) Caulfield**, who with 2 weeks notice joined us from 3(UK) Div Sig Regt to step into the breach as RSM. We hope you know what you are letting yourself in for! Welcome too to wife **Kelly** and their 4 year old son, **Tony**.

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Pete Hodgkinson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Sid Barrass**

Over the past few weeks the mighty Sabre Tp have been increasing their global domination **LCpl Ginger Hughes** is now flying the flag for us out in Iraq, and **Sig Rachel Baxter** is busy in BATUS. With future deployments to Salisbury Plain, Italy and the USA over the next few months, it's an exciting period for the unit. Without doubt, the highlight of the past few weeks had to be our first ex out 'on t' Plain' with the 1 Mech Bde HQ Staff. Our attached Subbie, **2Lt Pedro Wilson** (who was correctly dressed this time!) wasn't the only one who was amazed at the constant milk demands from the Staff Officers – there was talk at one point of buying a Tp cow. With that said, the weather was typically wet and windy and the majority of our movements were conducted at night – but everyone still had a good time.

The constant trickle of postings in and out continues, and unfortunately this time we have to say goodbye to the following Sabre Tp warriors. **Sgt Young** leaves us to head for the illustrious YofS course and we all wish him the best of luck. **Sig McCann** has also served his time with us and has recently successfully completed, and thoroughly enjoyed, his 10 week combat engineering course – his future now lies as a Sapper with 38 Engr Regt in Ripon, all the best to him.

Fortunately MCM Div has been kind and we have recently had a flurry of postings in. A big hello to **Cpl Morris**, **LCpl King**, **LCpl Trotter** and **LCpl Lightley**. With a busy few months on the horizon you have definitely come at the right (or is it wrong) time.

THE BRIGADE INTER UNIT HOCKEY COMPETITION
- by Capt E Mortimore

Quietly confident, with the secret weapon of Combined Services hockey player, **LCpl Tyler** under our belt, we arrived at the Tidworth Astro Pitch raring to go.

This enthusiasm was somewhat premature as the minor units competition had been changed three times in total and we would now only play one match. Slightly miffed by a good day's hard graft wasted and replaced by a day sitting in the sunshine, the only consolation was that our one match would be a good'un – 158 Provo Coy.

If we were going to annihilate anyone, who better than the RMP! The match started at a good pace and we soon rattled the back board with an excellent goal from **LCpl Simmons**.

Apparently he is slightly more competent than he had originally made out and wowed the crowds with his quick pace and silky skills. It did not take long for the RMP contingent to feel the pressure and they soon resorted to bully-boy tactics against **Cpl Scott**. After dusting off his knee and drying his eyes, he went on to play a corking game.

After three 10 minute halves (?), the final score was 5-0 to us, 3 scored by **LCpl Simmons** and 2 by **LCpl Tyler**. Albeit a one off game, we gelled well as a team and would definitely have given the Major Units a run for their money. Maybe next time...

The Brigade Minor Unit Hockey Winners

BENGAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt A Eros**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Welsh**

Postings in and out have been coming thick and fast. We have had to say goodbye to **Sig Day**, **LCpl Athey** and **LCpl Gallon**. **Sig Dixon** and **Sig Devonshire** have both decided to try their luck on the other side and have left the Army. We also say hello to **Sgt Shaw**, **Cpl Bird**, **Cpl Hayes**, **LCpl Simmons** and **Sig Paige.**

SUPPORT TROOP

Comd	**Capt MA Webb**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt M Hunt**

As usual, another busy period for Sp Tp. With inspections and preparatory work full steam ahead for the pending ECI and LSI annual inspections, this has left little time for much else. That said, the Tp have still managed to deploy on a couple of exs in sp of the Sqn. **Pte Eric Yeko**, the ECH HQ clerk, was surprised to discover that some forms of grass can sting (nettles to you and me) when he opted to 'stand to' in a bed of them. In trg for his Class 2 as a driver, **Sig Pierce** realised that the jockey wheel for a trailer must be up prior to driving off. More importantly, it doesn't bode well when you are driving past the QM at the time!

The QM's Dept is still very busy accounting for the new found technology, BOWMAN. Congratulations to **Sgt Paul Munslow** who has gained his well earned promotion and is posted to AFNORTH in August 06. **LCpl Batsey Bates** has gravitated to new heights running the ET and is looking forward to receiving some POHR. **LCpl Si Key** has found a new vocation 'beasting' our remedials back into shape on early morning PT. The QM, **Capt Miles Webb** and his RQMS, **WO2 Terry Bickerstaff** are convinced that everyone in Sp Tp should be in the '300' club, and if not, why not!

Well done to **Sgt Clint Challand**, who put together a swimming team for the recent Inter Bde swimming competition. The Sig Sqn won and became Minor Unit winners. We bid farewell to **Cpl Leanne Macleod,** now **Everleigh**, who leaves us for 1 UK Civ Div.

THE DIVSAAM - *by Cpl Britton and LCpl Squires*

The DIVSAAM was an interesting time for 215 Sig Sqn. With all the Bde commitments, we struggled to find enough people to enter a team, but managed to scrape together a fair assortment of sharp shooters. Our hopes were resting on the likes of **Cpl Britton**, who had done very well indeed on the few practice days, and on **LCpl Squires**, who had assured us that he was a "crack shot".

Once the competitions began, things started to get interesting. Leading from the rear, **Lt Eros** proved a vital asset in the Parachute Regt Cup. Of course this was so he could encourage the weaker members of his team. Unfortunately the scores were not looking too hot. It wasn't that any of the team couldn't shoot, far from it, it was the simply sporadic gusts of wind and the horrible range pixies that blow in your ear just as you're about to take a shot.

The final and most prestigious shoot was the falling plate competition. After an astonishing win against the Ghurkas, we thought we were on our way to glory. Unfortunately this feeling was short lived as in the second round we were unable to knock down all the plates, which ended our hopes.

101st LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

OC Sqn	**Maj D Worden**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Gill**

COMMANDER'S CUP COMPETITION - *by Lt Tedby*

The Commander's Cup is 101 Log Bde's Military Skills and Patrolling competition held annually.

It consists of a team patrolling for 60 hours to various stands to be challenged in a variety of military skills from 'Reaction to an IED incident' to 'Humanitarian Assistance'. The Sqn team set off from Aldershot with some apprehension, conscious of the extreme physical nature of the task ahead and aware that the forecast was for glorious sunshine - great!

The competition began with a series of small stands in a concentration area. The general knowledge test went down well with the team swots; wpn and veh recognition followed; and finally a set of orders was delivered by the patrol comd. Then the competition really began, starting with a short tab to our harbour area and some rest. An 0330 hrs start the next morning saw us undertaking a tactical river crossing. Being in a river pushing your kit in front of you at 0500 hrs is all wrong, but we were all over safely and dry (for the most part anyway). **LCpl Foster**

managed to keep his top off for a very long time on the far side, "Just in case there are any ladies about Sir!" was his reply.

The day continued much in the same vein, everyone slogging it out to make the next checkpoint and complete the required task. The casualty extraction was interesting. Why are casualties always the biggest guys in the unit and never the 4ft 2in, 6 stone chap?

The evening brought with it the public order stand, with 'civpop' provided by our unit. They didn't go easy on us and we most certainly did not go easy on them. The 4ft shields and snatch parties worked hard to isolate and withdraw the "shooters" and **LCpl Dunseith** and **Sig Lloyd** put on some amazing displays of prisoner handling.

The next day arrived and all that remained was the March and Shoot. As the temperature hit 25 degrees C, we set off. Spirits were high and all that can be said is bring on the Cambrian Patrol! Of the 15 teams competing in the Commander's Cup, our Sqn finished 5th.

Winning Minor Unit at the Morrison Cup

MORRISON CUP - *by 2Lt Monk*

Despite a busy couple of months, we were still able to field a competitive team for the Morrison Cup in Blandford. Having seen some impressive times and distances during trg sessions, confidence was running high amongst us as a minor unit. This good form continued over the 2 days and everyone on the team put in maximum effort in their events. Of particular note were the solid performances of **LCpl Mayers** who dominated the shot put, discus and high jump and also **LCpl Edmonds**, who pulled off a race-winning third leg in the 4 x 400m relay. Congratulations are also due to **Sig Morris** for winning the long jump and earning himself a place in the Corps Athletics Team. After a great 2 days of competition, 261 Sqn finished as the winning minor unit team.

102nd LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC	**Maj JP Hazlewood**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) P Storey**

LONDON CALLING...ALL OFFICERS OF 102 LOG BDE HQ & SIG SQN (262) - *by 2Lt Lee*

It was with bleary eyes and a stooping gait, that the officers of 262 Sig Sqn set out across London for their day and a half of development, having recently found themselves the wrong side of the Army *v* Navy rugby match weekend.

We forged a path to the National Gallery, where we were given an excellent guided tour of some of the exhibits, which ranged from mediaeval epics to the paintings of Turner and Van Gogh – including his famous 'Sunflowers'. Although it was very difficult for **Capt Ian Kirk** to see these pieces without a box to stand on!

Our next port of call was the British Army Museum, adjoining Chelsea Barracks. Again our guide was excellent, and showered us with information as we made our way around the exhibits. This focussed on giving a clear feel for the daily lives of ordinary British soldiers, from the Army's formation in the 17th Century to the present day.

This gave both the OC and the 2IC the opportunity to utilize their geekiness in military history. **Lt Sam Hunt** was so in awe of their knowledge, she felt the need to sit down throughout the entire tour – or alternatively nurse her aching feet.

The following morning we made our way to the unassuming office on Old Street which houses the HQ of Inmarsat, the satellite comms firm who provide services for the MoD. Again we were treated to a tour of the facilities, and **Capt Ben Psaila** made good use of their sat phone; using it to call his mum. Let's hope he didn't try to reverse the charges! All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, so the opportunity to catch up with old friends and colleagues at the Corps Dinner Night at The Savoy Hotel was a welcome opportunity for all to let their hair down.

THE MAIDEN VOYAGE - *by Capt Kelly Griffiths*

It has been an incredibly busy month for several members of the Sqn, as they fly the flag for the unit on its first operational tour since formation in 2003. Supporting the HQ(UK)NSE in Shaibah Log Base, the Tp mans an ISMT, a Tech Wksp, a COMMCEN/RADCON and has even allowed 2 members of the RAF's TCW to infiltrate its ranks.

Settling in quickly, the Tp has got to grips with not only the day job, but also the extra tasks of manning the 'Dog and Vixen' bar and organising sports and entertainments.

LCpl Studholme has formed a football team that **Beckham** would be proud of and **Sig Blair** is leading the volleyball

LCpl Studholme doing the day job

UK NSE Troop in Shaibah Base

enthusiasts to victory. Meanwhile, 10 intrepid voyagers, led by **SSgt Burnham**, will be racing the Staff back to Gutersloh, by means of running and rowing machines. The first month of Op TELIC 8 has been busy for TECHCON Shaibah. It has been a steep learning curve, as most of us are more used to working with radio eqpt. After a short period of adjustment, we are now turning jobs around almost as soon as they come in the door. Other ongoing projects include an upgrade of the emergency broadcast system and a complete overhaul of the Sig Tp LAN. Several members of the sect have already made the trip down to Kuwait, including **LCpl Gaz Walsh**, who seems to have found himself a new special friend in **Clifford**, our contract repair liaison.

After a hectic May cooped up in air conditioned rooms, let's hope June gives us some time to get the tan. It's been an exciting month in the Shaibah COMMCEN. The first 2 weeks were incredibly busy and the pace is yet to slow down! The list of responsibilities is growing every day but we are enjoying the new challenges. Everybody is missing their family and friends back home but when we get too depressed, we remember why we are here in the first place. To quote **Cpl Potts**: " It's for the children of Iraq."

After months of planning, trg, courses and endless briefs, we're here. The ISMT seems to have settled in well, getting hands-on with all the kit, some of which is functional and some just knackered. The job itself seems to be going well with all areas running smoothly, particularly the anti-virus updates for SLB which **Sig Malcolm** takes care of; not to mention the newsletter for the families, which is in the hands of **LCpl Madgewick**. **SSgt Burnham** and **Sgt Pearsall**, the experienced pair of the team, seem to be getting on well too, taking each task in their stride and showing the junior members how things are done on the IS side of comms.

The standard of living is good, considering we're in Iraq, with excellent food on the menu every day including a curry and a sandwich bar. The facilities are great too, there's a bar, all be it dry, and a gym for all those **Arnie** wannabes and future marathon runners. There's also a welfare village for all our needs; be they suntan oil for those lazy lunch breaks in the sun or even a tailor for those made to measure 3-piece suits. The Tp has adapted easily to the pace of life (but maybe not the heat...). Both the soldiers and the Sqn were more than ready for the challenge of ops and are keen to keep meeting and completing any future tasks as they arise.

12th MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

228 SIGNAL SQUADRON LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT COURSE - *by Lt Ed Cuthbertson*

The Leadership and Development Course was held at Sennybridge in Wales. It was a hybrid of the annual Sqn Battle Camp and a JNCO Cadre Course; designed to be beneficial military trg and development for all members of the Sqn, but with the added focus of putting potential JNCOs through their paces.

The deployment into the Sennybridge Trg Area was facilitated by 2 Merlin Helicopters, ably guided in by **Sgt Jamie Roderick** and then the course was tactically inserted into the Trg Area, to begin the initial phase of the trg.

This initial phase of the course comprised an instructional and learning process to develop and build on the skill sets of the soldiers and prepare them for their FTX.

The main areas that the course was designed to cover in this early stage were the basic patrolling skills, sect battle drills, contact drills, map reading theory and practicals and the orders and estimate process. Concurrently, the soldiers were put through Grouping and Zeroing ranges by **Lt Ed Cuthbertson** and an Individual Battle Skills Range (IBSR) conducted by **SSgt Flo Watts**. The majority of this intensive instruction came from the Sect DS, consisting of **Sgts Jamie Roderick**, **Sgt Steve Hall** and **Cpl Mac Macarthy**, who crammed in as many lessons as humanly possible to prepare the soldiers for the upcoming confirmations.

Once the periods of instruction were completed, we moved through the Bank Holiday weekend of fun, with a map reading confirmation on the Sunday. Ex FANDANGLE was located down in the Brecon Beacons, incorporating the Pen-y-fan summit, a rare treat for all of us involved in exercise and no doubt caused some amusement for the locals who would think the speeding soldiers mad! After all had recovered and feet had been sufficiently patched up, we moved on to Monday, or as it affectionately became known 'Ex HAPPY MONDAY'! An early morning sect competition over the asslt course was a welcome wake up, in preparation for the bayonet range conducted by **SSgt Flo Watts**. By the time they had had the instruction and physical beat up, they were already exhausted. They were then expected to fight through dummies on a bayonet range, which was uphill, marshy and crossed by streams. It would be fair to say that once **Lt Taft** and I took the bayonets from the soldiers at the finish, they were almost crawling! Special mention to **LCpl Cascarina**, whose eyes were acting independently of each other at the end!

Once all this was completed, the course moved into the FTX phase, where we started to test the soldiers on everything that they had learned throughout the initial and conformation phases. Using Tp Harbour locations as their base for ops, the sects moved through live firing as pairs, fire teams, sect in asslt and sect in defence. They continued with navigating around the area and worked hard through a cas and battlefield first aid serial. The evening before the final attack consisted of a Tp asslt onto a small village, with the sect (and DS!) making best use of illumination, smoke and thousands of blank rounds.

The next morning's final attack was then started with an insertion to the stop short by Sea King Helicopter and then a Tp level live sequential asslt onto 4 enemy positions. **Sigs Lilley**, **Fox**, **Bennet**, **Sharples** and **Hamilton** were all in contention for the top soldier in the cadre, so the DS had their eagle eyes on them during the asslt. The attack went in with the sects conducting themselves robustly and showing how far they had come over the previous 10 days. Having the OC Sqn, **Maj Spencer**, and the Bde Comd, **Brig JG Lorimer MBE**, also there to critique and offer pearls of wisdom at the ex end were an added bonus for the course.

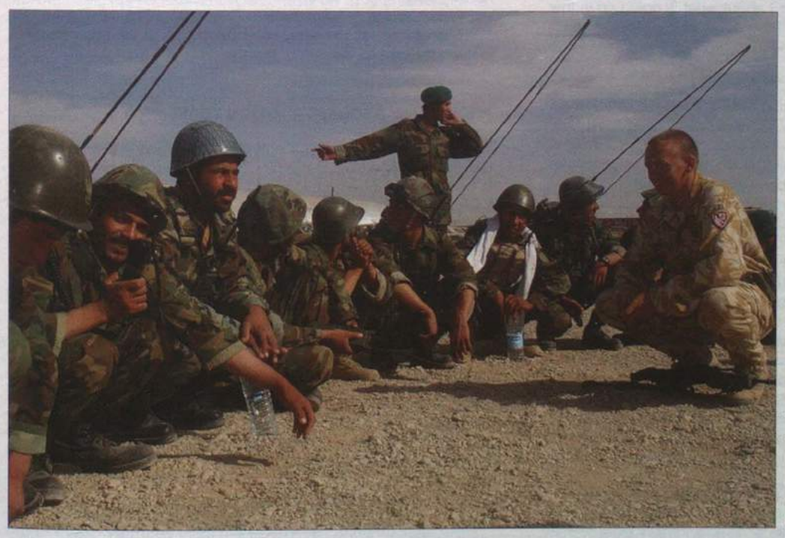
In summary the soldiers found it to be a taxing and at times very demanding course, but gained much knowledge and trg that will hold them in good stead with the fast approaching Afghanistan deployment in 2007. Congratulations to **Sig Fox** for finishing top of the course and to **Sig Condon** for winning the OC's award for determination!

16th AIR ASSAULT HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

216 DEPLOYMENTS AND ROLE ON OP HERRICK IV – AFGHANISTAN

For 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (216) the promise of going on an op tour had been looming for a while. Dates and numbers had not been confirmed, other than that a possible deployment would occur in 2006. For most, this was frustrating but as per usual the preparation was to be intense.

It all started in early January with Ex HERRICK EAGLE – the final UK based Bde FTX. The ex was in fact a dress rehearsal for the proposed op template that would be used in theatre. For the Sqn it highlighted the difficulties of working in so many locations. BOWMAN Light was trialled for the first time on a Bde Ex and it too provided its own teething problems. It is however being used successfully in Afghanistan.



SSgt Oliver teaching communications to the Afghan National Army

February saw elements from the Sqn deploy to Oman for Ex DESERT EAGLE with the primary task of supporting 3 Para and the Army Air Corps on live firing exs. This month also saw elements of the National Sp Comd Sig Tp deploy to Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan, with the mission of providing long range HF comms for this HQ. These were the first troops from the Sqn to deploy ahead of majority of the Bde.

The Sqn is deployed in a vast variety of roles in theatre and in many locations, including close sp to HQ Helmand Task Force (HTF), Rear Link Detachments (RLDs), soldiers and officer deployed on the Op Military Liaison Team (OMLT) and soldiers detached to 21 Air Asslt Bty RA Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).

One of the Sqns primary roles is to provide the comms and comd and control infrastructure to the HQ HTF. It is the first time that any armed force like this has deployed to this part of the world, making the challenge of uncertainty greater than ever before – a truly new and untried op. The traditional HQ layout was changed and new comms systems, pertinent to Coalition Forces ops, introduced; making it a very interesting place to work and observe.

RLDs have been attached to Coalition Units in order to provide continuity and specialist comms advice. RLDs are also attached to 3 Para and the Pathfinder Platoon providing both with comms bases and integral comms on the ground.

The OMLT is an all Arms Team that is mentoring the Afghan National Army in procedures and tactics. The Sqn has deployed a dedicated team in sp of the OMLT providing intricate comms knowledge and trg.

The PRT is HTF's provider of the 'hearts and minds' campaign. A large number of soldiers from all trade groups are deployed in Lashkar Gah in an inf role. They are supported by the 216 Ech commanded by the QM and RSM.

LCpl Morrison winning hearts and minds

3 PARA REAR LINK DETACHMENT (RLD)

The 3 Para RLD is responsible for providing comms from the BG back to the Task Force HQ (TFHQ). They also go out to the platoon houses located in villages in Helmand province and provide comms back to the 3 Para HQ. They are located in Camp Bastion and **Cpl Steel** is a det comd there. He reports:

"I've recently returned from one of the Platoon houses in the village of Naw Zad, which is about 95km north of Lashkar Gah. We flew in by Chinook helicopter and then patrolled into the village on foot.

The locals didn't know we were coming and it was quite tense, as coalition forces hadn't been in this area before. We moved in, set up a platoon house and re-enforced the sangars or guard posts with sandbags. The role of the platoon house is to provide first hand information back to the TFHQ about what is going on in the local area. The main priority was the security of the platoon house itself and us in it, so we all mucked in to build up the defences as quickly as possible.

There were 3 of us from 216 forming the RLD and we established a small tac HQ for the 3 Para Coy OC. We mainly used 117(F) and PSC 506 TACSAT systems to talk back to the BG HQ in Camp Bastion. We also had BOWMAN HF as a back up. Facilities in the house were very limited and we were using portable solar showers and living off ration packs. It wasn't a whole lot worse than Camp Bastion though, as when we first arrived in theatre, we were on water rationing and you couldn't wash any of your clothes. This doesn't help when it is over 45 degrees C and there are constant dust storms. Things are getting better though and we do now have internet access.

What I've enjoyed most so far is actually getting out on the ground in the platoon house and doing my job for real. It was great to be a det comd, when you're in the middle of nowhere, and when you are stood to you realise that you are in hostile territory, and this time you could really be attacked. It certainly beats stagging on in the Ops room."

PATHFINDER PLATOON REAR LINK DETACHMENT (RLD)

The Pathfinder Platoon (PF Pl) RLD is currently split between 2 locations, the Forward Operating Base (FOB) Price and the

National Support Command Signal Troop ready for PT

Helmand TFHQ. **Sig Hughes** has been deployed since March and has worked in both locations. He reports:

"Our daily routine consists largely of manning the Ops Room. The main job is to monitor the incoming comms, whether they come via 117(F) TACSAT or by telephone. It is the first time I've used TACSAT and it is brilliant. We've also got a text data attachment with it. I am often the liaison between the Staff at the HQ back to the PF Pl at FOB Price, which can involve passing mission critical messages. When I'm at FOB Price I'm also the battery storeman, responsible for charging and distribution.

FOB Price was great when we first turned up but it is a lot busier now, so the gym and scoff house can get quite crammed. One good thing is that you save a lot of money as there is nothing to spend it on! There is more of a family atmosphere working with the PF Pl and we even call the Sgt Maj by his first name.

When there is a contact situation going on, the reality really hits home that you have guys on the ground. It's quite easy to focus though and you take pride in your job. You just want to make sure you don't make a mistake. You feel the importance of what you are doing as you are passing information from the front line to the people who matter. It all highlights how important it is to practice when you are on ex.

The best thing about the job is that you get to learn a great deal on both comms and other eqpt that you wouldn't in the UK. I've used Cougar, had combat first aid lessons and fired a variety of weapons I've not used before, including Browning pistol, 51mm mortar, Claymore mine, Under-slung Grenade Launcher, Minimi machine gun and hand grenades. The worst thing is being away from home. Overall I'm really enjoying my job at the moment and looking forward to the rest of the tour."

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM (PRT)

The PRT are responsible for providing security and aiding Government agencies in the rebuilding of Helmand province. This is centred on the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah. 21 AD Bty, RA have been given this task but a quarter of their manpower has been provided by 216 Sig Sqn. **LCpl Carver** is a radio systems operator who has been attached to the PRT since January 06. He reports:

"Our trg began back in January, when we joined 21 AD Bty. It was quite intensive and we completed a number of range packages on wpns such as GPMG and 50 cal. We had to learn our SOPs for patrolling and how to manage public order situations within our rules of engagement. The OPTAG team then came and assessed us on the Bde mission rehearsal ex. Around half of us got to go out on Ex DESERT EAGLE in Oman, where we got to practise our contact drills whilst taking part in a comprehensive desert driving package.

Most of us arrived in Lashkar Gah in mid April and we are due to spend 6 months here. Our shift system is broken down into 3 days of patrols, 1 day on guard and 1 day as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF). One of the patrol days is spent doing escorts,

2 Pathfinder Platoon Rear Link Detachment ready to go

mainly to the Governor's compound down town. The other 2 are where we go on longer patrols, outside of Lashkar Gah, or on overnight patrols.

There are 4 people in each team with 3 teams making up a multiple of 12. In my multiple, we have a team from the Estonian army. Some of them speak better English than others but their skills and drills are quite good. As a LCpl, I'm also responsible for looking after the younger members of my team. It can be quite draining at times. When you are on QRF you are meant to be able to rest but you are often called out, or woken by the phone. The most exciting patrol I have been on is when we picked up a suspect 'dicker' (someone who uses a radio or phone to tell the enemy the location of the patrol) and some warning shots had to be fired.

We were also used to cordon off the area around the C130, which caught fire. It was good at the start but not that much fun after 26 hours. I've not had to fire any shots yet, thankfully, but I have had to take my safety catch off a number off times.

The best thing about being with the PRT is getting out of camp and on the ground. You get to see what Afghanistan is really like and it is better than stagging on a radio. The worst thing is that you don't really get any time off, like other people do and you often get fastballs. I've learnt a lot since being out here, especially about patrolling. It has widened my view as to what you can do and will definitely help me in the rest of the career."

19th LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj M Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) S Fidler**

The Sqn bade farewell to **WO1(RSM) Forrester** in April. His replacement, **WO1(RSM) Fidler**, has spent his first weeks in the unit imposing his considerable personality on all and sundry. In a process remarkably similar to global warming, sideburns have been seen retreating up cheeks like melting glaciers under his withering gaze. He is a smiling assassin, capable and eager for the chance nevertheless.
TELIC 9 preparations continue. Troops were taken through a comprehensive Team Medic package by **Cpl Eyers**.

Participation in the 3/4 Div SAAM was shoehorned in, with some fine individual performances from a team led by **2Lt Matt Johns** and **Cpl Glen Armitage**. The Sqn entered the **Morrison Cup**, as reported below. We now look forward to a battle camp and AT package in June.

MORRISON CUP – *by Sgt Venni*

Keen to retain its title as Morrison Cup Minor Units Champions, the Sqn planned its inter- tp athletic competition for 22 May, with trials for the Corps event 2 days later. Held on a cold, soggy day, the trials would clearly have been more advantageous if we had been trg for the inter-services aqua aerobics competition. Some useful trg was wrung from the deluge nonetheless, and **LCpl Jasjew** kept everyone amused with the hopscotch game he played during the triple jump competition.

The team set off the very next day for sunny Blandford with **Sgt Luke 'Luigi' Venni** as team manager. Keen to carbo load, the drivers insisted on stopping at every service station for dogburgers and fags. Upon arrival, we were greeted by the OC, **Major Dooley**, who had set off on foot several days earlier from Catterick, in order to warm up properly for the 5000m and the 3km steeplechase. Such boundless enthusiasm is profoundly humbling.

Rain greeted the first day of competition, having pursued us relentlessly from Catterick. Fortunately, the OC had a speech to rival Henry V at Agincourt, and before you could say *"for Dooley, England and St Jimmy"*, we were standing like greyhounds in the slips, straining for the start. Don't know what came over us, actually.

As the events started and results began to come in, it was clear that it was going to be a close run thing between us and 101 Log Bde. Obviously smarting from last year, our G4 buddies had been recruiting for all they were worth, and had attracted some serious class. After the first day's events only 3 points separated the teams.

We got off to a flyer on the final day. **LCpl McGuire** ripped through the 400m and 800m field, and **Sig 'Linford' Charles** won the 100m by the only hair on his chest. **LCpl Bill Reddy** did the business on the long and triple jumps, whilst trying not to damage the new tattoo on his back. The elusive **Cpl 'Red Andy' Pennock,** who seems to have snuck into *The Wire* notes yet again, confounded those who said he shouldn't have been drinking until 5am that morning, by strolling through his leg of the 4 x 100m relay without falling over at all. Truly, it was a day of stupendous achievements.

Success on the track was not, however, replicated in the field, despite the Herculean effort from **LCpl Scarff** – a man who was seen to revel in the moniker Mr Gay UK throughout the competition. 101 Log Bde eventually came home to win by 3

points. To be honest, this had always been the Sqn plan. We will be on ops this time next year and getting 'our' trophy back from Iraq would have been a logistic nightmare. Congratulations to **LCpl McGuire** who has been selected to represent the Corps in the 400m and 800m at the upcoming Army Championships.

EXERCISE TROPICAL STORM – *by Sig Waters*

Vaccinated up to the eyeballs, 16 sigs from the Sqn joined 1RGJ on Ex TROPICAL STORM in Belize between March and May. They performed numerous tasks, acting as coy operators, TCV drivers, gene reps and radio operators for 25 Flt AAC for CASEVAC.

The coy operators, **Cpl** (now **Sgt**) **Johnston**, **LCpl Houghton**, **LCpl Westbury** and **Sig McGrath**, received a thorough and well deserved thrashing in the trees. They took part in all the inf skills including live firing, sect, platoon and even coy attacks, as well as maintaining and securing comms.

The drivers also found their job to be difficult, as the roads and vehs were in such a terrible state. These points were put forward to the GOC and will soon be rectified, which will leave Belize with a transit infrastructure to rival the Ruhr. Driving long hours put the drivers under strain, as **Sig Waters** found out when she ditched her Bedford in a storm drain during a full BG move. Helpfully, the recce mechs were also VOR, which led to considerable friction for the Bn. For some, the highlight of the ex was time spent in the woods. For others, R & R beckoned.

People went off to Cancun in Mexico which proved increasingly and indeterminately expensive to reach using the RGJ's admin setup, so many went to Caye Caulker and San Pedro Caye. **LCpl Mick Westbury** and **LCpl 'Robbo' Robertson** played a game of Jet Ski dodgems on San Pedro. This didn't end in tears, despite **Mick** getting in an excellent hit on **Robbo's** tibia and fibia, shattering them both. To make things worse, they were landed with a £4000 bill for a slightly scratched jet ski.

All in all, Ex TROPICAL STORM was a great experience and we would definitely jump at the chance of doing it again.

FUNDRAISING FOR DARLINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The Sqn raised £1288.86 through personal contributions for Darlington Memorial Hospital's Emergency Department. The hospital intends to buy more Pulse Oximetry Monitors, which help to check children's health whilst being administered pain killers.

Barbara Mennim, the Matron of the Department, said: "We treat approximately 11,000 children a year at the A & E Dept at Darlington, and this donation, and the equipment it will be used to buy, are both very welcome."

In a cheesy press release that will do no harm in his bid for an MBE, the QM, **Capt Chris McGinley,** said: "We enjoy raising money and between us, it does not take a lot of effort. Many of us are from the area and so wanted to support a local hospital and see the money benefiting children."

20th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj F E Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Yates**

This first month in Iraq has seen every element of the Sqn's pre-deployment trg tested to the limit. On the comms side, the myriad of unfamiliar systems and limited knowledge of BOWMAN across the Bde has resulted in a very steep learning curve.

We are the first formation in Iraq who are BOWMAN Light trained, and combined with the electronic fratricide caused by the force protection eqpt, have experienced significant challenges to ensure that the BGs can communicate with their patrols. On the military side, both Tigris Tp and the MT multiple are routinely deploying in SNATCH, escorting both convoys and VIPs around the South of MND (SE).

Continuation trg has been essential to ensure that our skills and drills remain as current and as effective as they can be.

We have operators and technicians embedded in Rear Links with the BGs, who are routinely part of long-range desert patrols and QRF taskings. Supporting not one, but two demanding HQs (HQ MND (SE) and the Bde HQ) brings along its own little 'disruptive challenges', and it is a testament to our trg and initiative that there haven't been any insurmountable issues which our soldiers could not cope with. All in all, the Sqn is now firmly settled into its TELIC 8 role, and is thoroughly enjoying the tempo and reality of all the challenges the op is throwing our way. We are looking forward to the next 6 months immensely.

Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs of 20 Armd HQ & Bde Sig Sqn

OP TELIC 8 – FIRST EXPERIENCE - *by Sig Stacei Manners*

It is a bright sunny May Day. I am in a hot country but not for a holiday. I am here for a different reason; I am out in Iraq on Op TELIC 8. When I was told I was deploying to Iraq, I was apprehensive. After everything I had seen on the news I was expecting the situation to be worse than previous Op TELICs. I knew there was still a threat out there and that we still seemed to be fighting a war, but in actual fact, we are here to try and rebuild Iraqi society and democracy. The problem is that some people are trying to stop us.

Tigris Troop on Casevac Drills

I arrived in theatre after a long 24 hours worth of travelling. It was straight into the induction package at Shaibah Log Base. We were split into groups and rotated through a series of lessons. Some were a bit scary, but as a few people told me, they were just preparing us for the worst. So if anything happened we would be able to cope with the situation and control it. Our accommodation comprised a bubble tent with wooden slabs, rows of camp beds and the much needed air conditioning system.

The facilities were of a decent standard with hot showers and the usual 'portaloos.' After a very comprehensive trg programme, the final day had come and it was time for a quick late night flight to our final destination, and our home for the next 7 months - Basra Air Station. My heart was beating fast with adrenalin, wondering what was awaiting me. However, a few briefs later we were shown to our accommodation and to my surprise the standard was extremely good, in the form of two man bunks. We had the basics and I settled in quite quickly.

The first days were filled with the hand over from 7 Bde; checking, signing and servicing the vehs. However, doing this in the blazing heat was a strain. By lunchtime I had drunk 6 litres of bottled water. Acclimatisation was definitely going to take a while. As for the remainder of the tour, I am excited by what awaits us, but I am already starting to miss the normality of the family life I have left behind.

OC TIGRIS TROOP - *by Lt Dan Lewin*

Over the past few months, Tigris Tp has been continuing to develop and prepare itself for the forthcoming op tour to Iraq. Our traditional skills and drills were on top form post Ex UHLAN EAGLE but it was time to develop them with more of a Counter-Insurgency flavour.

The task which the troops face in theatre may well be daunting for some, with the natural anxiety of many soldiers on their first tour and the uncertainty of what lies ahead for them. The challenges on Op TELIC 8 are many: we have to cope with the developing 'BOWMANisation' in theatre and adapt ourselves to being operationally effective when we deploy as a Lt Fwd HQ.

With the theatre induction package complete, the Tp has been extremely busy with preparation for a myriad of roles, intertwined with live op commitments. We have strived to accomplish full understanding and op of the BOWMAN system and the way in which the HQ is set up and deployed. Concurrently, the Tp has been progressing from its minimum standard of OPTAG and cascade trg, and developing its trg with a series of 4 and 5 range packages, low level tactics and more advanced soldiering skills. This has been overshadowed by the need for Force Protection multiples to deploy on tasks such as convoy escort and mobile patrols, with continuous evolution of trg, tactics and procedures.

As with anything, the op commitment and tp level trg must include some 'fun' and a certain degree of down time. This has been in the form of fitness and sporting competitions, and an opportunity for individuals to have quiet moments. Op TELIC 8 will be a great challenge for the Tp. It offers the requirement for professionalism, commitment and thorough understanding of the tactical situation at all levels. All soldiers are already benefiting hugely from the tour, both with experience in trade, and an improved soldiering capability, which will undoubtedly stand them well in their future careers in the Corps.

JOINT SERVICES UNIT BASRA (JSUB) - *by SSgt Rory O'Neill*

JSUB (MT) has now fully completed the relief in place and normal ops are continuing. The role is very different to the normal run-of-the-mill MT, in that we provide our own Force Protection multiple to cover any force protection required throughout MND (SE). A normal task will see the multiple escorting all the fuel tankers from Kuwait to the air station to ensure the air bridge remains open, followed by a task escorting call signs into Basra and to surrounding areas. All in all, not the normal role for Linemen, Electricians and Operators; one of us is even rumoured to be a technician but he shows far too much common sense to me. The remainder of our manpower comes from all 3 Services, with all manner of cap badges, from Inf soldiers to RAF Radar operators, and made up from Regular, TA and Reservists. It has been an eye opener for me to see that all do exactly the same job, with little or no difference in the standard.

At the top of the pile is the MTWO, **WO2 Stu Reynolds**, who is living proof that man can survive on caffeine and rice crispies alone. **Sgt Karl Stenning** controls the white fleet on base and his partner in crime is the green fleet manager, **Sgt Daz Pullen**, who can regularly be seen at 400ft above sea level with a safety line tied around his ankles and arms flapping like a kestrel. **Cpl Daff Evans** is our resident driver trg expert and is normally seen trying to peel himself from the window of a high powered Land Rover 3, with a grinning staff officer at the wheel. All in all, life in BAS is pretty good, the facilities have certainly improved from previous TELICs. Hopefully we will get some time off soon to check them out but I imagine they will remain a mystery, at least for the foreseeable future anyway. Still, with a month gone and only another 6 more to push, the MT team are high on morale and as the saying goes "living the dream."

39th INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

OC	**Maj CM Vaudin**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Spiers**

ALPHA TROOP

OC Tp	**Lt Parkes**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Staff**

JACAMAR IMPLEMENTATION – *by Cpl Jon Atkinson*

The implementation of the new Jacamar TETRA radio system to MOD NI started in January, when members of the Sqn completed a 'Train the Trainer' package. The package was provided by Motorola and was split into 2 phases: first a bit of death by power point then the fun part – hands on with the new terminals! This should have involved walking around camp to test out the different functions, but due to a bit of inclement weather and the leadership of **Sgt Mick Simcock**, it involved sitting in the café enjoying a nice cuppa!

We were some of the first to be trained in Province, so it was then a question of trying to get as many personnel in the Tp trained up. This proved no easy task as everyone works shifts and we were at that stage of the year where we needed to use up our annual leave, however the task was completed with good results. After months of waiting for the Jacamar base stations, April had come round and the poor techs and inst techs of Charlie Tp were tasked with providing the Ops room fit in just a day, including all antennae and coaxes.

After all the rush, we then had some time to get everyone OK at using the base stations, which aren't as user friendly as the handhelds that the trg had been carried out with. Over the next couple of weeks, more and more Ops rooms had their Jacamar installed until May 06 came around and the system finally went live, slightly ahead of schedule. Jacamar is now the primary C2 in NI but it is running side by side with the older Cougar system while the users build up confidence with the new system. As Jacamar is leased from the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI), they deal with the entire network management and the installation and repair of the eqpt. This will cut down the Sqn's workload quite considerably, once the remaining Cougar talkthroughs are removed. This is hopefully going to happen after the upcoming marching season, where Jacamar will be given a thorough testing.

After a month of use, the feedback from the users is very positive, especially when compared with COUGAR. This is due to the superior voice quality and the ability to use the handsets for one to one calls just like a mobile, which increases our ability to liaise with other users such as the PSNI and improves comms between units.

Overall its been a very successful couple of months for NCC and the Sqn as a whole, and this will improve as Cougar gets removed and we move ever closer to Normalisation.

INDIA TROOP

Tp OC	**WO2(Supvr IS) Bill Fagan**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Si Kenny**

THE FUNERAL OF CPL ANDY PAGE – *by OC Tp*

At 1400 hrs on Thursday 27th April 2006, in the small grave yard of St. John the Baptist Church, Niton, in the south-east coastal region of the Isle of Wight, a lone bugler performs The Last Post. Around the grave are the family and friends of **Cpl Andy Page**, who tragically lost his life in a road traffic accident in Antrim the week previously. Standing to one side are members of his Tp and Sqn, from the OC and RSM down to Sig; a fitting tribute to a bright and enthusiastic IS Eng who had a promising career ahead of him.

The bearer and firing parties where chosen from a plethora of willing volunteers and they made sure that the funeral proceedings were conducted with the solemn reverence, military precision and respect that was due to **Andy** and his family at such a ceremony. It has to be noted that very few members of these parties had attended a funeral before, let alone taken an active role in one, and they conducted themselves admirably. **Andy** will be missed by many on a professional and personal level so the thoughts, hearts and prayers of all his comrades in the Corps go out to his family at this time, but especially his children **Joshua**, **Charley** and **Kaisha**.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp OC	**Maj S Harvey**
Tp WO	**WO2(RQMS) B Sheard**

THE LONDON TO BELFAST MARATHON CHALLENGE - *by RQMS Sheard*

The London to Belfast Marathon challenge was laid down by WO2 (RQMS) Sheard. It was a physically and mentally demanding challenge that started on Sunday 23 April with the London Marathon, continued with a running relay of 256 miles from London to Belfast, and culminated with the Belfast Marathon on 1st May. The aim of the challenge was to raise money for charity and the 2 charities adopted were the Royal British Legion and the Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children. Five gladiators stood up to be counted and these were: **Maj Bennett** (DCOS), **WO2(RQMS) Bri Sheard**, **Cpl Ian Allen**, **Cpl Kenny Campbell**, **LCpl Barny Barnstaple**.

On Sunday 23 April it was the start of the 2006 Flora London Marathon. The atmosphere was electric. Thousands of people were all mentally preparing themselves for 26.2 miles of running but for some, it all got a little too much and one of our team missed the start and had to run with the fancy dress runners at the back. **Cpl Kenny Campbell** was the first team member home, completing the Marathon in 3 hrs 18 mins. He was closely followed by the RQMS, DCOS and **Cpl Ian Allen** with **LCpl Barnstaple** last home in a respectable time of 4 hrs 32 mins.

We starter the next phase of the challenge on Monday 24th April, starting from the London Marathon finish point. To keep us on track we needed to run North of St Albans. **Cpl Allen** struggled to get his legs to work and rather than running he seemed to speed walk, with a shuffle. We think his tiredness had seriously affected his ability to take simple instructions, as he took a wrong turn on route adding an extra mile to his leg. With Day 2 coming to a close, we knew that the going was getting tough as **Cpl Mooney** our Admin Sp remarked: "all this driving is playing havoc with my calves."

The total planned distance for Day 3 was 42 miles, but **LCpl Barny Barnstaple** decided to push himself that little bit further by covering some extra mileage; and so the competition for the 'alpha male' began with each runner trying to outdo the runner in front of him. By the end of the day, we finished by the M6/M1 Junction having covered well over 50 miles. Day 4 Wednesday 26th April, target 66 miles. The team have now started to get used to a system of running, eating, drinking and resting. The distance is a real achievement and so far we had covered 160 miles. On Day 4, we successfully completed our aim to run 13.1 miles each and finish just outside Chester. On Day 5, **Cpl Allen** was the first runner of the day as the 'alpha male' competition

continued. The next runner, **Cpl Campbell**, threw down the gauntlet and pushed up the stakes by completing an 11 mile leg even though only 7.5 miles was planned. The DCOS, **Maj Bennett**, played catch up but bowed out at 10.5 miles in a time of 1 hr 17 mins. On Friday 28th April with only 15 miles to the ferry terminal at Birkenhead, the short distance to the ferry hardly seemed worth mentioning. All running was complete by lunchtime and we were now ready to catch the evening ferry for the trip back to Belfast and the run into the city centre the following morning. It was an early start as we arrived into the port of Belfast at 0800 hrs with only 6.1 miles to the Belfast Marathon start at the City Hall in the city centre.

That run was completed in just 35 mins and everyone could now look forward to a well-earned rest over what was left of the weekend. On Monday 1st May, we only had the 2006 Belfast Marathon, i.e. another 26.2 miles to go! It was decided over the weekend that in order to meet **Cpl Allen's** fetish for wearing women's clothing, the team would run in drag. The route was new with a loop around the City of Belfast, before a steady climb out towards the Zoo then returning back into the centre for the finish. All the team expected a slower time than London but were pleasantly surprised as we completed the Belfast marathon in a similar time to London. It became evident that no matter how much trg you do, the 'wall' will still be there. **Cpl Campbell** finished first in 3 hrs 23 mins, followed by the RQMS in 3 hrs 25 mins, **Cpl Allen** in 3 hrs 30 mins, **Maj Bennett** in 3 hrs 36 mins and **LCpl Barnstaple** in 4 hrs 42 mins. It has to be said that the runners did a fantastic job in successfully completing the challenge. In all, a combined distance of 506 miles was covered with a team time of 65 hrs and 31 mins. The team is ecstatic at having completed the challenge, though the Physio may be enjoying our company for some time. In total £10,432.50 was raised for the Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children and the Royal British Legion; a truly extraordinary and commendable achievement.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO	**Lt Col CJ McIntosh**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) LS Crossing**

HQ SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Jim Boyle**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Gaz Middleton**

CYPRUS CYCLE CHALLENGE - *by LCpl Steph Armsby*

On a warm day in April, 22 cyclists and sp crew from the Unit embarked on the 10th Annual Cyprus Cycle Challenge. Consisting of 4 day of cycling, the route would stretch to 542km with 5000m of hill climbing.

The challenge began and straight away we starting making good time. Within the first 10km, **LCpl Steph Armsby** decided to test the ground and fell off whilst braking at a junction, blaming a patch of oil on the ground. Still making good time, we approached Dhekelia and had our first water stop. It was here that the local reporters had us circling a roundabout in an attempt to get a few 'action shots'. This added at least an extra kilometre to the challenge. Comd ESBA then joined us for a while and with him, we continued to make good time and made it to the first lunch stop, Zygi beach, as a group. This was our first chance to reflect on the morning's cycling and everything was going well. After half an hour, it was back onto the bikes and off down the coast road to Akrotiri. **LCpl Alex Munford** led the group on a very old motorbike, which at times was overtaken by the cyclists; despite this he did a wonderful job at making sure we took the right turnings and never got lost. As we entered the camp gates at Akrotiri we all gave a sigh of relief, as the first day drew to a close. A hot gruelling day was over and 168km of mainly flat roads was under our belts.

Day 2 started with a very picturesque route around the coast which turned into a steady climb up to Episkopi camp. It was here that the group split into the 2 fitness levels but we regrouped at the top. On our way down to our first lunch stop, we enjoyed some impressive rolling coastal roads with some amazing views. Some of the more confident riders achieved some remarkable speeds on the downhill sections. Lunch stop today was at Aphrodite's Rock. But there was no rest for the wicked: we finished our lunches and continued on our way. We all knew that now we had a demanding hill climb coming up; the only incentive being was the knowledge that the hotel was at the top; now that was a motivator! Soon enough we reached the hill, and began climbing. A very steep start tested the riders and the group soon spread out. Soon enough it levelled out and gave the riders a chance to recover, the only downfall was that it levelled out for a very long time. Third up the hill was the RSM, **WO1 Leigh Crossing**, with **Sqn Ldr Rayner** effortlessly helping the back runners who were struggling but battled on to complete the hill and reached the hotel in good time for showers and a drink before dinner. Maybe that day was a little taster of the next.

Day 3 was the hardest day of all. Everyone woke still basking in their personal triumphs from the previous day, but we had bigger fish to fry. The Troodos Mountains stared down at us, as we began the decent down from our hotel back to sea level. Once again we followed the coast road, but we could all see quite clearly that soon we would no longer be riding along the flat as the mountain range got closer. We had one final stop before the climb, where all the riders crammed themselves full of bananas and energy drinks ready for the task ahead. Next stop, half way up at the first water stop. Troodos Mountain had begun. An interesting but long, steep, ride then followed. Almost immediately, the riders spread out and before long it was a good 2 kilometres between first and last rider. The back runners and less fit in the group didn't care about what position they were coming up the hill, as they knew that it was just a matter of doing it; the challenge was to do it before dinner. After some impressive contouring and a long and gruelling climb, with some very little downhill along the way, the riders reached the lunch stop. The hotel we had stayed in the night before had provided us with an impressive spaghetti and bread lunch, which was much needed and well deserved. The first group of riders set off after just 15 minutes spared for lunch, while the tail enders, including **LCpl Steph Armsby** and **Maj Terry Crane** took a bit longer but all eventually got going on the last part of the climb. In parts, the final climb was steeper than the first. Frequent water stops and marvellous encouragement from the sp crew ensured all riders made it up the mountain. A lot of the riders surprised themselves despite having cramp in the final 5km, **Cpl Dan Evans** did exceptionally well. We reached Troodos Camp just in time for dinner and after a shower and change, it was to the bar to relax and reflect.

Day 4 was the last day and with everyone exhausted, the only thing to carry us through it was the knowledge that this was it, the way home. What goes up must come down, so we had to descend the 1800m we had climbed the previous day. The group soon split up again, as confidence levels and experience soon shone through. **Maj Chris Hymas** almost got split up from the group as the police were convinced he had to stop somewhere else. We all managed to re-group at the bottom and then stayed together all the way to Nicosia, where we were greeted like celebrities by the UN who had provided an outstanding buffet lunch. Then onto the special baby care unit – one of our major charities for the event – where we were all given cake, juice and an individual carnation. It was then homeward bound. In the main, flat cycling brought us all the way back to where we had

started 4 days before, the only difference is that we had 542km and 5000m worth of hill climbing under our belts – and some very sore bottoms!

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

QM **Maj Chris Hymas**
RQMS(T) **WO2(RQMS) Lee Linton**

DHEKELIA RAFT RACE

Sat 3 Jun saw Dhekelia's annual all-island raft race, with all sections of BFC represented by foolhardy sailors on dubious floating devices. Twenty six teams entered, 3 of which were from the Unit. Aside from the two RE rafts (the day is traditionally a RE fun day) the QM's Dept tried their hand, aided by **WO2 (RQMS) Lee Linton**, to build the fastest, unsinkable craft in which to pit their wits against any plucky opponents.

Captain WO2(RQMS) Lee Linton and his seafaring crew

Nicknamed 'Plane Sailing (Army)', **RQMS Linton** and his crew, **Cpl Jay McConnell**, **Cpl Kim Peterson** and **LCpl Kev Daley** bravely set sail on what was to be a momentous and unforgettable race. Pitted against 4 other 'floating devices' loosely labelled as 'rafts', and after a dodgy start, 'Plane Sailing (Army)' came in a respectable 4th out of 5. Not bad for a first attempt. The RE Seniors team from the Unit came in 3rd in their heat and 3rd overall.

In the words of the RQ himself, it's the 'taking part that counts'.

BRUGGEN 10

This year, JSSU(Cyprus) entered the only team from Cyprus in the Bruggen 10 to raise funds for the station's multi charity Ex SILVER CHILD VI.

The ex is a year long charity event with members of the station completing events throughout the year with funds raised being split equally between Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) and local children's charities in JSSU(Cyprus). The Bruggen 10 is a 10 mile road race around the former RAF bomber station, which is now home to both 7 and 16 Sig Regt in Elmpt Station, Germany.

Headed up by **Maj Chris Hymas** and a team of 8 (5 RAF and 3 Army), the experience ranged from regular London Marathon runners to those that had chosen the event as a kick start to their fitness regime.

The race itself was a success, with **LCpl Kev Daley** coming in first for the team with a respectable time just short of 1 hour 18 minutes. Great fun was had by all and in the region of £1,500 was raised from the event and put towards the Silver Child charity.

1 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Billy Kidd**

Congratulations are extended to **Cpl Dan Evans** on his recent selection for promotion to Sgt. By the time of printing we will be bidding farewell to **Capt Rich Angove**, posted to Chicksands. In his place, we welcome **Capt Crawley**.

2 SQUADRON

OC **Lt Cdr Neil Bassett**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Des Holroyd**

NIKSTOCK 2006 - AYIOS NIKOLAOS' ROCK EVENT

Reeling in the success of last years NIKSTOCK 'Rock Festival', this year's event was brought forward to late May. The Akrotiri band 'RUSTED', made up of mainly BFBS DJs and employees, played an excellent set but it was the local band 'BAREFEAT', made up of 2 Sqn Royal Signals and HQ Sqn RAF Regt personnel, that got the biggest cheers. To top it off, 'BAREFEAT' were raising money for the Unit music club by selling CDs of their music– like hot cakes. These had been recorded the week before in the professional surroundings of a Nicosia recording studio.

SSgt(FofS) Dave Cook on Bass Guitar for BAREFEAT

As well as the rock bands wowing the crowds, an added twist was to introduce NIKFACTOR, in the style of the hit TV show X-Factor. In the weeks leading up to the event, all the bases held knockout stages and on the night only the very best made it to the limelight of the main stage. BFBS DJs and our very own CO, **Lt Col Chris McIntosh**, sat on the panel of judges, DJ **Dave Simons** attitude the nearest to **Simon Cowell**. All participants were fantastic; with **LCpl Esther Richard** from the WSBA finally taking the crown after a classic rendition of **Shirley Bassey's** 'Diamonds are forever'.

ARRIVALS, FAREWELLS AND CONGRATULATIONS

June saw the reinstatement of the SSM post to 2 Sqn, which had been gapped for almost 2 years. **WO2 (SSM) Des Holroyd** ably took up the post coming from 36 Sig Regt (V) accompanied by wife **Jenny** and family.

Congratulations go to **Sgt Steve Mckie**, a sudden promotion from the reserve list to SSgt and **Cpl Ally Way** (real name), on promotion from the QAB to Sgt. **Steve** is off, with wife **Mel** and family to 39 Inf Bde; **Ally** is hoping to stay in post.

Congratulations to both and good luck to **Steve** and all the best for the future.

Many farewells from the illustrious Line Section; to **Sig Clare Pugsley**, no sooner had she got here she was selected for promotion, so she's off to 7 Sig Regt as a LCpl. Good luck **Clare** and thanks for the hard work.

To **Sig Stew Russell**, after surviving a potentially fatal car accident, he's come around, passed his Class 2 to 1 with flying colours and is posted to 39 Inf Bde; it won't be long before he's back to Blandford to start his course.

And to **Sig Gavin Quinlan**, the unit 'shooter', he had a great tour, worked hard, played hard, but has chosen to jump off to try his hand at the civilian life. Good luck, **Gav**, and thanks for all your efforts.

And to **Cpl Steve Hughes**, only posted in a couple of months ago, this must have been the best place to 'wait' to be loaded onto his T1, so off he goes.

We say hello and welcome to **Sgt Robson** from Blandford, **Sgt Bone**, **LCpl Chris Johnson** straight from his Class 1 and **Sig Sear**.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS WING (DIGBY)

CO **Gp Capt AS Corbett MBE**

2 SQUADRON

OC **Sqn Ldr C Bruce**

EXERCISE DEEP WRECK (TIGER)
- by WO1(Supvr R) Paul Rowlands

At 0230 hrs on 24 Mar 06, a group of intrepid explorers departed RAF Digby for a diving extravaganza in the Red Sea. The participants included; **Lt Col Julian Thursz**, **Maj Tony McFarlane**, **WO1(Supvr R) Paul Rowlands**, **WO1(Supvr R) Jon Graham**, **WO2(SSM) Paul Williams**, **WO2(QMSI) Joe Cocker**, **SSgt Jo Berry** and **Cpl Tiana Fielder**. The 5 hour flight passed without hassle and the transfer from Hurghada airport to the boat took 40 minutes leaving the rest of the day to settle in, get the diving kit set up for the shakedown dive planned for the next morning and explore the Marriot Hotel, where the boat was berthed.

After a very comprehensive initial brief to the whole party, the trainee divers were allocated instructors for their first day's diving, whilst the remainder of the qualified divers "buddied up". The first dive of the day took place at Sha'ab El Erg, with a giant stride entry from the boat. All the dives went well, with the trainees completing all the necessary skills tests to allow them to progress towards gaining their Ocean Divers Qualification.

Everyone completed various dives during the day with particular attention paid to the "Barge", a wreck in Bluff Point Cove, which housed an abundance of marine life including Stonefish, Crocodile fish and 2 very large Moray eels.

The majority decided to carry out a night dive but had to battle the hoards of other divers from 3 other boats moored up alongside. It wasn't until we entered the water that we realised why so many use this as night dive location. The marine life was prolific, shoals of yellowtail snappers and Glassfish, trying to keep away from the predatory species such as the Lionfish, Crocodile fish and the Morays seen earlier.

Hearing the roar of the ship's engines at 0500 hrs was as welcome as an encounter with a Great White Shark, or even the Moray seen the night before. Imagine the delight on board though as the boat set off on a roller coaster ride for 45 mins, bangs and clashes galore. We later found out that we had moved from mainland Egypt to the Sinai Peninsula where we would be carrying out the next couple of day's diving. With everyone up and briefed by 0700 hrs, the first wave of divers travelled by Zodiac to the wreck of the *Kingston* at Shag Rock.

The second wave dived at 0800 hrs. This wreck had a beautiful array of marine life including Tuna, Clown fish and Trumpet fish. A Black Tip Shark was also seen. Unfortunately the second dive team missed this as they move along to other points on the reef. After lunch the boat moved to the wreck of the *SS Thistlegorm*, which was sunk fully-loaded by a Heinkel HE 111 bomber searching for the *Queen Mary*, while at "safe anchor". This wreck still contains munitions, motorbikes, rifles, trucks and other untouched cargo. Although the visibility wasn't as good as we had been used to, down to around 10m, it was definitely the highlight of the trip.

There were numerous wrecks to be investigated and we had a good look at most of them, including *Dunraven*, *Carnatic* and the "Tile wreck", known as such to many because of to the cargo of Italian floor tiles on board. The last dive however was to be in Hurghada harbour, and the wreck of the *El Mina*, a patrol boat sunk during the Six Day War.

Even though it was close to the mainland, this vessel still had its fair share of marine life with plenty of military hardware scattered around and about for the fish to explore. You can also see a

detached anti-aircraft barrel amidst numerous unused shells, whilst on the vessel itself the guns are still pointing skyward.

The wreck of the El Mina

The sights and scenes on this trip had been amazing, from the pleasure of watching a single dolphin dancing in the bow wave of the Zodiac, to the various reefs full of colour and life. The trip was a resounding success, made all the better by the enthusiastic and energetic divers who participated in what can only be described as a most excellent adventure.

COMMANDING OFFICER'S CUP 7-A-SIDE FOOTBALL – A 1 SQN VIEW - *by SAC Tom Watson*

Due to the inclement weather, the 7-a-side football competition for the CO's cup was played indoors on Thursday 01 June 06. All 5 of the participating teams were eager for the start, with encouraging chants from the vast array of spectators. 1 Sqn and 2 Sqn kicked-off proceedings with an enthusiastic display, with **SAC Mark Smales** rifling the first goal of the tournament into the back of 2 Sqn's net. Unfortunately, it was a sloppy goal from **JT Shaun Ferris** that equalled the score, resulting in a 1-1 draw.

The next game for 1 Sqn was against 224 Sig Sqn, who on paper, were the best team present. It was decided to play our strongest team for the first half, and then change things at the interval, if needed. This strategy appeared to work when **SAC Dave Milligan,** with support from **SAC Tom Watson,** slotted the ball home to make it 1 – 0 to 1 Sqn. 224 Sig Sqn began to feel the pressure; time was running out and 1 Sqn had started to dictate the pace of the game. The downfall came in the form of **LCpl Craig Buckland**, who not only capitalised on a lapse in concentration and scored a goal from a quick free kick, but also punished 1 Sqn with a second goal in the last 30 secs of the game.

The next 2 games for 1 Sqn were against 3/4 Sqn/Navy and 591SU/AES and although many opportunities were created, none could be exploited. This meant draws in both games. An excellent performance was put in from a good campaigner, **WO2(Supvr R) Chris Ashworth**, but even his contribution could not change the outcome of the games.

In the end, the competition ended in a well deserved victory for 224 Sig Sqn. Nevertheless, all the players can be proud of their performances, as they enthusiastically displayed their talents for their appreciative supporters and for the spectators' entertainment throughout the day.

EXERCISE ICARUS DIAMOND - *by Cpl Dodd*

The introduction of MATTS to replace the old ITD package gave JSSW the ideal opportunity to turn green once again and embark on Ex ICARUS DIAMOND. The plan was to incorporate the years MATTS (and CCS for the RAF) into a 3-day package to be conducted at West Tofts Camp on the Stanford Trg Area.

The first day comprised wpn handling, CBRN, battlefield casualty drills, First Aid and the new, much needed, map reading section. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough to time to include the Army and RAF fitness tests. In the evening, we settled down in the bar to the new MATT 6 videos, which were a refreshing change from the old ITDs, and I suppose the venue helped. A quiz provided the rest of the evening's entertainment.

Day 2 was spent at the range to complete the APWT package. Concurrent activities included: BCD / First Aid, CBRN practical and a navigational test. How you can get lost on a range I will never know, but a couple did.

The evening's proceedings continued with MATT 6 videos again and one or two games. There were various races with differences organised. All quite amusing; the balloon popping was OK but the egg catching was the highlight. Through the night, a few people were seen, quite literally, with egg on their faces. It had been a fun night enjoyed by all, but the following morning brought reality crashing home. We were suppose to be on ex, and a feisty little BCFT soon made us realise this fact. Oh how we laughed!

Ex ICARUS DIAMOND was a worthwhile experience that gave everyone the opportunity to interact on all levels, both at work and socially, and was thoroughly enjoyed by one and all.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Dennis Weir MBE**
PSAWO **WO1 John Farrell**

EXERCISE HERMES VENTURE

Let no one say that JSSU (V) do not choose the locations for their annual deployments well. After providing sp to Ex COURAGEOUS BAT in Denmark 2004 and Canada 2005, this year's Annual Camp saw the Unit deploying to Cyprus to provide op sp to JSSU (Cyprus), carry out their mandatory Military Annual Trg Tests (MATTs) and enjoy some "Challenging Pursuits".

Run over a 3 week period, Camp was split into 2 phases, with Group 1 attending weeks 1 and 2, plus Group 2 attending weeks 2 and 3. Weeks 1 and 3 were taken up with op sp to JSSU Cyprus and week 2 was Military Trg and Challenging Pursuits, with the whole Unit concentrated together for that phase at Ayios Nikolaos.

JSSU (V) – Cyprus 2006

As with all great plans, Group 1's deployment did not run as smoothly as we would have liked. Flying on the Trooper from Brize Norton, the Group were met with a "22 hr delay" prior to finally taking off for Akrotiri – thank you Crab Air!

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Tasked by JSSU Cyprus SO2 Plans, **Maj Chris Gore** and 1 Sqn Ops Offr, **Capt Rich Angove**, the Volunteers were integrated across the unit with personnel working in Mercury Barracks, Trenchard Lines and the lucky few deployed "up the mountain".

Group 1 posing with Gp Capt Sean Corbett (centre back) during his visit to Dhekelia Water Sports Centre

For some of the Unit it was a first visit to Ay Nik. **Maj Chris Carr** however had first served at 9 Sig Regt (as was) in 1964 and had also been lodging in Famagusta in 1974, when the Turks invaded. Ex HERMES VENTURE was to be **Maj Carr's** final swansong and after over 42 years service he has finally signed his headphones back into the Tech Stores for good: Best wishes for your military retirement **Chris** from all at JSSU (V).

VISIT BY COMMANDER JSSO

During week 2, the Unit were very pleased to host Comd JSSO, **Group Capt Sean Corbett MBE**, who was visiting JSSU Cyprus and called in on JSSU (V). **Gp Capt Corbett** visited both Groups while carrying out Mil Trg and Challenging Pursuits. During his visit to Dhekelia, he was taken for a spin on the Rib, by **Capt Jeff Williams** and **WO2 (Supvr R) Jacklin**. The offer of a spin on the Banana Boat was diplomatically turned down and the Gp Capt took the time to sit down and talk to members of the Unit, while topping up his tan. A Mezze with the Staff Pool at a local village rounded off a very successful visit by the Gp Capt to the Unit.

MILITARY TRAINING

Having got used to the high standard of RAF Digby's GDT Flt Military Trg, we were not let down by the trg provided by JSSU Cyprus Military Trg Wg. The Volunteers were put through their paces under the watchful, collective eyes of **Sgt Howie**, **Cpl Clancy** and **Cpl Burton**, RM. An action packed 2 days trg was provided, with Wpn Handling Trg, Grouping and Zeroing, CBRN and Basic Life Sp, plus the usual collection of LOAC, Diversity, plus Values and Standards trg.

CHALLENGING PURSUITS

Dhekelia Water Sports Centre was the location for the 2 day Challenging Pursuits (CP) phase. But before anybody set foot on the beach, there was the small matter of the Army Swimming Test to take and pass at Ay Nik's swimming pool.

The CP phase was hosted by **CSgt Brown** from the Resident Inf Bn, 2 RRF. The Volunteers took part in various activities, e.g. Water Skiing, Surf Kayaking, Canoeing and Snorkelling. A hardy few were also let loose on the Banana Boat – the aftermath was not a pretty sight. The least said about **Capt Jeff Williams** who pulled a hamstring following his snorkelling efforts the better.

SPORT

Taking advantage of the good weather, members of the Unit took part in numerous sporting activities; **Sgt Chris Wells** turned out for the Army/Navy football team against the RAF and was unlucky to be on the losing side, a number of the Unit's budding Tiger Woods were tested by "the old course" Ay Nik, **Capt Chris Lowish**, **WO1(Supvr R) Mark Gould** and **CPO Ian Dudley** showed the local youngsters that their tennis skills were still up to scratch and **WO2(Supvr R) Brian Armstrong** and **Sgt Fin Findlater** were active most evenings on the 5-a-side soccer pitch.

Some may say the sporting highlights of the 3 Weeks, were the early morning runs, every other day, around the camp's 3.5 mile perimeter. As the OC had turned into a born again runner, there was no escape for the masses and PBs were the order of the day for the competitive element of the Unit. Landmarks on the run such as: 2nd Al's, Dennis Corner, Chris Curve, Heartbreak Strait and last but not least, Eye Glass Hill, will all go down in the annals of JSSU (V) running folklore.

SOCIAL

During Week 2, the Unit arranged a Social at the infamous "2nd George's" down in the village and invited key JSSU Cyprus personnel, who had helped to make the deployment such a success. Guests of honour for the evening were **Lt Col Chris Mackintosh**, CO JSSU Cyprus, **Maj Chris Hymas**, the QM, and **Ms Corrine Keyes**, Dep Chief Ops JSSU Cyprus. A strong supporting cast of JSSU Cyprus members from the Military Trg Wg, QM's Dept, Sy Office and Admin Office were also treated to a Mezze, some very dodgy karaoke singing and a few sociable brandy sours. The OC made a number of presentations; a JSSU (V) picture to the CO and a "collector's item" JSSU (V) polo shirt to **Capt Rich Angove**, for their support to the success of Ex HERMES VENTURE.

CAMP 2007

After 3 overseas annual deployments on the trot, the Unit are concentrating at JSSW (Digby), Lincolnshire, next year – some may say not so glamorous, but positive planning has already started in earnest, with the outgoing Trg Offr, **Capt Chris Lowish**, handing over to the new Trg Offr, **Capt Nige Watton**, who is already utilising his previous experience as Head of Operational Trg at JSSW (Digby) to good effect.

OTHER UNITS

628 SIGNAL TROOP

OC **Capt K J Grice**
Tp FofS **WO2(FofS) Taff Ceaser**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Randy Randerson**

INTRODUCTION.

Since our last article in the April edition of *The Wire*, members of 628 Sig Tp have seen active service in Afghanistan. You can read in detail **Cpl Sam Durbridge's** account of her time deployed in support of ISAF below.

In February, we were fortunate to host Comd 1 Sig Bde, **Brig NAW Pope**, while we conducted off road driver trg on hill 60, pitting the German built Mercedes GD against the British built Land Rover – Landy won!

The Comd with Cpl Wilky Wilkinson, Driver Training Organiser

Many thanks to **Cpl Wilky Wilkinson** for the organisation that went into the Comd's visit. Every year, Elmpt Station runs a cadre course for Sigs, and 628 Sig Tp were fortunate to get 2 on the course – **Sigs Chris Tuck** and **Jay Dunn** who acquitted themselves well and got very muddy in the process. Well done to you both. The month of May was designated 'charity events month' and **Sgt Paul Lomas** was given the lead. He came up with a 24-hour basket ball competition, in aid of Cancer Research UK. I will leave him to give a detailed account below.

With most of the 1 NSB deployed in the Cape Verde Islands in support of Ex STEADFAST JAGUAR – Joint Force Comd Brunssum's NRF 7 certification, we have been given time to invest in military skills and AT. As I write this, most of the unit is away in Sennelager on a battle camp under the direction of **SSgt Randy Randerson**, **Sgt Dave Sawyers** and **Cpl Mick Sutton**. Later in June and July, **SSgt Randerson** will be leading an AT package in Wertach, Bavaria – busy boy. My tenure as OC comes to an end in late July, when I hand over to my good friend **Capt Ali Biggs**. I am posted as Adjt of 10th Sig Regt and look forward to meeting **Bruno**.

PROMOTIONS.

The unit had a double success in early April when **Sgts Dave Sawyers** and **Paul Creeley** were successful off the Sgt – SSgt board. Many congratulations to you both, as well as to **Mrs Hazel Sawyers** and **Mrs Susanne Creeley** for supporting you both over the years. Congratulations must also go to **Cpl Mick Sutton** who was successful off the last Cpl – Sgts board, soon to be the Corps' youngest YofS. We wish both you and **Kelly** all the very best for the future. Lastly, congratulations must go to **LCpls Al Derbyshire** and **Jonno Johnson** who picked up their second tape recently.

AFGHANISTAN DEPLOYMENT - *by Cpl Sam Durbridge*

On 18 January 2006 a group of 10 from 628 Sig Tp deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan to take over the 2nd Line, Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Sp role. We arrived in HQ ISAF to be greeted by 3 ft of snow and ice. Our role was to provide sp to the 12 multinational remote dets, sited all over the country. Based in a small tent, in a compound at the back of HQ ISAF and joined by a sole American, namely **SSG Grubbs** from 2 NSB in Naples, we hit the ground running.

For the early stages of this tour, we were the minority in an HQ, sp by German DCM C from Wesel, the Italian inf and small dets from all over the world. Our job was mainly to provide telephone sp to all sites, along with the maintenance of 2 VSAT Hubs, one in HQ and one 20 mins away at KAIA Airport. Although our role was to be based from HQ ISAF, it soon became apparent that when we were unable to sp these sites over the telephone, we would be packing a bag and off to the airport at short notice.

Getting to the sites was a whole different story. Our only mode of transportation was by Hercules or C17 from KAIA Airport to the remote site – remote being the operative word! We soon realised however that getting into a site was not the major problem, the difficulty was that once you were there, there was no guarantee you were getting out. We learnt this very quickly, as **LCpl McEwan** can confirm when he left HQ ISAF to fix a fibre optic head, with a flight back booked the next day. He did not return to us for 6 days, just in time for his birthday!

LCpl Blue McEwan and LCpl Donna Holmes

We soon got ourselves established at HQ and took over the running of the Commonwealth tent. It wasn't long before the Foreman had procured a 60" Plasma screen and a late license for a charity horse racing night. It became clear that not much was going on at the HQ 'entertainment wise' so 628 Sig Tp became the self appointed entertainment committee.

Cpl Gavin Nicholson headed up the first charity horse racing night and chose a women's refuge in Kabul as the beneficiaries. The night started slowly with the first horse selling for ?13. By the end of the night the bidding war resulted in horses going for up to a ?150, with an overall total raised for charity of ?675.

Not only were we providing entertainment in the form of charity nights, we soon came to realise we had an X Factor candidate in our midst. When the bunker alarm sounded, we were required to grab our kit and get to our allocated bunkers, not knowing how long we would be there for. Thanks to **LCpl Donna Holmes** our stay in the bunkers was never dull, with many renditions of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' and 'Tomorrow', the Italian Col was always grateful for her outbursts!

Every Friday, the people of Kabul would set up a market just outside HQ to sell local products, or tat. It became apparent very quickly that certain members of the team had a hidden talent for bartering. This was extremely useful to **Sgt Dave Sawyers** who required a new pair of sun glasses at least once a week, and always broke them the following day.

With entire site moves at Mazar-E-Sharif (3 times), and Herat PRT under our belts, it was time for German DCM C to leave theatre in time to make way for the advanced party of the ARRC to take over the running of Sig Sp Gp (SSG).

As 2nd Line Sp, we were never short of work. If we weren't moving sites, fault finding over the phone or repairing faults on site, we were organising charity events. There was little time for sunbathing. The second charity event crept up on us quickly and thanks to the reputation of the first one, there was a full house. We went on to raise a staggering ?1497.

We have to say thanks to **FofS Taff Ceaser** for ?350 of this, as he had quite willingly agreed to host the night in drag. Unfortunately for him, we were only able to provide him with a pink belly dancing outfit. All in all another successful night, this time raising much needed funds for a school in Meymaneh, which had been destroyed by the Taliban.

As our end of tour date neared, the work intensified. With many of the sites handed over to new nations, our ongoing job was to provide extra support for the new guys out on site. The trg include the embedding of 2 new Regional Comd Sp Teams (RCST) from 16 Sig Regt to act as fwd repair teams.

The ARRC arrived in HQ ISAF in force and many of the other nations we had enjoyed the pleasure of working with, were on their way home. There was no wind-down period for us, as the new 2nd Line Team arrived from 16 Sig Regt and the trg began all over again.

With many of the team never having worked with NATO kit before, it was certainly another steep learning curve. Along with this, there was always the added challenge of fault finding for sites that did not speak English but we always managed to get there in the end and hoped that the new team would manage.

In our 4 month tour in Afghanistan with a team of only 10, we had managed to visit all 12 sites that we had supported throughout our time there, making many new friends and learning a lot about the way many of the other Armies and Air Forces operate.

We had achieved a great deal, fixing all faults that were presented to us, moving sites and putting something back into the community. I know the rest of the team will hope that the new 2nd Line Team have a successful and enjoyable tour, just as we did.

EXERCISE JAVELIN HOOPS - *by Sgt P J Lomas*

Over the 11th and 12th May 2006, members of 628 Sig Tp took part in Ex JAVELIN HOOPS – a strange name for an ex some might say! Ex JAVELIN HOOPS was a charity event to raise money for Cancer Research UK, as a number of the Tp have had family affected by this illness.

The whole idea was to get as many of the Tp involved, no matter what their medical state. Two teams of 8 would just have to shoot basketballs for 24 hrs against each other – easy everyone thought! Wrong! Just to get the competitive spirit going, **Capt KJ Grice** was going to give the winning team a long weekend (what an awfully nice chap). To give a bit more of a competitive edge, the teams' points would also include the amount of sponsorship each had raised.

This brought out the true inventiveness of the British soldier, **Sgt 'Macc' Davies,** well known for his skills of getting money for basically nothing, was by far the best at this task. He managed to get sponsorship from every man, woman and company within the northern hemisphere. **LCpl Kerry Pook** on the other hand

Liza's Lunatics and Desperate Dan's

used her connections at JFC Brunssum, and used perfect timing, i.e. in the bar, on pay day cajoling large amounts of money out of their pockets. But for the event itself, the 2 teams were made up of Team Captains, **Cpl Dan Hartley** REME ,'Desperate Dan's', and **Cpl Liza Neary**, 'Liza's Lunatics' and 7 others in each team.

The pace started slow with Team Captains making sure that nobody burned out; shooters started by trying to get glory points by using the 3 point line and free throws but before long, it was clear that there was some real shooting talent, so with a tactical move worthy of **Wellington** himself, 'Liza's Lunatics' moved to using the lay up shot.

This was a brilliant move as they shot into the lead very quickly, but found it difficult to hold on to their lead as 3 hours into the competition the ventilation system went down, and the temperature went up and up, to an average of 30 degrees. The heat was now the test. As the 'Desperate Dan's' realised that they were getting their posteriors well and truly kicked, they too switched to the lay up tactic, and the going got tough with people doing 1 hour on and no more that 2 hours off.

Bodies did start to get very stiff and sore and players went straight to the showers to try to cool down. The real test came around the 3am point, with players dreading the 5 minute call from their Team Captain, and another group of slow and stiff moving figures would make their way from the viewing platform to the court.

The only thing harder than shooting hoops at this time was the admin team trying to keep awake, counting and noting every point that was scored, but **Cpl Tony Blackburn** and his team did an outstanding job. The time was soon 9am and there was only an hour to push so, as the organiser, I gave them their last surprise – "The Power Hour." Now, every team member was to shoot from the 3 point line.

This was a test of the energy and spirit left in the players, but as is usual in this Tp, every member stepped up to the plate and gave 100%. When the hour had finished, both teams, weary and exhausted, retired outside for a well earned rest, so that the points and sponsorship could be collated. Teams were brought back in and **Cpl Tony Blackburn** milked every second for what it was worth in giving out the score. In the end a total of ?2,800 was raised for Cancer Research UK and the winning team by the narrowest margins was the 'Desperate Dan's' in a comeback worthy of a Hollywood film.

HAIL & FAREWELL

628 Sig Tp would like to welcome the following new members to the Tp:

Cpl Richie Berry
LCpl Bennett
Sig Danni Miller
LCpl Willie Johnstone
Cpl Rob Bain
Cpl Tyrell
LCpl Richards

And say goodbye to:

Cpl Al Keenan and **Collette**
Cpl Paul Hayes and **Nicola**
Cpl Rob Roden and **Cattia**
Sig Matt Catto
LCpl Jon Ford and **Emma**
LCpl Mabbett

LAND INFORMATION ASSURANCE GROUP (VOLUNTEERS)

EXERCISE HORSESHOE DRAGON FEB 2006 AT LES CONTAMINES, FRANCE.

In a change from the usual hi-tech fare and with a view to late entry for the Winter Olympics at Torino 06, LIAG took to the slopes of Les Contamines for Ex HORSESHOE DRAGON, led by expedition leader **Maj Dave Titheridge**.

Instructors **Maj Matt Petersen** (RWR) and **L/Sgt Marcus Harriott** (HAC) had the unenviable task of trying to get 9 members of LIAG, **Majors Phil Bradley**, **John Pringle**, **Phil Hatton**, **Captains Clive Blake**, **Geoff Donson**, **Andrew Linn** and **Rachael Stammers**, who spend most of their time in the virtual world, through their Basic Ski Proficiency.

Snow conditions were great with blue skies over packed snow on all slopes at the beginning of the week. A couple of days light/medium snow provided a good fresh layer for the end of the week that even encouraged the tackling of some moguls, albeit slowly. Although not the biggest of resorts there were more than enough runs, of varying difficulty, for a good week skiing.

Accommodation, whilst not up to the usual standards of some of London's finest e-crime fighters, was above expectations. Evenings spent with vin-chaud in front of the log fire after full days skiing were just the thing.

Maj John Pringle made sure that a number of local restaurants were subjected to rigorous testing, all coming out well from the process. **Maj Matt Peterson** just wished **John** could ski as fast as he could talk.

The week was not without incident with **Capt Rachael Stammers** coming a cropper with a knee injury. Her spirits and enthusiasm were not dampened though and the group's biggest regret was not running the sweepstake for which day the injury would occur.

On the final night of the trip the group visited a local restaurant where **Capt Andy Linn** struggled with some killer broccoli and very soon found himself on the floor of the gent's toilets, legs in the air, with four burly paramedics in attendance. He now chews his food more thoroughly.

SPORT

DINGHY SAILING

Now that the warmer months are here, the AT Wing at 14 Sig Regt (EW) has started to deliver dinghy sail trg. All levels of the RYA Dinghy Sailing Scheme are available: from RYA Level 2 Basic Skills to Performance Sailing to Dinghy Instructor. It is also envisaged that day/keelboat instruction will also be available in the near future. Instruction is conducted either at Dale or at Neyland in the Milford Haven Estuary, which is in the beautiful Pembrokeshire National Park.

Dinghy sailing offers individuals the opportunity to participate in a range of activities; from the high performance, high energy, very physical (hair on fire!) end to the day sailing (take a picnic with you) end.

Individuals can also go on to participate in individual or team racing, where they can represent the Corps.

There are several events this year that will be fun and exciting, including an Army entry into the RS European Cup in Lake Garda, The Laser 2000 national championships in Scotland and various Army events at the Army Dinghy and Windsurfing Centre at Netley.

Of course, if you are interested in participating in these events or others in the future, you will have to learn to sail first. 14 Sig Regt (EW) offers the opportunity for members of the Corps to do just that. Get in touch with the 14 Sig Regt (EW) AT Wing for more details.

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS FOOTBALL

- by Maj Tommy Steele

MASSEY TROPHY WINNERS AND FOUR TIMES CONSECUTIVE WINNERS OF THE QUADRANGULAR TOURNAMENT

Corps football continues to go from strength to strength, as success seems to breed success, and all within the last 5 years! What a transformation from being the 'nearly' men to being widely regarded as the best Corps side around! It's all down to 3 things; hard work, team work and belief; belief in our system and belief in one another's ability on and off the field of play!

The season started in September 05, with a comfortable 6 – 1 win against the RAC in Blandford and this led nicely into a 10 day tour to Italy to the lovely resort of Rimini. An early start saw the lads gather together in 3 Armd Div Sig Regt's sports bar for a brief and a few hours sleep before the bus journey to Gatwick Airport. The booking in for the flight was uneventful, apart from the distribution of the eqpt that led to a few individuals being rather too close for comfort to excess baggage charges – cheap airways means poor baggage entitlement. Nevertheless we got away with it!

RIMINI TOUR

We arrived on Saturday morning and the sun was shining at Bologna when we landed. The captain reported that the temperature was some 22 degrees! Hurrah, just what we needed for a good pre-season! The Hotel Corolla was a typical continental 3 star affair; clean, spacious and reasonably well run! Most of the lads were accommodated in 2 man rooms though one unlucky lot had to share the same amount of space between 3. As soon as we had sorted out the room allocation, the boys changed and headed straight for the beach to grab the remainder of the afternoon sun. Morale was so high and the squad was very much looking forward to the challenges of playing football against a couple of decent Italian sides.

On Sunday morning we assembled on the beach front for the first trg session of the tour; all in bare feet. After a gentle jog along the water front, **Capt Richie Bell** decided to have some fun and led a fun PT session that culminated in a game of British Bulldogs, and yes you've guessed, in the sea! The locals passing by could not help but stop and gaze in amazement at the spectacle of some 30 lads diving around the sea on a miserable wet Sunday morning. Further games of volleyball and footy tennis completed an excellent morning's work. With a free afternoon ahead, the boys were ready for more sunshine and a trip to the beach to relax, alas the weather was to prove to be the worst Rimini had experienced in the last 10 years for the end of their summer season. It rained and rained harder each day! Just when things were beginning to clear up, it rained again and again. By the end of the 10 day trip, everyone was looking forward to getting back home!

We managed to play 2 games; the first was against Rimini `B' side, whose first team were in Serie B, and the second against a local semi-professional side. The lads were really up for the first game against Rimini `B' and produced an excellent performance to edge out the young professionals by 2 – 1 in what can only be described as a bruising physical encounter! **Sig Dan Haley** scored a superb free kick and despite the Italian side equalising before half time, the Corps went on to score the winner when **Sig Jay Bates** slotted home from a pinpoint cross from **Sgt Stevo Stephenson**. The whole team were strong, resolute and worked tirelessly for each other and thoroughly deserved the win with **LCpl Mark Hankey** being named Man of the Match! **Sgt Stevo Stephenson's** smile showed what a battle we had been involved with; a trip to the dentist would be needed back home!

The 2nd match against the semi professional side was played under floodlights in farcical conditions, with the rain lashing down on an already heavily soaked pitch. The journey to the game was shocking, with the driver on his mobile whilst steering his bus through heavy traffic in driving rain. The game was a spectacle! Players couldn't stay on their feet for very long and passes were constantly being cut short by large puddles on the pitch. Three things of note during that game were: the goal scored by **Sig Key Anderson**, an absolute stunner after a mazy run on the right side of the penalty box; the inability of **Sgt Shaun Middleton** to stand up for longer than it took to get up of the floor; and last, the fact the Corps strip would never be the same again! A comfortable 4 — 1 win completed a very successful tour!

MASSEY TROPHY

The next league match was against the AAC at Blandford in November 05 and although we didn't play at our best, the team coped comfortably and ran out winners by 2 – 0 with **Sgt Stevo Stephenson** scoring a brace. And so onto the Int Corps at Chicksands, who still live off their victory over us some 5 years ago, but they were left to hang onto this memory as they were well beaten by 4 – 0, with **Sig Jay Bates** grabbing a brace and goals by **Sig Dan Haley** and **Sig Kev Cameron** completing the scoring.

Next up on 2 December 05 saw the Corps play the Inf at Pirbright. After a struggle, the Corps managed to win through by 2 – 1, with **LCpl Mark Hankey** standing out amongst a great

team performance. The team were unbeaten going in to the Christmas break and were looking to build on a great start! First up in 2006 was the AMS, who put up their best performance against us that I can remember but despite this they still were soundly beaten by 6 – 2 . The score actually flattered us, as up until the last 15 minutes, the scores were level at 2 each! **Sgt Stevo Stephenson** grabbed the first hat trick of the season with **Sig Simmy Simpson** grabbing a brace.

The next fixture was against the RLC, a giant amongst teams within the Massey Trophy! Without doubt the Corps has to play at a level only seen at the Quadrangular Tournament to be able to see them off, and what a game it proved to be! The Corps were simply outstanding and excelled right across the park, never allowing the RLC to settle on the ball at any time and as soon as we had possession we retained the ball for long periods and used the wing backs and the strikers to carve there defence up, time and time again. **Sig Tally Talbot** was immense and with the rest of the team bang on their game, we ran out winners by 3 – 1. Without doubt the performance of the season so far! Against the APTC at Hermitage the Corps warmed up for the Quadrangular Tournament by scoring 6 without reply. **Sig Dan Haley** scored the 2nd hat trick of the season for the Corps! **Sig Smudge Smith**, in only his 2nd game for the Corps, was awarded the Man of the Match award! Next up was the AGC but alas they conceded on the day before the match and so onto the Quads!

QUADRANGULAR TOURNAMENT

This year's competition was held at Woolwich Barracks and was to be the very last time that football would be played there by the RA, as they are soon to move to Larkhill. As usual the first match in the Quads is against the RE and as usual it was an extremely physical encounter, with the RE intent on muscling us out of the game. With the score goalless at half time, the half time team talk centred on the fact that we had managed to compete on the physical front and that the key was being patient in the 2nd half, when they would tire and space would open up and allow us to play football on the deck. How right we were and as soon as we kicked off, they started to tire and space started to appear right before ours eyes! **Sig Jay Bates** scored the first from a well drilled set piece from a corner, and **Sig Dan Haley** smashed one into the bottom left corner from 20 yards out and **Sgt Stevo Stephenson** capitalised on a mistake at the back by coolly slotting the ball into the far right bottom corner from just outside the box. Winners by 3 clear goals. An excellent all round performance and a special mention must go to **WO2 Danny O'Niel** who played his first game of the season for us and handled their robust striker **Junior** as if he had played all season!

And so onto the Gunners, another side who enjoy exploiting the physical side of the game! Long balls over the top and the long throw, like an artillery shell delivered on the battlefield. The Corps competed well in the first half but were a little off the pace and found it difficult to retain any sort of possession and this was made worse by the fact that the Gunners were getting the 2nd ball every time and could so play to their strengths. With half time approaching we were looking forward to getting the lads in for a half time chat when disaster struck. We failed to move the ball on and were caught in possession in the middle of the park. The ball bounced kindly for their midfield player to lob our keeper from 30 yards to make the score 1 – 0 to the Gunners. A hammer blow just before half time, a strong chat at half time and 2 changes to the midfield and the Corps knew they had it all too do, as the Gunners were also unbeaten thus far! The 2nd half started at a pace and our changes were beginning to make a difference when an illegal challenge deep inside our half went unpunished and the ball was placed into the bottom left corner of our net with **Cpl Ads Pinchback** left stranded to make the score 2 – 0 to the Gunners. With a mountain to climb, the Corps started to get a grip of things in the middle of the park and things started to look promising. We started to get on top and after a good period of pressure we grabbed one back, with a fine header from **Sgt Curly Watts** to make the score 2 – 1. In the next 10 minutes, we threw everything at them and surely the equaliser had to come but alas there was further trauma ahead and from a long thrown missile into our box, the ball bounced kindly on the edge of the box and **Carver** smashed the ball home to make the score 3 – 1. They were elated and thought that the job was done with only 20 minutes remaining.

Further disaster was about to hit the Corps full on when **Sig Rizza** was sent off for a twofooted challenge! 3 – 1 down and only 10 men with only 15 minutes to play; what we needed was a miracle! What we got wasn't far short of one, this team never know when they are beaten and the 10 men summoned every ounce of courage and strength and got at them like terriers down a rabbit hole. We were suddenly all over them like a rash and were playing stylish attacking football and the Gunners were hanging on despite a two goal lead! They were desperately hanging on and soon the deficit was reduced to one as **Sig Tally Talbot** grabbed a goal and then their world fell apart as **Sig Scouse McGhee** scored a dramatic equaliser, that sent the whole squad let alone the team into a frenzy. With only minutes remaining, the Corps swarmed all over them in the search for the winner and one chance came along when **Sig Jay Bates** carried the ball into the area. rolled the ball past his marker and fired the ball with his left foot just over the top corner, with the keeper left high and dry! Had **Jay** looked up he would have seen 3 team mates standing square waiting for a simple pass to tap home the winner. Still what a performance. In my 5 years as manager, I am never ever surprised at the spirit this team has and how they believe in one another to achieve the almost impossible!

The final game of the Quads was against the REME, who play a similar style of football as we do! All we had to do to retain the Massey Trophy was not to lose the game! A single point would mean that we would retain it, but the Quads was a different matter and only a win would give us both Trophies! The REME set off very strong and quickly started to get on top, with the Corps looking markedly nervous. After a quarter of the game, the Corps started to get the ball down and play football and the contest was very even. Chances started to come our way and with the goal at his mercy, **Sig Simmy Simpson** passed up the opportunity to shoot and instead passed the ball wide to his brother and the keeper made a routine save. Ten minutes later **Sig Simmy Simpson** took the next opportunity and calmly slotted the ball home from inside the box to put the Corps in front and on their way to their ultimate goad for the season: not only winning the Massey Trophy and the Quads but also being unbeaten for the entire season.

After an up beat chat at half time, the Corps went out to complete the job. Plenty of opportunities to increase the lead came their way but we failed to take one and as long as the score remained the same, REME had the chance to spoil our day. Sure there were some anxious moments when they put the ball into our box but to be fair they didn't really get behind us to threaten our goal and we hung on to win the match by a solitary goal. What a season. Unbeaten throughout – fantastic. The Corps won the following trophies:

Massey Trophy
Quadrangular Tournament
Cowan Cup
Boyne Cup

Played: 11 Won: 10 Drew: 1 For: 36 Against: 8
Plus the Corps won both matches on tour in Italy.

The end of season celebrations saw **Sgt Curly Watts** 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! And in only his 5th game for the Corps side, **Sig Smudge Smith** was awarded with the 'Player of the Tournament' for the Quads by the Army Coach **Capt Basher Bates.** My sincere thanks for a fabulous season go to **Capt Richy Bell**, **SSgt Deano Baughen**, **SSgt(YofS) Joey Collins** and the team captain **Sgt Stevo Stephenson,** but most of all I'd like to pass on my sincere gratitude to every single player who has represented the Corps side this season, you have all been simply astounding!

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS 2006

The retired and serving golfers of the Corps gathered at The Ashley Wood Golf Club, Blandford on 17 and 18 May for the Spring meet and Corps Championships. A field of 81 players gathered for the annual contest, with an encouraging spread of ages from the young thrusters to the old stalwarts, and with a very sizable Queen's Gurkha Signals contingent adding to the mix. The outlook on the Tuesday afternoon practice rounds led to high hopes for a few days of good weather for the competition. However, as the early starters gathered for the 0700 hrs tee-off, the fairways were barely visible through the thick fog.

Following a number of inspections and re-hashing of start times, the fog finally began to clear and the medal competition got underway, after a 2-hour delay. Although damp and overcast, scoring conditions remained favourable with a 71 from **Capt Mick Cowie** proving untouchable on the day. In the nett competition **Lt Purna Gurung** set a strong target with his 67, closely followed by **Maj Trev Keates** (68) and **WO2 Loz Hill** (69) and with a number of challengers on 70, the race for the Handicap Cup would be tight.

Following a generous helping of **Clive's** Lasagne in the clubhouse, the Stableford competition got underway in ever deteriorating weather. **Capt Martin Flather** set the early pace with a well crafted round of 37 pts, that looked set to take the spoils, but rounds of 38 pts from **Sgt Rob Hansen** and **WO2 Bho Pradhan** took the prizes, with **Bho** winning on countback. A mention should also be given to **Cpl Richie Saether** who finally returned to the clubhouse at 2030 hrs, looking like he had been in the canal, but scoring a creditable 23 pts, in what were by then atrocious conditions.

The second day started with the second 18 holes of the medal competition, competitors starting in reverse gross order. The scratch competition was mainly between the 4 players in the final group: **Capt Mick Cowie**, **Cpl Nige Brennan**, **Cpl Pete Sochon** and **Sig Phil Dye**. Although **Phil** made a valiant attempt to close the lead and indeed did get it down to 3 shots at one point, **Mick** was able to keep them at arm's length and win with an impressive 4 shot lead over **Ian Stallard**. **Ian** had had a disappointing 1st round but maintained his great record in the gross competition with a closing round of 72. The Handicap competition was much closer with a half a dozen players in real contention, but eventually it came down to a close call with **Cpl Boab Toner's** final round of nett 67, seeing off the overnight lead of **Lt Purna Gurung** on countback. Other notable scores of 67 by **Cpl Sim Chocangi** and 68's by **Sgt Martin Campion** and **Sgt Gagan Thapa** showed that good results could be achieved.

In the afternoon, in ever increasing winds, the SOinC joined the field for the Greensomes pairs competition. By mere chance, he was partnered with **Capt Mick Cowie** and headed off to do battle with the 30+ mph winds. In a repeat of the Stableford competition, **Capt Martin Flather**, with partner **Maj Yam Rana** set the early pace, but some great scoring by the final groups saw **LCpl Phil McDowall** and **Capt Narayan Bhandari** lift the Greensomes Cup. Showered, changed and duly watered the prize giving got underway, with the SOinC doing the honours. A special mention to **Cpl Nick Haley** for the interesting outfits, the powder blue on Thursday afternoon was particularly special, as were the white shoes for the presentation. **Capt Martin Flather's** shoes also added to enjoyment of the final proceedings! Our collective thanks as ever go to the Captain, Staff and Committee at Ashley Wood Golf Club who always make us welcome, presenting the course in great condition and without whom these events simply would not be possible. The golfers of the Corps will reconvene in Blandford for the Autumn meet in September (6th and 7th) – I trust I will see you all there. **Capt Pete Stowell** R Signals Golf Comp Sec (Retd!)

SOinC(A) presents the Greensomes Cup to LCpl Mc Dowall and Capt Bhandari

COMPETITION WINNERS

Medal	
Scratch	**Mick Cowie**
Runner Up	**Ian Stallard**
Handicap Winner	**Boab Toner**
Runner Up	**Purna Gurung**
Div 1 Winner	**Phil Dye**
Div 2 Winner	**Gagan Thapa**
Div 3 Winner	**Martin Campion**
Inter Unit	
Winners	10 Sig Regt
Runners Up	2 Sig Regt
Stableford	
Overall Winner	**Bho Pradhan**
Runner Up	**Rob Hansen**
Div 1 Winner	**Pete Sochon**
Div 2 Winner	**Martin Flather**
Div 3 Winner	**Mahendra Limbu**
Greensomes	
Winners	**Phil McDowall** **Narayan Bhandari**
Runners Up	**Rob Hansen** **John McIlree**

Serving members interested in Corps Golf should contact their Golf Officer; retired members should contact the Corps Secretary (**Mick Cowie**) via email: corpsgolfsecretary@milnet.uk.net

DEVIZES TO WESTMINSTER CANOE MARATHON 2006

The Devizes to Westminster Canoe Marathon is a 125 mile non-stop canoe race held annually at Easter. Crews comprise 2 paddlers in 2 seater kayaks (K2s). This year, the Corps entered a team into the Services category of the race. Team members started trg together in the frozen waters of Wiltshire in January, breaking through both the ice and the 'Hypothermia' Barrier, until the milder April weather appeared. The race route follows the Kennet Avon Canal from Devizes, up through Newbury and on to Reading. The final leg through the heart of the City of London is fraught with perils. Having paddled for many hours throughout the night and the previous day, tired crews have to contend with choppy waters, pleasure cruisers and police river patrol boats, all

of whom seem intent on sinking boats. On the day of the race, crews report to the start at Devizes at different times depending on ability.

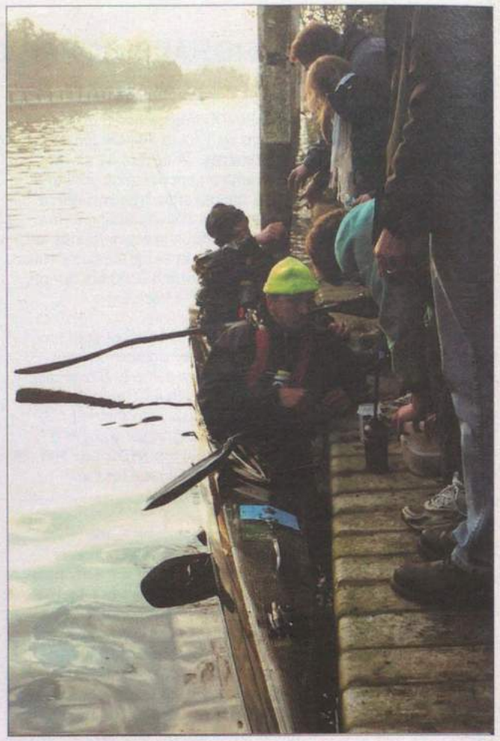
Keen competition between crews

The theory being that the faster the boat can be paddled, the later the start in order to hit the ideal tide at Teddington. High tide this year was 0610 hrs with a 3 hour window before the water began to run in the wrong direction. The intent was to enter 4 crews but due to injury, **Sgt Leroy Wilson-Cochrane** and **LCpl Richie Bottomley** (both 3(UK) Div Sig Regt) were forced to pull out the previous week. However without a good support team the paddlers stand no chance of completing the race. Feeding, drink resupply and encouragement has to done on the move; a role the injured team members, friends and family can carry out superbly.

All 3 crews had estimated their start times correctly, hitting target times measured at various points on route. 79 portages had to be negotiated; this requires the crews to run with their boats around locks and weirs, the longest of which is over 3kms.

The final leg to Westminster form Teddington is 22 miles and seems to take forever to complete. As landmarks in the distance are reached and prominent bridges passed under, the end to the pain brought on by many hours of paddling, sat in the same position, cannot come quick enough. Every paddler knows that the finish is below the London Eye but even this impressive landmark is not seen until the last corner is rounded. But once round this corner, with the finishing line in sight, you need a cautious paddle to avoid a capsize from the wash created by the safety boats before you cross the line.

For the first year of entry, the team did superbly well. We achieved a very creditable third place in the Inter-Services competition, behind the Royal Marines and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Individual success was gained by **WO1**



The support crews at work

Matt Wakeling and **WO2 Pete Howson** with wins in both the Services and Army categories as the fastest crew.

All 3 crews finished the race which is a great achievement as over one third failed to finish. Team composition and times are as follows:

WO1 (RSM) Wakeling	3 (UK) DSR	
WO2 (SSM) Howson	HQ NI	- 20 hrs 07 mins
CSgt Griffin	3 (UK) DSR	
LCpl Smith	3 (UK) DSR	- 24 hrs 40 mins
Cpl Bristow	63 Sig Sqn	
Cpl Shaw	63 Sig Sqn	- 28 hrs 24 mins

Training for next year's race has already started with the aim of winning the team event. For further information contact **WO1(RSM) Wakeling**, Bulford mil 2763, **CSgt Griffin Bulford** mil 3210 or www.dwrace.org.

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING (CORPSAM) 2006

- by Capt GGA Reith, Sec Royal Signals Shooting Association

INTRODUCTION

Royal Signals CORPSAM took place between 31 Mar – 7 Apr 06 and ran concurrently with Joint CORPSAM involving RA,RE, R SIGNALS, RLC, REME, AAC, AGC and INT CORPS. The TA Meeting was on the weekend 31 Mar – 2 Apr 06 and the Regular Meeting from 2 – 7 Apr 06.

Royal Signals TA numbers were again very high with 119 soldiers competing from 13 units. Despite the current high level of involvement on Ops, Regular numbers to this event also remained high with 130 soldiers competing from 15 units. We even had a 7 Bde team ready to come over from Iraq but unfortunately had to drop out at the last minute as they couldn't get flights. Good effort guys!

SUPPORT

32 Sig Regt (V) continue to provide an exceptionally high standard of range and admin sp for the meeting. Mission creep has required Royal Signals to take more Charter Tasks for Joint CORPSAM. Most of these tasks fall on 32 Sig Regt (V). You may well ask why our most Northern Regt is supporting one of the most Southern Corps Event ...well REITH obviously had/has a lot to do with it, but the bottom line is they do it because they can and they are very good at it. The event is seen as retention positive with excellent trg and experience in Admin Sp, range work as well as SAA trg value for the shooting team. 21 (AS) Sig Regt provided **SSgt Hannah** to run the CORPSAM Clay Target Range and 10 Sig Regt provided additional log sp from the local area. 32 Sig Regt are now co-ordinating the entire accn and feeding for 1000 soldiers from 7 Corps as well as running Central and Corps stats over the REEBOK deployable LAN, using an access database written by **Capt Jeff Jephcote**. Some 45 Officers and soldiers from 32 deployed from Glasgow, Aberdeen, East Kilbride and Edinburgh. **Capt Graham Reith** (Corps Shooting Secretary) is now looking a bit more relaxed with his experienced team around him who require little direction. **Capt Jim McNaught** (Joint CORPSAM QM) did a superb job with his admin sp team including **WO1(SVWO) McEvoy**, **WO2(RQMS) Sam Parke** and **Cpl Murray**, who together with a small admin team ran the accommodationn and feeding for this huge event. **Maj Terry McVey** as Senior Range Officer with **Capt Kev O'Neil** and **Mick Granitza** running Ash 4 Range. **Capt Jeph Jephcote** with **Sgt McBride** in charge of R SIGNALS and J CORPS Stats together with **Capt John Greenwood** who co-ordinates all the property and prize giving for the Corps. The REEBOK deployable LAN was run by **SSgt Ian Clarke** and **Sgt Wood** and was a great success.

PRIZE GIVING AND VIP LUNCH

Regular prizes were presented by Master of Signals, **Gen Sir S Cowan KCB CBE** and SOinC(A), **Brig J E Thomas MBE ADC**. The TA prizes were presented by Hon Col 32 Sig Regt (V), **Col AC Cunningham TD.** Also attending were **Brig M Lithgow CBE**, President of Royal Signals Shooting Association and Chairman of the OA&S Shooting Committee. VIPs joined COs, RSMs and Team Captains for a curry lunch after both prize giving events.

PRIZE WINNERS

The R SIGNALS TA and Regular CORPSAM prize winners and Unit Championship results are listed below. The following are selected main prizes:

TA		
Champion Unit Team		40 Sig Regt (A)
Best Young Soldier	**Sig Harper**	40 Sig Regt (V)
Champion Rifle Shot	**Capt McEvoy**	31 Sig Regt (V)
Champion at Arms	**Sgt Open Shaw**	34 Sig Regt (V)
Regular		
Champion Unit Team		30 Sig Regt (C)
Champion Minor Unit Team		39 Inf Bde HQ and Sig qn
Best Young Soldier	**Sig Bahadur**	30 Sig Regt
Champion rifle Shot	**SSgt Bharat**	2 Sig Regt
Champion at Arms	**Cpl Dev**	30 Sig Regt

All COs are thanked for releasing personnel and for their support to CORPSAM 2006. R SIGNALS are lead Corps for CORPSAM 2007. Dates are 14 – 20 Apr 07.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Brig NF Wood

Association Office
RHQ Royal Signals
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
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www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals

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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@royalsignals.mod.uk

General Secretary and Treasurer: Lt Col (Retd) C P Conlon
Assistant General Secretary: Maj (Retd) IN Greig
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr P J Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

Chairman RSA. After nearly six years in office, **Maj Gen Tony Boyle** handed over Chairmanship of the RSA to **Brig Nigel Wood** during the recent annual Reunion at Blandford. During his time as Chairman, **Gen Boyle** spent a great deal of time pushing the Association into the IT age. He has visited numerous Branches throughout the UK and affiliated association and also attended many of their annual dinners. Most RSA Branches contributed to a selection of 'farewell' gifts for **Gen Boyle**, including a long handled spade, a blackthorn walking stick, a statue of a Signaller laying cable from a horse and last, but not least, a row of poplar trees for his garden.

The Master of Signals presented **Gen Boyle** with Honour Membership of the RSA in recognition of his tremendous contribution to the Association. We all wish **Gen Tony** a long and happy 'retirement' and welcome **Brig Nigel** into the Chair.

Branch news. **Steve Bland** has taken over from **John Templeton** as Secretary of the **South London** Branch. Anyone in the Croydon area who would like to join the branch is asked to call **Steve** on; 0208-656 9740.

New Life Members. The following Life Members have been enrolled since the last issue of the WIRE:

Rank/Name	Service	Branch/unit
LCpl Sydney Brown	1940-46	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
Sgt Peter Anwyll	1979-93	
WO2 Nigel Smith	1981-05	
LCpl Paul Brown	1998-05	
Cpl Harold Greaves	1939-46	
LCpl Alan Clay	1972-78	
SSgt Dave Bennett	1983-01	
Sig John Pole	1978-87	
Sgt Joanne Bishop	1983-96	
Sig Jay Rockley	1951-57	
Sig Neil Manning	1990-96	

Cpl Neville Stephen	1963-69	
Cpl Stuart Angus	1948-50	
WO1 Andy Baron	1968-93	
SSgt Kevin Cooney	1982-05	
Sig John Lawrence	1996-01	
Cpl Brett Grist	1993-02	
Cpl Bob Cope	1988-02	
SSgt Mark Stanbury	1993-date	11 Sig Regt
Cpl Tony Chalk	1984-date	16 Sig Regt
Cpl Ken Gibb	1952-55	Southampton
Sig Vernon Jones	1946-48	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
Sig Dennis Blogg	1951-56	
Lt Col Peter Walker	1975-date	RHQ R Sigs
LCpl David Morris	1959-65	
Cpl Glenn Ralston	1977-86	
SSgt Simon Donnelly	1983-06	12 Bde Sig Sqn
Sgt Gordon Beckley	1970-82	
Sgt Tim Terry	1973-95	SHAPE
Cpl Mick Stanyer	1981-94	
Cpl Malcolm Crocker	1948-53	
Sig Stuart Banks	2003-date	
WO1 Kevin Clarke-Brown	1984-date	HQ SOinC(A)
Cpl Karen Carter	1996-date	
Sgt Ruth Griffith	1993-date	
Sig Terence McCann	1953-55	East Kent
Maj Mick Campbell	1969-06	
SSgt Chris Deary	1971-92	
WO2 Ian Goodson	1977-01	
Sgt Bill Pooley	1942-47	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
LCpl Dudley Dixon	1944-47	
LCpl Phil Hewish	1985-91	
Sig Brian Thomas	1954-56	East Kent
LCpl Brian Leyshon	1980-89	
LCpl George	1950-52	Cornwall
Cpl Patrick Oates	1966-72	
Sig Tammy Yates	1996-01	
Cpl Bob Hildreth	1975-89	
SSgt Gaynor Avery	1981-98	
Sig Francis (Nicky) Nye	1954-56	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
Dvr Stephen Robertson	1955-58	York
Sig Robert Lye	1971-79	
Sig Graham Cutter	1958-64	
LCpl Nigel Gerrish	1999-06	204 Sig Sqn
Sgt George O'Mara	1954-76	Beverley Ex-Boys Assn
LCpl Tony(Scooter) Burns	1985-96	
Sig Peter Allsopp	1945-48	
Cpl Gavin Allardyce	1982-06	
Sig Peter Gomez	1970-73	
Sig Ian(Vic) Brown	1992-97	
Sgt Henry Whittle	1943-47	19 Sig Regt Assn
WO1 Graeme Rothwell	1960-83	
Cpl Tim Halsall	1985-00	
Sgt Peter Bagnall	1976-90	
Sig Harry Green	1942-46	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
LCpl John Southwell	1955-58	
Capt Marc Ewart	1982-06	
LCpl Kai Marshall	1989-00	
Sgt Ricky Gordon	1962-79	
SSgt Adrian(Chalky) Meek	1979-05	
WO1 Ian Walling	1983-date	HQ 1 Sig Bde
WO1 David Middleton	1982-06	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt Charlie Fitzpatrick	1993-06	216 Sig Sqn
WO2 Adrian Bain	1981-00	
Sig Paul Harrison	1980-85	
Cpl Adam Duguid	1959-67	
Sig Bert Hayward	1951-57	Colchester
Sig Nick Turner	1990-93	Colchester
Sgt Andrew McAlpine	1970-82	
Cpl Roger Marson	1970-80	Middx Yeomanry Assn
Cpl Trevor Rayson	1959-68	
SSgt Tony Hartley	1995-date	
LCpl Liam Parker	1996-01	
Cpl Gaz Watson	1989-06	
Sig Thomas Vance	1988-92	
Sgt Kerri Hill	1985-date	Bristol
Cpl Dick Coghlan	1951-54	Bristol
Sig Steve Jenkins	1981-91	Bristol
WO2 Florence Green(Boon)	1962-72	
SSgt Ian Lee	1983-06	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt Ian Agg	1982-01	
WO1 Alan Newman	1962-84	
Cpl Graham Wilson	1979-85	
Sig Gary Molton	1990-96	
Lt Col Tony Burgin	1985-date	1 NATO Sig Bn
Sgt Cecelia Nichol	1991-date	1 NATO Sig Bn
WO2 Brian Travers	1952-74	

DONATIONS

Mr V Parker	£20.00
East London Branch RSA	£200.00
Mr W R Stone	£100.00
Paul Wood	£50.00
Cotswolds Branch RSA	£15.00
Bert Tincey	£4.00
Michael Wade	£30.00
Keith Russell	£10.00
Andy McArthur	£20.00
In memory of **Hubert C Vannerley**	£100.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club,	£10.00
in memory of **David V FentonMr Edward Toole**	£20.00
Eastbourne Branch	£50.00
Stuart Angus	£30.00
Mr J Riley	£15.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£10.00
Aldershot Branch RSA	£200.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of	
Brig G Proudman CBE	£10.00
Roland Jones	£50.00
Rotherham Branch RSA	£40.00
John Page	£5.00
From the will of **Mr Peter Harrison**	£5,000

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

One of the most enjoyable events of our calendar has been our annual Quiz Night held in May. This was a most successful occasion, the champions being 'The Lionesses', a team of ex-WRAC ladies, organized by Alison Schofield, a member of our Branch. Runners up were 'The Choughs' followed by 'The Hot Dogs'. For a 261 Sig Sqn team, 'We Need Support', it turned out exactly to the contrary when they romped away with the prize for the best team of serving soldiers.

Lionesses team. Jane Freebairn, Lynne Marsh, Sue Westlake, and Alison Schofield

Courtesy of the Garrison Sgt Maj, the event was held at the Garrison Sgts' Mess and **Shirley** arranged a curry buffet in the interval. **Neville Lyons** was our very able Quiz Master. He was assisted by the Chairman **Noel Moss**, **Edelgard Moss**, **Carole Thomas** and our Secretary, **Mary Pagan**. While also occupied in assisting with the proceedings, **Mary** managed to run a very productive Raffle. We are grateful to the Committee for donating the raffle prizes. We were delighted to be joined, as on previous occasions, by teams from the Reading Branch and many friends, who contribute so much to the success of the evening.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

After the Branch gastronomic safari in April, we considered that a nice quite meal in tranquil surroundings would suffice as a venue lunch for May. And so it was that 47 of us sat down to enjoy lunch in the Grangemoor Hotel in Maidstone. But prior to eating **Tom Bewsey** gave us a most interesting talk on India as he found it during World War II, the Indian Signal Corps, his own input whilst serving with them and an account of the Indian Signal Corps Association 50th Anniversary Celebrations which he, and our very own **Gen John**, were invited to during 1987.

A most enjoyable talk delivered with great style when one considers that **Tom**, a key instrumentalist in the Sidcup Symphony Orchestra, had spent three hours rehearsing the previous day followed by a two hour performance.

On 9th June the Branch takes to the sea main when they go aboard the SS Pocahontas at Gravesend and depart on a Mystery Voyage up (or is it down?) the Thames, but more of this in the next issue of *The Wire.*

Members reporting sick include **Jack Dienst** who gave his wife **Rachel** a nasty fright when he suddenly suffered a heart malfunction, which sent him into hospital were he vented his wrath on the NHS, until they were persuaded that **Jack** would recover more quickly at home. He is now much better. **Jean Saunders** suffered a problem with her internal plumbing, causing her to miss her planned excursion with us to Northants but after suitable medication she is also much better. **Doug Dickerson**, ex-Harrogate himself and creator of the now well established Association for the ex-Apprentices, was forced into hospital for another operation on his knee – a complete new joint.

Painful it was and still is but **Sheila**, his wife, assures this writer that he is making, slow but steady progress. Unfortunately, we hear today that **Pat Andrews**, wife of **Roy**, they being respectively Secretary and Chairman of the Malta Libya Command Association, is going into hospital for an operation and we wish her well.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Rtd) Paul Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

Our Branch AGM was held in April and it was announced that our President, **Fred Corr**, wished to stand down from the role, as his wife's medical condition needed him to care for her on a full time basis and he felt that he no longer could devote sufficient time to fulfil his duties. We were delighted that **Lt Col Jackie Allan TD**, a previous CO of 36 Sig Regt, was able to take over with immediate effect. After the formal meeting closed, we all gathered for a Branch photo which was taken by **Brian Streetly**. The photo, details of our full committee along with forthcoming events can all be found on our web pages at http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/eastlondon/index.htm.

In May at our Branch meeting, as part of our "Guest Speaker" programme, local amateur dramatics performer, **Reg Wheeler** entertained us with his 40 years of theatrical memories, experiences and jokes. He also played the guitar and sang some **Jake Thackeray** numbers.

Looking forward, a large contingent of our members are preparing for the journey to Blandford for the Annual Reunion and one of our members has just received an invitation to one of the Royal Garden Parties being held in July. These events will of course be reported on in due course.

We always welcome more members and encourage any potential members living in East London, South and East Essex area to join us. We are aiming to be inclusive and would welcome as Associate Members, serving or ex-service men and women from other Arms, Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts' Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

EXMOUTH BRANCH

Chairman **Bill Irving**
Secretary **Olive Irving**

The Exmouth Branch of RSA recently welcomed **Mr Ernest (Ernie) Huntley** to a lunch time social event at the Cat and Fiddle Restaurant, Clyst St Mary. **Ernie** was visiting Exmouth from London, Ontario, Canada, and was keen to meet some fellow "Signallers". He had found details of our Branch on the internet. Originally in the Royal Corps of Signals, **Ernie** had emigrated to Canada in the late 1940's and joined the Royal Canadian Signals, but still felt a strong affinity with Royal Signals.

The event was a lively social gathering with tales of derring-do, comradeship and lots of humorous details aplenty. Several members were able to share World War 2 experiences and exploits with **Ernie**. A good time was had by all. Our Chairman, **Bill Irving**, presented **Mr Huntley** with a Royal Signals Association commemorative Badge as a reminder of his visit to Exmouth."

Exmouth Branch enjoying a lunch time social event

On Friday 16th June, the Branch President, **Maj Gen (Retd) Ian Sprackling** accompanied by his wife **Annie**, Chairman **Mr Bill**

Bill Irving presents RSA badge to Ernie Huntley

Irving, Secretary **Mrs Olive Irving**, Treasurer **Mr Bob Coole** and his wife **Ann**, and Vice Chairman **Mr John Goodman** and his wife **Rita**, attended the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM). The Branch members were guests of **Brig GS Robison**, Commandant, at the King's Squad Pass Out parade of 908 Troop. It was the last Pass Out parade that **Brig Robison** would be attending, as he is shortly to become Commandant General of Royal Marines. The day began with a presentation by **Brig Robison** on the history and future strategy of the Royal Marines at Lympstone.

Refreshments were taken in the Officers' Mess, followed by the members proudly watching as 908 Troop received their "Green Berets". Lunch was taken in the Officers' Mess after watching the Royal Marines Band play as the Troop proudly marched and drilled in front of their excited families. Our next item on the agenda was a visit to the Royal Marine Signal unit and a lively talk about the work they do with the support of Royal Signals. A very interesting time was had by all. Our day ended by us all being hosted by **RSM Riach** in the Sergeants' Mess. Other members of our Branch are being hosted on 14th and 28th July respectively. This is a good example of comradeship and fellowship.

The visit to the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines

On the 17th June our Branch had a stall at the local Royal British Legion fete. We decided to just use the time for publicity and recruiting. It was amazing how many people approached saying that they were ex-Signallers. We are hopeful that our Branch numbers will be boosted. We even had some of the Army Cadets approaching asking for further details on how to join Royal Signals! A good time was had by all

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Jim McMillan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

On Saturday 6 may 2006, the Branch Members, families, and their friends, attended a ceilidh night, arranged by the committee. The music was supplied by The Rusty Nail Ceilidh Band. Between tunes and modern dances, the leader of the band gave instructions to those on the dance floor, on a variety of dance steps in the way they are danced in Scottish communities. It was fun and games watching the antics of those unable to remember the steps, in a similar way as some recruits in the forces who forget their left from their right.

A bar and supper were laid on and a raffle was held. The proceeds of this were used to offset some of the evening's expenses. The Branch Treasurer, **Eric McWaters** spoke on behalf of the committee, and thanked those Members who had donated the prizes and those that helped to set up the hall for the function and in particular ex-Chairman **Bill Taylor** for his assistance. Thanks were also expressed to **Cpls Debbie Carruthers** and **Christine McCormack** of 32 Sig Regt for their contribution of providing the supper from the kitchen and assistance behind the temporary bar. The Branch AGM, which was to be held on Tuesday 16 May, had to be cancelled. Although the room was full, there were not enough paid up members of the Branch to make a quorum, with a number of apologies for absence, to vote on the agenda, install a new committee, or pass the previous minutes. It means therefore calling a future AGM to carry out the functions of the Branch. The Branch Secretary was instructed to send a letter to all Branch Members, informing them of the next meeting in June.

Several items were discussed at the meeting, including the date of the proposed visit to Erskine Hospital in July. The meeting was closed by the Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan** who thanked those for attending and apologised that the AGM had had to be cancelled. Members then enjoyed a buffet and drinks in the Junior Ranks' mess.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Hon Sec **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

Unfortunately, once again I have to start these notes by reporting the sad loss of another of our stalwart Branch Members, **SSgt William Henry (Billy) Carey**. The sympathy of the Branch members is extended to his family. (See Obituary Section)

At long last, the writer (NI Branch President), managed to pay a short visit to Blandford while on holiday in the area. I have to admit that, having completed my initial training in 1945 at Catterick, which was then the Royal Signals base, I still find it hard to accept that Blandford now holds that role. It was quite an experience to meet people I have talked to by phone on many occasions over the years and to meet others new to me. I was glad to meet the General Secretary **Lt Col (Retd) Carl Conlon**, (who was extremely helpful to us in our 50th Anniversary arrangements), **Mrs Jan Cornick** (Welfare – who brought a recent local welfare case to a very satisfactory conclusion), new Wire Editor **Lt.Col (Retd) Alan Wallace** and Deputy Editor **Dawn Haselden**. Having met them I can see that *The Wire* is in very safe hands.

Unfortunately, I chose the very day **Peter Cuckow** had one of his rare days off. We did meet at our 50th Dinner in March, however. In the Museum I met Archivist, **Tim Stankus** and Attendant **Ian Faulkes**. I left with them some articles which had been used by a late colleague and ex-Sgt Royal Signals to teach City and Guilds to other POWs in captivity in Poland. From Wire articles, I knew the Museum must be quite good but I was unprepared for the really wonderful layout and displays.

Having visited other military museums over the years I have no hesitation in saying that the Royal Signals Museum must be number one. Great credit must be given to all involved in the planning and maintaining of the displays. Lastly, I must mention

the shop ladies who were so helpful and friendly. Sorry I don't know their names. I can only say it was a very worthwhile and enjoyable visit.

In the previous notes, I mentioned that we still had to decide when and how our new Branch Standard and 50 year pennant would be dedicated. After some discussion it was decided to arrange for the dedication to take place at the Blandford reunion, where Branch Chairman **Jim Reilly** will act as Standard Bearer for the occasion and so by the time you read this, the deed will have been done. Talking of the Blandford reunion, our "reunion Organiser" **Carole Cameron** is at this moment tying up last minute items re travel etc. Again, as you read this our party will have been there and back again. 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**

At the kind invitation of Aldershot Branch, we attended their Quiz night, in the Garrison Sergeants' Mess, on May 18th. It was an enjoyable evening with a very good supper, and some challenging questions in the quiz. Sad to say, neither of our teams came away with any prizes, not even in the raffle. Our thanks to all at Aldershot Branch for a splendid evening. We really must try harder on our foray into Hampshire next year! However things looked brighter when summer arrived in Berkshire on the 2nd of June, just in time for our garden party on the 4th. After a somewhat soggy May, the approach of a warmer spell was exceedingly welcome and, for the afternoon of the party, beautifully timed.

Brig Martin Roberts, Maj Gen Bill Macfarlane, Brig Noel Moss, Chairman of Aldershot Branch, Mrs Helen Macfarlane and Mrs Edelgard Moss

This year the event was moved to a Sunday, hopefully to reduce those clashes with major sporting and other domestic events that can interfere with the important things in life, but then you cannot win them all. A goodly crew of 35 actually made it to the venue which was held, now by custom, in the delightful woodland garden of **Martin** and **Hannelore Roberts** at their home in Bucklebury. Expansive and well cut lawns, merry bunting and a group of multi-coloured gazebos (just in case), welcomed members and their guests. Sadly there were two notable absentees from the assembly and all were sorry to hear that our Chairman, **Pauline**, and our Welfare Officer, **Ben Bolt** were both 'hors de combat' and had tendered their apologies for their absence.

After much chit-chat and close examination of the garden, encouraged by an appropriate and entertaining quiz generated by our hosts, our munificent tea makers **Thelma Wakefield**, **Sally du Feu** and **Connie Brown** announced that the tea pot was loaded and ready for action, and that the strawberries and cream, et al, were awaiting our attention. Following our really enjoyable afternoon repast, the draw took place for the "Lucky Ticket" with the winner being declared as **Betty Taylor**.

This was followed by the garden quiz result where **Helen Macfarlane** and **Edelgard Moss** were declared the joint winners. Then to round off the day, the Summer Raffle was held. As usual this produced a princely sum, sufficient to keep the Treasurer happy!

The next few months look as though they are going to be busy, and if you are interested in joining us, or to know what goes on at the Branch, have a look at
http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/reading/index.htm

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

On 23rd April 2006 the Southampton Branch, with support from the Reading, Salisbury, Aldershot, and Winchester Branches, celebrated our 60th Annual Reunion Dinner at the Masonic Centre, Chandlers Ford. Unfortunately our main guest had to pull out because of an overseas commitment and the Branch was unable to find a replacement in time.

The Top Table

However a volunteer, **Maj Peter Loveless**, was persuaded to fill the breach at the last minute because our President, **Brig Johnny Clinch**, was faced with a family bereavement on the day. Despite the depletion on the top table, the event turned out to be one of the most enjoyable in our recent history, largely due to the work of **Beryl Allinson** and **Ruth Dear**.

The Chairman, **Sidney Smith** and Secretary, **Tony Dear**, take this opportunity to thank the ladies and **Maj Peter Loveless**. In his impromptu speech **Peter** introduced the senior members present from the 43rd Div Signals, **Maj Len Joughin**, **Cyril Pike**, **George Packer** and **John Rush**, and reminded us that the 60 years included the time when the Branch was known as 43rd Div Signals. It was mainly in the era of Southampton RSA that the dinner became known as the Annual Lunch.

The Chairman and Maj Peter Loveless

Peter ended his speech by proposing the toast "to our guests." Finally as we always do, we remember absent friends.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

One a fine weekend in May, members of the Branch joined 31 Sig Regt on their annual battlefield visit to the Continent. This year the visit was to St Valery, where in 1940 the 51st Highland Division made their last stand, before being marched about 300 miles to captivity. Due honour was paid and a wreath laid at the war cemetery by a representative det from the Regt and our Branch.

Our party stayed at Fecamp in a beautiful hotel located beside the Marina. A most memorable visit was to the Benedictine Abbey, the home of the famous liqueur, samples of which were a bonus to the occasion, followed by a good lunch in a local restaurant. The consensus was that this had been a most agreeable weekend.

THE AIR FORMATION SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Dr David Vickers**
Secretary **Mr Dennis Egan**

Members of the recently re-named Air Formation Signals Association met at the Corus Hotel, Solihull, on Saturday, May 6th, for their annual reunion dinner and AGM. During the AGM, which was held before dinner on this occasion, a very moving letter from **Colin Morgan**, our Association Almoner who is very seriously ill, was read out. Later he and **Pam** were singled out for particular thanks for their dedicated service to the Association since its formation.

The design of an Association Standard was discussed at length. It was agreed that the design should be acceptable to the Royal Signals Association, thereby permitting our standard bearer to take part in the annual Standard Bearer Competition. It was reported that RHQ had agreed to the inclusion of a Red Beaufighter in the design. Some individual committee members planned to purchase a flag, to be flown from hotel flagpoles during reunions, and this would include in its design both the Red Beaufighter and the original triangular 'wings' badge.

Dinner got off to a cracking start with grace by the **Rev Jim McManus**, our Association Chaplain and concluded with the Loyal Toast. In another 'first', port was provided from Association funds, thus avoiding embarrassment for those diners who had already emptied their wine glasses!

RHQ now recognises the AFSA as one of the new categories of 'Regimentally Affiliated Associations', recruiting as it does from those who served in 21 Sig Regt and all other Air Formation (confusingly renamed Air Support in 1970) Signal Units, as well as genuine Air Support (Red Hand Gang) Signal Units. There are no joining or annual membership fees. For more details contact **Chris Collier**, the Membership Secretary, on 01902-338662 or e-mail: cecollier@supanet.com.

LAST POST

Name and Rank	Served Years	Died Date
Baynham - Brig DH Baynham GM		
	Served 1942/79	*Died* 17/05/06
Botterill - Maj JL Botterill	*Served* 1946/76	*Died* 15/05/06
Bracey - Sgt DJ Bracey	*Served* 1967/81	*Died* 09/06/06
Brackley - LCpl JA Brackley	*Served* 1949/54	*Died* 2005
Burke - Lt Col WC Burke	*Served* 1929/59	*Died* 15/04/06
Carey - SSgt WH Carey	*Served* 1957/83	*Died* 25/05/06
Clubley - Sig P Clubley	*Served* 1945/48	*Died* ??/05/06
Cornford - Sgt JJ Cornford	*Served* 1938/47	*Died* ??/04/06
Cowing - Sgt L Cowing MBE		
	Served ????/??	*Died* 26/12/03
Crewe - Sig G Crewe	*Served* 1951/56	*Died* ??/02/06
Davies - ?? RJ Davies	*Served* 1950/74	*Died* 02/06/06
Fairclough - LCpl B Fairclough		
	Served 1947/49	*Died* 13/04/06
Fenton - Sig DV Fenton	*Served* ????/??	*Died* ??/04/06
Foot - Sig PG Foot	*Served* 1957/60	*Died* ??/05/06
Fox - Cpl G Fox	*Served* 1952/80	*Died* ??/04/06
Gibbs - Sig A Gibbs	*Served* 1960/64	*Died* 2004
Godfrey - Sgt AG Godfrey	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/05/06
Griffith - Lt LA Griffith	*Served* 1945/52	*Died* 10/05/05
Griffiths - Sig D Griffiths	*Served* 1959/65	*Died* ??/04/06
Gulliver - SigDR Gulliver	*Served* 1940/45	*Died* ??/01/06
Harmsworth - Sgt WR Harmsworth		
	Served 1952/74	*Died* 27/04/06
Hartley - Sig DA Hartley	*Served* 1945/48	*Died* ??/06/06
Harvey - Pte I Harvey	*Served* 1943/45	*Died* 20/04/06
Hawkins - Sig RG Hawkins	*Served* 1946/48	*Died* 21/04/06
Heseltine- Cpl D Heseltine	*Served* 1943/47	*Died* 22/04/06
Hill - Cpl LG Hill	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 29/03/06
Hoare - Lt PC Hoare	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??/06/06
Hoath - Cpl I Hoath	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* ??12/05
Hobson - Cpl E Hobson	*Served* 1931/45	*Died* 23/05/06
Jones - Sig CA Jones	*Served* 1953/58	*Died* 27/04/06
MacKinnon - Lt Col NRF MacKinnon		
	Served 1945/74	*Died* 09/06/06
McCumiskey - Lt JA McCumiskey		
	Served 1943/47	*Died* 10/05/06
Morrison - Sig GA Morrison	*Served* 1953/56	*Died* 26/01/04
Mowbray - LCpl AS Mowbray		
	Served 1943/47	*Died* 2005
Power - Sgt GJ Power	*Served* 1936/50	*Died* ??/04/06
Proudman - Brig G Proudman CBE		
	Served 1941/77	*Died* 07/05/06
Smith - WO1 R Smith	*Served* 1960/98	*Died* 11/06/06
Sumner - Dvr A Sumner	*Served* 1948/50	*Died* 2005
Tait - Maj HA Tait	*Served* 1948/66	*Died* ??/02/00
Walker - AB Walker	*Served* ????/59	*Died* ??/11/05
West-Watson - Maj ECW West-Watson		
	Served 1936/66	*Died* 24/05/06
Wilson - Sgt SJ Wilson	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* 17/05/06
Woodmansee - Sgt EW Woodmansee		
	Served 1948/56	*Died* 08/04/06
Wray - ?? KA Wray	*Served* 1951/53	*Died* 07/06/06
Zajac - Capt R Zajac	*Served* ????/??	*Died* ??/04/06

OBITUARIES

BAKER – Henry George (Hank) died 15 January 2006.

Henry Baker, who was born on 23 June 1918, died aged 87 in January this year, following a long illness. He was one of the last half dozen eyewitnesses who travelled to Lhasa, capital city of independent Tibet, before the Chinese annexation of that country in 1950. Born into a Methodist family in Ryde, Isle of Wight, he was the eldest of seven children.

From working as a shop assistant he was enlisted into the Supplementary Reserve of the Infantry of the Line, Hampshire Regiment, on 7 September 1936. Because he had a private interest in radio and electronics, he was re-enlisted into The Royal Corps of Signals on 1 December 1936 and trained at Catterick Camp, Yorkshire. He then moved to Aldershot and then to India in December 1938. When he joined, The Signals were still kitted out in riding breeches. **Baker** remained loyal to his home regiment and kept Hampshire Regiment buttons on his tunic.

On arrival in India he was immediately posted from Karachi to Bannu on the notorious North West Frontier and on to the Ahmedzai Salient for 6 months on operations in outposts such as Mir Ali, Damdil, Tal and Razmak. In this short period 400 were killed or injured by skirmishing tribesmen.

Baker was seriously injured during one attack when a gun carriage exploded and he was hospitalised for 6 months. After recuperation he was posted to Southern Command Signal Company, Jubbulpore, as wireless operator from where he was to tour Lahore, Delhi, Peshawar and Kohat with a mobile station using camel, mule and lorry transport.

In September 1940, he caught malaria. After recovering, he made acquaintance over the air with an ex-Royal Signals man, **Mr Reginald Fox**, now a civilian employed by Government of India to operate the British Mission's radio in Lhasa since 1937. This link was regarded as vital as there were strong rumours that Chinese troops were becoming active on the Tibetan border.

The British Mission in Lhasa had been established in 1936. The radio station used equipment set up by **Lts Sidney Dagg** (later Lt Col) and **Evan Yorke Nepean** (later **Lt Col Sir Evan Bt.**), both of the Royal Corps of Signals. Towards the end of 1941, **Fox** was taken seriously ill and had to be relieved. **Henry Baker** remembered:"One morning my sergeant sent for me and gave me 24 hours leave to consider volunteering to take over the radio station – being told that if I declined, as there was a war on, I would be posted there anyway! Having "volunteered" I was given a trade test to make sure I could run the Lhasa station. Needless to say none of the items I was tested on were anything like what I found there."

On 20 October 1941 he was posted on what would be the greatest adventure of his life. In 1941 it was almost impossible for anyone, let alone a non-commissioned soldier to be posted to the almost inaccessible and near mythical, forbidden city of Lhasa.

Baker proceeded to Calcutta, where he met **Capt Dr Harry WG Staunton** of the Indian Medical Service. **Staunton** proclaimed him unfit. However, Delhi HQ informed him that nobody else was available and **Baker** had to go. Next day they proceeded to Siliguri by train and from there 70 miles by taxi to Gangtok the capital of Sikkim where they were invited by **Sir Basil Gould**, Political Officer Sikkim Bhutan and Tibet, to stay at the British Residency. **Gould** had led the 1936 Political Mission to Lhasa, which established the British presence there. **Baker** set out on the 21 days pony trek to Lhasa.

Baker found the Tibetans most friendly and he slept in village homesteads. Arriving at the capital city's outskirts, he was introduced to leading government officials and taken to the British Mission's residency. Each morning he transmitted weather reports and sent ciphered messages from the Head of Mission.

Baker settled into life in Lhasa and got to know several notables including the Dalai Lama's father and the Commander of the Tibetan Army. He was kept company by various nobles who spoke English and he was invited to some of the many picnics and parties in which Lhasans greatly liked to indulge themselves.

Early in 1942 after 7 months in Lhasa, **Baker** was unexpectedly recalled when **Fox** returned and he was posted to The British Residency, Sikkim to work radio until the war's end and where he used his technical skills to help **Sir Basil Gould** establish both a Tibetan language broadcasting station and a Tibetan language newspaper. **Baker** was given a privilege granted to a very select few – a Permanent Frontier Pass authorising him to enter Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet. He was instructed to have made, and to wear what were probably the most unusual shoulder epaulets in the history of the British Army. Sewn onto them were the words "British Political Service Tibet".

Baker recalled, much to his amusement, that when he was demobbed on the Isle of Wight in May 1946 "I was struggling along with a very heavy box and was still wearing these epaulets when two burly Military Policemen caught up with me, one on either side, to ask who I was and what I was up to. Having read the epaulets they ended up carrying the box for me!"

He requested 6 months home leave to get demobbed and intended to accept a job as a civilian wireless operator for the government of Tibet. In 1944, the American and British Indian Governments had supplied a limited quantity of radio equipment to the Tibetan Government and had planned the establishment of several wireless stations along the Tibetan border in an attempt to help Tibet protect herself from Chinese incursion as well as to help everyday traders. However, **Baker** was relieved by **Robert Ford** (author of "Captured in Tibet") who had recently been demobbed from the RAF. **Ford** later set up a radio station on Tibet's eastern border at Chamdo later to be captured by the Chinese and held prisoner for 5 years.

Having been demobbed in England, the newly married Baker took a job at Nairobi airport, Kenya but returned to England a few years later and he and his family emigrated to the USA.

Baker started a small business making and selling rubber stamps. Later he worked for Eddystone Radio and then Voicewriter Engineering where he worked on developing dictating machines. He then developed television studio communication equipment and became a technical writer. Leaving the electronics industry, **Baker** joined the New Jersey Police Force at Succasunna in 1963 and later the New Hampshire Police Force, while still running his own electrical repair shop as a sideline.

Having been overseas for many years **Baker** lost contact with most of his family and following the death of his wife, he moved to the northeast of England where he remarried but was again widowed shortly later. He suffered poor health in his final years until he gained a new lease of life when in 2002, it became known to researchers that he had been one of the last few European eyewitnesses of the old Tibet.

He was delighted to be visited and interviewed by academics from The Namgyal Institute of Tibetology (Sikkim), The Pitt Rivers Museum (University of Oxford) and the daughter of his travelling companion in Tibet, **Capt Staunton**.

He is remembered by elderly folk in Sikkim. Photographs he had bought there during the war from **Tse Ten Tashi** - then Private Secretary to the Maharaja's son, **Prince Paljor Namgyal** - form part of a current photographic exhibition at the Namgyal Institute. Many people were thrilled to see long lost images of their parents and grandparents.

Throughout his life **Henry Baker** retained his interest in amateur radio and was still active with Morse code until the last year of his life. He is survived by a son in the USA and a sister and a brother.

BAYNHAM – Brig Derrick Baynham GM – died on 16 May 2006

Brig Derrick Baynham, who died aged 82, was awarded the George Medal as a 17 year old school boy for his courage in attempting to save the lives of airmen whose bomber had crashed into the sea off the Anglesey coast, Wales. The British bomber had crashed into heavy seas around 11.30 am during a gale on August 28, 1941.

Almost immediately, two of her crew were washed away, but a third man, a Pole was left clinging to the fuselage. Despite the conditions, **Baynham** and another boy 17, **John Wood**,

launched a small dinghy and set out to the rescue. After three quarters of an hour they reached the injured airman, who was weak from shock and exposure.

As the boys came alongside the bomber, their boat capsized; but they managed to swim to the plane and persuaded the airman to go with them. Unfortunately, after a long struggle the exhausted boys were no longer able to support him and the airman was swept away and drowned. **Baynham** and **Wood** were washed in towards the shore and pulled to safety. They had been in the freezing water for two hours.

Baynham and **Wood** were invested with the George Medal by **King George VI** at Buckingham Palace on April 18, 1942. They also received the silver medal for gallantry from the Royal Lifeboat National Institution, as well as signed silver cigarette cases from **General Wladyslaw Sikorski**, Commander in Chief of the Polish Forces.

Derrick Hubert Baynham was born on April 19 1924 at Walton-on-Thames, Surrey the son of **Maj Hubert Baynham**. He was educated at St George's College, Weybridge, during which time he joined the crew of a 30 ft cruiser in the evacuation from Dunkirk. He joined the Army aged 18 in 1942, and was commissioned into the Royal Signals the next year.

Before his commission he volunteered for special service with the SOE. On commissioning, he transferred to the Guards Armoured Division, which fought from the Normandy invasion up to the Baltic. During the winter of 1944/45 the Division advanced in bitter fighting towards the banks of the Rhine. It crossed the river at Wesel, fighting its way through north Germany to the Baltic, ending up at Cuxhaven.

In this phase, **Baynham** was wounded in the face by a hand grenade and taken prisoner by the Germans; but he escaped and was mentioned in dispatches.

After the war he served in Palestine, Malaya and Cyprus. He was also an ADC to the Viceroy of India (**Field Marshal Viscount Wavell**) and to the Governor of Burma.

For the next five years he was based in Britain, with postings to the Royal Marines in Portsmouth, the Army Apprentices' College at Harrogate and as the Corps Liaison Officer to schools and universities for the various Royal Signals cadet units.This was followed by appointments to Singapore (1953 – 54), Malta (1954 – 57) and then to the Staff College, Camberley (1957).

From 1958 to 1960, at the time of the Eoka campaign, he was operations officer to the Director of Operations in Cyprus, working under the Government and Commander-in-Chief. He then held a succession of staff postings in BAOR and Catterick, followed by the Joint Services Staff College at Latimer in 1963 and at the War Office in London (1964 – 66).

In May 1966. **Baynham** assumed command of the Signal Wing at the School of Infantry at Hythe. This was followed by promotion to colonel and a posting to Shape at Mons, in Belgium. Subsequently as a brigadier, he commanded 11th Signal Group (V) in Liverpool, completing his military career as Chief Signal Officer, UK Land Forces at Wilton, during which period he was appointed ADC to the Queen.

In 1979 he retired from the Army and embarked on a number of commercial enterprises, including running computer courses and a marine company. For three years he was also bursar at London University's College of Speech Sciences. Many years earlier he had taken a correspondence course in his spare time and had been awarded an Economics degree from London University. He never tired of telling his graduate children that he had not attended a single lecture and that the entire exercise had cost him the princely sum of £26.

Baynham had a life long passion for sailing. In retirement he enjoyed fishing and shooting and was especially proud of his home-made game pies. Earlier, he had captained the British Underwater Skin Diving Team at four World Championships, including at Rome in 1960. He was a keen amateur radio ham. For 10 years, until 1997, he lived in Normandy.

Derrick Baynham died on May 16. He married **Ann Park** in 1949. They had been amicably separated for many years, and had three sons, one of whom predeceased him, and a daughter. He shared his retirement years in Normandy and Dorset with his partner, Sue.

CAREY- William Henry Carey BEM (Billy) died 25 May 2006

It is with great regret that the Northern Ireland Branch reports the loss of another of its stalwart members. After a prolonged illness, our good friend and long time Branch Member **Billy Carey BEM** passed away. In October 1943, **Billy** enlisted in the Royal Marines. During his service he served on several ships including the well known *HMS Illustrious*. His service took him to various operational areas. After 12 year's service in the Royal Marines, he was discharged and in civilian life became a bus driver in his home city of Belfast.

In 1957, he enlisted in 107 Bde Sig Sqn (TA) in Victoria Barracks, Belfast. When 107 Bde disbanded, he transferred to 40(U) Sig Regt (V) in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast. He retired in the rank of SSgt after 26 years.

Although **Billy** had become a Member of the Royal Marines Association after leaving Regular service, he also joined the Northern Ireland Branch of the RSA on enlisting in the TA and remained a faithful Member and regular attendee until ill health intervened. During the last few years, he was regularly visited by the Branch Welfare Member and others and he was always anxious to hear all the news of the Branch activities.

The funeral of **Billy**, whose wife **Peggy**, predeceased him by about 30 years, took place on 30th May from his home. The procession, with the Royal Marines flag on the coffin, was preceded by the RSA (NI Branch) Standard carried by Branch Chairman **Jim Reilly**. At the Crematorium, a large number of both Royal Marines Association Members, led by their Branch President, **Mr Terry Bennet**, and RSA Members attended. At the conclusion of the service, the bugler played the Last Post and Reveille followed by the recital of the well known fourth verse of Binyon's poem "For the Fallen" by our Branch President, **Maj (Retd) Noel Johnston**. The Officers and Members of the RSA(NI Branch) extend their sincere sympathy to **Billy's** family.

FITZPATRICK – James Fitzpatrick (Jimmy Fitz) – died on 3 May 2006

It is with deep regret that the family of **Jimmy Fitzpatrick** announce the death of **Jimmy Fitz** in May this year.

Following his death, the family found old paperwork and Army documentation which revealed that **Jimmy** had served with the Royal Signals. They thought it would be a fitting gesture to **Jimmy Fitz** and his widow, **Jean**, that an obituary should be published in *the Wire*.

Jimmy joined the Royal Signals in about 1957 for National Service and then signed on as a Regular. He served in UK, Germany and Kenya and was discharged in 1964 to fulfil family commitments.

HARVEY – Ida Harvey died on 20 April 2006.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of **Mrs Ida Harvey** who passed away in hospital on 20th April. She was cremated at Manchester Crematorium following a service at Mersey Street Baptist Tabernacle, Openshaw. **Ida** received Branch Honours and a strong turnout of members was present, led by Chairman **Ron Taylor**: the Branch Standard was paraded at the Church and Cemetery by **Peter Halford**.

Ida, or "**Aunty Ida**" as she liked to be called, enlisted in the Corps in June 1943 and served as telephonist until discharged at the end of the war. At this point she married RAF flying instructor **Frank Harvey DFC** but the marriage ended tragically in 1951, when her husband's aircraft plunged into the Irish Sea off Blackpool.

Ida's involvement with the Manchester Branch RSA seems to have started around 1954 and during her membership, she served as Secretary and Treasurer and was one of the first Honour Members. Her generosity and cheerfulness touched us all and a few of us (this scribe included) were privileged to be invited to dine with her at her beloved Civil Service Club, off Whitehall, when she was in London for the RSA AGM.

Ida had no surviving relatives, so the Branch would like to express its condolences to her dearest friend **Margaret Jones** and the minister and congregation of the Baptist Tabernacle, Openshaw.

Ida's death has given the Manchester Branch an unexpected legacy in her memory. Her wake was held at the Greater Manchester Police Club at Hough End and Chairman **Ron Taylor,** who in a previous life was himself a "Peeler", has managed to negotiate favourable terms to use the Club as a venue for our annual dinner/dance for the foreseeable future.

REUNIONS

Beverley Ex-Boys Association Annual Reunion

Saturday 7th October 2006

Ramada Hotel, Willerby, Nr Hull

Contact **Tony Hull** Tel: 01202 770261

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

From: **Lt Col (Retd) G Powell** of Waincliffe House, Roecliffe, York. Y051 9L:

On Sat 6th May 2006, a report appeared in the Yorkshire Post on the history of the village of Tholthorpe, which is located some 13 miles north west of York. At the end of the report, it listed **Geoff Duke** as its most famous resident, who was part of the Royal Signals, based at Catterick and Tholthorpe in 1948.

As I was involved in the publication of the book *"The White Helmets"*, whilst serving as the Admin Officer of the White Helmets in 1977, I was intrigued. On checking my copy of the book, I can find no mention of the White Helmets, or **Geoff Duke** being at Tholthorpe in 1948. The book does confirm he was the Team Sergeant at that time.

On Mon 15th May, I visited Tholthorpe and discovered that the information, in respect of Royal Signals at Tholthorpe in 1948, came from a chap called **Geoff Osborne** who was the Regimental Draughtsman of 2 Trg Regt at that time and that 2 Trg Regt was at Tholthorpe from Feb 1948 for approx 18 months, when it moved to Barnard Castle. 2 Trg Regt was tasked with the trg of Vehicle Mechanics, Driver Mechanics, Drivers and Despatch Riders and that the White Helmets, at that time, were part of 2 Trg Regt and trained on Tholthorpe Airfield.

I can find no mention in any Royal Signals publications I hold of any Royal Signals units being stationed at Tholthorpe village or its airfield. Can any reader of *The Wire* throw any light on this subject?

I remain, Sir...

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

From: **Mrs Maureen Rigby** of 5 Hawksworth Drive, Formby Liverpool. L37 7EY

I would be most grateful if you could publish this letter in *The Wire* in the hope that it might enable me to obtain a photograph of my late father. He was killed in Normandy on the 12th of June 1944 and is buried in La Deliverande War Cemetery near Caen.

Owing to family circumstances at the time, all photographs of him were lost and I am trying to find out if the Army have any available in their archives or maybe someone who served with him may have one of a group or Regiment in which he served.

His details are as follows:

14512841 Signalman Henry Price (Known generally as **Harry Price**) Enlisted in Liverpool in January 1943 in the General Service Corps Embodied Territorial Army and was I think in the Kings Regiment.

He transferred to the Royal Corps of Signals in March 1943. He was involved in the D-Day landings in June 1944 and was posted as "missing in action" on June 10 1944 and subsequently found on 12 June 1944. He was 34 years old. He probably served with 3rd Division.

He married Evelyn and lived at 8 Golden Grove, Walton, Liverpool 4 and had two daughters, **Maureen** and **Betty**.

I have been in contact with his surviving brother who is now 89 years old but no family members have any photographs of him. Perhaps a letter in your magazine might produce the longed for picture. I hope that you can help.

Yours...

From: **Lesley Ayris**

I am trying to find out any info about my late father, **Harry Green**, who served with the Corps in MELF April 1952 – May 1955. Anyone who knew **Harry** is asked to get in touch with **Lesley** at: ayris@chariot.net.au

---

From: **Richard Polley**
I am in the process of writing a book about the men listed on the war memorial in Didcot, Oxfordshire.

I am seeking information about a **Signalman Rolle Dixon** of the 9th Armd Div Sigs who died 02/12/1941. For some reason, he is buried at Towcester Road Cemetery, Northampton. Was there a camp in that area? His parents lived in Didcot and you would have thought they would have brought him home. If anybody can help, please contact me at:

56 Cronshaw Close
Didcot
Oxon OX11 7JX
Or by telephone on: 01235 812498

NOTICES

WHO IS A VETERAN?

The word 'veteran' often conjures up a particular image - that of our older generation who served so magnificently in WWII. However, ***anyone who served in HM Forces, regardless of when, how long for and whether in conflict or peacetime is by definition a veteran.*** If you were in the navy, army or air force, even if only for one day, you are a veteran and as such can access a vast network of support and guidance. Veterans Agency is the focal point within the Ministry of Defence for providing free information and advice on issues of concern to all veterans and their families. Whatever your enquiry, whether it be accessing service records, finding out entitlement to a War Pension, health concerns or any other issue, the Agency is here to help.

If we can't help on the spot, we are positioned at the heart of a wide network of support dedicated to helping ex-Servicemen and women and their families. By working in close partnership with ex-Service organisations, War Pensions Committees and other voluntary groups and statutory bodies we can point you in the right direction for sound practical assistance. To access the wealth of support on offer simply call the Veterans Agency Helpline on: **FREEPHONE: 0800 169 2277** Veterans Agency also administers the War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Schemes and manages a welfare service through a network of 25 regional offices.

War Pensions
You may be entitled to a pension or compensation payment. Call the Helpline now if you think you have a medical condition caused or made worse by your service in HM Armed Forces.

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme
Since 6 April 2005, the new Armed Forces Compensation Scheme provides a simple and quick means of compensating Service (and ex-Service) personnel for illness or injury sustained as a result of their Service life.

A Home Visit
Wherever you live in the UK, one of our dedicated welfare managers can visit you in your home on request. They can provide face-to-face help on issues such as statutory benefits, health, training, employment and housing.

Find Us On The Internet
For further information, visit our website:
www.veteransagency.mod.uk

P.S. Have you got your veterans badge yet?
The HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge was launched by the MOD in May 2004 as a visible recognition of a veteran. It has proved to be extremely popular and we have issued over 100,000 to date. Eligibility is about to be extended and with effect from 27 June 2006 will be available to those who served in HM forces up to December 1959.

Other groups entitled to a badge are:
Cyprus Regiment;
Merchant Navy seamen;
Home Guard;
Polish forces under UK Command;
War Widows and Widowers in receipt of a war pension.

To apply for a badge: Call the Veterans Agency Helpline on **0800 169 2277** (UK only) or **0800 169 3458** (Minicom users) Or complete the application form on-line at www.veteransagency.mod.uk Click the Veterans Lapel Badge button on the Homepage. Complete the form, sign and date it, then either fax or post it to Veterans Badge Team, Veterans Agency,
Room 6108, Norcross,
Thornton-Cleveleys,
FY5 3WP

EXERCISE MERCURY CHALLENGE
– The Royal Signals Global Sailing Expedition

EX MERCURY CHALLENGE is a round-the-world sailing exped organised and crewed by members of the Royal Signals. The exped is divided into 10 legs and will involve a total of up to 140 serving officers and soldiers, most of whom will complete just one leg – lasting between 2 and 6 weeks.

The 33,000 nautical mile route will provide crew with numerous challenges, as well as including stopovers at some of the world's best known ports: Las Palmas, Rio De Janeiro, Cape Town, Perth, Sydney, Hobart, Wellington, Buenos Aires and Antigua, before completing the circumnavigation in Portsmouth in June 2007.

Along the way crews will compete in 2 of yachting's most exciting and prestigious competitions, the Sydney Hobart Race and Antigua Sailing Week.

The exped set sail at the end of June and has started its voyage around the world. Prior to the yacht setting sail, there was a comprehensive trg package for all crew.

The Skippers and Mates received extra trg in order to fully prepare them for the challenges of the ocean. The bright orange suits being beautifully modelled by members of MERCURY CHALLENGE were tested in the cold Gosport water! Follow the exciting progress of MERCURY CHALLENGE on www.mercurychallenge.mod.uk and if you want to be part of this once in a lifetime opportunity, then contact the Project Office on: 94371 2421 (mil) or 01258 48 2421 (civ).

Lt Col Richard Quinlan prepares to climb the mast

Sgt MJ Holt, Sgt Gale, Maj Charlie Roberts, Maj Dave Tyce and SSgt Daz Cattle

FOR SALE

Car Badge, size 5" x 3"

Offers please, money to Southampton Branch Funds. Contact **Sidney Smith**
Tel: 02392 466351

FUTURE SPORTING ACTIVITES

Month	Sport	Versus	Venue
Aug 11	Golf	REME	Blackmoor
Aug 16	Golf	ACC	Aldershot
Aug 23	Golf	RE	Hankley
Nov 14	Royal Signals Championships	Swimming & Water Polo	Colerne
Nov 22-23	Inter Corps Championships	Swimming & Water Polo	Aldershot
Nov 20-30	Ski Training Camps - Alpine, Snowboarding & Nordic		Austria
Dec 1-14	Royal Signals Championships	Alpine & Snowboarding	Austria
Dec 19-22	Royal SIgnals Championships	Nordic Skiing	Austria

HONOURS AND AWARDS

We congratulate the following Royal Signals personnel who received Honours in the Queen's Birthday Honours List:

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

Lt Col AT Evans LIAG
Lt Col AP Ferris MBE HQ ARRC

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

Captain SC Keilty 101 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO1 SA Robinson HQ DCCIS
SSgt SJ Roberts 14 Sig Regt

Queen's Volunteer Reserves Medal (QVRM)

Lt Col HJ Robertson TD

ROYAL SIGNALS PIPES AND DRUMS

Senior Pipe Major **WO2(SSM) G Rowan**
Corps Pipe Major **SSgt(PM) J Taylor**
Secretary **Col (Retd) T Moncur**

Since the last edition of *The Wire* the Pipes and Drums has been keeping itself busy with many individual performances around the world at parades, funerals, mess dinners and a recent pipe band performance with the Band of the Royal Signals and the TA Northern Band at the Poole Arts Festival, which took place at the Lighthouse Theatre in Poole to a packed house. Congratulations to **Cpl Glenn Macdonald** from 7 Sig Regt, who recently came a very creditable 3rd in the march, strathspey and reel at the German national piping championships.

COLUMBIA

PM Taylor recently jetted off round the world (again!) and had the unique honour of teaching the Columbian Navy pipes and drums for 2 weeks at the Columbian Naval College in Cartagena naval base where the temperature was thirty five degrees! **PM Taylor** was there on behalf of the British Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming. The association between the Bagpipe School and the Columbian Navy goes back about 4 years and originated from a request from the British Defence Attaché in Bogota.

The Columbian Navy's first ever Admiral was **Captain Binney**, ex RN, who was a Scot and introduced the bagpipes to Columbia. The Columbian Navy pipes and drums number 15 pipers in total of varying standards and **PM Taylor's** task was to give them trg and tuition to prepare them for their president, **HE Alvaro Uribe**.
'Scotland the Brave' and 'Amazing Grace' South American style were the order of the day with **PM Taylor** also teaching pipe band drill, with a mixture of British Army pipe band and Columbian Navy drill.

The pipes and drums are now preparing themselves for the Royal Signals Association (RSA) parade in June followed hotly by a 2 week trip to the NATO CIS School in Latina, Italy. More to follow in the next *Wire*.

Pipe Major Taylor providing tuition to the Columbian Navy's Pipe Band

ATTENTION PIPERS AND DRUMMERS

Do you play the bagpipes or the drums?
Would you like to play the bagpipes or the drums?
The Royal Signals Pipes and Drums are always recruiting from within the Regular and TA Units. All tuition is free and all equipment is provided. Regular pipe band events are the Poole Arts Festival in May, RSA parade in June and an annual two week camp abroad.

For more information contact:

WO2(SSM) Rowan
4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, 11 Sig Regt on Blandford Military
94371 2501 (01258 482501)

THE Wire

October 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE wire

October 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Brigadier Nigel Wood

As many of you will know, **Gen Tony Boyle** handed over the Chairmanship of the Association to me at the beginning of July and I would like to start by thanking him for the huge amount of time and effort he has devoted to the Association throughout his Chairmanship. This is not the first time he has "handed a baton" to me; as you may remember I took over the reins as Signal Officer in Chief from him in the mid-1990s. I was sorry not to have been able to be at this year's Blandford Reunion to pay tribute to him then.

For those who may not know me, I was commissioned into the Corps at the end of 1963. My service included a couple of tours with Special Forces and much time in Germany, ending up in command of 7 Signal Regiment when it converted from Bruin to Ptarmigan. In between times, I had a tour in Bahrain with the RAF as the airfield troop commander and a tour in Nigeria as an instructor at their staff college. The latter years of my service seemed to revolve around the MOD, but the last 3 years were perhaps the most rewarding of all, when I had the privilege to visit so many units our Corps as well as meet affiliated overseas Corps as Signal Officer in Chief.

On retiring 8 years ago, I took up my present employment as Chief Executive (Secretary) of what is now the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Yorkshire and the Humber (the old TAVRA). For those who don't know, RFCAs deal with infrastructure support for the Reserves and Cadets of all 3 Services. Most of our work is in property management, mainly TA Centres and Cadet huts and training centres, but we are also involved in recruit marketing and publicity for the TA, and in advising employers of Reserve Forces personnel. It's a thoroughly satisfying job, but it is very time consuming. I will be continuing in the job for the immediate future, but hopefully it will not prevent me from undertaking my commitments with the RSA.

We are living in very turbulent, not to say dangerous, times. Far from life becoming more peaceful at the end of the Cold War, the Armed Forces now find themselves ever more committed and stretched. This has a direct impact not only on serving members of the Corps and their families, but also on the whole of the retired Corps, particularly those who have recently retired. The value of the Royal Signals Association as an organisation to support serving and retired members of the Corps and their families is as great now as ever it has been. It is my intention to continue with the excellent initiatives that **Gen Tony** has begun over the last few years to strengthen the links between the serving and retired members of the Corps. I would like to see a situation where every member of the Corps sees the value of the Association and wants to make his or her own contribution. In particular, I will be emphasising the importance of the officers of the Corps, serving and retired, taking their full part in this.

Naturally as Chairman, I wish to get around to see as many Branches as possible and I hope that **Wendy** and I will have as much stamina as **Tony** and **Ann Boyle** have shown over these last years in their many visits throughout the country. I know that the Association is most grateful to both of them for the amount of time they have devoted to this. I feel very privileged to take over the Chairmanship of the Association and I look forward to meeting as many of you in the Branches as I can, although it may take some little while to get everywhere.

RSA REUNION WEEKEND

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Established in 1920

The Wire

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http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/thewire/

Subscribers
All enquiries regarding subscriptions and despatch of *The Wire* should be made to: 01258 482087 or 94371 2087 (mil) Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

EDITORIAL

It is with real sadness that we have to record the tragic death of **LCpl Jonathan Hetherington** who was killed while fighting rebels during an assault on his platoon house in Musa Qaleh in northern Helmand province on 27 August. Our thoughts and condolences go to his family and friends at this time.

I am pleased to say that this edition includes well written reports from units on the diversity of current operations and preparatory training. I also congratulate everyone on the quality of the pictures this month. Our principle rule is that if we get a high quality photograph, then we will do our very best to print it.

Looking ahead, 2007 is the Anniversary of the Falklands Islands campaign. It is intended to mark this with a feature article in *The Wire* and to orientate the RSA Weekend towards marking that anniversary. The aim is to encourage Falklands veterans to attend. There will be more in the December edition but please make a diary note now.

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FRONT COVER

Op TELIC – the new painting commissioned by the Corps. Painted by **Mr JHL Beattie** (www.jhlb.co.uk), it won 2 prizes at the Armed Forces Art Society Exhibition.

BACK COVER

The Baghdad Signal Troop of 206 Signal Squadron

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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MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, AUGUST 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col AP Bristow	EC CCII
Col TW Canham	BDS(W) Comd Control Comms
Lt Col GR Norton	HQ ARRC
Maj B Alderson	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Maj NA Beecher	HQ ARRC
Maj GE Bennett	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Maj IA Blower	21 Sig Regt(AS)
Maj J Caesar	HQ ARRC
Maj RJ Carter	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Maj AM Churchill	HQ LWCTG (G)
Maj AJ Clewlow	RSS
Maj SO Cole	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Maj MC Cornell	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Maj NB Cullen	HQ SOinC(A)
Maj TJ Downes	HQ 19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Maj RJG Edwards	BOWTAG (GE)
Maj PR Flavell	3(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj DC Gaul	J6 Div PJHQ (UK)
Maj A Greenfield	HQ ARRC
Maj PJ Hale	DCBM(A) Prog Branch
Maj JG Hill	HQ ARRC
Maj JAG Langley	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Maj RJ Lovett	DSTL Land Systems
Maj AG Lucas	DCI (A)
Maj GJH Maloney	CSDC Sys Dev(C) HQ SOinC(A)
Maj RA Mulholland	AC CIS C-E MDG
Maj AJ Parfitt	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (262)
Maj AE Percival	CBM J6 Ops
Maj LS Pilling	DCSA Operations Support
Maj MP Purves	SANGCOM
Maj PN Randell	DEC (SP)
Maj IG Rodger	G6 HQ Land
Maj CI Russell	DSTL Land Systems
Maj JJ Smith	33 Sig Regt(V)
Maj PR Smith	G6 HQ Land
Maj RJB Spencer	BATCIS IPT 1
Maj P Stephenson	HQ 5 Div
Maj CR Sutherland	2 Sig Regt
Maj JE Toze	10 Sig Regt (251 Sig Sqn)
Maj LC Westerman	EC CCII
Maj P Whitehouse	7 Sig Regt
Maj SJ Whytock	2 Sig Regt
Maj GW Wilson	EC CCII
Maj AS Wilson	EC CCII
Maj D Wright	DCSA, DCTO IA DCOA
Maj GO Yeomans MBE	CAST (S)
A/Maj MP Boyle	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/Maj PA Rose	CAST (N)
Capt I Ahsan	39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Capt RH Angove	HQ 1 MI Bde
Capt AC Aylward	Army Information Services
Capt ND Baker	7 Sig Regt
Capt LJ Brererton-Martin	G6 HQ Land
Capt TM Brown	HQ 2 Sig Bde
Capt PJ Brunton	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt EA Byfield	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt AR Campbell	PJHQ (UK)
Capt SF Coeshott	NCSA HQ
Capt RJ Craig	JSSU (CH)
Capt IN Gordon	RHQ 10 Sig Regt
Capt KJ Grice	10 Sig Regt
Capt D Gurung	RSS
Capt JKR Hawkins	S Troop HQ SOinC(A)
Capt MS Hele	OCE HQ Land
Capt SE Irwin	CSDC YS Dev B
Capt PD Jones	14 Sig Regt(EW)
Capt TE Kane	RSS
Capt JN Mayne	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt EL McLellan	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt DR Orr	HQ 1 Sig Bde
Capt AJ Parkinson	38 Sig Regt(V)
Capt SE Pittaway	RSS
Capt LN Rickman	RSS
Capt A Scott	DISCSU HQ
Capt MC Sideras	DCSA
Capt DP Spencer	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (261)
Capt AD Stannard	Operations - Henlow
Capt JR Stillie	19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Regt (209)
Capt EM Swift	HQ 3(UK) Div
Capt JVB Thomson	RSS
Capt MJ Wong	30 Sig Regt
Capt A Woodley	HQ SOinC(A)
Lt AP Eros	RSS
Lt SL Green	JSSU Cyprus
Lt AD Rea	RSS
Lt AK Reid	10 Sig Regt - L Troop
Lt IJ Scaife	ATR Lichfield
Lt TW Skinner	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt RL Clayton	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2Lt PR Crawley	22 Sig Regt
2Lt CP Goslin	14 Sig Regt (EW)
2Lt JA Harryman	30 Sig Regt
2Lt AJ Jankiewicz	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (262)
2Lt PJ King	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
2Lt AF MacDonald	16 Sig Regt
2Lt SJ Rice	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
2Lt MJ Tremelling	21 Sig Regt (AS)
2Lt TE Turtle	14 Sig Regt (EW) 224 Sig Sqn
2Lt SR Wallis	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt

OFFICERS, SEPTEMBER 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col DM Steele MBE	HQ Beaconsfield Station
Lt Col MG Billingham	JSC and Staff College
Col DAH Jones	HQ DFTS
Lt Col IAJ Condie	LSP Oman
Lt Col IN Hunter	JSC and Staff College
Lt Col JRE Janes	LAIPT
Lt Col NJ Makepeace	JSC and Staff College
Maj TJS Allen	RMCS Courses DA
Maj JR Anderson	30 Sig Regt (250 Sig Sqn)
Maj GD Anderson	HQ Land CBM/G6
Maj MR Bever	COS HQ SOinC(A)
Maj DJM Bizley	JSC and Staff College
Maj PJ Day	JSC and Staff College
Maj ST Gillespie	SANGCOM
Maj NJ Hammett	NATO Comms School Latina
Maj JHN Harrington	NATO C3 Agency, Hague Det
Maj GB Ingram	G6 HQ Land
Maj MN Johnston	Theatre and Info Comms IPT
Maj SR Mannings	JES IPT
Maj MC Milne	18 (UKSF) Sig Regt
Maj DJ O'Brien	MOD A Block
Maj MJ Rayner	Directorate Manning (Army)
Maj RWS Scurfield	D SCS (Prog)(Ops)
Maj AR Urwin	MIS HQ ATRA
Maj RJ Watts	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (228)
Maj MG Webb	SP CISR IPT
Maj WDJ Wilson	RMCS Courses DA
Maj KG Wilson	DCSA DST Strat Change
Maj DA Wright	22 Sig Regt
A/Maj RN Byfield	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj PE Connor	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj PA Cutforth	HQ SOinC(A)
A/Maj RL Francis	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj FJ Reid	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj SJF Ing	RMCS Courses DA
A/Maj JR Knight	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj JA Lyons	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj MP Parke	JSC and Staff College
A/Maj Y Rana	RSS
Capt KA Barker	JSC and Staff College
Capt SA Bason	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt PM Carpenter	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (261)
Capt CP Coleman	JSC and Staff College
Capt LJ Courage	1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC)(V)
Capt DW Craig	22 Sig Regt
Capt JW Dagless	JSC and Staff College
Capt MW Davis	DDefSy
Capt EC Dickson	JSC and Staff College
Capt OR Dinnis	RSS
Capt AM Duncan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Capt DP Farragher	OC Wing
Capt SJW Gunson	RSS
Capt SCD Hargreaves	JSC and Staff College
Capt N Hendry	SRR
Capt G Irwin	JSC and Staff College
Capt BK Jeffery	30 Sig Regt
Capt M Jones	35 Sig Regt (V)
Capt CSD Kamara	10 Sig Regt (251 Sig Sqn)
Capt SJ Macpherson	HQ NI
Capt CG McGinley	JCUSA (AE)
Capt MJ Morton	JSC and Staff College
Capt MR Neighbour	ATR Lichfield
Capt LN Rickman	RSS
Capt SJ Short	JSC and Staff College
Capt MA Solomons	DPA Abbey Wood
Capt DJ Watson	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt RA Wilson	JSC and Staff College
Capt M Worden	JSC and Staff College
Capt AS Youngman	2 Sig Bde
Lt RJ Agnew	1 WFR
Lt JC Long	RMCS Courses DA
Lt JPS McDonagh	ATR Lichfield
Lt HJJ Oliver	1 Royal Anglian
Lt DP Palmer	RSS

WO'S AND SNCO'S AUGUST 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 RD MPE Angove	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO 1 Supvr IS AG Ellis	JSSU (Ch)
A/WO 1 Supvr IS IK Jones	30 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD SK Legg	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
WO 2 RD A Morris	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
WO 2 RD S Page	7 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD JR Raybould	33 Sig Regt (V)
WO 2 AE Buckle	RAF Aldergrove
A/WO 2 Supvr IS MD Buffery	251 Sig Sqn
A/WO 2 Supvr IS AF Russell	7 Sig Regt
A/WO 2 AJ Finn	ATR Litchfield
SSgt RD ACR Torrington	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt MD Clayton-Batty	7 Sig Regt
SSgt SL Fielding	3 Bn REME
SSgt JA Garner	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt JP Gronn	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (228)
SSgt SA Hoskins	RMAS
SSgt PD Hounsell	215 Sig Sqn
SSgt MC Laughton	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt KA McIntosh	7 Sig Regt
SSgt PS Mullen	RSS
SSgt CJ Mulligan	21 Sig Reg (AS)
SSgt A Nuttall	14 Sig Regt (EW)
SSgt W Scarrott	2 Sig Regt
A/SSgt PRS Carrington	NCSA HQ (Shape)
A/SSgt J Duncan	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/SSgt S McKie	39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt BJC Atkin	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt MC Beckett	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (228)
Sgt PR Bone	JSSU Cyprus
Sgt C Bowman	2 Sig Regt
Sgt J Brooks	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt J Cunningham	16 Sig Regt
Sgt LS Davis	RSS
Sgt DG Dix	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt PR Ensor	London ART
Sgt SA Fitzgerald	ATR Litchfield
Sgt NS Fraser	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209)
Sgt DS Ions	37 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt ID John	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt KM Kiff	DCSA Blandford
Sgt CG Langford	94 (BY) Sig Sqn (V)
Sgt GS Lawson	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt P McKenna	39 Regt RA
Sgt CA McMullen	39 Regt RA
Sgt SJ Mesmer	243 Sig Sqn
Sgt PR Newell	35 Sig Regt(V)
Sgt MA Partington	RSS
Sgt DL Smith	HQ SOinC(A)
Sgt PR Walton	CIS Sector Mons
Sgt AW Ward	DCTO IA E3A
Sgt G Waring	15 Sig Regt
Sgt IJ Wells	2 Sig Regt
Sgt M Wilcock	40 Sig Regt(V)
Sgt GP Wilman	16 Sig Regt
Sgt SR Yeomans	15 Sig Regt
A/Sgt CA Clarke	Astor Sqn
A/Sgt D Parry	30 Sig Regt

WO'S AND SNCO'S SEPTEMBER 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO 2 RD DP Collins	22 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD M McNeill	16 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD PA Reed	22 Sig Regt
WO 2 Supvr IS WL Fagan	HQ SOinC(A)
A/WO 2 RD AP Ingham	22 Sig Regt
SSgt FofS DB Cattle	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
SSgt FofS DB Graham	ARRC Sp Bn
SSgt JW Brady	CIS Brunssum Sector
SSgt AJ Carnegie	CIS Sector Mons
SSgt G Cavanagh	34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V)
SSgt AD Dobson	RSS
SSgt N Francis	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt J Giddens	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt AD Gleadall	CIS Brunssum Sector
SSgt PD Green	DDefSy
SSgt MS Jones	RSS
SSgt LA Moore	Bowman SST (G)
SSgt P Oulton	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
SSgt S Pearson	RSS
SSgt JW Powell	OCE HQ Land
SSgt SJ Robinson	30 Sig Regt
SSgt JL Sowden	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
SSgt G Tiplady	BATUS
SSgt A Tye	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (202)
SSgt JL White	DCSA (G)
SSgt SJ Williamson	7 Sig Regt
A/SSgt KJ Choules	Bowtag (GE)
A/SSgt MA Kenning	RSS
A/SSgt JD Leishman	Bowtag (N)
A/SSgt J Richardson	39 Sig Regt (V)
A/SSgt D Sawyers	16 Sig Regt
Sgt NJ Anderson	RSS
Sgt JP Attwell	RSS
Sgt J Barber	RSS
Sgt DP Bentham	RSS
Sgt C Bradshaw	Sp Wpns School
Sgt M Collins	35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt AJ Connor	CIS Sector Mons

Sgt PA Creeley	Bowman SST (G)
Sgt NC De La Rosa	RSS
Sgt BJ Doyle	RSS
Sgt R Dryden	RSS
Sgt PE Farrington	RSS
Sgt J Faulkner	RSS
Sgt PE Fraser	RSS
Sgt SC Hall	TAC CIS SST
Sgt RA Harris	BATUS
Sgt P Harris	DSDC Ashchurch
Sgt SJ Hogan	RSS
Sgt SC Hogg	15 Sig Regt
Sgt AS Jackson	RSS
Sgt JA Kemp	2 Sig Regt
Sgt S Kerr	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt JK Laye	RSS
Sgt CA Leader	JSSU Cyprus
Sgt NTG Lean	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt SJ Livesey	2 Sig Regt
Sgt AJ Livsey	RSS
Sgt RM Lyon	628 Sig Tp
Sgt GM McArthur	RSS
Sgt LV McMahon	RSS
Sgt CM Moore	37 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt D Morgan	15 Sig Regt
Sgt LM Norman	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt AJ O'Neill	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt GJ Phillips	15 Sig Regt
Sgt DP Rycroft	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt SJ Sharman	RSS
Sgt SJ Southan	RSS
Sgt ND Tarry	RSS
Sgt DJ Taylor	RSS
Sgt SJ Templeton	RSS
Sgt GP Tierney	4 Regt RA
Sgt TM White	RSS
Sgt A Wilkie	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt DA Wood	RSS
A/Sgt MC Bailey	2 Sig Regt
A/Sgt MJ Bentley	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
A/Sgt PF Bungay	20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200)
A/Sgt D Hallway	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (261)
A/Sgt DP Kirby	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (228)
A/Sgt AJ McKenna	JSSU (Ch)

RETIREMENTS

AUGUST 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Campbell - Maj MJ Campbell	07 Aug 06
Docherty - Capt JWA Docherty	19 Aug 06
Lenthall - Maj GH Lenthall	07 Aug 06

SEPTEMBER 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Doherty - Maj PJ Doherty MBE	08 Sep 06
Fish - Capt LA Fish	01 Sep 06
Hryhoruk - Lt Col PJ Hryhoruk	21 Sep 06
Smith - Maj M Smith MBE	30 Sep 06
Sulivan - Maj AM Sulivan	01 Sep 06
Urwin - Maj AR Urwin	30 Sep 06
Woolaston - Maj AGA Woolaston	28 Sep 06

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

The White Helmets

OC	**Lt Col RVJ Brannigan**
Team Capt	**Capt RA Moody**
Team Sgt	**Sgt AS Butterfield**

THE LONGEST ROAD TRIP - *by Sig Chris Sowiak*

With plenty of shows under our belts, the first year riders are beginning to feel like veterans in the arena. As July closed, we were all aware of the daunting road trip ahead of us that would take us to the furthest reaches of the British Isles. We had already performed shows in Devon, Nuneaton, Wolverhampton, Aldershot and York, and so it was with trepidation that we departed on our journey to Inverness.

We were fortunate to be making a short stop at Shrivenham to perform at the graduation ceremony for the Defence College of Management and Technology, but there is no rest for the wicked, so we were straight back on the road again on our way to Scotland. We were fortunate enough to be accommodated at the Officers' Mess at RAF Woodvale on the night of the 21st, and we were kindly hosted by the members of Liverpool University Air Sqn who were celebrating some new solo pilots.

On the morning of 22 July, we continued our journey to Inverness, and arrived at Cameron Barracks in the early evening.

Our first show was at the Inverness Highland Games the next day. After a day watching caber tossing and enjoying haggis, the team were in the mood to perform and pleased to see a crowd of over 10,000 people. The pressure must have got to **LCpl Al Huish** and he tried to incorporate the car jump ramp into the Double Jimmy, causing him to crash.

Fortunately for him, he came out with only bumps and bruises, however, **Sig Paul Reffin** who was stood on his back came off worse for wear. A quick visit from St John's Ambulance and he was off to Inverness hospital, where he would spend the rest of the trip recovering from a broken foot. The rest of the show went fine, with the other members of the team filling in for the injured **Sig Reffin**.

We were fortunate to be staying in Inverness for the best part of a week performing at the Inverness Tattoo, where we performed at 2100hrs each night. The arena was a cricket pitch, much to the enjoyment of **Sgt Andy Butterfield** who has described every arena this season as a bowling green, when quite obviously, they were not!

The shows went well, and the crowds grew bigger every night as the word got around that the team were performing. We got a lot of sightseeing done in the daytime, including a few trips down to Loch Ness; no sightings of the Loch Ness Monster though, it seemed that Nessy was on holiday. Unfortunately the Scottish weather did not hold out all week, and the heavens opened a few hours before the last show, leaving a lot of locals and tourists waiting another year to see the White Helmets.

We departed the next day for a painstaking 14 hour journey down to DLO Kineton, in preparation for a show at the Silverstone Classics Day. The Silverstone arena was very difficult, as there was shale and gravel on the parts of the arena where the tricks turn.

The first third of the show was tough, and the Double Angel was the first to fall much to the displeasure of the riders **Sig Ian Greenhalgh** and **Sig Shea Dawson**. The Book Reading trick also fell, although we are not sure if the rider, **Sig Dave Kitchen** couldn't turn, or whether he was too busy smiling for his parents to take some photographs!

A big thanks to the Aston Martin Race Team who let us use their £580,000 DB9 race car for the car jump. Unfortunately, none of the team were allowed to drive the car in to the arena – I don't know why! That saw the end of the longest road trip, and everyone was relieved when we finally returned home late that night.

After a little down time back in barracks, we were back on the road. Our visit to the Burwarton Agricultural Show went without a hitch, and I even got to drive a £30,000 Subaru Impreza WRX STi for the car jump. We then moved to Hightown Barracks in Wrexham for the Wirral Show.

There was no cook house on camp, so **Cpl Gypo Hooper** and **Cpl Fozzie Forster** decided to have a team BBQ, and there was so much food that there was enough left over to have another BBQ the next day! The Wirral Show was excellent, and is well known as the largest free show in the North West.

We were loaned 2 cars by the local radio station, Buzz FM, and were fortunate enough to be introduced to **Tabby** from the X-Factor who posed with us for a few publicity photos. **Sig Mel Quinn** was chuffed to have met someone 'famous' and spent the rest of the day on the phone to her mum to tell her who she had just met.

We performed to the biggest crowds so far this season, and you couldn't see the ground due to the density of the public flocking in to watch the show.

Another brief trip back to Blandford and we were on the road again, back to Sennybridge in Wales for the United Counties Show. The show timetable was quite "flexible" so we ended up getting ready for a show only to be postponed by an hour. Never the less, the shows went well apart from the Ladder trick coming down whilst being ridden by **Cpl Forster**. Not being the sort of rider to drop tricks often, a small investigation ensued in to the reason behind the crash. Lo and behold, it was not the fault of the rider, but the fault of a damaged ladder.

We returned to camp that night and the Team had its first weekend off since the beginning of the show season, giving us plenty of time to rest and recuperate. The team would like to wish **Cpl Mal Cooper** and his wife the best of luck for the imminent birth of their child.

If you think you have what it takes to become a member of the White Helmets, and you like the idea of road trips and visits to Loch Ness, then contact us now and reserve your place on the next selection course being held November 2006. Details about the selection course can be found in SOinC(A) PD 204, held in every orderly room or from the HQ SOinC website.

If you have any questions, and prefer a friendly voice, you can call the office at any time on mil: 94371 2365 (civ: 01258 482365) to discuss a potential tour with The White Helmets.

ROYAL SIGNALS PIPES AND DRUMS

ROYAL SIGNALS PIPES AND DRUMS ANNUAL CAMP LATINA, ITALY 2006

Senior Pipe Major	**WO2(SSM) GM Rowan**
Corps Pipe Major	**SSgt(PM) J Taylor**
Secretary	**Col (Retd) T Moncur**

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Signals Pipes and Drums held their annual trg camp 2006 at the NATO CIS School in Latina Camp, Italy.

All the pipers and drummers arrived in Blandford in late June for RSA rehearsals and kicked off the annual camp with a parade at the Downlands School Fete on Blandford Camp. This was well received by the children of the school and this parade is now a regular event. It is used as a dress rehearsal for the tunes which are played at the RSA parade on the next day.

It was up bright and early to tune the pipes and beat the drums at our new home in 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, 11 Sig Regt who have kindly offered us the use of their classroom, in which to conduct our trg throughout the year.

The temperature on the RSA Parade was around 32 degrees (nice weather for highland number one dress!) and the parade involved us marching on the square in sp of the 11 Sig Regt march past in the morning and in the afternoon we marched on the square in a massed band with the Military Band and the Northern Band. This was very well received and it was commented that our massed band was a similar size to that of the Guards!

The flight to Naples went well after a short delay while the stewardess retrieved **Pipe Maj Taylor** from the duty free shop but after that they did a good job of quenching the thirsts of some very thirsty pipers. On landing, we found that the bass drum had literally rolled off the plane and had to be repaired as soon as we got to camp, good job the technicians within the band had their tools with them!

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

On our first morning in Italy we got off to a good start with our hosts, when **WO1(RSM) Kev Reid** asked us to play outside the NATO CIS School as a surprise for the American contingent, after a few minutes of "The Halls Of Montezuma" we found ourselves surrounded by a large crowd who seemed to enjoy our impromptu concert.

COCKTAIL PARTY

After a 3 hour drive we arrived in downtown Naples, only to find that the bus driver wanted to take a shortcut to the AFSOUTH Headquarters through some very narrow back streets in which our 45 seater coach would have been stuck, had we had one more coat of paint.

Once **Pipe Maj Rowan** had finished his shopping in the US Navy PX, we were ready to travel the short distance to the NATO Maritime Component Command HQ just outside Naples. The temperature was in the high thirties and to say that we were

The Pipes and Drums parade in Latina

sweating is an understatement, some of the ladies thought that **Sgt Rab Brannigan** on the bass drum had sprung a leak, as there was so much sweat coming off him. **Pipe Maj Davey Moir** surprised everyone by knowing some of the officers on the parade – everywhere we go he seems to know someone! The parade went smoothly and the Pipes and Drums were warmly congratulated by the Deputy Commander Allied Joint Force Command HQ Naples, **Air Marshal GA Miller CBE** RAF.

PIPES AND DRUMS PRESIDENT

During the annual camp, we were visited by our president, **Lt Col Fensom** whose day job is CO 11 Sig Regt and who has been hoodwinked with a few chanter lessons to be the pipes and drums president. **Col Fensom** visited us for 24 hours and in that short space managed to fit in a wine tasting at a local vineyard, a recce to a mountain top village that we were due to play at and a restaurant where he was able to meet all the members of the pipes and drums in a social setting. Here he could discuss some of the finer aspects of playing in hot climates over a glass or two of the local vino collapso.

SARAMENTO VILLAGE

The posters had been up for days and the locals had been talking about the "cornemuse et tamburi" (pipes and drums in Italian!) it was now time to take our music to the locals. We travelled into the beautiful mountains around Latina and were invited to play at a very spectacular mountain top village. The village had its own small square overlooking the escarpment and had not been touched for hundreds of years, indeed the locals looked like they hadn't received any visitors for much of that time. It is no understatement to say that some looked shocked to see a bunch of Highlanders making their way up the steep cobbled streets to the top.

The Pipes and Drums in Saramento

After some picture opportunities with the OIC of our annual camp, **WO1 Tony Ward**, we played for half an hour in the sweltering heat for the village and then presented the Mayoress with a Royal Signals Pipes and Drums plaque. Afterwards the village very kindly hosted us at one of their restaurants, where we were fed and watered whilst the World Cup was being played live on large screen inside the dining area. As a sign of support for the host nation all the pipers and drummers were wearing Italian football tops underneath their number one tunics, save **Pipe Maj Taylor** who was on the French side!

SWIMMING POOL

The NATO CIS School prides itself on very good relations with the local community and we were asked to play at the opening of the Latina swimming pool, which the school uses regularly. We found to our surprise that we were playing on live Italian television and felt very honoured that they should think us so important as to want to film us. Imagine our surprise when we found that they were not there to film us but a beauty pageant or was it a fashion show. Once again the local community were very generous and let us sample some of the local cuisine and fine wine that the area is so famous for.

LATINA TOWN PARADE WITH THE CARABINIERI

Our penultimate parade was to be in the town of Latina sharing the stage with the world famous band of the Carabinieri. We found ourselves marching a lap of the town square before coming to a halt on the steps of the town hall and playing to a packed house. Between each set of tunes, the Master of Ceremonies had to translate the names of the tunes into Italian with a short history on each tune. At the end of the evening we finished off with a double bill with ourselves and the Carabinieri band playing the European anthem, "Ode to Joy", then off to a restaurant (again) where we were hosted by the town council and the Carabinieri. Readers please note that all Carabinieri bandsmen are armed with loaded pistols when playing and when hosting pipe bands!

BEATING RETREAT AT LATINA CAMP

Our final parade in Italy was Beating Retreat, which was set in the evening and played in front of the residents of Latina Camp and was our way of saying farewell and thank you for being so royally hosted by **Lt Col Gus Colvill**, **WO1(RSM) Kev Reid** and **Sgt Jimmy Scott**. The weather was still as hot and humid as before and the uniforms were still as soaked in sweat, as we found ourselves on the square in front of the School. Then it was back to the Oasis Club for a buffet and to meet some of the personalities from the camp before packing our bags and making our way back to Naples airport and the flight home which was uneventful, apart from all the pipes and drums tpt passing through the Italian toll barriers and instead of collecting tickets, we managed to collect a couple of small fines. Back in UK, it didn't get any better as the coach which collected us from Gatwick airport broke down in Wimborne of all places and it was 3 hours before we were rescued at 0400hrs.

BLANDFORD GARRISON SUPPORT UNIT

QM	**Lt Col Wally Drain**
QM(T)	**Maj John Mackay**
RQMS(G)	**WO2 Mickey Yendell**
RQMS(T)	**WO2 Shaun Fardy**

In April of this year the previously separate halves of the QM dept came together to form one entity under Blandford Garrison Support Unit (BGSU). The dept now provides sp for the entire Garrison and has surely the largest customer base in the Corps.

Not satisfied with the usual G4 issues the dept has continued to extend its horizons; we managed to raise over £500 for Sport Relief, by organising a Sport Relief Mile on the Garrison. This event was hugely successful and well attended by all, from the children and Headmaster of Downlands School to one mad individual who decide to flick flack the whole mile! Many thanks to QM clerk **Miss Sarah Armstrong** and **WO2(RQMS) Mickey Yendell** for the organisation.

In May 2006, **WO2(RQMS) Yendell** was presented with a Garrison Commander's Certificate of Appreciation for all the sterling work he has done throughout the Garrison and the Corps. There can't be many people left in the Corps whom **Mickey** hasn't helped at one time or another and we are all very proud of his achievements. He is the focal point for events on the Garrison and there is hardly a committee or group of which he is not a member, giving help and advice and more importantly, resources, not to mention a huge amount of his own time. Well done and well deserved.

The civilian staff of the dept had the "once in a lifetime" opportunity to partake in an Armed Forces Familiarisation visit. These visits are organised by the Civil Service to provide an exciting day out for civilian staff whilst giving them an opportunity to get stuck in and view mil trg at first hand; the highlight of their trip was undoubtedly a Sea King flight from Yeovilton to South Wales and back, which was for most of our staff, a first. Thanks for this trip must go to **Mrs Jean Peck**, QM(T) clerk, who after years of perseverance managed to secure 12 places for our dept. We finally bade farewell to the QM(T), **Maj Pete Doherty**, who retired after 37 years service. He has made the long journey across the Garrison to BGSU! We wish him and his wife **Jackie** all the best in their new life. The new QM(T) made the equally long journey (the other way!) and we welcome **Maj John Mackay**, just in time for the Board of Officers and LSI! The new RQMS(T) **WO2 Shaun Fardy** also arrived from 30 Sig Regt and if he can spend enough time off the cricket field, we hope to get a few days work from him.

The civilians prepared to go airborne!

Finally, congratulations go to **Cpl Tracy Fitzpatrick** and **LCpl Sammy Samson** for their promotion to Sgt and Cpl respectively – a just reward for a full and active year, and proof that Blandford is just as good as any other unit for promotion, if you are prepared to put some hard work in that is! And we wish all the best to **LCpl Dave Garside** with his posting to the newly formed 22 Sig Regt, good luck counting chairs!

MT

MTO	**WO2 Billy Lilburn**
MTWO	**WO2 Tim Tatler**

July was one of the busiest months we've known. We welcomed **Cpl Carl Stewart** and said farewell to **Sig Pawsey**, who is starting civilian life as a coach driver, and **LCpl Amy Lewin**, who is changing cap badge to RADC. We wish them all the best in their new careers. We held a Garrison Road Safety Week and conducted 5 x C+E driving tests (all passes) as well as some recreational activities.

MT ready to go "off road"!

As his last task, **Sig Pawsey** organised a day's walking around Lulworth Cove and luckily we had great weather. The plan was to go for a 'relaxed' 5 mile walk. It actually turned out to be an 8 mile CFT! We took out as many of the mil and civilian staff as we could and **WO2 Tim Tatler's** dog 'Coco' came along too, providing great amusement for all when he chased a bull! A fun day was had by all rounded off with a meal and the odd beer or two!

Congratulations to **Sgt Kezza Brown** on another full season of Tug of War. After winning the 640kg Morrison Cup, the team have gone on improving with every competition. **Sgt Brown** is away representing both the Army and Combined Services and will be finishing the season by representing the Army in the World Championships in Holland. The Tp looks forward to welcoming him back – eventually!

On Friday 21 July, 4 members from the Dept went "off road" motor cycle trg with the Avon and Somerset Police Motorbike Training Unit, arranged by ex-police rider **Mr Geoff Case**, one of our civilian drivers. The trg was held at a farm near Cheddar Gorge covered with loads of challenging tracks. **Cpl Buck Rodgers** didn't waste any time, he was first out on a lovely clean bike, but after a quick 10 min blast it didn't look quite so good. The instructors didn't look quite so happy knowing it would be their job to clean them down.

Next to go was **WO2 Tim Tatler**, who went out on the other clean bike and also found the only puddle around and bought the bike back dripping with mud. Then **LCpl Amy Lewin**, the shortest member of the MT, had her first go. Not being able to touch the ground, the police had to hold the bike up and kick start it for her. **Amy** revved up and was off. Only when she had gone did we discuss how she would stop.

In the end they just had to catch her! Another great day and the only injury was to **LCpl Lewin** - yes, she still had a few problems stopping!

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

DEFENCE COMMUNICATION SERVICES AGENCY

SUPPORTING WORLDWIDE OPERATIONS - BATTLESPACE SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT - *by WO2(YofS) Martin Murray*

I work in the DCSA's Defence Spectrum Centre (DSC) in Blandford and I regularly deploy on ops around the world. My role is to provide operational Battlespace Spectrum Management (BSM) sp to UK forces around the world. I deployed in November last year to Kandahar, Afghanistan with HQ Preliminary Ops, comprising a core of Joint Force HQ Staff, supported by augmentees. Our role was to inform the planning process and create the conditions to enable the successful deployment of the UK Task Force to Helmand Province in Afghanistan. In addition to my role as the BSM, I also assumed the additional responsibilities for co-ordinating the Electronic Countermeasures (Force Protection) (ECM (FP)) measures. These were required to ensure UK Forces would be adequately protected against the increasing threat of radio controlled improvised explosive devices. The ability to closely coordinate ECM (FP) requirements with BSM activities proved very effective. The lessons identified will assist in developing and improving co-ordination between the various spectrum stakeholders in the future.

My BSM activities included co-ordination with the in-theatre spectrum management authorities (Coalition, NATO and civilian) to ensure effective frequency clearance procedures were implemented for UK Forces. I also created a BSM plan that was issued to all units earmarked for deployment. This informed them of the UK Force spectrum management policy as well as providing them with information on the various related policies and procedures required.

In addition to sp for main units, such as 16 Air Asslt Bde and the Joint Helicopter Force-Afghanistan (JFH-A), spectrum was also cleared for capabilities such as the Desert Hawk Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV) and British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS).

I had a brief respite from Afghanistan at the end of January, when I redeployed to Iraq in support of Op TELIC. There I conducted monitoring and analysis of the electromagnetic environment in the HQ Multi-National Division (South East) (MND(SE)) area of ops. This was to establish if recent problems with the Phoenix UAV system were attributable to RF interference. This proved to be a very interesting and rewarding task, which raised the visibility of BSM further.

In early March 2006, elements of 16 Sig Regt deployed to Kandahar as the theatre Joint Network Centre (Joint NETCEN). This allowed me to hand over responsibility for UK frequency management in the Regional Command (South) area of ops. This achieved, I redeployed again, this time to Kabul to work in the Theatre Frequency Management Cell (TFMC) in support of HQ International Security Assistance Force (HQ ISAF). This allowed me to ensure effective and robust BSM procedures were in place before handing over to my colleague, **Flt Sgt Alan Wyers** (also from the DSC) who began a 9 month tour providing BSM support to HQ ARRC in the TFMC. All in all, this is a busy time for the DSC. Our profile continues to grow and as the awareness of the importance of BSM in supporting effective Battlespace Management (BM) continues to increase, so too does our Op, ex and trg remit. In May, we provided simultaneous BSM support to Ex JOINT VENTURE 2006 in South Cerney, Ex PHOENIX ENDEAVOUR in Germany as well as Op HERRICK. More information can be found on the Defence Intranet at: http://www.dcsaportal.dii.r.mil.uk/asps/organisation/dcto/ia/tr/dsc.

WO2(YofS) Murray monitoring the spectrum on TV Hill, Kabul

NEWS OF TRAINING

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD (BATUS)

SO2 CIS	**Maj Owen Finnie**
YofS	**WO2(YofS) Dave Rogers**
BSM	**SSgt Pete Watson**
Ops SNCO	**Sgt Andy Conley**

- by WO2 (YofS) Dave Rogers

Here in BATUS, the 1 Staffs BG are nearing completion of Ex MEDICINE MAN 3. They have completed all key trg events. 9 days of Special to Arm 'live firing' exs, 4 days of combined trg known as Ex TRACTABLE, 9 days of TES trg prior to the arrival of the HQ staff from 12 Bde for the finale, Ex TOTALISE. This month sees **WO1(YofS) Craig Scott** and his wife **Jane** depart for sunny Blandford and another Bowman job on promotion to WO1 – congratulations. We welcome **WO2(YofS) Dave Rogers**, who now becomes 'call sign 84', as he arrives with his wife **Christine** and children **Lauren** and **Aaron**. The Permanent Staff here is currently augmented by some 26 Temporary Staff who for this Ex are mainly from 3 Div Sig Regt and 228 Sig Sqn. **Sgt Andy Conley** is the Ops Room SNCO and under him sit 12 soldiers, broken down into 3 shifts, who are charged with manning the Ops rooms both at range control and at EXCON, 24 hours a day throughout the whole of each Ex. **SSgt Pete Watson** is the resident Bowman System Manager and is responsible for overseeing the 2 RRB crews, which totals 4 soldiers as well as the 2 Bowman Systems Managers and 2 Application Specialists. **SSgt Watson** also co-ordinates and liaises with the Bowman System Sp Team, to ensure systemic Bowman problems are reported correctly. He provides all users of Bowman with second and third line support – no mean feat.

The remainder of the ex season up until mid November 06 is very busy. Ex MEDICINE MAN 4 in support of 1 Mech Bde (2 R Welsh BG) takes up all of August. A large turn around of troops sees September written off with trg to the OPFOR and new Temporary Staff. Ex PRAIRIE BRAVE 2 ends in mid October. Finally, de-activation which runs the first 2 weeks of November completes the Ex Season and a return to normal office hours to plan for 2007. There is still a little room for physical activities between exs however, and **WO2(YofS)Dave Rogers** and **Sgt Conley** entered a sprint triathlon competition in Calgary as novices. They both did exceptionally well coming in the top half of a competitive field:

Dave Rogers	28th overall and 5th in Age Group
Andy Conley	43rd overall and 8th in Age Group

- by SSgt Watson:

In the middle of May, a team of 7 soldiers from 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn, 1 Mech Bde Sig Sqn and 3 Div Sig Regt deployed to BATUS and joined 2 Royal Signals Temporary Staff at very short notice to assist with Bowman work on the entire BATUS veh fleet. Over 17 long days the team identified and rectified Bowman faults and initialised platforms ready for the ex season.

It was identified that there were outstanding Bowman issues from the previous season, hence the need for the deployment. Their hard work has ensured that this year's preparation for trg is on track. Despite working up to 14 hour days, the team still found time to sample the social life in downtown Medicine Hat. The highlight of their visit was a couple of days in the Rockies after the work was complete, a well deserved break. The team gained extensive Bowman experience working on all types of BG vehs and they return to their Units very confident with Bowman eqpt.

- by Cpl Qualtrough

The primary role of the Temporary Staff in the Ops room is the control of safe movement around the ex templates. This involves the continuous route clearance of up to 600 vehs in any one day. No mean feat by any standard, particularly when the area is 1600km square and on the busiest day 1500km is full of live firing. Just one error in a clearance and you could have a Land Rover coming face to face with a Challenger 2 looking for a target! On a busy day, everyone in the Ops room is fully focused; route clearances could be checked by up to 3 people at a time so as not to have any errors. The shift supervisors have another specific job and that is the control of any CASEVAC. This involves liaison between the helicopter, med centre, doctor and call sign with the casualty. This ensures the casualty gets the treatment needed in the shortest possible time.

It isn't all work, when we're able to get a day off or a stand-down; you can take a trip to Calgary, just over 2 hrs drive away. There are some cheap hotels to stay in, and you can have a great day out. All in all, BATUS has a lot to offer even for the hard working Temporary Staff. Work wise your operator skills will be honed, and your social skills will be pushed to the limit. That leaves just one more thing to say, never let your mother get the number for BFBS, as **LCpl 'JJ' Cascarina** found out when she put his pass-off tune on the radio for him, with a nice little dedication.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1 (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col DG Robson**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) R McGachy**

It has been another busy period for the Regt, with many key personnel moving on.

The summer months brought lots of rain and a little shine, but more importantly, the opportunity to get a large percentage of the Regt away to do some AT in Bavaria before the ex period in September.

HQ SQN

OC	**Maj GJ Stoker MBE**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Midgley**

EX PREMIER PROVIDER

Regt MT deployed on Ex PREMIER PROVIDER in June for the first time in 18 months to practise DPs and Rolling Replens (our real-time role). The move almost went well with all convoys managing to read the route card. The only fly in the ointment was the OC Sqn and MTO breaking their Land Rovers, before we even got out of the gate! As soon as we reached our location, dept trg started in order to teach the role of the Regt MT to the new lads. The move to the second location brought up a few surprises, the biggest to **Sgt Hillman**, who managed to lead his packet to a unique location that what was not on the route card.

The weather throughout was hot and humid and proved that horseflies are harder than soldiers. It was unusual to see horseflies with helmets and webbing on! However, all personnel who took part managed to survive the attacks on them from these insects and learned new skills and improved old ones. It certainly proved a great "last outing" for **Sgt Taff Maher**, who leaves us soon on promotion to SSgt and an exciting welcome to **Sgt Murphy**.

Endex proved more reliable, with all packets reaching Herford with no difficulty! Once all vehs were parked up on the square, the families of the Regt MT were invited to see their partners and dads in their various work roles. All concerned managed to endure the inevitable ex stories well.

TM TROOP - *by Cpl Feast*.

The Tp remained high spirited, even during the recent RSIT visit, where **Maj Plumb** and his infamous team conceded that the RSIT inspection was the best in over 6 years – an outstanding achievement that should surely see the Regt FofS, **WO1(FofS) Tosh Leyland** immediately promoted to Maj Gen. Then to make things worse for the RSIT boys, who were self declared Kegel Bowl champions, they were beaten by a scratch team that included **LCpl Finners Findlay** – the Tp's accident prone mascot.

The remainder of the Tp are busy doing what they are good at; **Sgt Jim Liddell** is currently busy writing more databases, **Sgt Dan Stein** is preparing for his forthcoming FI tour, **Sig May** is off to Bulgaria and **LCpl Sawyer** is engaged in convincing the Regt FofS that University and the law of hippies is the way forward.

The Tp would like to welcome the following new arrivals: **Sigs Kudiersky** and **Platt.** Unfortunately, we must say goodbye to some outstanding individuals: **SSgt Brady** and his good wife **Jacqeline**, **Sgt Collins** and **Cpl Feast.**

EAGLE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Potter**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt L Francis**

KAPE TOUR 06

The Regt provided 4 soldiers to assist the Royal School of Signals with the annual KAPE Tour recruiting drive in Scotland. **Cpl Skene** and **Sigs McCluskie**, **Mechan** and **Robertson** were the willing volunteers with the promise of a trip home and copious amounts of Tenants!

The 4 travelled to Blandford to meet up with the rest of the recruiting team and from there began the epic first leg of the journey north to Inverness. The half way stopover was at the Scotch Corner Hotel, where we swiftly headed for the hotel's swimming pool and Jacuzzi to ease the aches and pains of the drive.

Once we arrived in the surprisingly warm and sunny climes of Inverness, we saw that almost every branch of the Army was represented and the RAF had also made a appearance. We set up our stand and then had the opportunity to go down town to sample the delights of the North and mentally prepare for the onslaught of screaming kids the next day!

Over the following days and weeks we moved on to Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow. A brilliant if somewhat expensive time was had by all, recruiting many potential young Sigs into the Corps.

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj L Keily**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) B Sheard**

HAWK TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt A Macintyre**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P Robinson**

Hawk Tp would like to welcome the following new members and their families to Herford. I'm sure they will enjoy life at 1 Div to the full; **Cpl Steve Hudspeth**, from 7 Sig Regt, **Sigs Bradbury** and **Fyfe**, from 11 Sig Regt, **Sig Jenna Williams** from the RSMPT and not forgetting **LCpl Anna Morgans**, back from her time away on an Int Corps course – all 1 day of it!

With Battle Camp and all the hard prep for RSIT out of the way and a good report gained for the Sqn, Hawk Tp have taken the opportunity to make the most of the glorious weather in BFG by taking the odd afternoon away from the garages. First was a trip to the outdoor Go-Kart course. This did nothing for the argument that men are better drivers than women. **Sig Jenna Williams** was the fastest overall on the day and **Sig Nav Navuso** and **Sig Graham Rai** were the slowest by far. Such was their expertise that **Sig Rai** didn't even make it out of the pits before crashing into the cones, and then started looking for reverse gear - on a Go-Kart? **Sig Navuso** did clock up a new course record though; the most crashes and spin-offs in one visit to the course.

The next thing we tried was water skiing. It was apparent from the start that some had done this before but more apparent was that some had not. **Cpl Phil Smith** was something of a geek at this sport. Rumour has it he takes his briefcase with a spare pair of shorts and a bottle of wine to the lake. Another who took to water skiing like a duck to water was **Sgt O'Connor**. **LCpl Latusek** got to grips with the board and was soon making it around a full circuit and attempting the jumps, unlike most of the Tp who didn't make 10m. A few of the 'splashers' (well I can hardly call them skiers) that spring to mind are **LCpls Kev Miller**, **John Jones** and **Sigs Tommo Thomas** and **Mossy Mosforth**. A very good time was had by all.

All members of Hawk Tp would like to bid farewell to the few that have recently left our fold: **Sgt Georg McMinn**, who leaves us after 22 years in the Corps, **LCpl Wright**, posted to 251 Sig Sqn on promotion to Cpl, **LCpl Jimmy Wilson**, posted to 18 Sig Regt, **Sig Danny Jones** posted to DCSA(G), and finally, **Sig Woody Woodruff**, who leaves us to go back to Civvy Street. We wish them all the very best for their futures, whatever it may hold.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj GJ Oliver**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Churchward**

HERFORD STATION SUMMER FETE - *by Captain Jo Wilson*

One of the tasks allocated to 211 Sig Sqn is the organisation of the Herford Station Summer Fete. The ethos behind the fete is to bring the German civilian community together with the British mil community, to have a bit of fun and to raise some money for charity along the way.

This year the fete was held on a very sunny Saturday in July. There were lots of stalls to entertain visitors; some were mil in order to demonstrate to the German public a little about what we do, and some civilian ones too. We were very fortunate to host the Spiel Mobil this year which is a play centre owned by the Deutsche Red Cross, it proved very popular with both the children and their parents!

Other stalls included local businesses, such as the gym and hairdressers (which allowed **Lt Hugo Evans** to finally get a haircut!) and some local craft stalls too. There were stalls for Ice Cream, Doughnuts, Bratwurst, Herforder Pils and all Sqns in the Regt were tasked to put on a "fun" stall, which ranged from "Beat the Goalie" to "Crazy Golf" to "Take on 211", a stall where visitors were challenged to pit their wits against soldiers from the Sqn.

Whilst all the stalls were running, there was also a central arena providing lots of entertainment for visitors. Events started off with a Children's Football Competition and then a highly entertaining Dog Show. After this, the CO, **Lt Col Robson**, made an impressive entrance as part of the Rhine Army Parachute Association Display Team. The day was concluded with a fiercely fought Inter-Sqn "Tug of War" competition, which was won by the mighty 211 Sig Sqn under the supervision of **WO2(SSM) Churchward.**

The raffle was drawn at the end of the day and some great prizes (which were all generously donated by local businesses) were won. Overall, the day was a great success and we raised a couple of thousand euros for Great Ormond Street Hospital and the Deutsche Red Cross. Roll on next year, when the event promises to be even bigger and better!

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Gray**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wilson**

REGIMENTAL OFFICERS' LEAVING FUNCTION
- by Lt Laura Champion

To mark a significant change in personnel at 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt with the departure of 10 key figures from within the Regt, a fun packed afternoon was arranged with the highlight being Go-Karting. This was never going to be anything other than a fight to the death and this highly competitive event did not disappoint!

The afternoon started with lunch and the first 4 of 10 leaving speeches and the presentation of the traditional Rhino. This was a telling stage with regard to later racing with some competitors at this stage choosing to be conservative with their positions in the hope that a lighter car would be able to gain them those all important extra few seconds!

The Go-Karting format was a 15 minute time trial, after which, racers were split into 3 race groups. Fortunately **Capt James Macrae** qualified in the fastest group and did not suffer the embarrassment of being dressed in a full racing suit for no justifiable reason!

The first race was led clearly from start to finish by **Capt Ross McLeod** who did not slow at any point during the race for fear of losing his hold.

This also included conveniently ignoring the yellow flag! Second place was awarded to the Adjt, **Capt Sofia Hargreaves**, who made an amazing comeback from driving Miss Daisy once her competitive streak got the better of her!

Both the second and third races were fiercely fought with much overtaking – some successful and some not! The wipe out of the day award went jointly to **Capt Shane Abbott** and **Lt Laura Champion**. A somewhat dubious undertake by **Capt Abbott** while **Lt Champion** refused to leave her line, meant the complete destruction of a tyre wall and more importantly some very entertaining video footage!

The clear second group winner was the Regtl 2IC **Maj Barry Spiers**. In the final race, the lead was held till all but the last lap by **Capt Dave Petty**, who fell victim to the nifty moves of **Capt Bob Stanton**, the eventual victor and overall champion.

Best wishes to the following as they move on from Herford:

Maj Pilling, **Maj Hart**, **Capt Hargreaves**, **Capt Watson**, **Capt Stanton**, **Capt Stillie**, **Capt McLeod**, **Capt Macrae**, **Capt Williams**, **Capt Ahsan** and finally, **2Lt Hodges.**

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

This past few months have been extremely busy as we maintain commitments to enduring ops and continue to ex the Cormorant capability. Additionally, 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn prepares to deploy to Op TELIC in September, the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) recovers from Cyprus and Lebanon after Op HIGHBROW, while RHQ and 219 Sig Sqn begin to prepare for Op HERRICK in 2007. The Regt will soon begin to restructure the 3 comms sqns, ready for the impact of pre-deployment trg. Interesting and demanding times lie ahead.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MS Tivey**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) D Leask**

There have been some notable changes in Sp Sqn over the past couple of months – not least the change of name from HQ Sqn to a title more suited to our role in a Cormorant Regt. The Sqn has been extremely busy supporting 'Race The Sun' with **WO2(SSM) Leask** picking up a last minute tasking as 246 GSS deployed on OPTAG trg and the 2IC and RSM powered through a very successful 'Army In Yorkshire' event, with up to 6000 people visiting Imphal Barracks. The focus is now clearly on ops.

The Sqn also bids a fond farewell to all personnel leaving and welcomes new arrivals with open arms to 2 Sig Regt – get your desert combats out!

2nd DIVISION ROUNDERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

On 28 June, the 2 Div Rounders Championships was held at Imphal Barracks, York. The whole event was organised by the Div Rounders Sec, **WO2(QMSI) Denise Richards**, who just happens to moonlight as the QMSI of 2 Sig Regt. There were a total of 6 teams in the competition, including 2 from 2 Sig Regt and 2 guest teams from the Army Foundation College, Harrogate.

The home teams went through a rigorous trg regime led by the MTO, **Capt Kelly**, who was using this competition as a stepping stone to the Army Championships in August and hopefully Rounders Coaching greatness. The Regt A Team was captained by **Cpl Amanda Wright** of 214 Sig Sqn and also featured **Sig Stacey Frost**, who only arrived from Blandford 2 days before. She has been informed not to expect the first 3 days in future units to be spent in sports kit playing rounders!

2 Signal Regiment Rounders Teams after success in the Division Championships

The Regt B Team was captained by **QMSI Richards**, who along with **Maj Mel Rayner**, OC 214 Sig Sqn, boosted the team's experience (not to mention the team's average age!) As most of this team came from 214 Sig Sqn, **Maj Rayner** was seen to be making CR notes in between games.

With a 20 minute interval being called due to a brief but torrential downpour, each team played each other once on a league basis, rather than a knock out competition. After a full day of fierce competition, the 2 Sig Regt A Team were declared winners after playing 5 and winning 5, while the 2 Sig Regt B Team took 2nd place, winning 4 and losing just 1. At the prize giving, a selection of sports goods was presented, including a prize for the best player from each team. Those selected from 2 Sig Regt were **Sig Stacey Frost** (A Team) and **LCpl Kim Rippon** (B Team).

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MJ Rayner**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

The last couple of months have been exceptionally busy in 214 Sig Sqn with numerous activities undertaken including Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS, the recent 11 Bde ex, the 'Army In Yorkshire' Open Day, Ex COAST TO COAST (a charity run), 'Race The Sun', AT and deployments to Qatar on Op VERITAS. Although the 2IC, **Capt Steve Knight**, and his det have enjoyed sunbathing and using the fine swimming pool at the US Camp, As Sayliyah in Qatar, they are all glad to have now handed over to a new crew so that the hard work can be shared by all! Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS saw SLE Tp deploy with 14 Sig Regt (EW) to the wilds of Scotland. This no doubt provided some excellent trg in preparation for their deployment to the Middle East. We have seen a large turnaround of key sqn personnel with goodbyes going to **YofS Matt Kutzner**, **Sgts Rob Bird**, **Joey Maguire**, **'Jonah' Jones**, **'Manic' Mundy and Al Henderson**. There have been many new arrivals including **YofS Mike Mitchell**, **FofS 'Dusty' Miller** and **SSgt 'Tank' Anderson**, who joins us as the new SQMS. All are warmly welcomed to the Sqn.

EX COAST TO COAST

Over the period 16 – 18 July, 214 Sig Sqn embarked on a sponsored charity event on behalf of Cancer Research UK and the Army Benevolent Fund. The challenge was for 12 soldiers, running in pairs, to complete the 136 mile journey from Workington in Cumbria to Tynemouth Castle in Northumbria in less than 24 hours. Initially, there were 12 able bodied "chosen men and women" who were willing to participate in this gruelling challenge but due to op commitments, this was reduced to the "Imphal Eight", namely **WO2 (SSM) Chris Ogg**, **Sgt Emma Dignall**, **Cpl 'Simmo' Simpson**, **Cpls Chris Glennard** and **'Pads' Paddon**, **LCpls 'H' Heydon** and **LCpl 'Robbo' Roberson,** and **Sig 'Jimmy' Regan**.

With the temperature already rising, **WO2 Ogg** and **Sgt Dignall** started the first of eleven legs at 0950hrs. The team settled well into the event and were producing some noticeably good leg times. Shortly before last light, we were accompanied by the RSM who wished to motivate the team through a couple of difficult legs. A thought must be spared for **LCpl Heydon** who had to complete the worst leg of the event, a gruelling 3.5 mile uphill leg to the Hartside summit.

WO2 Ogg gave a running commentary to BBC Radio York throughout the day to help promote the event and to help raise the profile of the Regt within the local community. We continued to run through the night but this brought the team some fresh challenges. Besides the general fatigue that was affecting most of us, the main problem was that we had a couple of team members who became 'geographically embarrassed'. Remedial MATT 5 trg is definitely needed for **LCpl Roberson** and **Sig Regan**!

Shortly after 0800hrs, and to the relief of the team, we decided to walk the last mile from the Fish Quay in North Shields to Tynemouth Castle. After 22 hrs and 50 mins, we crossed the

The 214 team looking fresh and eager before starting their 23 hour marathon

finish line to a mix of cheers, grunts and the odd wince. Although the total collected has not been finalised, we are confident that we have reached the planned total of £3,000. A special mention must go to Sodexho Defence Services for the extremely generous sponsorship donation, without which we would not have been anywhere near our target. This was a fantastic achievement for 8 soldiers on one of the hottest days of the year.

EX GRIFFIN FOCUS – SPEARHEAD LAND ELEMENT (SLE) TROOP PERSPECTIVE

On 14 June, Roman Tp, under the comd of **Capt Stannard** and **SSgt Hayler**, left York to travel to the remote outcrops of Inverness to use Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS as a testing phase for the SLE.

Once there, we joined forces with 14 Sig Regt to provide Cormorant comms for them, in addition to the comms systems they normally use, to improve their op effectiveness.

After the long drive, we arrived a day later and immediately set about erecting the det. All went well, with the build completed within a few hours, which then allowed the guys to settle into routine. A few days later, **Sgt Andy Kay** and **LCpl Mike Galyer** decided to join us from the courses they had been on and brought much needed comms kit, which had decided not to play initially. All in all it was an excellent ex that continued to prove the success of Cormorant for SLE.

A special mention must go to **Cpl Bob Barn** who used the ex to boost his bank balance. Using his ED vehicle and power facilities, he ensured that all saw the World Cup games, whilst selling a wide choice of refreshments at extortionate Scottish prices! What's more, on the last day, he was rewarded with the discovery that he had been promoted; congrats to **Bob**! The Tp wish him and wife **Sarah** well on their move to ATR Lichfield.

OP HIGHBROW - *by Lt Foggarty*

On 15 July, the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) Tp was warned for a potential deployment to assist in the emerging crisis in Lebanon. It was a potential Non-combatant Evacuation Op (NEO) in Lebanon. Due to the aerial bombardment that the country was receiving from Israel and the potential of invasion from ground forces, it was likely that an evacuation of all UK passport holders might be required. The vehs and eqpt were prepared and then we had the anxious wait for the signal to deploy to the Air Mounting Centre (AMC) at South Cerney. Prior to receiving the signal, a Light Weight Recce Node (LWRN), a 2 man team, was deployed to STANTA. This was to provide secure voice and data to the comd elements of 2LI, the SLE Bn, who were on ex there.

The call forward was received on 17July and the Tp deployed to the AMC. Here all of the elements of the BG were being force packaged by the Comd, so that he could deploy with the right personnel and eqpt for the tasking. The Comd decided that he would take both LWRN teams and the SLE Tp Comd with the lead group. Then on the following flights, the rest of the personnel and eqpt would be sent. The first flight arrived in Cyprus in the early hours of 18 July.. We were moved to Episkopi Garrison and then received a briefing on what was to happen next. After liaison with all of the other force elements, a Coy (-) group deployed forward to Beirut on Chinooks. They set up an Evacuation Handling Centre (EHC) to prepare onward embarkation. There were two platoons of inf, a section of medics, an EOD team, and last but not least, the LWRN team, forward based at the British Embassy in Beirut.

The Comd's intent was to have a very small footprint on the ground, so the Coy (-) group was not reinforced. The other LWRN team set up initially on camp in Cyprus to communicate

The Evacuation Handling Centre in Beirut

with the forward team. It was then deployed forward as a reserve, as it was vital to maintain comms with the EHC. Meanwhile the rest of the SLE HQ arrived in theatre and was established. An old cookhouse was utilised as the HQ building and within a couple of hours the HQ infrastructure was in place. Once the Talon link was in, Cormorant traffic was quickly passing and the first op use of Cormorant had been achieved. Within a very short period of time all of the tails eqpt was engineered in and everything was fully tested.

After the first intense 72 hrs, the numbers of evacuees started to fall and the decision to collapse the EHC was called on 22 July. **Cpl 'Cruisey' Armitage** and **Sig Hodgey Hodson** were to say the least rather relieved at the decision. On the evening before the collapse of the EHC, the aerial bombardment had been very close to their location. The Tp returned to the UK on 28 July after a successful deployment proving the first op use of Cormorant to be a success!

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DJ Duggan**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) NL Hunt**

219 Sig Sqn were the first to roll out of the gates early on 7 Jun on their way to Lincolnshire to be part of what went on to be a very successful Bde ex. On arrival at RAF Kirton in Lindsey, Eagle Tp commanded by **2Lt Si Grey** was tasked to establish the Interim Staff Working Environment (ISWE) in preparation for the arrival of the staff component on the ex.

Under his direction, and the scrutiny of the **SSgt Nick Ulley**, the ISWE was put up in record time and comms were established not long after. In addition to that, Phoenix and Falcon Tps deployed to nearby locations to establish their Local Management Cells.

The ex as a whole proved to be a valuable learning experience for those who hadn't come into contact with the demands of staff working within a HQ. 219 Sig Sqn Ops cell were also challenged when as a Regional Management Cell, they were tasked to take on and manage the Regt's contingent of Cormorant assets and the network they provided. **Capt Hannaford** entertained all those who were fortunate to hear her unique briefing style. Likewise there was never a dull moment at the APOD at RAF Scampton which if rumours were to be believed, had Gordon Ramsey serving Lobster Thermidor in a 4 star Michelin outdoor kitchen.

Overall, the Sqn worked hard and proved it was more than up to the challenges set by the Joint Netcen and that it is the most experienced and successful Cormorant Sqn in the Regt, if not the Bde. This was OC 219 Sig Sqn, **Maj Dave Duggan's** last ex

with 2 Sig Regt before he moves on to pastures new as 2IC 10 Sig Regt and the Sqn wishes him all the best in his new job.

ARMY IN YORKSHIRE FESTIVAL 2006

The annual 'Army in Yorkshire' Festival was held under gloriously sunny skies on Saturday 15 July in Imphal Barracks. The festival is held to nurture the existing good will of the local community and allow the Army to interact with the general public by providing an informative and enjoyable occasion. Although the Regt's involvement had been reduced from previous years, this is very much a key event in the Regt's calendar.

The event was centred on the main square with stalls, exhibits and displays set up in the streets in the surrounding areas. The street activities were coordinated by Sqn Teams and consisted of fun stands with all the proceeds going to charity. The event was also supported by a large number of commercial and non-commercial civilian stalls from throughout the region.

246 Gurkha Sig Sqn and their families provided a Cultural Show involving both children and adults, that demonstrated traditional Nepali songs and dances in the Small Arena. The Gurkha wives supported their husbands with a stand that gave the public a "Taste of Everest" serving traditional Nepali food and selling out well before the end of the day.

The public were entertained with some spectacular displays in the Main Arena by The Royal Signals Motorcycle Display Team, The White Helmets, with **Lt Col AJ Botterill**, CO 2 Sig Regt taking the salute.

The Royal Signals Parachute Display Team including a member of the Regt, **Cpl Ian Lyons**, demonstrated their skill and accuracy with all members of the Team producing a fine performance and hitting their landing marks. Approximately 6000 members of the public passed through the gates during the day to enjoy the event and combined with a maximum turn out from 2 Sig Regt, the day was a resounding success.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DM Stoter**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Kedar**

EXERCISE GRIFFIN FOCUS 2006 - *by Cpl Tulsibir Shahi*

Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS was a Bde Level ex for 11 Sig Bde to assess the effectiveness of its subordinate units for medium scale level of ops and was run to test the ability of 2 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt and 14 Sig Regt to be classified as Collective Training Competence (CTC) Level 3. It included the deployment of a Joint NETCEN, in order to validate its procedures, carry out experimentation and confirm its specialist comms test requirement. 2 Sig Regt deployed a scaleable and robust comms info system network from 11 – 23 Jun. The main aim of the ex was to do collective trg to deploy cormorant elements in a realistic scenario to reflect the Joint Rapid Reaction Force concepts (JRRF) to validate Joint NETCEN and develop a wider understanding of Cormorant CIS sp. 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn's 3 troops were scattered across Warcop trg area. Sek Kong Tp provided Cormorant Information Communication Services (ICS) to 101 Log Bde with Local Area Support (LASp) 30 and Core Element (CE).

Island Tp provided Cormorant ICS to 7 Armd Bde with Combined Local Area Support (CLASp 30) and Bearer Module (BM). The Regional Management Cell (RMC), 1st Line and 2nd Line maint was located with Kowloon Tp. They also provided Cormorant ICS to the Land Component Main and Forward HQs, serving up to 60 staff with LASp 406, CE 113 and TALON as satellite bearer. During the middle of the ex, change of control was exercised and 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn was stepped up to be the Theatre Management Cell (TMC), the highest network-specific C2 node. On the final day the Bde Comd announced that he had full confidence with the Regt and awarded CTC Level 3. This is a major achievement for the Regt and the Sqn.

Finally ENDEX was called on 22 Jun 06 and to celebrate the achievement, it ended with a Sqn BBQ at Warcop Camp.

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col A G Hill**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Wakeling**

The Regt said 'au revoir' to the CO and the bulk of 206 Sig Sqn, who are off to serve in Iraq with the Div HQ in MND (SE) and in sp of the Senior British Military Advisor in Baghdad. The troops will be away until January – we wish them a safe and successful tour.

ARMY ATHLETICS FINALS – 5 JULY 2006
- by Lt E Cameron

A highly successful athletics season for the 3(UK) Div Sig Regt female team came to an end at the Army Athletics final on 5 July in Aldershot. Second place at the Morrison Cup, followed by victory at both the 5 Div Championships and Semi-Final meant that team confidence and spirits were very high.

Cool weather on the day came as some relief, and the day started well with **LCpl Jules Cartwright** winning the first event, the 400m hurdles. She turned out to be the 'Wayne Rooney' of our team, winning all 3 of her events!

Tough competition came in the form of 3LSR and the lunch break saw us level on points, closely followed by RMA Sandhurst. In the events after lunch, **Cpl Jackie Davies** was pipped to the post in the 100m by 3LSR, who then consolidated their superiority with wins in the 200m and 400m. This meant we were battling for 2nd place with RMA Sandhurst, with the day's worst event still to come, the dreaded 2000m Steeplechase. **Cpl Smurph Murphy** put in a sterling effort to come 4th, taking the battle for 2nd to the wire (no pun intended). Results from the throwing competitions meant that we had to beat RMA Sandhurst by 4 places in the 4 x 100m relay to win Silver overall. The team excelled gaining 2nd in the relay, but RMA Sandhurst came a close 3rd, leaving us with the Bronze. Look forward: Next Season!

The successful 3(UK)Division Signal Regiment female athletics team

3 DIVISION SIGNAL REGIMENT WEEKEND
- by WO1(FofS) Rob Clifford

It all started in the CO's directive in December 2005, when all of the op taskings came through. 202 Sig Sqn – go to the Balkans, 206 Sig Sqn – go to Iraq, HQ Sqn sort out the Regtl Open Day – so we did.

Headed up by the Regtl FofS, **WO1 Rob Clifford,** the planning started for the weekend of Saturday, 23 June 2006. There were many aspects of the weekend that had to be addressed; to host the veterans of the 3rd Div Sig Regt Club, to entertain and thrill the soldiers, their families and friends, and say farewell to the CO and 206 Sig Sqn before we got shot of them to Basra and Baghdad.

A meet and greet for the veterans was organised on the Friday night in the Sgts' Mess by the acting RSM and PMC of the Mess, **WO2 Ali Watkins,** the SSM of 202 Sqn. This was meant to be a reasonably tame affair but some shabby looking vets and Sgts' Mess members were spotted wandering glassy eyed and aimless before the start of events on Saturday lunch time. The fete arena, complete with fayre, stalls and dog displays was ready for the Open Day's first event; the presentation of Op TELIC medals to 11 recipients by the CO and **Mr Arthur (Trader) Horn** of the Regtl Reunion Club, who is a veteran of D Day.

This was followed by a superb display of skill and accuracy by the Royal Signals Parachute Display Team. **Lt Col Alan Hill** then formally welcomed the huge crowd that had gathered and handed over to **Cpl Jackie Davis**, our very own Olympian, who gave an excellent speech commending the Army life to all - which is made even better if you're an Olympian. There were two first rate beer tents, selling cheap first rate beer and Pimms (for the Officers), which made for some enthusiastic support for the sqn teams competing in the "It's a Knock Out" and "Tug o' War" competitions; organised by the gymnasium staff. This was a trade test for our very own wannabe muscle buster **LCpl Del Del-Vall** and was won by 222 Sig Sqn. The results will go towards the CO's Cup, which is, as you would expect, presently held by HQ Sqn. The Open Day drew to a close in the early evening, when everyone apart from the stalwarts from the Vets and Sgts' Mess, sauntered – or tottered – off home.

Sunday saw **Padre Bell**, an old friend of the Royal Signals, led us in a Regtl Church Service and put us in touch with his HQ so that we could send our troops off on ops, firm in the knowledge that they will be in our thoughts and their families will be kept in the Regtl fold.

These weekends are hard work for the organisers and workers who have to make things happen but it was worth it – so a big well done and thank you to everybody who had some involvement. It was a great weekend.

D Day veteran 'Trader' Horn Presents Op TELIC Medals

YUKON RIVER QUEST - *by WO1(RSM) Matt Wakeling*

Over the period 28 – 30 June 2006 a team of 6 Army kayakers raced 3 tandem sea kayaks in the Yukon River Quest, the longest annual canoe and kayak race in the world. The Royal Signals crew consisted of **WO1(RSM) Matt Wakeling** of 3(UK) Div Sig Regt and **WO2 Pete Howson**, formerly of the Regt. The 6 man team and 3 sp crew members flew to Whitehorse, Canada 4 days before the event, to prepare the boats and themselves for the 460 mile race.

At 1230hrs on 28 June, an international field of 137 competitors lined up on Main Street, Whitehorse, for a Le Mans style start incorporating a 440 yard run, in full paddling kit, to the boats lined up on the bank of the Yukon River. The first leg of the race from Whitehorse to Carmacks was 189 miles and included crossing Lake Laberge – a 30 mile stretch of open water that tested the paddlers' nerves, with a constant barrage of sea-sick inducing waves that threatened to overturn the boats. Only the threat of attacks by grizzly bears persuaded people to stay out on the water! After 21fi hours of paddling **Wakeling** and **Howson** arrived at Carmacks in 9th place overall; a position they managed to maintain for the remainder of the race. At Carmacks, all competitors had a mandatory 7 hour stop during which showering, eating and sleeping were the order of the day, while the sp party restocked food and drink systems on the boats.

All too soon the break was over and paddlers returned to their boats stiff, blistered and tired, to commence the second leg – a 160 mile paddle to Kirkmans Creek, taking in the notorious Five Finger Rapids en route. The remainder of the leg was relatively straight forward, though sleep deprivation was taking its toll and a moose jumping into the river in front of the boat caused much amusement. The third and final leg was just a short sprint of 106 miles. This took in a labyrinth of islands and wide stretches of open water, which were difficult going due to a head wind that appeared regardless of the direction paddled. Just when we thought we had it in the bag, another canoe appeared from nowhere and we were caught in a sprint finish to Dawson City after 460 gruelling miles.

The Royal Signals crew achieved 9th position overall and 4th in the tandem kayak class. The other two Army crews had finished 2nd and 3rd in class and 5th and 7th overall. All 3 Army crews completed the race inside 49 hours - a remarkable achievement.

MEDALS PRESENTATION

On 17 July, CRA, **Brig Nick Eeles**, presented LS&GC medals to 5 of our Regt in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. Recipients were

CSgt Griffin, with Lorraine and Becky enjoying his MSM moment

SSgt(FoS) White, an outstanding sportsman, **SSgt Upcraft**, **Sgts Myerscough** and **Lane** and **Cpl Gwennap**. Awards were also made to **CSgts Griffin** and **Cooper**, both of whom received the Meritorious Service Medal for the outstanding contribution they have made to the Army and to their civilian communities. Congratulations to all the recipients and their families.

ON TOUR IN IRAQ

The commitment for 3(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt on Op TELIC VIII is being fulfilled by a composite sqn, albeit tp sized, predominately made up from soldiers and officers from 206 Sig Sqn, complemented with soldiers from other depts within the Regt. The Sqn is incredibly stretched with personnel serving in Iraq and UK, as well as a number of individual augmentees serving in Canada, the Falkland Islands, Bosnia and Afghanistan.

The last few days leading up to our deployment seemed to drag. Bags were packed, kit had been squared away and good-byes had been said to friends and relatives. We were now playing the waiting game. At 0500hrs, Wednesday 5 July 2006, 27 of us boarded the coach for the journey to RAF Brize Norton and every one of us was fully expecting lengthy delays. The OC Sqn, **Maj Paul Smith**, had deployed a few days earlier to get a feel for the ground and to pave the way.

We were pleasantly surprised when flights from the UK into Basra passed without incident or delay and we landed in 2 groups in the early hours on Thursday 6 July. Thankfully, we were met by **SSgt Si Upcraft's** predecessor, **SSgt Preece**, who was extremely efficient in shepherding us to our accommodation and providing all the assistance we required. The next day was spent recuperating in one of the bars on Basra Air Station. Although the bar was dry during the day, there was no way we were going to leave the air-conditioned building. The heat outside was by far the biggest challenge we had to come to terms with at this early stage of our tour. Walking between the various parts of the camp was like walking through a furnace, the hot winds whipping sand across the backs of our legs.

That evening, still in the bar but this time adhering religiously to the two can rule with a couple of beers, we met up with **Cpl Denham** and **LCpl Scott** who are both out in Basra for the next 6 months, working directly to the JFCIS headed up by the CO. Throughout the evening various other members of the Regt came out of the woodwork including **WO2 Lockie** and **Sgt Jim Lang.**

On the way over to the Baghdad Support Unit (BSU), in the International Zone (IZ), we dropped off 8 of the Tp to man the dets at Camps Victory and Slayer, next to the Baghdad International Air Port (BIAP). The dets have now been left in the capable hands of **Sgt Billy Bremner** and **Cpl Lindsey Deal,** although the rest of the Tp will be only a short, but evasive helicopter flight away,

The main body has now settled into life at the BSU having completed several major projects to improve the facilities within the camp. It is deemed that it is important to stay on top of our life sp skills for when we return to the Div Main HQ during ex season. As well as **WO2(FofS) Tony Nicholls** and his team gutting and refurbishing the Welfare Suite, we have carried out a complete make-over of the outside bar with "Beach Hut" the main theme. The bar has been a huge success and after its grand opening by **Lt Gen Sir Rob Fry KCB CBE,** the SBMR-I, it has played host to numerous social occasions involving external British and multi-national visitors. The name for the bar, 'The Duck & Cover' was cunningly borrowed from the title given to the mortar shelters surrounding the IZ by **Cpl Pav Pavitt**. It is just about possible to block out the 15ft blast walls and the chaos reigning outside the perimeter fence as we enjoy some form of normality.

During the first 6 weeks of the tour, we have set out to cover the distance from Baghdad to Bulford, some 4192km, using the minimal CV facilities available. The sponsorship money raised will go to Cancer Research UK and Medical Aid for Iraqi Children (MAIC). The whole Tp has taken the event very seriously, some more than others. The 'competitive dads' are quickly coming to light and include **Maj Paul Smith**, **WO2(FofS) Alfred Nicholls**, **Cpl Tony Gallagher** and **Sig Dale Kelly**.

The main event for our tour is going to be a Charity Auction held at the end of our time here. Grand plans are afoot for impressive prizes from weekend spa breaks to 'celebrity waxing'. The more hairy in the Tp have been warned, with **LCpl Chris Wilson's** neck and **Sgt Jay Shuttleworth's** arms already looking for an earlier flight home.

All in all things are going well and time is beginning to pass quickly. The Tp is fully immersed in Baghdad life and is continually driving to improve the facilities, both comms and welfare related. The new OC Sqn, **Maj Helen Bosley**, has recently arrived in theatre, this being the second time she has taken a comd posting during an Op tour.

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

ISAF IX OP HERRICK IV PREPARATION CONFIRMATORY EXERCISE - *by Lt Kelly*

As this goes to press 7 Sig Regt Gp will have deployed in order to sp ISAF IX, as it increases its footprint of control in Afghanistan.

To prepare for the op, soldiers of the 7 Sig Regt Gp have increased the tempo and intensity of their specialized to theatre trg over the last 4 months, under the guidance of the Regtl Trg Wg with the benefit of lessons learned from recent recces. This trg has involved learning to operate new comms eqpt. It has also involved a great deal of mil skills trg and the ubiquitous Battle PT!

With an ever increasing demand for 7 Sig Regt to provide not only comms assets but also to deploy several multiples as Force Protection (FP), soldiers have had to demonstrate their now legendary flexibility.

The mil trg culminated in a week long confirmatory ex for the majority of the Regtl Gp on Sennelagger Trg Area, taking the form of a Public Order scenario. Soldiers deployed as Security Forces and were tested to the limits in as many probable situations as were possible. Their reaction to those playing the Afghan population, whilst practising general patrolling, took on a life of its own as the natural enthusiasm of those participating (and the natural showmanship of the 'locals') shone through.

Several members of the "local population" adapted very well to their temporary role. **Cpl Trev Taylor** was amongst those who will have to be watched carefully for signs of going native in theatre. There was a huge amount of energy and high morale throughout the week, as the reality of the imminent deployment began to sink in. Undoubtedly this was aided by the quotes of certain members, such as **SSgt Robbie Allen,** who when asked what they should do with the injured baby said innocently to give it to the SQMS.

Although the ex was enjoyable, there was a great deal learned. Valuable lessons on the local culture were brought home by clear demonstrations of what not to do and, more importantly, why not as well as the suggested course of action. For those deploying as part of the Force Multiples this trg is extended further in the weeks to come, in order to prepare them for their new challenges and will include a Live Field Firing element.

EXERCISE COMBINED ENDEAVOR - *by 2Lt Joiner*

This year, 7 Sig Regt again represented Royal Signals and the British Army on Ex COMBINED ENDEAVOR. Now in its 12th year, Ex COMBINED ENDEAVOR 06 saw 42 nations participating in the largest Command, Control, Communications and Computing (C4) Interoperability ex in the world. Based in Baumholder, South Germany for 3 weeks, nations spent long days testing eqpt and protocol compatibility. Evenings were passed working on "human integration"; something the UK delegation was particularly good at. It was invaluable being able to try integrating Ptarmigan with some of the latest systems coming into service with nations such as Canada, Sweden and Denmark. Apart from testing our eqpt, **Sig Lee**, an Area Systems Operator from 232 Sig Sqn exchanged places with a private from the US Marine Corps. After spending 1 day using their new state of the art battle space management software, he could clearly understand the benefits Bowman and Cormorant should bring to the British Army. In another effort to bring nations together, and demonstrate British superiority, we organised a mini world cup and invited all nations to attend. The weather managed to hold off long enough to complete the 5-a-side tournament, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day. Cheers from the supporting crowds enhanced the atmosphere, especially after referee **Capt Andy Paton** (the TOT) had to calm some of the players down after taking things a little too seriously. Unfortunately the only downside of the day was seeing the UK 'A' Team losing in the first round to Italy (eventual runners up) on penalties after **2Lt Joiner's** penalty was saved, and the UK 'B' Team losing 3 – 0 to the USA (eventual winners). The ex finished with a parade and then the BIWAC; a party where all nations try and bring a part of the their culture, normally their national drink! Pimms and Johns Smiths bitter flowed by the gallon from the British stand and were loved by all, but I would advise against drinking home-made Romanian Vodka! Very few managed to visit all 42 nations in the evening, with most choosing to mingle in the crowd and watch the entertainment put on by the German hosts.

ELECTRONIC MISSION REHEARSAL - *by Lt Kelly*

In preparation for the forthcoming Regtl Gp tour of Afghanistan, 229 Sig Sqn headed up an Electronic Mission Rehearsal.

With preparation times compressing daily now, this was a necessarily intensive, week-long comms eqpt and procedural familiarization ex, which tested the skills and mental agility of the over 100 soldiers taking part. The aim of the ex was to provide realistic, real time problems, in order to ensure that when under the extra pressures of theatre conditions the operators would be rightly confident in their own abilities, and timely in the production of workable solutions.

Cpl Simpson training soldiers on TALON equipment

The Communication Information Structure Platform was constructed under the careful guidance of 229 Sig Sqn Ops Team, **YofS Hamblin** and **FofS Prendegast**, known fondly by the Sqn as the Chuckle Brothers. Regt Ops Officer, **Maj 'Herbie' Herbert**, enthusiastically introduced the Armageddon-like scenarios. At the end of the week, morale was high, with everyone champing at the bit to take over in-theatre.

EXERCISE BEAR BACKSTOP - *by Sgt Nesbit*

Members of 229 Sig Sqn travelled to Wertach, Bavaria for some AT. The 3 mountain goats, **SSgt 'Ski' Nowsielski**, **2Lt 'Steph' Archibald** and **LCpl 'Wally' Watson** had previously researched some routes to ensure that the 5 days of trekking was of the highest quality. Our first walk was up the Aggenstein. We used this as the 'icebreaker' to assess the levels of fitness and capability before breaking the team down into 2 groups. This showed who the 'Great Explorers' really were. **Cpl 'Trev' Taylor** showed his phenomenal attention span by receiving a brief of where he was and where to go, only to walk off in the opposite direction 1 minute later. **Sig 'Tully' Talbot** showed he wasn't scared to try anything once, by sampling the local goats' milk...with half a pound of sugar for flavouring.

During the remaining days we also covered the Rubihorn, Nebelhorn and the Oberjoch border walk. The border walk was interesting. As you walked across the ridge, you had Austria on one side and Germany on the other, before encountering a very tricky descent to finish. With The Mighty Seventh's passion for all things trg, mental trg in the form of Quiz Nights were laid on even whilst away on AT. Some people exhibited their true mental prowess. **LCpl 'MJ' Mannion-James** in particular excelled, questioning the Quiz Master's own knowledge and believing his answers were the right ones. Some local PR was also undertaken. When the group went to watch an England World Cup game being shown on a big screen in Sontoffen, everyone stood up to sing the National Anthem and received a rapturous round of applause.

The week went very well indeed, everyone bonded and the weather was hot and sunny throughout, with exception of the final night when the lodge put a BBQ on and the inevitable floodgates opened.

229 Signal Squadron finally reach the top!

ELMPT STATION SUMMER FETE - *by 2Lt Archibald*

After only 6 short weeks into his posting with 7 Sig Regt, **WO2(FofS) Avery** organised a fantastic Summer Fete. The sun shone and the food and drink flowed as the crowds were treated

to a wide variety of attractions throughout the afternoon. Amongst these, were the mile run to raise money for Sports Relief, and demos from the Fire Service and the Mountain Rescue Dogs. 12 Flt AAC brought down a helicopter for the day and the Dive Club had Tri Dives in the swimming pool during the afternoon. This proved particularly popular and helped to raise interest (if needed!) for the planned diving exped to Bermuda on our return from Afghanistan. There was a plethora of other stalls to keep everyone amused, as well as live music, warming up for the Battle of the Bands competition organised by **Maj 'Herbie' Herbert**, which rounded off a thoroughly enjoyable day.

The proceeds from all of the activities were donated to charities. Thanks to all those who supported the event and particularly to those who organised it.

Lt Col AR Blackwell and the Burgomaster take the salute from the Bandmaster of the REME Band

HARTBURY COLLEGE FOOTBALL ACADEMY VISITS THE REGIMENT - *by 2Lt Joiner*

With Germany turning what would seem its entire focus to the World Cup, 7 Sig Regt played host to 25 students from Hartbury College Football Academy in June. The students were all aged between 16 and 18 and the aim of their visit was to mix football with an introduction to military life. The week started with demos of eqpt and a competition shoot in the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer. After being lulled into a false sense of security, the mil trg side of life developed into something more arduous. Competitors were put through their paces with a gun run and a Personnel Safety and Public Order lesson with **WO2(QMSI) Spike Crawley**. Bruised and exhausted, it was time to get back to football with a fixture against 16 Sig Regt. Although a fairly physical game, the technical ability of the younger side won through and saw a 6 – 0 defeat for the home team. Brimming with confidence they couldn't wait to try and stump the Mighty Seventh. After a morning of suitably exhausting potted sports in the gym to properly prepare them for the match, they stepped onto the field against 7 Sig Regt. Going into the dressing rooms at half time 1 – 0 down to the visiting side, **WO2 Dixon**, our player/coach for the day had some harsh words and strategic changes to make to avoid defeat. The equaliser came shortly after the break. Then the floodgates were open for more goals and there was action at both ends. Winning 4 –3 in the dying seconds of the game, 7 Sig Regt thought they had successfully beaten the youngsters, but in true World Cup fashion, when the game went into time added on, a free kick floated into the box and soared into the goal ensuring a very diplomatic draw. A fair result considering the performances put in by both teams.

BEATING RETREAT - *by 2Lt Fell*

The CO, **Lt Col Alan Blackwell**, welcomed local dignitaries, heads of local Police and Fire Services and other civilians who play a vital part in the hosting of Javelin Barracks to the Beating Retreat Ceremony. In word-perfect and utterly accent less German, he thanked them for their ongoing hospitality, enjoyed for many years. He praised the way in which British soldiers were welcomed and treated by the German population, who both work on camp and support the Barracks in the local community. At least we think that's what he said.

After a few cocktails, nibbles and bi-lingual tales of the 'Old Days', mixed in with discussions on Germany's and England's chances in the World Cup (most of which was in perfect English from our guests, while Regtl Officers spoke in tongues), everyone moved out to their seats on the covered patio for the Military Band display. The Band of The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers gave an excellent show of music and marching which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. As the sun began to set, the spectacle of Beating Retreat began.

Beating Retreat has its origins in the early years of organised warfare, when the beating of drums and the parading of Post Guards heralded the closing of camp gates and the lowering of flags at the end of the day. It signified the cessation of hostilities until the following day. Over many years the ceremony has evolved from the original call that was beaten by drums alone. Fifes were then introduced and later still a bugle. The present ceremony of the whole band parading is a modern innovation but none the less a marvellous spectacle.

It was a fantastic evening and an excellent way of showing a little of the ceremonial side of British military tradition to some of the German people who do so much to enable and ease our stay in Germany.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON GROUP

OC	**Maj Martin Bever**
2IC	**Capt Ali Biggs**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) S McKenzie**

As 231 Sig Sqn nears the end of a 6 month tour of Afghanistan, changes are afoot. **Maj Bever** has been replaced by **Sqn Ldr Gilroy** from TCW who will command the Sqn until 229 Sig Sqn, also from the Mighty 7th, deploy in September.

The Sqn has been extremely busy consolidating the CIS we have laid down since our arrival in theatre and expanding into new locations. In Kabul, we have continued to support HQ COMBRITFOR at Camp SOUTER and JFCIS within the ISAF HQ in the centre of town and have recently put a presence into Kabul International Airport.

In all, the Sqn has around 30 soldiers working in Kabul over these 3 locations providing services to the UK elements deployed there. Work for the teams has been interesting and varied both supporting the staff and regularly moving around the city. In Helmand Province the Sqn now has 4 points of presence. At Lashka Gar, **Lt Tom O'Neill** and **SSgt Henderson** lead a team providing ICS to the UK Task Force HQ and the Provincial Reconstruction Team. They are based in a small camp in the middle of the town and are working and doing Sqn PT alongside 216 Sig Sqn.

The team is now branching out, regularly supporting the staff in and around the town. By contrast, **Lt Des McGuckian** and **SSgt Lythe** are down in the middle of the desert at Camp Bastion.

In the sandstorms and the heat (often in excess of 45 degrees) they are supporting the Paras and the Apaches in the main base from which they are conducting operations against the Taliban.

Despite the harsh environment the detachment is thriving, recently sending a small contingent to Camp Tombstone where the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) are training the newly formed Afghan National Army.

Elsewhere in the Province, **Sgts Stanway** and **Smith** are supporting C Coy of 3 Para just outside Gereshk at FOB Price. Here they are not only working as communicators but also getting out on the odd patrol. Last but by no means least **Cpl Mee** and **LCpl Raloka** are up the valley at Sangin, at the current 'sharp end' of the op.

So far, the tour has been outstanding. Arriving in the early days of the op when there was little on the ground, deploying the Sqn around theatre and watching the situation develop has been professionally challenging and extremely rewarding. In a few weeks time our sister Sqn, 229 Sig Sqn, will take over the reins. We wish them the very best in their endeavours.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col RJ Quinlan**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) M Gilbert**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The Regt says farewell to: our longstanding Regtl Ops Officer **Maj Mick Boxall** who crosses the demarcation line to DCSA, the Adjt **Capt Gary Irwin**, who is away to be educated on ICSC, **Maj Nik Beecher** OC 251 (UK Ops) Sig Sqn who is posted overseas to HQ ARRC, and lastly **LCpl Milly Milne** the CO's driver. Good luck to you all and thank you for your dedication.

We welcome **Maj Martin Elphee** as the new Regtl Ops Officer, **Maj Andy Arthurton** as SO2 ECM (FP) Ops for a while, after he hands over ECM (FP) Sqn to **Maj Jez Toze** who becomes the new OC 251 (UK Ops) Sig Sqn, **Maj John Fraser** as OC ECM (FP) Sqn, **Capt Kelvin Grice** as our new Adjt and **LCpl Bramell** as the new CO's driver.

WO1(RSM) Gilbert and 241 (STRS) Sig Sqn hosted a fine Officers *v* SNCOs Cricket match to celebrate the 4th anniversary of the reformation of 10 Sig Regt on 4 July. Amazingly, the Officers won and have challenged the SNCOs to a return match when they catch their breath.

EXERCISE GRIFFIN FOCUS 06

Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS 06, 5 - 21 June 06, was a Theatre Troops ex that involved all units OPCOM that Comd. Approximately 4,000 troops from Germany and the UK were involved in the ex, which centred on the W of Scotland and NW of England.

The main aim of the ex was the insertion of log and med aid to sp a country recovering from a conflict. The Regt was tasked with providing the main ICS infrastructure for HQ 8 Force Engr Bde, HICON and EXCON. Elements of 241 Sig Sqn, 243 Sig Sqn, and 251 (UK Ops) Sig Sqn under OPCOM of 38 Sig Regt (V) were involved in the ex and provided EDWIN, our UK Ops 100 seat LAN, Website maint and cable distribution and management.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj James Vosper**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Jim McEwan**

Despite a lack of conventional Bde or Div level exs, mass deployments on op tours or vehs to constantly maintain for first line inspections, life continues to be fairly busy here in Chelsea.

Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS 06 at West Freugh

Recently the Sqn has deployed on a Sqn level mil skills ex at STANTA using a Tactical Exercise Simulator (TES) eqpt and taken part in a number of Skill at Arms Meetings. We've conducted various trg days, including some interesting range packages, completed ceremonial trg for, and deployed on, the Queens Birthday Parade, the Household Division and Royal Marines Beating Retreats and Royal Garden Parties.

A number of personnel have also moved on in the past few months, including **Capt (TOT) Paul Lewis**, off to enjoy his well deserved (cough) retirement, **SSgt Martin Stebbing**, who has retired from the Army after 220 years service (he's old) and **Sgt Nikki Thompson**, who has left the Army to pursue a new career on the outside (not quite so old). Additionally, **Cpl Jim Brown** and **LCpl Richie Barlow** have deployed to JCUFI for 6 month tours and **Sgt Phil Brown** has deployed and subsequently returned from a short op tour in Afghanistan as part of a 241 (STRS) Sig Sqn deployment. Even here in Chelsea you can't hide from Ops!

The Sqn welcomes our new TOT, **Capt (TOT) Kev Sturman,** our new SQMS **SSgt Andy Carter**, **Cpls Sam Richards**, **Amanda Giltrow** and **Paul Clarke**, **LCpls Mark Freeman**, **Mark Etienne** and **Woody Woodward** and **Sig Scott Marshallsay**. Finally the postings in have caught up with the postings out! Throughout this busy period the Sqn has also managed to squeeze in some leave over Easter, lots of testing physical trg, sports afternoons on some Wednesdays and a great weekend over the Army *v* Navy Rugby match.

TRAINING - *by Capt Gudonis*

The Sqn continues to put together interesting trg days and exs to augment the specific role based trg that is routinely carried out throughout the year. Alongside the rigorous physical trg, Incident Response Team trg, ongoing MATT process and ceremonial trg, we have put together some challenging and enjoyable events.

During late March the Sqn deployed to STANTA trg area and conducted a mil skills ex using Tactical Exercise Simulator (TES) wpns effect eqpt. The lessons learned using TES were invaluable and served to demonstrate the reason behind the drills that are taught in basic trg. Participants in the ex very quickly realised that they could not carry out long Rambo-style bounds between cover and that gorse did not provide adequate cover from well aimed shots. TES kit can be temperamental, but it is definitely worth persevering with.

The Sqn now has 3 LFTT qualified individuals, the OC, SSM and **SSgt Bagstaff**. Combined with 5 additional RMQ qualified personnel the Sqn has been able to ensure that once individuals have passed their APWT that they can partake in some more interesting shoots. So far this has included an Individual Battle Skills Range (IBSR), which consisted of firers advancing between various points of cover (simulated roof tops, windows, tree stumps and trenches) and engaging targets. Following the IBSR, the firers were lined up in pairs for a live fire and movement Close Quarter Battle (CBQ) lane. The lane was constructed to look like a street with cars and other obstacles associated with built up areas, including some dodgy looking dummies to act as civilians.

CORPSAM - *by Cpl Orme*

Attempting to administer and organise a team for CORPSAM was always going to be difficult, with a mixture of 238, 243, 241 and 251 Sig Sqns, all located in different parts of the UK. After a few hiccoughs with tpt, wpns and team members, we eventually managed to get down to Aldershot, not so much to practise the shoots, but to learn them.

While the novices amongst us attempted to live up to the title of 'Shooting Team', under the coaching of **Sgt Richie Turnbull,** we shot high, low and wide, while still receiving words of encouragement from **Maj Beecher** (although his disappointment at not being able to take part this year was evident from the start).

As always, practice made perfect (well almost!) and we began to look like a shooting team, or the next best thing. Unfortunately, an injury to **Sig Crook** meant only one team could be fielded, so the remainder entered as individuals. Still they were still representing the glorious 10 Sig Regt, with no less pride!

The team performed admirably, with each of our team members employing differing tactics to achieve better results: The Whitehead Cup saw **Sig Adam Hadlow** leave the fire trench in one step, to give him a huge head start in the race down, **Cpl Orme** running the hundred like ten men to get all his Roberts rounds off at a hundred, **LCpl Rob Charlton** pleading to be allowed to fire from the hip, and **Sig Andy Barr** always stating he'd have the next one (which he inevitably did).

We had a few near misses with awards, **Cpl Matt Shey** with a respectable 180 in the Roberts just missed out, as did the team as a whole, finishing a respectable 9th overall. **Sgt Neil Tarry** and **SSgt(YofS) Brewer** showed us younger soldiers that experience really counts, by both finishing in the top 50. But the accolade really should be reserved for **Cpl Richie Libby**, who not only finished in the top 20, but won top shot in the 'Association Shoot'.

The Master of Signals presents Cpl Libby with his Association Shoot Winners Award

LONDIST RIFLE ASSOCIATION MEETING – *by Cpl Orme*

The Sqn took part in the London District Rifle Association Meeting (LDRAM) this year, competing against all other Regular Units, major and minor within the District.

The competition started for the 238 team with the 'Two Man Gun Run' in which **Sgt Turnbull** and **Cpl Shey** competed in earning a respectable 3rd place out of all the teams. Next followed the Whitehead Cup, Whitaker Trophy (an event 4 of the team had not taken part in before) and the day concluded with the Graham Trophy (our best event by far).

As a whole the team performed well, **Sig Hadlow** notably the most improved on the team, and now full of confidence for the Div SAAM. The most consistent shot of the team was **LCpl Charlton** who despite his fears of 'The Wooden Spoon' Award, continued his good form from CORPSAM.

Overall the team finished 3 points behind the Minor Units runners up, this equated to one round in 4 of the 5 shoots but after beating several of the Major Units in London we had to agree it had still been a good shoot.

Finally the greatest praise has to be reserved for **Sgt Turnbull**, who after an initial (and familiar) comment about someone moving his sights, went on to win the best individual for the Whitaker Trophy, and finished runner up in the Graham Trophy. Well done him!

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT AT DIVSAAM 06 - *LCpl Charlton*

The Regtl Shooting Team was made up of selected individuals from 238, 243 and 251 Sig Sqns, ably captained by **Sgt Turnbull.**

We had a week of practice to learn the different shoots from various positions. We then competed in 4 DIVSAAM on the ranges at Bulford.

In the Roberts Cup, **Sig Hadlow** had a protest upheld and re-shot after scoring Washout! Washout! Washout! The Combat Snap Team comprising **Sgt Turnbull, Sgt Tarry, Cpl Shey** and **Sig Barr,** completed phase one in the quickest time of the day (38 seconds) only to hit very little in phase two. **LCpl Charlton** failed to live up to his name and huffed and puffed his way down the ranges. Hats off to **Sig Beckley**, who came 2nd in the LSW Match (The Gun Run!). Overall we finished 5th; only just missing out on qualification to CENTSAAM. A huge amount of experience was gained in some difficult shoots.

LOOKING FORWARD

With the ceremonial season now concluded, the Sqn is looking forward to a change of focus from No1s, bulled boots and sweating like an Eskimo in the Sahara to a period of dedicated Incident Response Team trg and trials, the Regtl summer AT camp at Fremington and the August maximum leave period.

251 (UK OPS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj Beecher**
SQMS	**SSgt Wedge**

The Sqn are still growing and are slowly getting nearer to the correct manning levels required to carry out our taskings. To that end, we have had a number of new arrivals, **SSgt Howe** from the ACIO Birkenhead, **Sgt Smith** from 3 UK Div, **Cpl Piercy** from 2 Sig Regt, **Cpl Reddy** all the way from 101 Log Bde, **LCpl Hicks** from 7 Bde, **LCpls Allen** and **Allard**, **Sigs Beckley**, **Poole**, **Lawson**, **Rumsey** and **Hiorns** have all arrived from Blandford. Welcome and we hope you have an enjoyable tour with the Sqn. Sadly we also have to say some farewells, firstly **SSgt 'Dani' Thwaite**, who has moved on promotion to be RQMS of 71 Sig Regt in Bexley Heath (the TA won't know what's hit them). Of course the OC, on posting to HQ ARRC and lastly we say farewell to 3 of the veterans of 251 Sig Sqn and wish **Cpl's Barney**, **Bradley** and **Libby** all the best as they leave the Army and start working for a living. The whole Sqn wishes them the best of luck and hope they succeed in their chosen fields.

ECM (FP) SIGNAL SQUADRON

With Normalisation under way in Northern Ireland, ECM (FP) Sqn have still managed to keep busy with plenty of op tours and Regtl activities. The Sqn has seen many new faces join the ranks recently and also many leave. On 1 Jun we had the leaving do for **Sgts Woz Wozniak**, **Neil Port** and **Gordon Dunderdale**, all posted to sunny Blandford on the YofS course, we all wish them good luck for the future. The do was held in Bangor and saw the group depart the shores on the '*Missy Moo*' for a good day's fishing.

Sqn AT took place at Brawdy, 14 Sig Regt, courtesy of **Sgt Al Smith** who arranged a week at the Royal Corps of Signals Open Handicap Dinghy Sailing and Windsurfing Regatta 15 – 19 May. Prior to getting into the racing element of the week, the novices amongst the party (which was everyone) were instructed in all aspects of sail craft, including safety and piracy on the high seas! We received expert tuition from the very experienced "Sea Dogs" led by **Capt Taff Owens**, with **Capt Del Postlethwaite** and **Cpl Si Rich**.

The week proved very successful in the novice sailing category with **Sgt Al Smith** finishing 2nd, **SSgt(YofS) Rob Murray** finishing 3rd and **Cpl Nige Green** claiming an impressive 4th place. Mention must go however to **Cpl Dave Lancaster**, who survived many early setbacks in order to receive the prestigious award of Biggest Loser (most improved Novice). The choppy water however, proved too much for the windsurfers who were struggling to stay upright, including the over confident 'boarder dude' **LCpl Matt Ruddy**. Another week of AT in Loch Lomond, involved kayaking and hill walking, which **Cpls Jimmy Bond** and **Stu Dickeson** decided to undertake.

HMS Raleigh – About to be Tango'd

With everything else that has been happening, the Sqn had some very good news on the Cpl to Sgts promotion board. No less than 7 of our finest Cpls got the good news and were welcomed into the Sgts' Mess. Congratulations to **Cpls Jimmy Bond**, **Stu Dickeson**, **Martin Hart**, **Dave Lancaster**, **Marie Moore**, **Kim Roberts** and **Kerry Smith**. With all that fun out of the way, it is time to start afresh with the Sqn's move to 10 Sig Regt and before we knew it we were getting stuck into Regtl life with AT and battle camps on the horizon.

EXERCISE SINK OR SWIM

The aim of the ex was to give all Sqn personnel the op trg required to work in different theatres. In reality, it was 3 days away from Aldershot, giving all those attending the opportunity to have a go at the Helicopter Dunking drills at *RNAS Yeovilton* and the Damage Repair Unit at *HMS Raleigh*, with a days walking wedged in between.

Everyone enjoyed the activities and I'm sure it will be on the calendar for next year.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col S Vickery**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Reid**

REGIMENTAL WEEKEND 21 – 23 JULY 06

The Regtl weekend was an opportunity for the Regt to show itself off to the local community and have a good time doing it. The night of 21 July saw a Cocktail Party for local dignitaries and a concert by the Corps Band in the beautiful setting of the ruins of the Bishop's Palace in St Davids. An excellent finger buffet was provided by the Regt's chefs, followed by a barbeque. This was but a prelude for Saturday's events.

At 1030hrs on Saturday 22 July, the Regt exercised its right to march through the streets of the City of St Davids with "Swords drawn, Bayonets fixed and Bands playing." The Regt made an impressive sight as it was applauded through the streets by locals and tourists alike. Parading at the cross in the city centre the Regt was honoured to be inspected and addressed by the Lady Mayoress of St Davids before marching off once more accompanied by the Corps band.

Saturday afternoon saw the inaugural Brawdy 10s Rugby competition with 4 local teams from Haverfordwest, St Davids, and Pembroke Dock and a newly formed team from 14 Sig Regt. The competition was organised by **WO2(SSM) Morgan** and was a great success with Haverford West A beating 14 Sig Regt in a thrilling back and forth final. Neither team had lost a match in the run up to the final and 14 Sig Regt had only conceded 1 try up to that point. The whole contest was played out in true fun spirit with all teams producing some excellent moments of rugby. The trophy was "loaned" to Haverfordwest A by the CO, along with Man of the Match awards and awards to the 2 excellent referees.

Finally, Sunday was the Regimental Fete, organised by **SSgt Collins-Brown**. This had stands ranging from crazy golf to rally cars to clay pigeon shooting to everyone's favourite – the Stocks. All the field officers from the CO down took turns to be soaked in the stocks in the name of charity. The day was a great success with the Corps band really earning their pay with a recital in the improvised bandstand. Thanks go out to all those involved. All monies raised over the weekend will be split between the Regtl and Sqn charities.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Williams**
SSM **WO2(SSM) W Morris**

EXERCISE SNOWDON DRAGON JULY 06

On 10 July the QM's Dept set off up to Capel Curig in North Wales for a week of Level 2 AT. The big adventure started on the Tuesday with **Sgt Gaz Farrimond** taking a group hill walking (mountain climbing, if you were to ask **Cpl Neil Gibbard**) in the Snowdonia National Park, while **Sgt Ritchie Anthony** and the lads went kayaking. Both groups had a fantastic time especially as the weather was spot on.

Wednesday saw the groups swap over. **Cpl Paul Davies** chose to hill walk for a second day due to his fear of white water kayaking (a lake then a bit of a river). **Sgt Nik Williams** was "arguably the best on the water" (his words but no-one else's). The rest of his group said he was like a spider trying to avoid the bath plug hole.

Thursday was another glorious day as we headed out rock climbing. We held a competition for the best disco legs and the prize went to **LCpl Danny Rees**, while the prize for the biggest sufferer of vertigo went to **Cpl Lee Custance** after he only managed the dizzy heights of 3 feet off the ground.

Freedom of the City of St Davids Parade on Saturday 22 July 2006

Some of the lads were a bit sore from the week spent in Snowdonia but all of them agree that it was a great week and look forward to the next chance they get to take part in AT.

The QM Department on Ex SNOWDON DRAGON

EXERCISE LONG WALK MAY 2006 – *by Sgt Jamie Leishman*

With the planning complete, boots and Bergens checked, we set off on the short drive to Cardigan Bay, West Wales to begin walking the first of 7 legs to complete all 186 miles of the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path. The challenge was to raise money for a local charity to help prevent the closure of Withybush Hospital, used by many service families. Walking the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path takes you along one of the finest stretches of coastline in Britain, so we all felt privileged to be able to take part, which has now been completed in 3 consecutive years by TM Troop.

At the start we took the obligatory photo, rechecked our kit, and then arranged where to meet the admin team for lunch. Having an admin team allowed us to travel light, but this didn't dissuade **LCpl Kaitani** from carrying a full 30 kilos on the first part of the walk. After meeting up with the admin team for lunch, he saw the sense in the minimalist approach and reduced his weight significantly, deciding to start his Lanyard Trophy trg after he completed this challenge. The morning started off well, but later we were shown how fickle the Welsh weather could be as it began to pour with rain on our approach to Fishguard, our campsite for the night.

After an hour of walking at the start of Day 2, there were the first grumbles of aches and pains and everyone was happy to see **Cpl Haslam** driving the Land Rover up the road to the breakfast RV point. After a hot container meal, we were fired up for the 32 mile slog to Whitesands, where we would be camping that night. With our muscles loosening up, we were getting into our stride and eating up the miles. With the sun high in the sky and not a cloud in sight, we began to feel the familiar sting on the back of our necks and we realised we were well on our way to a good sun tan. The walk passed within a kilometre of camp so we had visits from the CO, the Regt FofS, **WO1 Brown** and the TOT, **Capt Brown**, who all walked a section of the coastal path with us.

Over the course of the walk, some of the original walkers dropped out due to injuries but we gained walkers too. We had a mixture of sunny, cloudy, and rainy weather, often all at the same time. A special mention has to go to **Cpl Hurst** and **Cpl McMillan** who managed to complete all 186 miles of the walk.

224 SIGNAL SQUADRON – RAF DIGBY

OC **Maj J Brown** Int Corps
SSM **WO2(SSM) G Shuck**

DEPLOYED OPS – OPERATION HERRICK QUIZ NIGHT
- by SSgt(FofS) Street

On Friday 21 Jul 06, deployed members of 224 Sig Sqn organised a quiz for all personnel based at Lashkar Gah on Op HERRICK. The evening was organised by **SSgt(FofS) Dave Street** (Question Master), with **Sgt Wayne Addison**, **Sgt Ross Harmer** and **SAC Pete Downward** as his trusty scorers. In all 14 teams took part including elements of the British mil and civilians, American civilians, and the Estonian mil. The top 3 teams received $50, $30, and $10 prizes respectively. The eventual winners were 'The Channel 4 News Team', comprising members of the J2 cell, scoring a very creditable 56 points out of a possible 70. After the quiz, a number of sporting items were auctioned; these having been collected by members of 156 Provo Coy RMP from UK based companies such as Manchester United, who donated a signed football. In all, $400 was raised for the 'Aschiania' charity, which assists orphaned children all over Afghanistan, and will be handed over by **WO1(RSM) Chris Coates** when he arrives back. All in all, the evening went very well and was enjoyed by all who attended.

PARTY IN THE PARK - *by Fg Off Keith Dear*

On 22 July, RAF Digby held its annual Party in the Park. 224 Sig Sqn had been involved from the outset, with Sqn personnel being responsible in the main for the advertising and promotion of the event. In the early stages of the planning, **Sgt Bob Crozier** worked hard to ensure the event was advertised through all the traditional means of print and radio media as well as roadside banners. For the first time extensive use was made of the internet for promotion purposes, with **LCpl Axel Rose** assisting by setting up the facility for online payment, taking the majority of the advance bookings. As the event neared, **Sgt Andy Watkin** could be found in Lincoln High Street, ably assisted by a cast of 'volunteers' including **Sgt Jules Edge**, **LCpl Travis Wood** and **SAC Martin Hurst**, handing out fliers to Lincoln's shoppers.

On the day the Sqn was tasked with management of the car park, an unglamorous duty, made more so by the bedraggling effect of intermittent thunderstorms. During one, **Cpl Titch Evans**, did a passable impression of a drowning rat as the rain cascaded across his not insubstantial frame. Despite this less than ideal situation, **Cpl Evans** lost none of the humour for which soldiers are famous. "It could be worse Sir," he shouted, "We could be on holiday!" The man had clearly taken leave of his senses.

The event itself undoubtedly suffered because of the rain. Despite this, those who endured the trial by water were rewarded with some real highlights. The Silver Dragons Martial Arts Display Team put on awe-inspiring display of skill in the main arena, while RAF Swing Wing eclipsed **Natasha Hamilton** with a rambunctious performance. Despite the rain, the powder was kept dry and the day concluded with the now traditional spectacular firework display. The Station Comd extended his thanks to the committee for organising the event, and I should like to extend this in particular to those from 224 Sig Sqn who assisted me.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Cooper**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Conlan**

ROMEO TROOP

The last few months have seen the Tp deployed on numerous exs and enjoying a busy time. On 14 Jun, Romeo Tp deployed on the Regtl ex to the far reaches of the UK on the Isle of Skye, where the Tp performed to an outstanding level, intercepting and

reporting naval activity on Ex NEPTUNE WARRIOR. Despite the howling rain and gale force winds Romeo Tp's input to the ex was highly commended. However when the rest of the Regt returned to the comforts of Brawdy, the Romeo Tp road show pressed on to JSSU Digby, where we conducted another successful ex reporting on the Waddington Air Show.

The Tp was rewarded with some exceptional and outstanding reports, praising the condition of the vehs after everyone put all their efforts into preparing for the Royal Signals Inspection Team (RSIT). All in all, this has been a very hardworking but rewarding period for the Tp and we now look forward to future demanding deployments, particularly Greece in November.

SUPPORT TROOP

It was a busy month for Sp Tp due to the Regtl ex in the Isle of Sky and Loch Ewe in Scotland. After a mammoth 3 night drive up to Inverness, Sp Tp was released to perform their tasking for the ex. Luckily, as target vehs, we were left out of the ex NBC phase. Target vehs were split into 2 OPFOR Gps; Gp 2 living in a warm house with satin sheets and their own chef, while Gp 1 were living in conditions that the cast of "Lost" would have turned their noses up at. However everyone was treated to the pleasant Scottish weather; if it wasn't torrential rain or hurricane style winds, the midges were out in force so that it made standing outside a brave, yet foolish decision. However both Gps sent numerous radio serials enabling the Regt to practise its intercept and analysis with great success. After 10 days in the field we endured the same long road move back to Brawdy, very tired but happy to be home. The last mention is the award for the Golden Blanket which goes to **Sgt Cowlard** who amassed more time in his doss bag than the troops on ex managed in the 2 weeks!

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC	**Maj Paul Flavell**
SSM	**WO2 Taff Morgan**

TANGO TROOP - *by Sig Deeley*

Tango Tp has yet again had a couple of busy months preparing, sorting, and organising. We recently returned from the Regtl ex on Skye. Time constraints being what they are, we went straight into our RSIT preparation, which went well and our hard work paid off.

To put work behind us, we had our Sqn function in the middle of the month organised by **LCpl Carter,** which went exceptionally well. It was held in the Wolfs Castle Hotel and had a very good turnout, with the theme of the night being 'Stars in Their Eyes'. This had everyone laughing, especially **LCpl Morge** as James Brown, **Sgt Jenkins** as Tom Jones, **Cpl Tucker** as Robbie Williams and well done to **Sig Donkin** who won as Ronan Keating.

VICTOR TP - *by LCpl Kingsley-Hughes*

We've spent a lot of time away from Brawdy recently, keeping busy with things such as the Morrison Cup and the Regtl ex. Unfortunately, what should have been a nice break from Welsh weather turned out to be an extremely wet and windy ex on Skye! It also meant 3 nights of convoy driving to the North of Scotland before going to our separate locations, where fortunately we stayed for the majority of the ex. A few blown over portaloos later, we started the journey back to Wales, typically just as the sun came out!

The pace seemed relentless returning to RSIT, range days and CFTs happening at times we didn't even know existed! We've also got FIBUA trg coming up and then it'll be time to wind down for summer leave before getting straight back into the swing of things with Ex LION SUN in September. I should imagine that the 6-week ex in Cyprus will provide us with the suntan we missed out on during the Regtl ex!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

OC	**Maj SG Scott**
SSM	**WO2 KN Smith**

EX GRIFFINS FOCUS

This year's Regtl ex was held in deepest darkest North West Scotland - not too dissimilar to wet West Wales. We deployed in our role as current holders of the Regt's SLE capability. As an ODETTE Sqn, we had never participated on a Regtl ex with the Scarus eqpt however the SLE component of the Sqn had completed several exs prior to deploying and was a well-formed team. The SLE CP and Scarus Sensor 2 avoided the 3-day road trip to Scotland, by flying to RAF Lossiemouth in a Hercules. Apart from being target practice for 2 Tornados en route, everything ran smoothly especially for **LCpl Smith**, who slept for the entire flight! Other than missing out on the 'man test' of a drive it meant that we had tested our preparation for flight and that we had no 'showstoppers' – apart from the 20 tubes of issue mosquito repellent that were confiscated!

LCpl Smith, Cpl Perks and Sig Grice on the C130 bound for Scotland

The ex phase flew by and our timely intercept and reporting made a difference. The locations however, were challenging. **SSgt Butler**, **Cpl Perks** and Sensor 2 spent the 2 weeks in a swamp while **SSgt Arundel**, **Sgt Flanagan** and Sensor 1 had to deal with up-turned portaloos. While we had to batten down the hatches through several storms, we were glad not to be with the

OC, **Maj Scott**, at BEWCC where the midge plague was of biblical proportions. In spite of the obvious clash with the World Cup, it was fortunate that there was a 90-minute ceasefire by the Enemy Forces every England game! The ex phase proved that the SLE capability is achieving its R1 status and would be ready to deploy should the call come.

MOUFLON PHOENIX

What is becoming our annual Sqn reconstitution ex happened again during the first week of July. Thanks to **WO2(SSM) Smith** we had a brilliant week of both educational and adventurous activities in Thorney Island. Many of the Sqn got through the Underwater Escape Trainer at *RNAS Yeovilton*. Upside down, underwater and in the dark, there is no polite "after you" and it was self-preservation that came first. **Sig Hames** decided to unbuckle before coming to a halt and after being thrown around the fuselage earned his group a 'reshow'. Our visit to the Royal Marines museum gave **LCpl Bosher** the opportunity to show off his knowledge with a quiz before we left. We had 2 days of mountain biking, go-karting, horse riding, sailing, and power boating, and the latter saw **Sig Harman** do an impressive back flip out of the RIB and into the sea. With the sun out and Portsmouth close by, a good week was had by all.

14 SIGNAL TROOP (EW) – OPERATION TELIC

The Regt's enduring commitment to Op TELIC in Iraq continues. The overall mission remains the same, although the situation has changed somewhat over the last year with UK troops being targeted much more frequently. In true fashion the Tp is a right old mixture of Royal Signals, Int Corps and RAF personnel as well as **WO2 'Tommo' Tomkinson**, our Aussie attached WO, who is finishing off his time at the Regt on the front line!

Half of the current Tp have previously deployed to Iraq in an EW role which allowed the new team to settle into theatre and get on with the job much more efficiently. Morale has remained very high throughout despite a few close shaves. The sp team, comprising **LCpl 'Hos' Hoszowskyj**, **Sig Lashbrook** and **Cfn Hart** at Basra Air Station is kept under close control by **Sgt Jamie O'Reilly** ensuring that the guys visit the gym at least once a day in order for them to watch him pump iron. The EWLO has had the pleasure of working with 2 high calibre Int WOs, **A/WO2 Todd McCartney** and **WO2 Al Jeffs**. **A/WO2 McCartney** should be congratulated on the recent award of a GOC's Commendation. The EWLO and Int WO work as part of the Operational Intelligence Support Group (OISG) at Div HQ and are kept exceptionally busy reacting to the ever changing op tempo and demands on our resources and manpower.

As for the 'Out Dets', well they continue to work as hard as ever. The Tp relies heavily on our tech, **Cpl Owen Boyle**, to keep our kit working in the hot, dusty conditions. In addition our lone Spec Op, **LCpl Wright**, continues the task of being out of trade in an analyst's post and doing a cracking job.

As for the rest, well they're RAF and Int Corps, but they continue to earn their money and provide an outstanding service to the comds on the ground.

Op TELIC – Our team in the north

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Jase Goldsworthy**

OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

16 Sig Regt Gp is commanded by **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**. It is an amalgamation of 7 and 16 Sig Regt personnel and has been providing strategic comms throughout theatre to both the ISAF IX and Op HERRICK missions in Afghanistan. As well as providing comms, Kabul Sp Unit, manned by soldiers from HQ Sqn controls stores in and out of theatre for Op HERRICK. There are also two platoons from 16 Sig Regt providing Force Protection (FP) to HQ ISAF, Kabul and the surrounding area.

ISAF IX - *by Signals Support Group (SSG) HQ ISAF, KABUL*

OC 255 Sig Sqn **Maj A Long**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A Maylett**

2nd LINE PROVISIONAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM (PRT)
- by Sig Chadwick

Over the past few months our 11 man team has been extremely busy expanding existing comms at the PRTs and enabling greater capability. We travel all over Afghanistan to places like Herat, Masar-e-Sharif (MeS), Konduz and Chagcharan. During my tour so far, I've only spent an accumulated 3 weeks back at HQ ISAF in Kabul, where we are based.

I have spent almost all the tour out installing the cable infrastructure at all the PRTs. This isn't uncommon for the rest of our team either. We always have guys out and about in 2 – 6 man teams doing their respective jobs.

It is great getting out to different and new places and liaising with other nationalities. The PRTs always look forward to seeing us.

Recently at Regional Command North (RCN) in MeS, I was called "the most wanted man in theatre" by **Col Tiepe**, the Comd RCN. Everyone wants new cables installing, but it was nice to feel needed!

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM (RCST), REGIONAL COMMAND NORTH (RCN), MASAR-E-SHARIF (MeS).

Chief RCST **Lt Sally Green**
SSgt RCST **SSgt Andy Young**

The RCST have now settled well into their isolated det in MeS. There are 11 of us here and we are busy dealing with the demands of international Staff Officers and their inability to log onto any NATO CIS without problems! We have all had the opportunity to visit the PRTs around N Afghanistan. **Cpl Neil Margrie** took **Sig Acton** and **Sig Fox** on patrol to a hospital in Maimana, after being stranded there for 5 days. **Sig Fox** should have sought guidance whilst at the hospital after biting the head of a locust earlier in the week!

Sig Steve Talling was finally persuaded to shave off the moustache he'd grown for a bet, after he was informed he looked just like a German! **SSgt Andy Young** is busy trading off the Tp Comd for new air con units for his ISO office! **Sgt Vicky Charnock** is training for a half marathon in Camp Souter – 24 laps of the same circuit! **LCpl Westmoreland** is still fighting a losing battle to get his skin to turn from blue to red, without success. **Cpl Sarah Drummond** is questioning her nationality after dressing up as a German during the World Cup semi finals and **Sig Dixon** is still trying to acclimatise!

As the R&R phase slowly passes us by, we can look forward to the huge NATO CIS expansions that are planned for the whole RCN, the relaying of endless fibre cable dug up by the Afghan shovels and the daily sandstorms that do not exfoliate the skin!

Regional Command Support Team, Regional Command North in Masar-e-Sharif

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM (WEST) – HERAT
- by Sig Howland

Tp OC **Lt McDonagh**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Douglas** and **Sgt Johnson**

It has been a busy couple of months for the RCST(W) team, with the Regional Area Coordinator (W) moving 15km from the PRT to our location, bringing all their kit with them. This was installed and tested, which meant many late nights for the "cone-heads" (or IS Engineers as they prefer to be called).

The food in the Italian and Spanish cookhouses has taken some getting used to, and there have not been as many cases of loose bowels for some time now. So we do have something to be thankful for on that count. However some people do have a greater regard for it than others. **Sig Howland** has a special place in his heart for Piranha, a delicacy in many parts of Italy and a real treat for us at lunchtime in the Italian restaurant!

Nevertheless, the new lads quickly settled into life at RCST(W), getting used to deploying without much notice (if any at all!) to the Western Regions' PRTs , either by veh, helicopter, or Hercules. The quiet days in between are usually spent in the gym, topping up tans, building on our newly created "funhouse" (a rest area behind our tents), or organising sports with the other nationalities on camp. The latter usually ends up being quite competitive!

The RCST(W) team continues to go from strength to strength, and a great time is being had by all, roll on R&R, and end of tour!

Sgt Johnson and Sig Griffiths with Portuguese Commandos in Farah

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM (SOUTH) – KANDAHAR - *by Sig McGee*

RCST(S) deployed to Kandahar Airfield on 5 June. Our main objective throughout the op is to provide NATO data and voice comms alongside the Canadian led Multi National Bde HQ and Sig Sqn for Coalition Task Force AEGIS HQ. We are also providing some NATO comms to secondary units.

Currently, we are using UK supplied eqpt, with Talon being the core of the det, providing a satellite link to HQ ISAF in Kabul. This provides NATO and ISAF SECRET data networks.

However, all our eqpt is due to be replaced over the coming weeks and months by commercial kit. The first component, in the form of a microwave shot, has already been delivered and is due to be connected in the next few days.

Our team, spearheaded by **Lt Oldridge**, includes **Sgts Owen** and **Matthews**, **Cpls Wynter** and **Young**, **LCpl Pardoe** and **Sig McGee**. There were initial challenges setting up the det resulting in many long days (and nights), especially for **Sig Ligthelm**, our only IS Eng. Though we've temporarily lost **LCpl Filipo** to the heat and **Cpl Griffiths** and **Sig Smith** on loan to Lashkar Gah, we still hold firm in doing the job at hand and even find a little time to soak up the Kandahar sun. See you back in Germany in September with our tan!

HQ ISAF FORCE PROTECTION COMPANY - *by Sig Cowell*

The FP Coy has expanded its ops to include the trg of the Afghanistan National Police in Surobi, approximately 40km east of Kabul. **Sgt Morrison** and his "War Dogs" spent 2 weeks turning the keen but lightly trained local Police into a more professional and cohesive unit. As part of an on-going trg package, Multiple 7 gave lessons in subjects such as Personnel Search, Rules Of Engagement and Prisoner Handling. However, **LCpl Chesworth** (self proclaimed "hardest man in Afghanistan") gave his own lesson in how to scream like a girl when encountering a "large" spider. Despite this, the 2 weeks proved to be a great success.

The remainder of the Coy providing FP for HQ ISAF have continued with the "Hearts and Minds" op. Two local schools have been given some much-needed resources, thanks to the charity work that has been undertaken throughout the Bn. It has been rewarding to see these small but significant improvements throughout our tour.

Multiple 7 debrief after patrolling

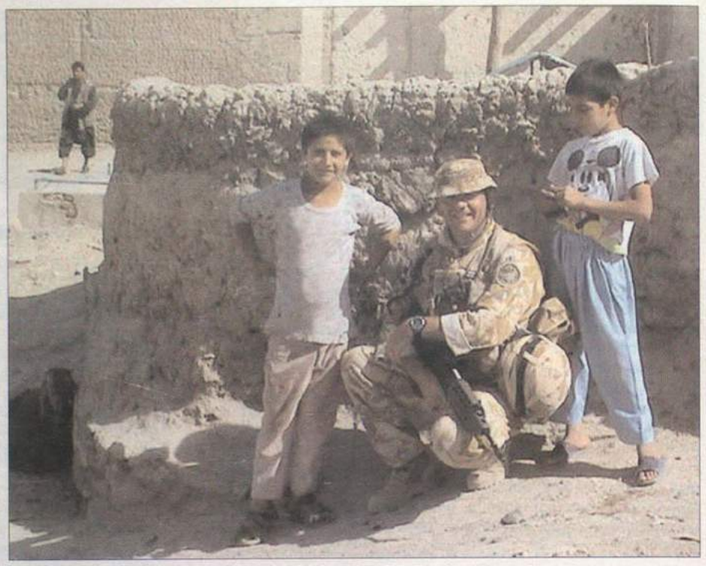
THE CO AND RSM ON ISAF FORCE PROTECTION PATROL
- by WO1(RSM) Goldsworthy

It was on Thursday 29 June, with the hot summer sun beaming down and the Kabul air thick with a combination of dust and exhaust fumes, that the scene was set for a quality afternoon of patrolling. The CO, **Lt Col Baines OBE** and myself gathered at the front gate of HQ ISAF and awaited the arrival of **Lt Osterloh,** the Comd of one of the 16 Sig Regt FP multiples. A quick briefing followed his arrival which included a check of the team's comms. We were split among the multiples with the CO and **QMSI WO2 Corner** in Team 2. I was happy to take up a rear guard position within Team 1.

The rusted gates swung open and the patrol set off. Unlike the drills common to NI, there was no need to hard target out through the gates, due to the protection afforded by the ISAF Green Zone, which provides cover to local movement in and out of the camp. Pushing out into the street in a northerly direction, we passed the American Embassy, which had been the scene of some local

unrest only 2 weeks previously. We worked our way through the narrow streets passing new and modern apartments under construction, a sure sign of improvement amongst the local community.

Bystanders on the streets, trying to shelter from the heat of the afternoon sun, seemed pleased to see us and greeted us with a mixture of English and Pashtu. Small children who have grown up with the presence of soldiers on their streets used more common greetings that have no doubt been passed on by many a patrol in the past. Weaving our way through the traffic filled streets with the constant reminder of OpTag trg in your mind, your senses are heightened by the activity levels around you. If something was to happen, where would I take up a fire position? Who looks out of place? Why is that man just standing on the corner of the street? Who's driving that car and does it match the ones we where briefed to look out for.



WO1(RSM) Goldsworthy meets some local children while on patrol in Kabul

All these thoughts plus the weight of the combat body armour, the assault vest laden with ammo, helmet and hydration pack started taking their toll. The streets opened up into an open area of waste land which sat at the foot of a small hill. "Team 1 go firm," came the call over the Personal Role Radios, "provide cover for Teams 2 and 3, while we take the higher ground." I settled myself into a comfortable fire position that provided me with a good view of both teams whilst they moved up the hill side. With the altitude at street level being some 5500ft, the effort required to climb the smallest of hills was enormous. Some 10 mins passed and the lads in the patrol started to point out a few local landmarks. Apparently we were next to the local swimming pool, which after years of neglect was only recognisable by a diving board hanging dangerously over a hole in the ground that didn't have a drop of water in it.

Eventually, the other teams had made their way to the top of the ridge, so we broke cover and pressed on. Now with the 2 teams on the high ground affording a good view over the approaching village, my team was able to confidently patrol its way through the narrow village streets. Again the greetings were as warm but the surroundings somewhat different. I asked the interpreter how it was that the difference in living standards could change so harshly in such a short distance. His response was simple. "There, Sir, are the Westerners, here are the locals." So my earlier thoughts of improving standards were dashed, though, the population seemed content and happy to see us moving amongst them.

We moved into the village centre to meet with the village elder. Using the interpreter, the CO engaged the bearded elder in conversation whilst the remainder of the patrol provided a protective screen. The elder was keen to talk and divulged that he was the proud father of 12 children and had 2 wives!

The village children played happily in the streets. When I asked one lucky boy, the proud owner of a football, if he was to be the next David Beckham, he laughed loudly. The rest of the children were trying their luck with the lads, trying in vain to get a pen of all things out of them. Time was moving on, so we bade our farewells and swung down through the narrow streets, passing open drains filled with domestic waste – the smell! We popped out of the village into the open streets and the main supply route leading back to HQ ISAF. The patrol straddled the road passing market traders with stalls packed with not quite fresh fruit and various local produce. The safety and security of the Green Zone was once again in sight; only the main roundabout to negotiate and we were home. It was only now that I realised how much I had sweated through my kit; my shirt and trousers were soaked.

Once back through the gates and after the debrief, we relaxed over a cool bottle of water. The remainder of the patrol had to take its place in the towers and were not afforded the time to change from that same sweaty gear.

The patrol was a great opportunity to get out and witness at first hand the local life style. The poor living standards of the people I saw saddened and humbled me. Inside the barriers, the reality of what we had just seen started to sink in and I thought about the impact Coalition Forces were having in Kabul and across Afghanistan.

OPERATION HERRICK 4 JOINT NETCEN – KANDAHAR

Joint Netcen is the nerve centre from which strategic and op comms for UK Forces across theatre is controlled. At the helm sits CO 16 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE** and his ops team. The CO has the honour of commanding the Close Sp Sig Sqn, which is mainly 7 Sig Regt soldiers at our Forward Operating Bases (FOBs), Camp Bastion, FOB Price and Lashkar Gar. Reports from these locations can be found in the 7 Sig Regt submission to *The Wire*.

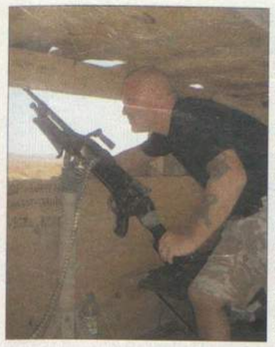
COMBAT OUTPOST (COP) ROBINSON, SANGIN

- by Det Comd, Cpl Mee

Cpl Jock Mee and **LCpl Jim Raloka** deployed to COP Robinson on 1 July as a 2 man det with DU JOCS and Secure Voice. When the notice to move came, we were unsure what to expect. We had heard rumours that it was like a camp out of a Vietnam film and contacts were quite frequent. We soon found out at first hand that these were not rumours, but fact.

We were welcomed by the sound of the guns from I Bty, based at this location, engaging the enemy to the north. When shown our accommodation, which isn't exactly five-star standard, by the hotel porter we saw that we had our very own toilet, but shared a room with the local insect community and other vermin. **Jim** refused to tip him.

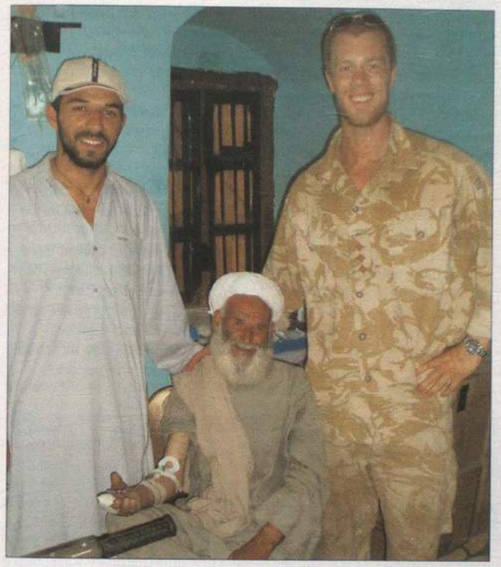
The "day in - day out" routine of this place varies but generally involves – emptying the rubbish, doing the washing up, cooking our 3 course meals from rations, being stood-to, waiting to be



Cpl Mee at Combat Outpost Robinson

stood-to, firing the 50 cal, waiting to be overrun, hearing the guns firing and explosions downtown and of course shots being fired.

Our primary role is comms and ensuring that they remain up and running, as well as helping the staff should any problems arise with the eqpt. We are fulfilling our 2 roles up here, which is being a soldier first and a signaller second. I leave on R&R soon and **Jim** a week later, but we shall be returning to finish our tour here, which we are both looking forward to.



RMO Capt Theo Booker treats local Afghan elder in Nowzad

COMD 1 SIG BDE VISIT TO CAMP BASTION

Brig Nick Pope, Comd 1 Sig Bde, took a day out of his busy schedule at HQ ISAF to visit his soldiers in Helmand province with a trip to Camp Bastion. After a brief from the CO, Tp SSgt and acting Tp OC, he spoke to the guys running the det. As well as getting an update on the busy comms work going on within the Tp, he learnt about the welfare facilities available to the soldiers at Bastion. Pleased to hear the world cup football was not being missed, the single soldiers of the Tp showed the Brig their entries on the "Hot or Not" website. This is a website where you post a photo of yourself and rate and chat to other entrants. The single boys were enjoying particular success with photos of themselves in desert combat uniform.

The Brig has strong affiliations with the Gurkhas, so at the end of the day after visiting one of their sangars, he and the det were lucky enough to sit down for a delicious Gurkha curry meal with **Maj Dan Rex** and members of D Coy, 2 RGR.

Brig Nick Pope with the Signals Troop at Camp Bastion

16 SIG REGT GP RMO IN THE NOWZAD PLATOON HOUSE

Our Regtl MO, **Capt Theo Booker** spent 3 weeks up in the Nowzad Platoon House with a platoon from D Coy, 2RGR and an element of the Afghan National Army. The house is attacked 2 – 3 times a day by Anti-Coalition Militia. On one occasion the "Doc" assisted by returning fire from the roof but was coaxed down by a Gurkha Sgt with the plea: "Doctor Saab, please come down you are too important to us." Indeed, when the locals heard of a doctor in town, the Platoon House had regular visits from the villagers for treatment. The Coalition Force and Afghan Force in Nowzad assist in providing an element of security and stability in volatile Northern Helmand. A tour of extremes, our Doc goes from a basic and dangerous existence in Northern Helmand to a more comfortable life at HQ ISAF in Kabul.

BACK AT CAMP – ELMPT STATION

Whilst 255 and HQ Sqns have been deployed on ISAF IX or Op HERRICK in Afghanistan, the vast majority of those remaining in Elmpt Station have been aggregated under 230 Sig Sqn Gp and have been conducting intensive pre-deployment trg in order to conduct a RiP in September.

The trg has included: 3 weeks annual MATTS and basic low-level skills trg, 1 week basic range package including APWT, 1 week pre-OPTAG ex followed by 1 week of OPTAG itself, 1 week long live-firing stage 4 and 5 range package, 1 week comms mission-rehearsal ex, intermittent veh maint, when trg allowed, 2 weeks AT in Norway and a plethora of theatre-specific comms and IS courses in locations from Luxembourg to Latina.

In addition, the Regt won the BA(G) Minor Units Swimming and Water Polo Championships and went back to Aldershot to compete and do well in the Army Championships. The remnants of the Regt's football team were successful in a mini-cup held at JHQ but were less successful in a 5-a-side competition held in the Netherlands.

The intensive trg has now finished except for the occasional sweep-up and the majority of personnel are heading off on their pre-deployment leave. Those that are not fortunate enough to be deploying have been covering the vast bulk of duties including life guarding, security duties, support to the trg, Op HERMES, welfare driving and any other tasks that are thrown their way.

EX TELEMARK BACKSTOP 10 – 20 JULY 2006

Ex TELEMARK BACKSTOP was a 230 Sig Sqn AT ex based out of the Joint Services Training Centre (JSTC) in Evje, Southern Norway. The ex comprised 2 mini-expeds of 3 days and 2 nights. The activities undertaken were trekking in the Setesdal mountain range and canoeing in Bylandsfjord. 4 Instructors and 17 soldiers attended the exped.

Having completed the 14 hour drive to Evje on Mon 10 July, the next day was an admin day to allow us to settle into the JSTC, issue the loan pool stores, conduct confirmatory recces and complete canoe familiarisation. The gps were split into two, with one gp conducting the canoeing expedition in Week 1 and the other gp the trekking exped. This was reversed for the second exped phase. Having been promised a heat wave by the centre's owner, **Brian Desmond**, it failed to materialise for the first few days and the sky looked distinctly British. However towards the end of Week 1 and for the rest of the ex, glorious sunshine was the order of the day.

The trekking took place in the Setesdal Mountain Range, which is approximately 2 hours drive north from JSTC. The routes taken on the first and second exped phase were different to ensure that the maximum amount of the range was covered during the 2 weeks. The average distance covered per day was 10km, taking approximately 6 – 8 hours including rests. The expeds were totally self-sufficient and on several days did not encounter any other life except for mosquitoes and reindeer. Wilderness camping was permitted within the range, so we had the freedom to choose exactly where we wished to stay each night. On all occasions, campsites were located next to lakes to ensure a fresh water supply and to provide dramatic views from the tent door! The terrain was very similar to the Lake District, rough underfoot, several ascents and descents and very marshy in places, however I would say the views and quality of lakes were superior. ORP was issued to all participants as their food for the duration of the exped but Super Noodles and other supplements appeared on a regular occasion. Everyone found the trekking phase challenging and several members' feet can show testament to that!

Ex TELEMARK BACKSTOP

The canoeing took place in the nearby Byglandsfjord, approximately a 10 minute drive from JSTC. The canoes were of the traditional open tandem variety and kit space was limited. As a result, no tents were taken for these expeds; instead, shelters were constructed using the canoes themselves, spinnaker sails and groundsheets. Once again, camping was allowed in most places and the choice site was usually a secluded beach somewhere on the fjords banks. The canoeists tried a variety of skills including attempting to 'sail' the canoes, raft and shelter building. Both groups managed to canoe to the top of the fjord and back which was no mean feat. Escaping from the sun reflecting off the water was a harder challenge!

The 2 days between the exped phases had been allocated to R&R and admin. The main R&R activity was a visit to the Canon Museum in the nearest large town of Kristiansands. This museum is based around the world's second largest canon ever to be mounted on land. It was used by the Germans during their occupation of Norway in WW2 to defend the shipping lanes between Norway and Denmark. After the visit was complete, the group had a few hours to look around the town and then we headed back to JSTC for a BBQ. The second R&R day included a morning of go-karting and then preparation for the second exped phase.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO **Lt Col DA Craft**
RSM **WO1 R Dyer**

HQ SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Horton**
SSM **WO2 G Chapman**

EXERCISE LION BEAUFIGHTER 06 - *by SSgt Collins*

Ex LION BEAUFIGHTER 06 was the Regt's annual battle camp ex and this year it took the form of an Escape and Evasion (E&E) type ex, within the Otterburn and Kielder trg areas. The Regt arrived in Otterburn on the Monday evening after a long day travelling. After a series of briefings, the exercising troops settled down for what was possibly to be their only comfortable night's sleep for the next few days.

Before taking to their heels on the E&E Phase, all participants went through a round of survival stands within the Kidland forest, led by **WO2(RQMS) Crooks**. **Sgt Ian Milsom's** food preparation lesson proved to be a real favourite with many of the soldiers of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn, but was not for the faint hearted, as soldiers had to prepare a rabbit and cook it for their evening meal. The final lesson of the day was on shelter building and there was a real incentive to pay attention, because the shelter they built would be the group's home for the night.

After spending a night in their newly built and tastefully furnished homes, the troops were stripped of all their kit and left with only a button compass and a photocopied map of the trg area.

They were given their start grid, and set off on their chosen route of up to 60km across arduous terrain, with the hunter force made up of the Regt's Lanyard Trophy wannabees under **Lt Richie Boardman,** hot on their tails.

To add to the realism, **WO2 Chapman** and **WO2 Jones** also got in on the act chasing them over the hills on the Regt's Harley motorbikes. On reaching a checkpoint groups were met by a friendly agent, who rewarded them with their next grid, and if they were lucky and the DS were in a generous mood, they might also get a bit of a ration pack to share.

To add to their tired state of mind the groups also had to remember info to pass on to the next agent. The groups not only had to run and hide from the hunter force but the weather was the hottest of the year; great for sunbathing but not for running over Otterburn. **SSgt Cooper's** group was the fastest around the course in a very good time, but the team, led by **WO2(SSM) Surendra**, was the overall winner gaining the most points.

The ex finished in true Regtl style on the Thursday with a BBQ and a well-deserved rest in a comfortable bed.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj GB Lamb**
SSM **WO2 DW Dunbar**

EXERCISE SCORPION ADVENTURE DRAGON

Ex SCORPION ADVENTURE DRAGON was 220 Sig Sqn's AT week, which took place at Penally in South Wales. The location of the camp – right next to one of Wales' best coastal golf courses was obviously a complete surprise to golf mad **Sgt Maj Wayne Dunbar.** Activities on offer included coastal and hill walking, canoeing, rock climbing and the Tenby Trout Challenge. With perfect weather gracing the week the Sqn quickly established a highly competitive lobster look-alike competition, **Sig Joseph** took an early lead thanks to some committed tanning but was made to look distinctly amateur by **Sig Wayne Harker** who easily forged ahead thanks to his beautiful even coverage. On the water, **Flt Lt Smudge Smith** took time out from his usual role as MAOT Team Leader to introduce Sqn personnel to the joys of Canadian Canoeing. With a keen eye for detail, he carefully ensured that the current was against the canoeists for the whole trip and there were many sore shoulders to testify to the arduous nature of the ex.

Everyone managed to get wet on the so called 'confidence tests', which were meant to show us how stable and forgiving the boats actually are. Following these tests, nobody had any confidence whatsoever that we wouldn't end up in the drink at the slightest touch of a wave. **Sgt Holly Glen** and **Cpl Stacey Lyon** were so keen to practise their drills that they carried out the rescue procedures; some would say not deliberately, about 5 times more then anybody else. Not content with gunwale walking and head dipping they went on to complete simultaneous forward exits, individual rear exits, abandon ships, abandon ships with forward roles and a whole range of advanced manoeuvres. We were all very impressed – funny how no-one volunteered to paddle back with either of them.

Meanwhile on the rock face **Sig Pinnington** destroyed most of his remaining brain cells getting to grips with his rock climbing harness which he modelled back to front, inside out and upside down before finally getting it on the right way. **FofS Richards** impressed all with his ability to stick to the rock as did **Cpl Wal Morgan**, leading everyone to wonder whether the Tech Dept have been experimenting with radioactive spiders when the should have been doing first lines. Everone is looking out for suspicious sticky substances in the workshops. At the end of the week the Sqn finished with a BBQ on the beach and an impromptu game of volleyball against 12 Mech Bde, glad to say that 220 won and celebrated victory in the traditional '2 Can' way.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JA Kennedy**
SSM **WO2 Surendra**

LCPL MILAN'S OP TELIC CHARITY RAFFLE DRAW IN AID OF THE GURKHA WELFARE TRUST (GWT) - *by LCpl Milan*

Whilst on Ops in Iraq, I had the distinct privilege of being responsible for running the Camel Toe Bar for the JHF(I). In order to raise funds for the GWT I organised a charity raffle draw and BBQ, with the added intention to raise awareness of the Trust and the Gurkhas. More than 200 soldiers and officers participated in the Charity event. **Capt Palmer** briefly recounted the history of the Gurkhas and the role of the GWT.

The raffle prizes were a ceremonial Kukri and a normal working Kukri. At the end, almost everyone seemed to know a little more about the history of the Gurkhas and I raised £401 for the charity. I would like to thank all those who took part and played a part in making this function a tremendous success.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

EXERCISE RED HAND III 244 SIGNAL SQUADRON BATTLE CAMP - *by Sgt Seaun Lovell*

244 Sig Sqn deployed to Warcop Ranges during the first 2 weeks in May for its annual battle camp. The camp started with the advance party deploying and getting straight to work, while **Sgt Buzz Bury** shopped for designer clothes, and **Sgt Ian Wells** showed off his dancing skills down the local FIBUA village. Sunday came and the troops arrived on a grey drizzly day, thinking of things to come, and after briefs were taken to their luxury accommodation. After un-packing, they were then more than happy to track down the bar and the fruit machines. The week started with an APWT in the rain, with the highlight being the arrival of a burger wagon, which obviously helped as the scores seemed to go straight up. The next 2 days were spent on the IBSR with back round activities of first aid, CBRN and dry drills on sect attacks and withdrawals.

The weather was good, spirits were high, none more so than when **Sig Nev Navalua** showed us his own brand of 'fire and movement' that even Body and Doyle would have been proud of. The third phase of the battle camp involved a culmination of all the trg over the last 2 days, with **Sgt Buzz Bury** running a very realistic, if not long, CBRN scenario, and **SSgt Sid Snape** covering everyone in fake blood and blowing everything and everyone up in his first aid scenario. The live firing culminated in a sect withdrawal under fire, up and down some very difficult terrain. The sects were given free reign with their decision making and proved that everything they had been taught over the last 3 days had been taken in and understood, with all sects performing to a high standard. However a special mention should be given to all members of Sects 1 and 4, under the guidance of **Cpl Titch Vellacott** and **Cpl Giltrow** on an outstanding performance. The final day saw the troops taking part in the Sect in Defence shoot. Although all the drills were carried out to a very high standard, I couldn't help thinking that the troops were more interested in seeing who could set fire to the range with tracer first. However they let themselves down on this front with only one small fire started by **LCpl Amsden's** sect, and then only after over 1,000 rounds. After a quick clean up of camp and a shower, the troops set off with the finest of pack lunches under their arms, and tales of how weary they set off for the Lake District and a weeks AT.

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AS) REGIMENTAL FOOTBALL TEAM - *by Cpl J Gilding*

The Regtl football team kicked off this year's season with an intense pre-season trg program. This consisted of a number of "bleep" tests and some highly challenging core stability trg This did not bode well for **Cpl Andy Heney** and **Sig Culliford**. This excellent physical trg put the team in great shape for what was to be an outstanding season. Out of the 6 competitions the squad entered, we were extremely successful; winning 4 and coming runners up in one. The team produced excellent consistency to win the Premier Division with great performances week in and week out, from the likes of **Cpl Macca McSween**, and **Sigs Dixon** and **Pinnington**. In the cup competitions there were some hard battles with wins coming in the dying stages of extra time and in other games where opposing teams were well beaten inside the 90 minutes. One such game was 21 Sig Regt *v* 3 UK Div Sig Regt, where the majority of their team were Corps players.

This fact did nothing to rattle us as we trounced the more experienced team 6-0, with goals coming from **Sigs Dicko Dixon** and **Gaz Magee** and 4 from **Cpl Gilders Gilding**. The team did have its fair share of disappointments with defeat in the final of the Signallers Cup to 7 Sig Regt. Although the team were defeated 3 – 0, man of the match was awarded to the oldest player in the team **Capt Andy Dick**. With such an excellent season this year, the team have a lot to live up to, but with the new season approaching morale in the squad remains high.

XXII 22 SIGNAL REGIMENT

The 22 Signal Regiment Implementation Team AKA "The Dirty Dozen"
Sig Bhim, Sgt Jaya, LCpl Salt, SSgt Bagbir, Sig Tek,
SSgt Rudd, WO1(FofS) Scaife, Capt Balfour, Lt Col Fraser, Maj Smith, Maj Alexander, WO2(RQMS) Heynes

This has been an exceptionally busy period for the Team, which is now a dozen strong and should be reaching the high thirties by October after several trips to Glasgow by **Capt Jamie Balfour** and excellent sp from MCM Divisions (all cap badges). The Regt 2IC, **Maj Dougy Wright,** coming from JCUFI, the RSM, **WO2 Reed** coming from ATR Lichfield, OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Dougie Craig** coming from 216, and several other key enabling staff will be pitching up in early autumn. They will help to develop the current plan and begin to put flesh on the bones to get the place up and running and ready for the bulk of personnel to arrive in Feb/Mar 07. We have also welcomed the arrival of **Maj Colin Alexander**, from ICSC(L) who has taken up the post of Ops Officer but will move to be OC 222 Sig Sqn and **Maj Dave Whitaker** from CCU, who will in turn take over as Ops Officer, **Capt Kath Tye,** who just returned to work after maternity leave and will be the RAO/Det Comd and finally **Sgt Edwards** from 40 Sig Regt(V) who is TM Tp Sgt.

UPDATE – IT'S OFFICIAL!

A major event took place on 14 June when the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, **Rt Hon Adam Ingram**, gave the following statement to the House of Commons. "It was announced by the Secretary of State to the House on 20 December 2004 (Official Report, column 1795) that it was the Government's intention to restructure the British Army to meet the evolving needs of modern operations. It was confirmed that 22 Signal Regiment was to be formed under Future Army Structures in 2007-2008. The Regiment will consist of a new Regimental Headquarters and three Squadrons, involving the transfer and resubordination of 248 Squadron from Colerne and 222 Squadron from Bulford, and the creation of the new 217 Squadron formed largely from personnel of 219 Squadron in York.

After detailed examination, I am now pleased to confirm that it has been decided (subject to further detailed work and Trade Union consultation) that it is our intention to form up the unit at the former RAF site at Stafford. This will enhance the Armed Forces presence currently provided by the Tactical Supply Wing of the Joint Helicopter Command. It is our aim to have 22 Signal Regiment fully formed, with all sub-units, personnel and equipment, with effect from 1 April next year (07). The proposal will see approximately 570 additional military personnel based at the site, who will be accommodated in the Stafford area. It is also anticipated that approximately 200 families are likely to move to the area, and there will be a requirement for a small number of administrative posts to support the Regiment. Taking account of other movements, there will be net decreases of approximately 120 uniformed personnel at Colerne, 130 at Bulford and 40 at York. There are no concomitant reductions in civilian staff anticipated at these locations."

This has meant that people are now starting to sit up and listen when their phone rings. **Maj Tom Smith** now has a spring in his step and is checking his mail every 5 mins to see if the cheques have arrived from the Defence Estates and the Regional Prime Contractor.

VISITS ARE US

We have also welcomed some senior visitors to MOD Stafford and 22 Sig Regt, which have clarified and explored a number of issues. All were briefed fully (over 50 PowerPoint slides!) and shown round the planned lay-down in MOD Stafford. Comd 143 (WM) Bde, **Brig Chris Murray CBE**, visited on 5 July to look around and took a number of developing station issues away with him, which his staff are closely engaged in.

Comd 1 Sig Bde, **Brig Nick Pope** and Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig Phil Davies** both visited (during their leave!) on 18 July to discuss which of them owns this particular hot potato and finally the SOinC(A) and Corps RSM, visited on 19 Jul. The Corps visits were useful as an external sanity check on the Implementation Team Leader's mad schemes and some clear direction – particularly regarding the creation of 217 Sig Sqn, the development of streamlined/lt ech and C2 capabilities to better sp Ptarmigan and to begin to think about the development of FALCON sp. The Ops Team are now beavering away to create an eqpt table for HQ Land to begin resourcing!

In addition, Comd 12 Sig Gp (des), **Col Charles Turner** visited and stayed overnight, leaving in no doubt that this is a superb site for the Regt and also his team, who are to be based at MOD Stafford. 12 Sig Gp will be in the same building as the RHQ, which should lead to joined up ex planning and affiliation sp to the TA Ptarmigan Regts. With the potential for elements of 35 Sig Regt to move here, Stafford could become a major Royal Signals hub. We have also hosted or enabled visits on the medical, security, PAYD and education side - with an average of 2 – 3 key visits a week, not including those purely focused on the infrastructure!

Elements of 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron lined up ready to return to Colerne

However, no visit is a chore as most people in the Corps will be involved to some degree in re-creating the Regt. Crucially, we have had a team up from 222 Sig Sqn in Bulford on a recce, who can confirm that first: Stafford is a cracking night out and second: being briefed by the Team Leader the day after is a struggle! This was a useful visit to bounce around ideas about single living accommodation and how to bring the sub-units in. We also had a Tp plus visit from 248 Sig Sqn, whose comd team were briefed, while the Tp carried out veh trials in the garages - confirming the lay-down plan and prompting the contractors to look at another option for secure garaging. This has ultimately led to the Regt getting more garage space in better condition.

THE DEVELOPING PLAN

A letter was sent to all COs in June to describe the plan, and an additional monthly SITREP is produced by the Team covering a host of issues. However, in outline The Implementation Team mission is:

"To form 22 Sig Regt, within a realistic estate solution, delivering IOC on 1 Apr 07 in order to complete Regimental integration, reaching FOC by 1 Dec 07."

In order for us to complete the build up of key infrastructure, depts and processes, the general intention is to create HQ Sqn and then plug in the existing Sqns, create 217 Sig Sqn and then reconfigure the Regt as required for future taskings. In the short term by Sep 06, we plan to build the team up (with skeleton RAO, Ops Team, QM Staff and key REME staff) to allow detailed planning and the key activities regarding standing up the Regt to begin to be tackled. By Nov, we should be almost 70 strong with some chefs, specialists, welfare staff and a small LAD element to begin to activate HQ Sqn functions. In early 2007, we should reach over 100 to create the full RHQ and HQ Sqn depth as well as key elements of 217 Sig Sqn, ready for the move of the bulk of the Regt bouncing through **Maj Gig Plumb** and his RSIT gang into Stafford in Feb/Mar 07.

We will then spend a few weeks with people milling about trying to find the cookhouse, do some bonding and then get heads down for the commitments ahead. At some point we will have a drill type of affair with flags, a band and (fingers crossed) some motorbikes and VIPs – but the plan is to wait until summer 07, so we can find the space and get elements of 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn back from op dusty places.

OTHER BUSINESS

The RQMS **WO2 Russ Heynes** is continuing to clog up the Minor New Works process and has also managed to fit in his CLM course. **SSgt Bagbir** has cut away to start establishing the Gurkha welfare side of life. **SSgt Rudd** has been rebadged as the Regtl Draughtsman and has been producing technical drawings for various agencies. **Sgt Jaya** is the RQ's gaoler and is never seen without a huge bunch of keys jangling around his neck! The CO, **Lt Col Fraser**, Adjt, **Capt Balfour**, Ops Officer, **Maj Alexander**), FofS, **WO1 Scaife** and **LCpl Salt** have all now moved into RHQ and have been busy forming Regtl HQ and the Ops Team.

It has not been all work, work, work, we managed to get out for a "bonding day". Foreman **WO1 Karl Scaife** organised a day out walking to a local landmark – "The Wrekin", some dark satanic hills, a visit to Ironbridge and then a well earned pie and pint.

22 Signal Regiment Implementation Team atop The Wrekin

SO WHAT – POSTED TO STAFFORD?

If you are reading this and lucky enough to be getting posted to Stafford, rest assured we do exist and this is an excellent location just a couple of miles from junction 14 of the M6. The town centre is 15 minutes walk or a cheap taxi ride from camp and Stafford is blessed with all the major shops, sports and entertainment facilities and served extremely well by the west coast train line. This has always been a very Forces friendly community (there used to be around 800 serving RAF personnel at Stafford), and further info can be found at the local council's web site; http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/.

There are clearly a number of improvements required on camp, such as upgrading the sports pitches, redecorating offices and redesigning working areas, but this is being resolved. If you will be living in Junior Ranks accommodation, then please note that the rooms are single occupancy but compact.

Consider carefully the amount of eqpt you arrive with and we suggest you trade in the big TV and invest in a flat screen – it will save hours of frustration as the block doors are only 53cm wide! If you are arriving before the major in-load of 222 and 248 you should get in touch with the unit direct (details below), and then deal with Defence Estates over housing issues as required. Also, bring a sense of humour – there is much to do, but be chuffed you will be coming at an important time.

CONTACT DETAILS

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	Civ – 01785 787767
RQMS – **WO2 Russ Heynes**	Mil – 95551 7561
	Civ – 01785 787561
Welfare – **SSgt Bagbir**	Mil – 95551 7370
	Civ – 01785 787370
Address	22 Signal Regiment Implementation Team RHQ (Bldg 5) MOD Stafford Beaconside STAFFORD ST18 0AQ
Fax – 01785 787043	

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGaw**

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT TAKES THE TITLE AT CENTSAAM 2006 - *by Capt (QGO) Nirmal Gurung*

This year's Central Skill At Arms Meeting (CENTSAAM 06) was held at the Pirbright range complex between 25 – 30 Jun and proved to be one of the most successful in the Regt's history. After a long hard battle last year, 2 Sig Regt went home with the glory and we came 2nd. With this still fresh in our minds, this year's team led by **Capt (QGO) Nirmal Gurung** undertook a thorough trg regime, which resulted in a clean sweep at the CORPSAM and BDESAM, allowing 2 teams to go forward to CENTSAAM 06, the Queen's Medal Competition.

This began on a bright, sunny day with a mild breeze. A total of 33 teams across the Army qualified for the competition, with the 30 Sig Regt team, comprising **Capts (QGO) Nirmal Gurung** and **Yamkumar Gurung**, **Cpl Devprakash Gurung** and **LCpls Saroj Rana** and **Shiva Gurung**. This year, there was a long, hard fought battle between 1 Royal Gurkha Rifles and 30 Sig Regt. Despite strong resistance from the Gurkha Rifles throughout the competition, we were victorious with almost a clean sweep. As Signals personnel, where shooting is not our prime nor routine role, this result is even more heart-warming.

This was an outstanding achievement for 30 Sig Regt, setting a new shooting standard by winning 14 trophies in a single event. However, this would not have been possible without the help and sp from the various sqns and the QM's Dept, which is greatly appreciated. The team looks forward to their continued sp in next year's shooting events.

In addition to winning the team event, 10 of the 11 team members made it into the Army Hundred with **LCpl Saroj** achieving 7th position overall. Queen's Gurkha Signals had 18 individuals in the Army 100, while there were 25 from the Royal Corps of Signals. Overall, an excellent result in the CENTSAM.

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JHN Harrington**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Lokbahadur Gurung**

After the hugely successful Trailwalker 2006, the majority of the Sqn deployed on Ex WHISKY KHUKURI, a mil skills ex in Sennybridge or Pre Deployment Training (PDT) prior to going on some well earned leave. These trg packages were extremely productive and refreshed everyone's knowledge of the mil skills required on ops by those held on R1.

The Sqn would also like to congratulate **Capt S Vaughan** on his recent promotion, say farewell to **Sgts Bedbahadur Purja** and **M Haigh** and of course welcome **Sgt Singleton**.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj DR Parkinson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Eastman**

EXERCISE SWAN ENDURANCE – (A PLAN, SOME SCRAN AND A BLUE AND WHITE VAN)

Ex SWAN ENDURANCE was a management outing arranged by **WO2(SSM) Eastman** in the Brecon Beacons. The ex started at 0500hrs, when we boarded minibuses to head towards Brecon and the highlight of the day, Ferns roadside café. We were greeted there by **Maj Parkinson**, **Capt Chapman** (Sqn 2IC), Sam and Boo (the OC's dogs) and the OC's VW Camper Van.

As we climbed toward Corn Du we could see Pen Y Fan in the distance. This was unusual as normally you can't see your hand in front of your face due to Brecon's own weather system of rain, fog and more rain. While the OC's dogs were enjoying the walk and chasing the sheep, **SSgt Nige Howard** was not, and could be heard moaning at the back, complaining about his knees.

The team proudly poses with their trophies with the CO and Maj (QGO) Krishnabahadur Gurung Gurkha MajQG Signals

The OC shows the way, while others rest at the top

We stopped at the bottom of Pen Y Fan for lunch, took in the scenery and patched up our wounds. For us old timers walking up hills is not a problem, it's the down hill where the trouble starts.

However, as we began our decent with the end in sight, **WO2(SSM) Eastman** and the younger members bounded off into the distance, leaving the more mature and battered behind. Seeing the minibus brought a smile to our faces as this meant that after a long sweaty day it was time for a well deserved pint or three.

EXERCISE GRIFFIN FOCUS - *by Lt Matthews*

With Ex JOINT VENTURE just finished, there was no let up in the tempo of trg and commitments for the Globetrotters! After some hot de-briefs and turnarounds it was straight back into preparation for a new ex and the various challenges that would entail.

Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS was a Theatre Troops ex in which 11 Sig Bde was tasked with providing the comms network for an op in Engraqia. For the Regt, this was another opportunity to flex its Cormorant muscles and further bed into its new role in providing a strategic wide area network. In true 30 Sig Regt fashion, assets deployed around the country to provide sp to a plethora of units involved in the ex.

258 Sig Sqn assets had the furthest to travel, as the Airborne Task Force (ABTF) moved north across the border to West Freugh, South West Scotland and the Maritime Component Command (MCC) deployed to RAF Kirton in Lindsey, in Lincolnshire, alongside our 11 Sig Bde brethren, 2 Sig Regt. Meanwhile 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed JTFHQ2 Small Scale and 256 Sig Sqn the Regional Management Cell (RMC) to Swynnerton Camp.

A small rear party was maintained at the home camp in Bramcote, leaving the Network Tp from 256 Sig Sqn to provide connectivity through the Bearer Module chain under the stalwart direction of **SSgt Martin Barringer** and Recce **Cpl Richie Horsburgh**.

With op tours looming next year this was an excellent chance to brush up on trade skills, practise deployment and sustainability in the field, and gain further experience managing the new Cormorant comms system.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JS Hiorns**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Burdus**

A warm welcome to the new Sqn 2IC, **Capt Gav Darke**, our new SSM, **WO2 Burdus**, **WO2(YofS) Milne** and **Sgt Umney**, meanwhile we say goodbye and best of luck in their new posts to **Capt Marc Bentley**, **WO2(YofS) Mitchell**, **Sig Flann** and **Sig Burningham.**

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Duckworth**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Wilford**

The Sqn has been busy extremely busy as always supporting all aspects of Regtl life and adapting to the changes of role and emphasis that have come with the introduction of Cormorant. In amongst System Acceptance Trials, ex and deployments we have managed to squeeze in some Cadre Courses, delivered Pre Deployment Trg, done exceedingly well at Inter Sqn Competitions and then there was the small matter of the……..

REGIMENTAL OPEN DAY 2006

The planning and preparation began for this year's Open Day under the ever watchful eye of OIC event, **Maj Jon Duckworth**, who was supported by his 2I/C, **Capt Kev Innes** and SSM, **WO2 Wilf Wilford**.

The publicity for the Bramcote Open Day got off to a flying start at the launch of the Mayor's Appeal in May, when **Maj Jon Duckworth** presented a cheque to the Mayor of Nuneaton and Bedworth, Councillor Julie Jackson, for £500 in aid of People In

Action. This was later made up to £3000 after the days takings had been totted up.

The White Helmets headlined the main arena but a diverse programme was arranged and included the Royal Signals Northern Band, a mil display devised and choreographed by **WO2(SSM) Matt Eastman**, as well as local youth groups and Cadets displaying their talents.

Maj Duckworth's 'pride and joy' was the good old fashioned Village Fete, which provided an opportunity for the Tps and depts to come up with novel and inventive ways of relieving the great British public of their cash.

The success of the day could be measured by the enjoyment had by all and the amount of money which was raised. Approximately £7,000 was raised and will be split between military and local civilian charities.

A great deal of effort went into the "build" and **WO2(SSM) Wilford** cajoled a team of dedicated 'volunteers' into producing a top quality event of enormous proportions.

32nd SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

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

EXERCISE SPRUNG TIGER - *By Maj Steve Holt*

Ex SPRUNG TIGER is a Royal Signals sailing experience, which gives total novices a taste of sailing and an award of Competent Crew. It also develops Competent Crews into Day Skippers and means Day Skippers go grey looking after a boat load of sailing novices. The ex lasts 7 days but the experience will stays forever.

Our particular boat was called *CALLISTA*. She was skippered by **Capt Iain Affleck** and crewed by **Colin McGrory**, **Lorna Craik**, **Ali Rowsell**, **Marc Beckett**, **Nicki Flemming** and **Steve Holt.** These 7 intrepid crew were squeezed into a 34 foot yacht, with only a 2 ring cooker, and a 'Spice Girls' CD for company. Most of the crew were unfamiliar with each other, so on the first day everyone was terribly polite and helpful. After a series of briefings and demos, we set sail into open waters for Cowes. The first IA was to get the sun cream and 'sunnies' on as the weather was cracking. Lots of man-overboard drills were conducted and we docked confident of our abilities to pick each other up, if one of us should ever fall in. Our first run ashore was spent getting to know each other and on returning to the boat we discovered our first mistake; **Maj Colin McGrory** had packed every item of clothing into an individual crisp packet; at least that is what it sounded like to **Ali Rowsell**, as he tried not to disturb 'Her Upstairs' when we got back in.

The crew minus Maj Colin McGrory, who had done a runner early – to miss cleaning the boat

Our Skipper spent the second day trying to explain the 'On', 'Off' and 'Mother' shift system to us, but since when any cooking was to be done, the blokes did it and when there was any physical work, the girls did it; we thought our system was better. And anyway, what are you going to do on your 'Off' shift on a 34 foot boat? Our week was spent, sailing along the Solent and popping into to various ports to ensure we could park the boat correctly and fill the water tank. The time sailing was spent trying to beat the speed of the previous helmsman but this was difficult once the Skipper got the best speed and then reduced sail. No one should mention overfilling the 'heads' or ask **Sgt Beckett,** about the late night ablutions situation. Every crew member has a story, from **LCpl Rowsell** being so interested in flowers, to **Lt Craik** demonstrating exactly how not to push away from a boat by falling over-board. The only 'sailors' to come out of the week unblemished were 'the Skipper' and **LCpl Flemming** – yeah right, we won't mention falling asleep over the sacred chart table or sailing the boat the wrong way. As for myself, I meant to throw the bucket of water into the wind so it blew back on me; I did not intend to splash **Ali** as she rested, yet again, during a man-overboard drill.

Ex SPRUNG TIGER is a must for all soldiers with just the slightest curiosity in sailing. Our mixed crew of male, female, TA, NRPS and Regular soldiers had a fantastic time and came away from the week knowing just a bit too much about ourselves and others. But we will advertise within our units and it has whetted our appetite for more and as you can see by the smiling faces on our pictures we thought it was worth it. The boat flag was Flag Zulu – if you don't know look it up.

VISIT BY MAJOR GENERAL FURLOW OF THE TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD - *by Capt Laura Clark*

32 Sig Regt played host to **Maj Gen Furlow** of the Texas National Guard, United States Army over the period 30 – 31 May 06. **Maj Gen Furlow** and his staff are visiting British units in order to develop a better understanding of the Info Ops and media interaction following major incidents. The Texas National Guard was instrumental in the support provided after Hurricanes *Katrina* and *Rita* and hence it was a fascinating opportunity to gain insight into their actions in such major disasters.

The team were taken on historical visits to Edinburgh, Stirling and the Wallace Monument and then to meet Comd 51 (S) Bde. A series of presentations on the Regt's history and role was followed by a demo of the comms eqpt at Jardine Street, including the Reebok Det.

Very kindly, **Maj Gen Furlow** agreed to present medals in the Officers' Mess at Jardine Street and spoke openly with the soldiers and recruits, whilst enjoying a curry and a few drinks. The visit was a huge success and the lessons learned on both sides have proved to be incredibly interesting and useful.

The visit was all thanks to the hard work of the Ops Maj, **Maj Steve Holt**. Hopefully it will be the first in a series of reciprocal exchanges, in an effort to develop our understanding of our respective forces.

33rd SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col Bill Adsett**
RSM **WO1 Shean Dewar**

EXERCISE GRIFFIN FOCUS 10 – 24 JUNE

Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS was the Annual Camp this year for 33 Sig Regt. It consisted of a Fd MOBEX, comms deployment, Special to Arms (STA) Trg, Sigs Cadre, JNCO Cadre, Offr/WO/SNCO Cadre and finally the 2006 CO's Competition.

The initial comms phase of the ex took place in and around Catterick and then moved to Kirkcudbright in Dumfries and Galloway to carry out the various mil skills cadres and the CO's Competition.

Although the fortnight was extremely busy and packed with events, the general consensus was that the whole camp had been a great success and many valuable trg lessons had been learned. R&R took place in various watering holes around Dumfries and Galloway with 42 Sqn opting for a night out in the pleasant county town of Dumfries.

The highlight of the fortnight's trg was the CO's Competition; a gruelling event consisting of a number of mil stands to be negotiated including a testing march in full kit.

At the end of camp BBQ, the Hon Col, **Col RIS Meadows OBE DL,** presented various prizes and the combined 42/80 Sqn team were delighted to be awarded the overall winner's cup. **LCpl Monty Montgomerie** of 42 Sqn was also awarded the Best Improved Soldier award for her efforts throughout the fortnight. **Sig McGarry** of 59 Sig Sqn was awarded the top place in the Sigs Cadre and presented with a set of LCpl tapes by the CO.

THE CARRINGTON DRUM AWARD 2005/2006

The Carrington Drum is awarded annually to the Army unit which is considered to have put the most effort in to raising money for the Army Benevolent Fund (ABF). This year 22 units were in contention for the award of the drum and the Certificates of Merit which are given to the 5 units selected as runners up. In the event, the Irish Guards were the winners of the Drum but 33 Sig Regt were selected as one of the runners up.

The Regt and 42 Sig Sqn in particular raised a considerable amount of money for the ABF last year. In recognition of this, **Capt Whelan**, PSAO 42 Sig Sqn, represented the Regt at a reception held in the Welsh Guards Officers' Mess in Wellington Barracks, London, following a Beating Retreat ceremony on Horse Guards Parade attended by Her Majesty The Queen. 33 Signal Regt had the distinction of being the only TA unit amongst the 22 contenders and the only unit considered from the North West of England.

The presentations were made by the Chairman of the Army Benevolent Fund, **Gen Sir Jeremy Mackenzie GCB OBE**, and attended by the Director Regional Fundraising and Liaison Army Benevolent Fund**, Brig DCN Shaw**; a former Comd of 42 (North West) Brigade.

Captain Gerry Whelan receiving a Certificate of Merit from General Sir Jeremy Mackenzie GCB OBE, Chairman Army Benevolent Fund

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

OC **Maj AJ Quinn**
SSM **WO2 K Westall**

VISIT OF HONORARY COLONEL

The Sqn was delighted to receive a visit from our new Hon Col, **Col RIS Meadows OBE DL**, during a Drill Night in May. **Col**

Major Andy Quinn presenting the Honorary Col with a Royal Signals stable belt

Meadows, accompanied by the CO and RSM, spent the evening touring the TA Centre and speaking to members of staff and TA soldiers. He was then invited to the JRC for the normal curry and a beer and a further opportunity to meet members of the Sqn in a more relaxed setting. At the end of the evening the OC Sqn, **Maj Andy Quinn**, presented the Hon Col with a Royal Signals stable belt as a memento of his visit.

42 SQN RECRUITING/OPEN DAY – 22 JUL 06

A Sqn recruiting and families Open Day was held on Saturday 22 July. This was aimed at providing the next batch of recruits to feed in to the Territorial Army Foundation Scheme (TAFS 1) weekend on 05 Aug 06 at Halton Trg Camp. It was also to raise the profile of the Sqn in the local area and to provide a fun day out for the families and friends of the Sqn's members.

The weather on the day was hot and sunny and the event proved to be a success with over a 100 people coming through the gates and a possible 12 recruits signed up. Many attractions were on offer including a comms stand, paintball range, .22 range, patrol skills demo, field craft demo, wps display, computer games stand, and for the children: bouncy castles, face painting, disco and a balloon making clown. There was also a free hamburger stand from the fd kitchen demo to attract in students from the local Manchester University campus!

The highlight of the day was a mast erecting race between 2 teams from the Radio Relay Ops of the Sqn. **Cpl Stu Green**, resplendent in his Desert Combats from his Op TELIC tour, led his team to victory and proved that he is not just a pretty face. A family BBQ was held in the evening to round off the day, at which the OC Sqn, **Maj Andy Quinn**, generously provided free beer to one and all.

CONGRATULATORY

Finally the Regt wishes to congratulate **LCpl Jayne Stanley** on her marriage to **Sgt Pete Russell**, 80 Sqn, on Saturday 29 Jul 06.

FAREWELLS

The Regt would like to bid a sad farewell to **SSgt Dave Kirk** who leaves us and the Corps on completion of 22 years Colour Service. Farewells also go to the following on posting: **Maj Chris Laycock** to 21 Sig Regt, **WO2(RQMS) Steve Legg** on promotion to 34 Sig Regt, **WO2(YofS) Marcus Bailey** to SACLANT, USA, **SSgt(FofS) Danny Mulheran** to S Tp, HQSOinC(A)), **SSgt Paul Richards** to 21 Sig Regt and finally **Sgt Kitt Knight** to 12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.

34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) PV McGarry**

50 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj SA Smith**
SSM **WO2(SSM) CA Phillips**

EX GRYPHONS FOCUS

This year's Annual Camp was split between Sennybridge and Penhale Camp, providing members of 50 Sqn with a challenging and varied 2 weeks worth of activities. Sennybridge was a Mil Skills week, where basic field craft, patrolling, harbour areas, navigation exs and Operations in a Built Up Area (OBUA) were undertaken with much relish and enthusiasm.

The notorious Havit My Friend (HMF) Forces, led by a ruthless ex-Para, were gripped and put in their place on several occasions by eager 50 Sqn troops. There was mixed reception to the unseasonably warm Welsh weather, as troops entered the CBRN phase! Nothing, however, was about to dampen 50 Sqn's spirits as they marched on to the final assault, making sure that all the bombs, bullets and bayonets were well and truly disposed of into the stunned enemy. A thoroughly good time was had by all on the wet and muddy asslt course, which capped the week off nicely.

The AT week at Penhale Camp, near Newquay, was a full week's worth of adrenaline and excitement: mountain biking, rock climbing, kayaking, hiking, surfing, windsurfing and coaststeering. **Sgt Neil Cansfield** and **Cpl Gary Robinson** had fun out in the sea with big fish and imaginary basking sharks, however they returned to the shore in one piece, if a little white knuckled and shaky!

Sgt Micky Jemmet hosted **Sgt First Class Bill Meggs** from the USA. One result was that less sleep was had in Penhale than Sennybridge because of the necessary cultural tours around Newquay and into the Mess! Still, we are sure that **Sfc Meggs** returned to the USA with a comprehensive understanding of English World Cup fever! Memorable Mess Dinners were attended by both the Sergeants' and Officers' Mess.

Ex SPECKLED JIM provided an excellent opportunity for Sqn members to sweep away the cobwebs and brush up on comms, as well as getting their teeth into a **WO2(SSM) Phillips'** BBQ extravaganza! Ex SUMMER TIGER followed soon after, led by **Capt Shane Ferris** and **FofS Sanderson**. Despite not having the highest manpower, the Sqn still managed to deploy all required assets. A lot of valuable trg and experience was gained by all, especially the un-traded members, keeping enthusiasm and team spirits high.

TA INTER UNIT HOCKEY

The TA inter unit hockey competition took place on 1 July at Aldershot camp. Although initially we were short of players, thanks to the initiative and connections of **SSgt(FofS) Sanderson**, players were recruited as we travelled down the country to make almost a team.

Much entertainment was provided by **Sig Clark's** DVD player and by **LCpl Hutton** claiming that she saw a lorry driver driving with his feet. Actually it was the passenger of a left hand drive lorry, but how was she to know.

The competition was a little more competitive and the games a little longer than expected for the hottest weekend of the year. However after donned what we were sure was the old Aston Villa football strip, we soon looked the part and took to the pitches.

The first game can only be described as an blitz from the team who were to be the eventual runners up and we soon decided we were not there to win but solely to have fun and enjoy the

Sgt Milligan and Sig Courtney defending our goal well

atmosphere. Although the standard of hockey did not drop significantly, we managed to find much amusement in our performances. **Sgt Milligan** did a fantastic job as a first time goal keeper and we were only let down by the lack of experience in the team, ranging from the majority who had not played since school and a few, **Sig Davidson,** who had never played before. But having climbed a steep learning curve, our main handicap was our inability to score goals.

Much fun was had by everyone who played, bruises and all. Thanks must go to **SSgt Sanderson** for organising a great weekend.

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Denning**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Hunter**

EXERCISE GRYPHONS FOCUS

Ex GRYPHONS FOCUS proved an arduous experience for 90 Sig Sqn with everyone learning new skills and pushing themselves to the limits and beyond.

The Penhale Camp involved abseiling with rock climbing, kayaking, walking, mountain biking and coasteering or surfing.

The kayaking proved a particularly interesting experience, with **Cpl Kev Pountain** proving so competitive that he managed to pull ligaments in his arm, which he didn't discover until after the Battle Camp. Both the CO, **Lt Col Sixsmith** and **Sig Nixon** managed to gain a few bumps and bruises on **Sgt Miligan's** challenging mountain biking route.

Sennybridge proved to be as midge ridden as usual, but the rain held off for most of the week; however it did arrived in time for the wettest obstacle course in Britain.

The Regt had a gaggle of visiting American exchange officer and soldiers for the duration. **Lt Krista Schuster** found the visit an interesting experience and somewhat different to her role in the US military. She was particularly impressed by **Lt Jo Burke's** ability to juggle cubes of blue cheese at the Officers' Mess Dinner.

TA DAY

90 Sqn set up their recruiting stand at Owton Manor, with **Sgt Graham Belt**, **LCpl Paul Liddle**, **LCpl Mark Turnbull** and **Sig "Murph" Murphy** all wearing their desert combats, having recently returned from Iraq. They proved a popular draw for all the locals.

CONGRATULATIONS / GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK / WELCOME BACK

Congratulations to **Cpl Sarah Belt** and **Sgt "Rossy" Ross** on their new addition, little **Jake**, a future 90 Sqn member no doubt! Congratulations to **WO2(SSM) Taylor**, who has finally left 90 Sqn and is now happily ensconced as SSM of HQ Sqn. Good luck to **Sgt Eddie Waring** who is leaving us to move over to Northern Ireland. Welcome back to **Sgt John Simons**, who has recently joined us again, but this time as a Territorial, having left his Regular life behind. We also welcome back **LCpl Mark Turnbull** from his recent posting in Iraq.

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

ANNUAL CAMP EDITION

Annual Camp in June went into top gear following the employers visit at Ludlow Race Course as dets began moving in and around Sennybridge Trg Area, with advance elements moving towards Caernarfon before the final push into Castlemartin to savour the delights of the Pembrokeshire coastline.

The last time the Regt trained on this scale in Wales was back in 1987 when the main effort was mil trg. By contrast, Ex Griffin Focus was conducted in 3 phases this year: Phase 1 which ran

from 9 – 16 Jun was a comprehensive field Commex, Phase 2 was the relaxation phase and ex turnaround before moving onto Phase 3, which was composed of range activities and AT during the second week of camp.

Both Phases 1 and 2 proved invigorating and achieved their aims either improving communication skills or giving everyone who attended camp some alternative form of trg that was both character building and enjoyable.

In addition and running concurrently with Annual Trg was a recruit course at the Regional Training Centre in Donnington, where many Regtl Recruits attended in lieu of annual camp. Notable visitors during the comms phase included Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Chris Murray** and the SOinC, **Brig JE Thomas MBE ADC** who was accompanied by the Corps RSM, **WO1 Chris Bruce**.

The visit from the SOinC was particularly welcomed as we have not had a visit from a SOinC for some years.

For this one we laid out the red carpet and showed off a little. During his visit, as well as chatting to many members of the TA about their service and commitment, the SOinC was surprised to come across an ex-member of the Corps, **Pte Bethan Jones** (nee **Lewis**) who served as a Data Telegraphist in Wilton during 1975-79 and now runs a farm in the Welsh Hills with her husband and children.

The SOinC was then taken aback to meet **SSgt Ken Barker**, who had served with him when he was a Tp Comd, Sqn Comd and CO all in the same Regt; a triple whammy for both of them. The SOinC was then introduced to, and exchanged one or two jokes with **SSgt Bob Bowden** of the US Signals Corps currently serving with the Regt on an exchange visit. The Corps RSM meanwhile took time out to meet as many members of the TA and Regular Permanent Staff, closely followed by our own RSM **WO1 Coupland.**

FROM OAKWOOD TO THE PEMBROKESHIRE COAST

Phase 2 of camp is generally known as the relaxation phase or R&R following the ex turnaround and allowed a period of regeneration before the range and AT package.

Oakwood theme park proved to be a popular attraction for those who enjoy the spectacular rides, notably the *Mega Phobia* which has been voted the best wooden rollercoaster in the world or the dramatic G forces on the *Bounce* or *Vertigo*, which proved an unsound alternative to getting soaked on the *Hydro*.

Others pursued more relaxing activities, such as golf or a gentle walk along the coast, and meeting the locals in every available pub. Meanwhile on Sunday 18 June, the celebrated Officers Mess Fish Lunch was held which saw many ex-members of the Regt make the long trip to South Wales to enjoy the magnificent feast and to meet old friends.

They were joined by the Hon Col, **Col Brian Foxon** who kept them amused with his repertoire of TA anecdotes. Phase 2 ended on a high note with the incentive that Phase 3 was going to be just as enjoyable with the Range and AT package.

The Range package was put together by **SSgt Paul Coxon** who had arranged an introduction to the firepower of the GPMG in a sustained fire role, a March & Shoot and a background activity Survival stand, superbly run by **Cpl Danny Stacey.** Because of his survival and pioneer skills and engaging instructional technique, **Danny** is now becoming widely known as 'Grizzly Man' – only the bare facts will do!

Running concurrently with the range package, Regtl groups made a swift changeover to the AT activities expertly organised by **Capt Alec Rogers** and his team of exped leaders. An extensive, comprehensive and elaborate programme (some would call it ambitious) was organised that included Coasteering, Land Yachting, Hill Walking, Sub Aqua Diving, Mountain Biking and Climbing.

How they fitted it all in remains a bit of a mystery. This exhilarating, hugely enjoyable and immensely successful Phase ended all too quickly as preparations to recover to TA Centres took centre stage for the long journey home on 23 Jun.

HONOURS, AWARDS, PROMOTIONS

During the final week special time was set aside and devoted to a series of presentations. Operational or Efficiency medals were presented by the CO, **Lt Col Chris Edwards.**

The VRSM or Clasp to VRSM was presented to **Maj William Henderson**, **Sgt Tony Hadley**, **Sgt Rob Neal**, **SSgt Kev Potts**, **Sgt Kay Yeubrey**, **Sgt Dave Funnel** and **SSgt Ade Stowell**. The Iraq medal was also presented to **LCpl Rhys Mountford-Jones**, **Sgt Paul Spicer**, **LCpl Chris Fulthorpe** and **Sgt Guy-Holt** who was also awarded the Clasp to his VRSM. To all of our medal recipients we extend our warmest congratulations.

A special presentation was also made to **Cpl Zowie Trimm** who was awarded the Stockdale Trophy, because of her outstanding performance and contribution to the efficiency and well being of the Regt. Finally the CO took great delight in promoting **Sgt Paul Stewart** and **Sgt Gary Potts** to SSgt. Both are serving with 95 Sqn; **Gary** in particular is delighted as he is no longer out ranked by his brother **Kev**.

A BAKERS DOZEN SCORE AT DONNINGTON

The end of annual camp also coincided with the Recruit Course Pass Off Parade at Donnington on Saturday 24 Jun. Here it was good to see 13 of our recruits proudly displaying their new found skills at their final pass off parade before being classified as trained TA soldiers.

It was reassuring that so many attended this course (a Regtl record) and was clearly testament to the excellent recruiting efforts and inductions being achieved throughout the Regt.

It also demonstrated clearly the intensive moulding and preparations made by our own recruit trg staff to ensure they were all well prepared for this tough course, that combined TA instructors with Regular Army instructors making it very much a joint and mutually rewarding effort. This included 2 of our own, in **Sgt Dave Ramsden** and **Sgt Paul Spicer** who provided invaluable instructional assistance to the Regional Recruit Trg Team.

Since the Pass Off Parade our recruiting efforts have taken on a life of their own, with hugely successful Targeted Recruiting events being held by 48, 89 and 95 Sqns which have seen many more potential recruits come through our doors much to the relief of the CO who can be satisfied, when he hands over the Regt later in the year, that he has presided over the most successful recruiting efforts in the Regt's history.

95 SIGNAL SQUADRON RE-UNION

Calling on all former members of 95 Yeomanry Sig Sqn. A reunion of all ex-serving members both Regular and TA is planned for 24 March 2007.

The event will take place at Sundorne Road TA Centre and will involve the participation of all present serving members.

For further details please contact **Sgt Laragh McIntosh** at 95 Sig Sqn, Sundorne Road, Sundorne Shrewsbury SY1 4RL or email: laragh.mcintosh@virgin.net

36th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col M Smith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KD Gratrick**

EXERCISE KWA-ZULU TIGER 8 – 26 APRIL 2006

In the heart of South Africa, the escarpment of the Drakensberg Mountains rises breathtakingly from the foothills. Sheer cliffs dominate the lush green valleys, with Cape Vultures and Lammergeyers circling high overhead. From the top, once the steep paths have been conquered, the rolling grasslands of Lesotho sit at 3000m, dropping away suddenly and quite dramatically back down to South Africa below.

Fifteen soldiers from 36 Sig Regt travelled to South Africa this April, to trek in this mountainous environment and experience its beauty first hand. Flying into Jo'burg, we set off immediately for the northern Drakensberg, an area called the Royal Natal National Park. Driving into the national park we were greeted with our first views of the Amphitheatre, a huge 600m high rock face that stretches for 5km in length. At its westernmost end are Thukela Falls, 850m high and the world's second highest waterfall.

As night fell the skies were illuminated by streaks of lightning, and the tents were pummelled by ferocious rain. As we crawled into our tents, we were wondering what challenges the exped would bring.

All the groups set off for an unsupported 6 day trek along the edge of the escarpment. **Maj John Howell-Walmsley** started from the northern end at 0400hrs, circumnavigating Sentinel Peak and climbing the chain ladders up to the highest mountain in South Africa – all on his group's first day. **LCpl Tom Burke** took his group initially from Cathedral Peak National Park, fighting the dense undergrowth for 12 hours on Day 1, before having to call a halt and camp, not yet on the escarpment.

Capt Cath Stephens, the exped leader, set off from the south the following day, opting for the 'Bell Traverse' rather than the jungle, as the ascent route for her group.

Once all 3 groups were on the escarpment, the landscape changed dramatically from soaring cliffs to rolling hills. The cloud at times was so thick as to limit visibility to 50m. With no paths to follow, and the magnetic rock making the compass swing through 90 degrees, navigation was challenging! There was always the GPS to rely on, if it doesn't pick the same moment to lose all its satellites.

The groups were all getting used to the diet of couscous and pilchards by this point, even if the decanted pilchards did find their way out of their bags into a few rucksacks. Two of the group leaders had been alert enough to check their group's kit before departure, to ensure they were not carrying unnecessary weight, and so had to endure the reduced calorific intake. One group leader, however, was not so inspired and had to endure eating all her group's extra chocolate, produced at regular intervals.

Finally after 6 days at 3000m, the end of the journey was nigh, and the various groups battled their way down through the jungle; some getting caught in a ferocious storm while still on the hills. But all were safe, none were sorry and all appreciated the food and comfort of the restaurant that evening.

Apart, that is, from **Lt Col Mark Smith** and **LCpl Richard Hazelton**, who decided their long john clad legs were too much to inflict on the delicate constitution of those just down from the hills, and opted for cold porridge in their tents, rather than the baked golden fish served in the restaurant. Hmm…

Capt Stephens' group at Twins Cave

The next day, the security of the rich national parks was left behind as the 2 southern groups drove north to reunite with the third. An oasis of wealth, the national parks are the preserve of white South Africans, staying in the luxury hotel or villas tucked away in the trees. Once past the gate barring entrance to those lesser-favoured, the landscape changed, with children carrying water on their heads from the distant stream back to the comfort of their mud hut.

The roads were potholed and sometimes washed away, with electricity prevalent only in the luckier of habitations. As we drove through, secure in our hire vehicles, we observed the distance between these people and ourselves; only a matter of metres physically but a lifetime away in terms of experience. Problems back in the UK seemed insignificant in comparison but these people were never without a smile and a wave. Maybe it is us who have got it wrong…

Finally, we returned to Jo'burg, and had a meal on the town before doing the tourist thing the next day. Most of the group ended up visiting Soweto, an intense and sobering experience. Wandering into a church that had been one of the scenes of the anti-apartheid troubles back in 1976, a man introduced himself and began to explain a little about what had happened. As a boy of 11, he had persuaded his elder brother to join him in a peaceful demonstration against the oppressive Afrikaans government.

Demonstrations being against the law, the police moved in to break it up, opening fire on those before them. People fell over each other in their panic and the brothers got separated in the force of the crowd. His brother had been killed that day, a victim of the struggle for the freedom that these people finally attained.

For those of us in the military looking for examples of moral courage, look no further. This sort of courage is an example to us all.

So the exped was over, and we flew back to the UK that night. A rich and varied experience had been had by all, and will no doubt be the talk of the Regt for many months to come, at least until the next hapless volunteer comes forward to organise the next one. Good luck to you, who ever you may be…!

BATTLEFIELD TOUR OF ISANDHLWANA AND RORKE'S DRIFT 20 – 23 APRIL 06
- by Sig Andy Coutanche

Having met our tour guide, **Reggie Purbrick** (ex CO 17/21 Lancers), the night prior to the battlefield tour itself, I felt confident that the tour would be a memorable one. Since arriving in South Africa, I had been reading about the Zulu War, and in particular, the battles fought at Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift.

The tour began on Friday 21 April. We piled into **Reggie's** Land Rover and one of the Volkswagen buses and made our way to Fugitives' Lodge to pick up another driver, taking in the spectacular scenery and wildlife along the way. As promised, we caught our first glimpses of giraffe and various other types of wildlife. The driver we picked up, **Joseph**, was an interesting character and was able to provide us with valuable insight into the traditions and culture of the Zulu as we made our way to Isandhlwana.

Rorke's Drift memorials to British and Zulu dead

We stopped off at various points on our way to Isandhlwana, where **Reggie** told us about the history of the area and the background to the wars. Lots of little pieces of information that would help us build a much bigger picture during the battlefield study itself.

Isandhlwana is a very distinctive hill; it's shaped like a Sphinx. We were told how this was a strange coincidence as the 24 Regt of Foot (the Regt serving in Isandhlwana) used the Sphinx as its cap badge, and it had never brought them any luck.

Isandhlwana itself is an impressive sight; there are many large graves and cairns of white rock, marking where the combatants from both sides fell. **Joseph** was kind enough to tell to us about the Zulu memorial and the spiritual tradition where they used the Buffalo Thorn Tree to capture the spirits of their ancestors who died in the battle, and took them back to rest in the 'ancestor room' in their homes.

As we sat halfway up Isandhlwana hill, **Reggie** told us in great detail how the battle unfolded. From our commanding view of the land, it was easy to see how brutal and savage the battle of Isandhlwana must have been, and also how errors made by the British comds had cost them so dearly. It was also clear to see the bravery and courage shown by the British in standing their ground and fighting to the last; particularly **Col Durnford's** rearguard action. It was also apparent that the Zulu were a formidable fighting force; good tacticians, loyal to their King and able to move swiftly over difficult ground.

After telling us about the battle, **Reggie** led us on an 10km walk through the bush to the Buffalo River, following the route taken by the 'Fugitives' of Isandhlwana who had left before the fighting began. We caught a glimpse of some zebra before finally reaching the Buffalo River, where **Lieutenants Melville** and **Coghill** crossed, losing the Queen's Colour in the river.

We crossed the Buffalo River, which is a fairly wide and fast flowing river with earthy smelling dark brown water and then ate lunch on its banks. After a sandwich overdose thanks to the kind local Pastor, **Werner**, we followed the route taken by **Melville** and **Coghill** in their effort to escape the Zulu, although we travelled most of their route in a Land Rover.

When we came to their monument, **Reggie** explained about the site and how **Melville** and **Coghill** made it to the site and then died in a final battle with the Zulu.

The following day we made our way to Rorke's Drift. We spent a lot of time in the Hospital, now converted to a Museum with a great number of interesting artefacts and plenty of information outlining the story of Rorke's Drift, what happened in the Hospital and much more. **Reggie** also took us into the old storehouse, now a Church, and told us of a touching ceremony between the British and the Zulu that took place on the 120th anniversary of the battle, which celebrated the heroism on both sides and gave an opportunity to remember the dead.

The site at Rorke's Drift has changed a lot since 1879. The storehouse is now a church and the hospital is now a museum. The cattle kraal still stands, and the various points of defence such as the inner perimeter are marked on the ground by stones. There are also memorials to both British and Zulu dead.

Standing at the site of such a monumental British victory certainly filled me with a feeling of national pride. **Reggie** took us through the entire battle, from start to finish. He explained in great depth how Rorke's Drift was fortified, how **Hook** and **Williams** burst through the hospital walls to escape the Zulu advance, and how the battle was actually fought. Myths and urban legends were also dispelled and the heroic stories of the VC winners told.

The 2 days of the battlefield tour were educational, memorable and enjoyable. Learning about the living conditions, order of battle and general life of a British soldier in the Zulu Wars was both eye opening, instructive and interesting, and visiting the sites was certainly a once in a lifetime experience. Many thanks to the RQMS, **Des Holroyd** for his hard work in organising such a fantastic tour, and also **Reggie Purbrick** for making the battlefields come to life with his storytelling.

45 (ESSEX AND CINQUE PORTS) SIGNAL SQUADRON

EXERCISE ESTUARY FREUNDSCHAFT 06 13 – 16 JULY 06
- by WO2(FofS) Mark Ward

At 0330hrs on Thursday 13 July, some 30 bleary eyed Sqn members prepared to depart Colchester TAC for Stansted Airport. This was the start of what is now a very much established annual visit to our friends in the German Reservist organisation – Kreisgruppe 511 Mittlerer Neckar Nord – to take part in mil trg and an annual reservists' mil skills competition in the Stuttgart area of Southern Germany.

The morning started with some small excitement due to the coach driver discovering that the remodelling of some of the roads within Colchester Garrison meant that he couldn't rely on his Tom Tom.

This prompted much early morning pacing from organiser, **Capt Gordon Bathurst**, but he finally found us and by 0930hrs (CET) we were at Baden Baden airport being met by our hosts, led by the always genial **Lt Col Gerhard Mosch**. The next leg of our trip was to the Bundeswehr trg camp at Stetten where we were to spend the first 2 days.

This is an area familiar to those of us, who had the pleasure of their very extensive "confidence" course the previous year. Having been fed and watered, we were taken to the newly formed German EOD Centre where we were lucky enough to be given a very comprehensive talk from the Comd himself followed by a trip round their extensive collection of "things that can blow you up"! Finally, before the much sought after beer and brattie in the Sgts' mess, we were treated to a visit to a local Schloss with a specially arranged guided tour.

This was notable as we set off the armoury alarm as we were being shown their impressive collection of weapons dating from the middle ages. Somewhat unkindly, it was said later that **Capt Mick Meddeman** had spotted a pike like the one he'd been issued with when he joined the Essex Regt and he had only wanted a closer look!

The next day the Sqn was woken up at 0500hrs by the resident troops getting ready for their day's work (no one will ever complain about the British Army's 0600hrs starts again!). After breakfast, we were back to the confidence course, being fitted in our harnesses under the watchful eye of the chief instructor – while **Lt Col Mosch** asked about the state of our wills! A brief coach trip and a long hot walk later, we were perched 600 feet or so above the Danube valley being offered the choice of either the 160 foot or 120 foot cliffs to abseil down. At this stage, **Sig Carly Smith** pointed out that this wasn't what she'd originally had in mind for her birthday.

In the end a good time was had by all – helped by the excellent weather and the spectacular view. **SSgt Sally Howson** enjoyed it so much that she went down 5 times. A brief pause while a violent thunderstorm moved through the valley was followed by a crossing of the Danube by wire – the more adventurous using the single wire, although as **Sig Jane Derby** discovered, this can be somewhat painful! Then a slightly slippery climb had to be negotiated under a railway bridge before we boarded the coach to head for our overnight stay in a very luxurious "hostel" in the Schwabian Wald (Forest)

After another early start on the Saturday, we were off to the start location at Oberrott for the much anticipated mil skills competition. Overnight some tactical adjustments to the teams had taken place – notably by the OC, **Maj Stuart Rowson** – and there was an air of confidence as the Sqn's 5 teams lined up against the 12 teams of German Reservists to start the competition. In deference to the very hot weather, the course had been reduced in length from the previous year, although the heat and the hills more than made up for it.

The OC's team of crack troops suffered an early setback at the shooting with both **Capt Gordon Bathurst** and the SVWO, **WO1 John Davis** scoring ducks. They were soon making good progress, however, with an impressive showing at the VCP and at the terrorist Incident (only marred by the SVWO surprising the German "terrorist" so much that he hurt himself and was left hobbling for the rest of the day).

The other British teams were also doing well and received much praise for their professionalism from our German hosts – even if **Sig Phil Thompson's** throw at the Grenade stand did reduce everybody to tears. All the Sqn teams completed the course in around the same time of 5 hours, although with staggered starts it was not until around 1800hrs that we all paraded in front of the national flags to hear the results.

However before the results ceremony, both **Maj Stuart Rowson** and **Capt Gordon Bathurst** were presented with a silver achievement medal for their contribution to the establishment of the links between ourselves and the Kreisgruppe 511 Mittlerer Neckar Nord – a great honour. In the end it turned out that the Sqn had done better than ever before with all teams doing very well; especially **LCpl Wood's** which finished 7th overall, **LCpl Hill's** which was 5th and best of all the OC's which finished 2nd. After the presentations and the playing of the national anthems by the German brass band, we all moved on to the beer tent for food, drink and the renewing of old friendships and the making of new ones.

On the last day, with some inevitably sore heads, a lie-in was pleasantly anticipated. Unfortunately nobody had told **Sgt Maj Hermann Franz** and we were woken up at 0700hrs which was sooner than most of us would have liked.

Then it was off for breakfast and down to the local sports centre for much needed showers and a change into civvies. Next it was down to the nearby town of Murrhardt for a visit to a rather unusual museum run by one of our German hosts which featured his family hobby since the 1930s – Taxidermy!.

Suffice to say that the SQMS, **SSgt Rob Price** was even more careful with his counting of personnel than usual when we left! A pleasant BBQ in the nearby woods concluded a very successful visit to our German colleagues before we departed for Baden Baden and the flight home with everybody looking forward to our return in 2007.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

HEADQUARTERS (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SQUADRON

CO'S CUP *- by WO2 Simpson*

On 14 July, the HQ Sqn team set off for Sennybridge to take part in the CO's Cup, an inter-Sqn mil skills competition. On arrival, we were given the scenario and a briefing from the sect comd, **Lt Taylor** REME (OC LAD).

We had an early start the next morning for a quick wash and shave in the cool of the morning before receiving a Pyro demo at 0530hrs which meant that everyone was wide awake and ready for breakfast, prepared by our own chefs, **Sgt Starowski**, **Cpl Natress** and soon to be chef, **Pte Smith**.

The sects then departed with full kit to start the competition. Our first task was to extract personnel from an oil field. From the drop off point, we moved tactically to rendezvous with a friendly agent. When we arrived at the location, the CBRN alert state had gone up and so the sect donned their NBC suits. While patrolling down the road, we came under a chemical attack from shellfire and with the heat starting to rise; our suits and respirators became our own private saunas. After getting into cover and decontaminating, we could deal with the causalties found in the location: one walking wounded and one stretcher case.

These were both decontaminated and evacuated back to our start point. This seemed to be twice as far as on the way out and breathing through the respirator in the heat became almost impossible. However a very hot and sweaty sect had achieved the objectives.

This was to be the start of several mil tasks to be undertaken over the day. The stands were a significant yomp apart and the heat was on. Thankfully, there was plenty of much needed water

The Duke of Westminster chats to members of the 57 Signal Squadron team

at each stand. The other tasks included driving skills, in which 2 Land Rovers and trailers had to be reversed down a winding track and camouflaged, followed by a quiz.

The urban patrolling in the FIBUA village was another task in which there was a lot of smoke, noise, shooting and of course sweat. The man of this task was **Cpl Morris**, who managed to surprise the Ops Maj, acting as the enemy, and gave him the chance for a long sleep.

During this task, our VIP visitor, **The Duke of Westminster**, observed the sect being put through its paces and later spoke to all the sect members.

Another hot and tiring yomp saw us through to the First Aid stand in which the sect excelled. Although by this time, some of the other sects were suffering from some "no duff" casualties, giving **LCpl Nash**, our resident medic, some real work.

The tank stalk was a very enjoyable experience for the whole sect – well it was for all those under the age of 45! Again the sect managed to surprise the enemy (and the DS, who had to move the enemy before it was all over). One of the aims was to deliver 2 grenades near to, or on the tracks of an armd veh. Although one grenade fell just short of the track (and failed to detonate), the other one could have been placed on the track by hand before it did detonate.

The LAD element of the team took over at the recovery stand, quickly and expertly removing a Land Rover from a ditch, using a Hand Winch. We were then taken by veh to a drop off point, where all the teams were congregating prior to yet another tiring slog to our harbour for the night. Once in location, we finally found time to eat a hot meal and get a hot drink. There was very little time for rest, particularly for **Lt Taylor**, who had to receive orders for the night patrol. This required 4 members of the team going out to observe an enemy location. On return, the information gathered was passed on to our contact before we could finally get some sleep.

Then came the biggest shock of the weekend! After breakfast and a visit by the CO and RSM, all the teams were off on yet another slog, twice as far as any on the first day.

During this, the sect had its one and only casualty. Although **Cfn Hancock** had been suffering from a bad ankle, it had become worse, and so to avoid any serious injury, he was taken back to EXCON.

At the end of the trek, all the sects were re-supplied with ammo and smoke grenades and given orders for individual sect tasks. These tasks were to be completed simultaneously in the FIBUA village, each sect having a separate building to clear and extract personnel or eqpt. All sects met heavy resistance and had to fight through the village to get to the pick up point.

At the end of this task, the CO held a parade in which the results were given to the Regt. We came a very close second to 57 Sig Sqn; well deserved as the Sqn team had worked well and everyone had put 100% effort into the weekend.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Both OC and SSM have changed since the last wire notes. **Maj Clive Dawes** had taken comd of the Sqn for the second time, taking over from **Maj Gus Loveridge** who has assumed the appointment of Unit Employer Support Officer. Welcome back **Clive** and **Theresa**. In addition, **WO2(SSM) Mike White** has transferred from 57 Sig Sqn and assumes the appointment of SSM from **WO2(SSM) Simpson**, who has moved to become MTWO(V).

EXERCISE BRUNEL WARRIOR

As part of the integration of 94 Sqn into the Regt, a joint mil skills ex was run in Sennybridge, with members of both Sqns integrating into one pl. Elements of 94 played the enemy and 57 Sqn provided the HQ. The Friday evening was a comd and control nightmare, with 94 arriving at 0200hrs. They had to be given their ORBAT at the dead of night, once they had managed to find the rest of the pl! What followed was a game of cat and mouse on the Saturday, with the combined pl sending out patrols to find the enemy, being bumped in the process, and of course ending up victorious!

The Saturday afternoon culminated in a pl attack over some rough terrain, with suitable delays for replenishment, provided by the Pl Comd, **Lt Trevelion**. At night, the fun and games continued with the DS laying an ambush for the pl as it changed locations, only to loose them after the initial contact and spending the next hour searching for any sign of them.

Sunday of course culminated in a final attack on the enemy position, with some good fire and manoeuvre displayed by the pl: the enemy dying in a suitably stubborn fashion. Overall, a good chance for the members of the sqns to meet each other, and both were left with a good overall impression of each other's mil skills.

ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEKEND

Over the first weekend in August, the Sqn deployed to the coast for a well earned weekend of AT.

As the tpt drew up alongside the harbour, the hunt for our boat Kara Kara started She was nowhere to be seen. This was not the best start to a day for the 9 members of the Sqn who had opted to go sea fishing. Then our skipper strolled along and promptly announced that he would have to cancel the charter as overnight, he had grown an abscess the size of a tennis ball in his mouth. At least this was the gist of it; it was difficult to understand exactly when someone is talking through a tennis ball. By sheer luck however, we found another skipper whose charter group had broken down on the motorway and couldn't make their trip, so we had another boat!

After a quick ride to the mackerel grounds, our skipper proceeded to demonstrate how easy it was to catch these fish. Easy: let the line go for a count of ten, then wind it back in and up come 2 fish. Just like that. Soon we were plucking them out of the water with gay abandon, no more so than **Sgt Boscoe**. This haul we were informed would serve well as bait for the real fish! So off again to the next ground were we would fish off the bottom for whatever lived in the deep.

Soon we all had lines over the side and were intently watching the tip of the rod for any indication that the bait was taken. To a man, we never spotted a twitch, however when 15 mins had elapsed and curiosity compelled us to reel in the line, low and behold 3 out of 9 hooks had a blond ray on the end.

This fine start did not continue as we entered a barren spell with the only person catching anything being **Cpl Estcourt**. The only problem was that what she caught was every one else's line. By this time **SSgt Klass** was starting to look a bit green, but not deterred he carried on throwing over his bait and like the rest of us was soon entangled with **Cpl Estcourt**.

The competition was now on, with the pot going for the largest catch of the day. Holder for most of the day was **Sgt Palfrey**, who was pipped at the post by **LCpl Walker**, who could claim she had the only shark!

A great day's fishing; with the exception of **SSgt Sharpe**, who despite feeding the fish vast quantities of bait never pulled one over the side. At least he can come back next year to catch the one he spent all day fattening up.

The group taking part in sailing managed to make it down to the sailing centre with plenty of time to spare, despite having taken the scenic route to the location. Over an early coffee, those who had sailed before were heard to down play their previous experience so that expectations would be low. Having met the instructors, we equipped ourselves with wet suits and life jackets and did a dry run of the basics, before being let loose on the open sea.

The general lack of wind all day meant that it was difficult to get up too much speed, but this was more than made up for by the hot air coming from those taking part.

After a steady morning practising moving round the buoys, a hearty lunch of chocolate and muffins meant we were all prepared for the afternoon races.

The general aim was, that no matter what happened, the main effort was to make sure that the officer in charge, **2Lt Doherty**, didn't win any of the races. And so, a level of racing skill rarely seen outside duck ponds in parks around the country was revealed, with variations within the races to keep interest, such as capsizing half way through and having to swap boats. All in all, a great day where we all learned something. It certainly gave us an appetite for the beers in the evening ahead.

For those doing the Kayaking and Biking, the day began with a 'hunt the ASDA' ex, otherwise known as 'if we turn left there we will find the Outdoor Pursuit Centre'. Having arrived early, we waited eagerly with great anticipation for the day's activities to start.

The first embarrassment of the day was choosing the best fashion statement in wetsuits, 'oh does my bum look big in this?' and then, with the aid of our instructor **Tom**, it was on to selecting what we thought would be the most stable craft in the water. Then into the water! **Sig Paulson** decided he should start by testing the temperature of the water through total immersion.

Water skills were acquired and then it seemed time for the instructors to start the confidence building games, water fights, 360 degree turns on your bottom on the back of the kayak, standing up (falling out) and the unusual sport kayak gymnastics, headstands in the kayak performed by **Lt Hanlon** and an outstanding flip from headstand by **Sig Chapman**. With a cry of pain, **LCpl Chalton** took a hard side hit from another kayak in the murder ball game.

He carried on bravely despite his injury; however the Oscar is on its way to him as we write. We finished with a few more water skills and finally we practised our beach landings and headed back to prepare for the biking.

The first shock was finding out that we needed a deposit for the bikes. The trusty tpt acquired, the group headed down the Rodwell Trail. **Sig Turner** needed some assistance changing gear and then refitting the chain to the bike.

We went in search of the local wildlife and found some near the Ferrybridge. **LCpl Chalton**, **Pte Clark**, **Sig Turner** and **Sig Chapman** attempted in vain to communicate with said wildlife, so we moved off swiftly down to Portland to view the harbour.

Suddenly there was a cry from **Pte Clark**, and indeed a bike was lying in the road and **Sig Hartfield** was lying on the bank. It quickly became apparent that **Sig Harfield's** path had been crossed by a younger less experience member of the local wildlife. His pride and knee hurt, **Sig Hartfield** remounted with the assistance of the other group members and again the intrepid explorers headed off. On arriving at the harbour it appeared that something was just not quite right with **Sig Paulson's** bike; it was wobbling strangely! We decided to turn back and retrieve that deposit!

CO'S CUP

The Regt deployed to Sennybridge for yet another weekend, this time to take part in the highlight of trg year, the CO's Cup. Four teams were entered: one from each of the Sqns (HQ, 57 and 94), and a composite team from 57 and 94.

After an early night in the FIBUA village, the teams deployed to their first tasks at early o'clock. The tasks consisted of a round robin of sect attacks, veh anti-ambush drills, CBRN, First Aid and Veh Recovery. The guidance from the CO had been that the competition was to be 'reasonably' arduous, and this was verified when after stashing Bergens first thing, they were re-issued shortly after to be carried all day! The heat of the day added an interesting dimension, with regular trips to the hospital as members of the teams went down with heat stroke.

Demonstrating Anti-ambush drills during the CO's cup weekend

The teams all displayed varying strengths as the day went on, but were united in their relief when told on the Saturday evening that they could stop wearing their helmets when marching. And so it was with a degree of significant relief that we all arrived at the harbour.

The arrival of the CO and RSM indicated further tasks were ahead, and there was no surprise when the sect comds received orders for an evening CTR.

Some quick de-confliction was needed when it was realised that we were all doing recces on the same target, but despite this, all the patrols invariably bumped into each other during the night, and only some hastily whispered passwords prevented blue on blues.

Once the night time activities were complete and patrol orders handed in, it was time for a couple of hours sleep before the early morning speed march, and a hostage rescue was undertaken by all four sects on the FIBUA village to rescue heavy water and scientists.

Despite much confusion and banging around, a relatively speedy extraction was performed and it was soon time for tea and medals. After a close run thing, 57 won the honours, with HQ a relatively close second. All in all, it was a challenging but enjoyable weekend.

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC	**Maj SPM Nesmith**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Caulfield**

It has been a very busy period for the Sqn, with continued BOWMANisation trg exs with the Bde Staff.

In between deployments to SPTA, we had Bde sports competitions, Inter-Tp competitions, a chariot race, a JNCO cadre course, a visit from the SOinC, a Sportsman's Dinner and of course the month would not have been complete without some leaving dos.

We say a warm welcome to **SSgt(YofS) Greg Cox** and his family who have just arrived from the puzzle palace at Blandford and **Sgt Mike Ridley** and his family from 16 Sig Regt in Germany.

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt P Hodgkinson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Barrass**

With eyes firmly set on Olympic Gold, Sabre Tp made up the majority of the Sqn's Athletics team. This time the competition was the Bde Athletics, held at Tilsley Park in Abingdon.

As the team arrived they were slightly apprehensive when the rather professional looking 3LSR started to conduct their warm ups 2 – 3 hours prior to the events.

Even more worrying was the fact they seemed to have their own personal kit for every single event.

Our only real rivals for the Minor Unit's competition were 158 RMP (in fact, there were only 2 people in each race!). The Men's team got off to a cracking start with **Capt Pete Hodgkinson** getting some early points on the board in the 400m hurdles. **LCpl John Trotter** also produced a great performance in the Hammer. **Sig Gangly Proffitt** and **Cpl Bri McKenna** proved to be a handy combination in the sprinting events. **Sig Hoppy Hopwood** had the race of his life in the 3000m steeplechase producing a fine performance. **SSgt Sid Barrass** also turned out a cracking performance in the 1500m.

As always the competition was extremely tight but in the end the talent on show from 215 was unmistakable and a great deal of silverware returned to Tidworth. Not wanting to be outdone, the Women's team also swept up the trophies. A big shout goes to **SSgt Nikky Wilson**, who had a fantastic race in the 5000m.

After a busy few months, the Tp is now preparing for a deployment to BATUS and well deserved summer leave. With exs in Belize and Canada and AT in Italy, Canada and Austria all coming up over the next few months, there is plenty to look forward to.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt M Webb**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt J Goreing**

QM DEPARTMENT

The QM's dept has seen another turbulent period preparing for the ECI and LSI inspections. The boys burnt the candle and put in some late hours to prepare for them. Someone once said: "There should never be a need to prepare for ECI and LSI inspections – they should happen seamlessly!" Still, it was worth every hour as the dept gained a Green for both inspections – well done to the guys.

As a way of thanking the boys, **Sigs Woody Wood** and **Swiss Keenan** are taking some well earned R&R and are attending the unit cadre course. The dept says farewell to **Sgt Munners Munslow** and family who leave on promotion to AFNORTH, 1st NATO Sig Bn, Holland. He rang them up to establish what accounts he would be responsible for – he was informed they don't have any! We wish a warm welcome to **LCpl DJ Unsworth**, who joins us from 2 Sig Regt.

The MT would like to say a big congratulations, thank you and farewell to **SSgt Martin Hunt**, who has now left us on promotion to his 'slipper and pipe' posting to 37 Sig Regt as RQMS – the Sgts' Mess will never be the same! **Sgt Ian Slocombe** is to be congratulated on his recent promotion. He is also leaving the MT to join 2 Sig Regt. With the MT still supporting the troops on ex, it was well appreciated to get new blood from the factory. The MT would like to welcome **Sigs Taffy Gladdy**, **Del Boy Lunn** and **Maxus Maxwell**.

The dept is now looking forward to some well earned summer leave.

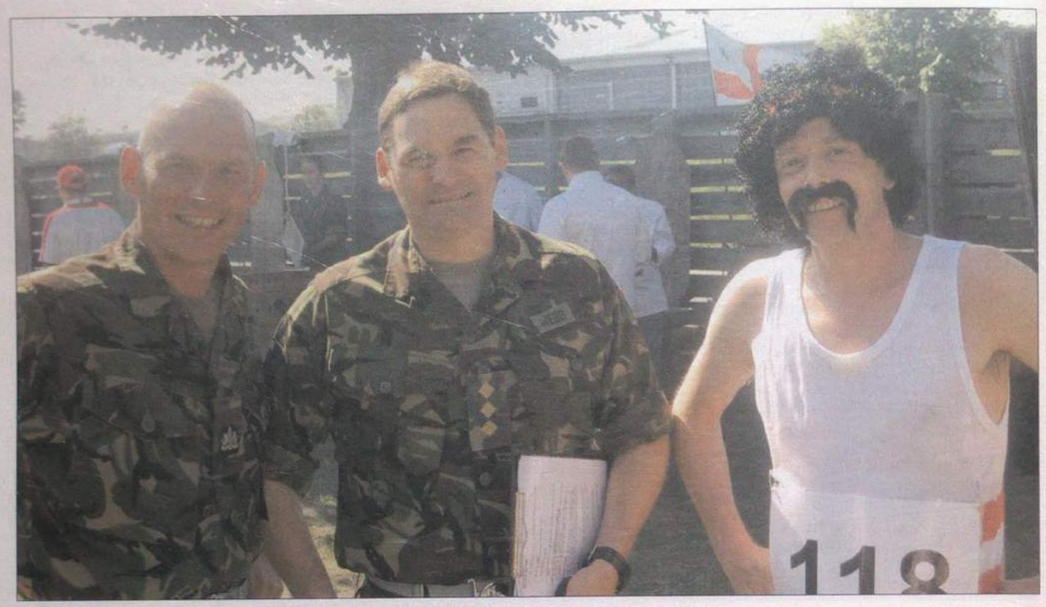
SOinC(A) VISIT AND THE INTER TROOP CHARIOT RACE – 12 JULY *- by Capt Webb*

After the SOinC(A) and CRSM had received some formal briefings and op updates, the 'Firm' were ushered up to the rugby pitch. I don't think they were quite expecting what stood before them as they arrived.

Prior to the visit, **Sgt Seabrook** and **SSgt Irvine** from the LAD, had approached the QM, **Capt Webb** and hatched a plan to organise an Inter-Tp Chariot Race. The rules were quite specific – each Tp was to put together a chariot that was not powered by peddle or motor and which could be driven by a driver with a team pushing. A course would be set with a few obstacles and the fastest team round the course 4 times would win. Prizes would be given for costume and chariot design along with points for positions in the race. The day chosen was the day of the SOinC(A) visit.

There on the pitch was a race track with banners, tyre barriers, chicanes, bunting, water bomb tents etc. However, on the sound of a klaxon sounded by the QM, the teams paraded past them.

Sabre Troop's chariot in action – unfortunately lapped several times and coming in last in the competition!



Current Corps RSM, past Corps RSM and (future?) Corps RSM

They were dressed in Roman outfits, Del Boy Trotter kits and, most unexpectedly, '118' outfits.

I am not sure what the SOinC(A) thought of the SHQ/Ops team, **Maj Nesmith**, **WO1 Caulfied**, **Capt Liz Mortimore**, **WO2(FofS) O'Hara, WO2(YofS) Vanandel**, **Sgt Slapper Cuthbert** and **Sgt Weasel Whenman**, who appeared in their somewhat 'tight' 118 kit, but the lads and lasses appreciated their efforts.

A 'Le Mans' start was imposed before teams jostled for positions on the grid. Sp Tp gained pole position and managed to retain this to the end even though the other Tps put up some stiff opposition – not to mention a tent pole through the spokes and a member of the opposition being run over by their own chariot!

Maj 'Mansell' Nesmith, who currently owns a Toyota Yaris, took the driving seat of the Chariot for SHQ and her remarkable skill saw her zip past the opposition, before seeing her team mates taken out with water bombs.

Post the Grand Prix, a BBQ was held in the Bradley Club where **Brig Thomas** and **WO1 Bruce** awarded SHQ top prize for a very well deserved costume and chariot design. A fantastic day was spent by all.

CORPS BIRTHDAY SPORTSMAN'S DINNER NIGHT

After celebrating our Corps Birthday with an Inter-Tp cross-country competition, a very hot and dehydrated Sqn arrived at the Garrison theatre at 1830hrs, to be sat down for our meal at 1900hrs. With all Cpls and above dressed in jacket and tie and mere mortals in shirt and tie, everyone was looking very smart, even if a little red and sunburned.

Most of the Sqn used the time before the meal to re-hydrate post cross-country with copious pints of Fosters and Strongbow. As a result, the last warning call for dinner was followed by a prolonged toilet break, which lasted 9 minutes. We were then able to sit down and enjoy a wonderful meal, courtesy of our cookhouse staff. With the meal over and everyone itching to get to the bar, it was time for the prize giving.

The OC made a short speech and then handed over to our Guest of Honour, **Brig Davies**, to present the prizes.

The following people were awarded Sqn Colours, in the form of a Sqn tie, for their sporting efforts this year; **LCpl Phil Pacey** for Football, **LCpl Tim Tyler** for Hockey, **Sig Sharpy Sharpe** for Swimming and last but not least, **Sig Ritchie Shelton** for Rugby.

The Brig then presented the main award of the evening, 215 Sig Sqn's "Sportsman of the Year 2006" to **Cpl Ben Scott.** Solicitously, the Brig did not make a speech, which enabled everyone to return to the bar for more re-hydration and break dancing from **SSgt Irvine** long into the night !

EXERCISE FIRST OCEAN

Ex FIRST OCEAN was a visit from the Sqn to sunny Portsmouth to visit *HMS Ocean*, an amphibious helicopter carrier and the largest vessel in the Royal Navy. It started well with the RQMS, **WO2 'Tom Tom' Bickerstaff** in lead veh with the remainder in the minibus following.

Unfortunately, during the journey the RQ had flashbacks from NI days and thought he had to lose the 'suspicious' veh, which had been following since he left Tidworth. It was only due to **Sig Pierce's** driving skills that we managed to stay with him.

On arrival, we boarded the ship and were led off to the briefing room, completing the 800m hurdles on the way through the ship, enjoying the smell of fresh paint and being blinded by the brass being cleaned in preparation for a visit by Her Majesty The Queen the following week. We received a brief on the capabilities of the ship and life on board.

We were then split down into groups and conducted a tour of the ship, again more hurdles, or as the Navy call them doorways.

This time it gave some of us the chance to bang our heads a few times.

The main interest point for us was a brief of the comms suite on board, which included Bowman and how they had incorporated it to provide situational awareness on land for their embarked force, as well as the air and sea picture.

We were all very impressed by the tour and after lunch, we proceeded to meet up with a small boat for a tour of the Harbour. No one was sick! Then it was onto *HMS Victory* and after a chance to change and explore the delights of Gunwharf Quays, we headed for the Tiger Tiger Bar for a few drinks and a meal. We rounded off the day making a presentation of a Sqn Plaque and a Bde tie to **Cdr(E) Ian Kennedy** RN who took time out of his very busy schedule to organise and conduct our visit.

We all had a great time in Portsmouth but on the way home, the RQ did manage to shake us off.

On board HMS Ocean

4 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

PAINT BALLING DAY OUT

On Tuesday 4 April, a paintball day was held at Versmold. The people who attended were from Sp Tp, 204 Sig Sqn. The MT, QM, and LAD Sects of the Sqn all took part with a total of 18 attending this team building day out.

We departed from Quebec Barracks, Osnabruck at 1200hrs in 2 minibuses, driven by **Cpl Lee Holdcroft** and **Sig 'Stavros' Stather**, and went to 'paintball island' in Versmold. Then the paintballing began.

The rest of the day was spent in team games where the aims were to capture the flag belonging to the other team and return safely back to home base, shooting as many people in the process as possible.

We ended the paintballing with one final game to see who was the best.

It was every man for himself. Each person was given an armband at the start and once you were shot, you had to give this to the person who shot you.

At the end of the game, the winner was the one who had accumulated the most armbands.

The winner was **Cfn 'Fish' Fisher**, who was presented with a trophy before we headed out for dinner and a drink at a local pub. All in all it was a successful and enjoyable team building day out.

Also a few goodbyes to **LCpl Scotty Halley** en route to 21 Sig Regt and to **SSgt Brett Newton** posted to ATR Bassingbourn. We shall miss their banter.

We also say welcome to **LCpl Trev Bloy** from 1 Div Sig Regt, **Sig Neil Worgan** and **Sig Paul Collins** who have both arrived here from Blandford.

102 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (262)

OC **Maj A Parfitt**
RSM **WO1(RSM) P Storey**

EXERCISE GRIFFIN FOCUS 06 - *by Cpl Burrell*

On Friday 2 June, elements of 262 Sig Sqn headed out on Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS 06, a large scale ex in Scotland including thousands of troops from various units and cap badges throughout the Army. Our convoy was led by **Sgt Si Holroyd** and **Lt Hunt** and we boarded the overnight ferry from Rotterdam to Hull, under a sunny continental sky, arriving in the UK early on Saturday morning to begin our trg.

Lt Hunt flying high

Before Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS 06 we had a few days of low level mil trg on Otterburn Trg Area, which consisted of map reading, first aid and comd tasks. Day 1 consisted of lessons on the 3 subjects with **Cpl Steve Barton**, running with map reading, **Cpl Chris McKechnie** instructing in comd tasks and **Cpl 'Speedy' Thomas** sharing his knowledge of first aid. The day progressed well with the only person getting wet on the comd task being the instructor (who really should check his knots before crossing a stream).

That night we had a night navigation exercise (navex) to test that we had learned from the map reading lesson. The night navex consisted of the 3 sects sent off to different checkpoints to retrieve numbers, which put together correctly gave a grid reference of a feature. The sects had to successfully identify the feature to complete the ex. The night went well with all 3 sects doing well going up and down what was described as 'one massive hill' and completing the ex.

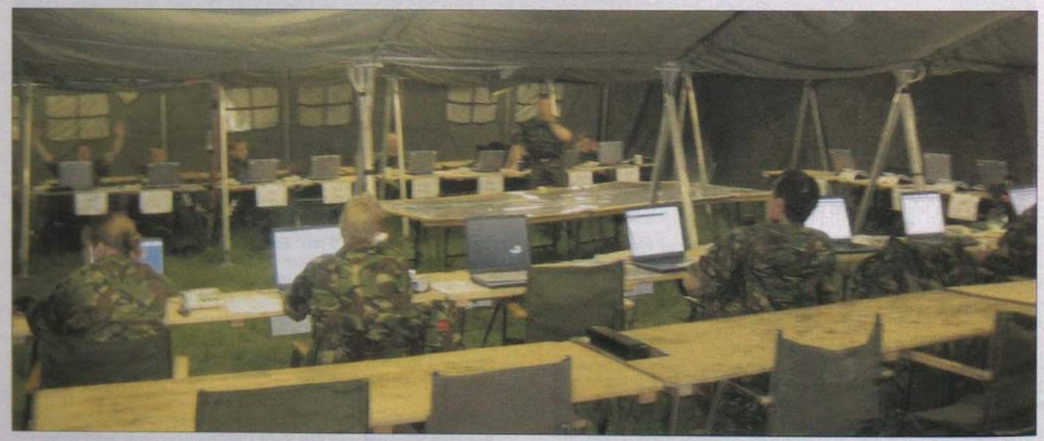
The highlight being when **LCpl Daz Cummings** mistakenly took a dead sheep for a bath and returned to EXCON smelling a little less than fresh. Day 2 consisted of tests of the other 2 lessons, in which everyone did well, showing they had been paying attention after all. After this, we moved down to York, where we met up with elements from 7 Sig Regt and spent the night.

We then deployed on Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS 06 and moved to West Freugh. Once there, we were given an area to set up on and began the construction of Bde Fwd HQ.

Halfway through the set up however, everything ground to a halt when we found out that we had been sited directly on top of underground high voltage electricity cables. Understandably, we stopped hammering metal pegs into the ground and moved location.

Everything went smoothly from then on with **LCpls 'Hesh' Hiscocks**, **Sidorowicz** and **'Robbo' Robertson** being attached to 7 Sig Regt, leaving **Cpl Steve Barton**, **LCpl Steve Brown**, **Sigs Stevie Haberfield** and **Will Forshaw** on day shift and **Cpl Chris McKechnie**, **LCpls Ken Lawson** and **Daz Cummings** and **Sig Rob Ford** on nights. We also had a crack team of sp troops with **Cpls 'Speedy' Thomas** and **Carl Richardson**, **Cfn 'Stevo' Stevens** and **Sig Daz Hocking** always ready and able to man the front desk at a moment's notice.

Once set up, our attention turned to more important matters, i.e. the start of the World Cup and with the first England match approaching, we grew apprehensive about being able to watch England play. As luck would have it the men who matter wanted



A view inside the enlarged Forward HQ

to watch football too and during England matches, we were able to drop to minimum manning and enjoy the festivities.

After a few day's of top brass visits, we were then tasked to move down to Carlisle Airport. With England playing Trinidad and Tobago that evening, everyone prayed for an eventless drive down and we just made it to Carlisle for the kick off.

After the match, the HQ was set up and had to be doubled in size to allow a bespoke fit for the ex play to run smoothly. After a few days, the Comd then requested that Tac HQ be deployed and **LCpl Robertson** and **Sig Haberfield** were tasked to move to Dalbeattie to provide it.

The HQ was running smoothly but in order to accept the full complement of staff, it seemed that double the size was not good enough and after moving 500m it was doubled again (so now 4 times normal Fwd HQ size).

This was just in time for the heavens to open and good old Scottish weather to soak us all. But as good soldiers we battled on and eventually EndEx was called.

Under the guidance of **2Lt Lee** we moved back down to York where we spent 2 days turning kit around and waiting for the ferry back. While there, we enjoyed a trip into York to spend some of their hard earned LSSA.

Eventually the day came to get back on the road and after a short cabbie down to Hull, we hopped on board the ferry and returned overnight to mainland Europe. After landing we continued on our way and were soon back at camp. Once back, we just had time for a quick turn round before deploying onto Ex MERCURY WARRIOR 1, but that's a different story.

EXERCISE MERCURY WARRIOR 1 - *by LCpl Lawson*

With Bravo Tp returning from Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS 06 late Saturday evening, it was a quick turn round before deploying to Sennelager Trg Area on Sunday evening. The aim of the ex was to complete MATTs 1 to 4 with some Battle PT in the form of the annual BCFT and a Fire Team Assessment (FTA), along with some other concurrent activities thrown in for good measure.

We arrived at Camp Site 4 to be greeted by **Sgt Mike Tiplady** and **Cpl Kev Bickford** from the Sqn Trg Wg for the camp admin brief. Once settled in and after a good night's shut eye, with no need for a crypto guard, we started the week with grouping and zeroing.

Everyone seemed to be getting to grips with firing a rifle again having not fired since last year's battle camp, except for **Cpl Chris McKechnie**, who thought he was on a duck shoot with a shotgun. The day ended with everyone completing Live Firing 7 and a navex around Starpol Trg Area.

The next morning started with the CFT. Everyone passed with no real problems except for **LCpl Daz Cummings** who was attempting to grow another foot in the form of a blister.

Next up was the APWT. Everyone had to complete a 5 round check group before commencing and **Cpl McKechnie** was swiftly removed from the firing point until everyone else had completed their APWT.

This was again followed by a night navex to test our ability to cover and measure distances at night, with **Cpl Dave Vakalala's** team completing the 5km (more like 10km) in just over an hour.

The next 2 days saw the introduction of the FTA, from which the majority of the Sqn received the reward of being battle worthy and an introduction to automatic fire. That night, the night shoot took place, in which **LCpl 'Swanny' Swanick** and **LCpl Jonathan Robertson** received full marks.

THE TACTICAL COMMUNICATIONS WING LADS' EXPERIENCE IN IRAQ - *by SAC Perry*

We arrived at the Shaibah helipad on a hot dusty morning months back in May. Two lone SACs from the RAF Tactical Communications Wing (TCW), who did not know quite what to expect. We were collected by the two TCW lads we were there to replace and brought to the NSE compound.

Then we dumped our bags at our accommodation and after a quick HO/TO, we said farewell to the guys we were replacing.

At the same time, 1 Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt were being replaced by 102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (262), the guys we would be spending the rest of our time with. It wasn't long before we met the 262 guys. At first it was only a quick exchange of names and greetings, as they were busy getting on with their HO/TOs but got to know each other properly once everything started to settle down.

Once we got into a routine, we started getting to know the guys, especially ISMT dept where we worked. We were told that we were part of the team and weren't treated any differently. We took part in all their activities, good or bad.

We were really made to feel part of the team and have made some good friends here with the Sig Tp. I will tell the guys coming out to replace us soon, not to worry as the 262 lads will look after them.

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj RJB Spencer**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RD Burrows**

With Sqn personnel deployed in Canada and the rest preparing eqpt for storage, as well as supporting the condensed trg year, the past couple of months have been intense as the Sqn worked furiously to finish all tasks in preparation for summer leave.

The Sqn AT package was a welcome break for those that could get away and the week prior to block leave was socially packed with a families' BBQ and a final farewell to the OC, **Maj Rich Spencer**.

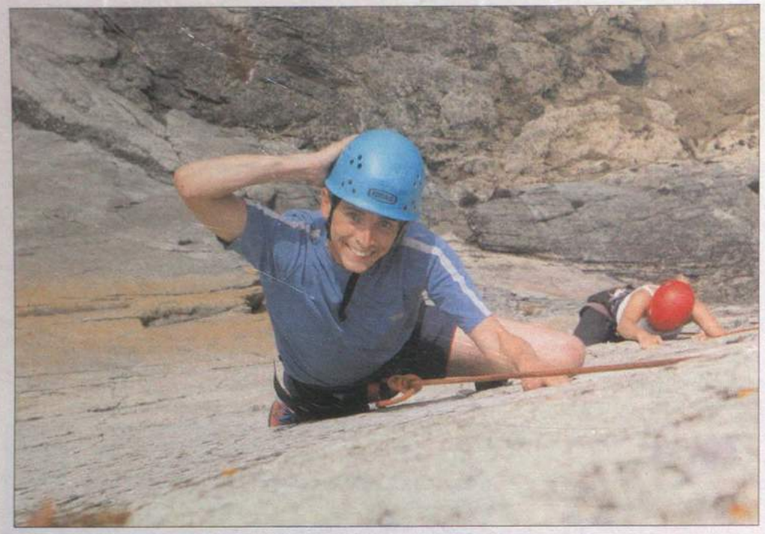
Every one in the Sqn wishes him and his family all the best in his new posting and thank him for his dedication to the Sqn.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING - *by Lt DaleTaft*

Currently at the end of a busy trg year with an op tour on Op HERRICK 6 looming at the doorway, the Sqn finally found some time to enjoy itself.

Two week-long AT packages were organised: an outdoor package in Tenby, Wales and a sailing exped out of Portsmouth Harbour. In Tenby, Sqn soldiers were exposed to a variety of activities including hiking the coastal routes and climbing the rugged cliffs of the beautiful Pembrokeshire coastline.

The highlight to the trg in Wales was the coasteering rotation. Not for the faint-hearted, the cliff-jumping, boulder-scrambling, sea-swimming adrenaline sport of coasteering tests even the



LCpl Crowder demonstrating 3 points of contact near St Davids

curve from the moment they slipped mooring! Gaining much personal development during the sailing in and around the Solent (and a comedy suntan), those involved also went away with a few stories!

In addition to the AT and morale building, there have been 2 recent OC Challenge days woven into the work programme. Here the Sqn depts pitted their sporting prowess against each other, within a healthily competitive environment!

The first of the OC Challenges was to see the depts battle it out on the football pitch. With strong performances throughout the afternoon from both Alpha and Bravo Tps, it was obviously clear the LAD were not lying about how little spare time they have in the programme!

The tension grew in the round-robin tournament before Alpha and Bravo had to meet in the final deciding match; Alpha gallantly, yet modestly, leaving the pitch as 2 – 1 winners. A sunny June afternoon was to host the most recent "Top Gun" themed volleyball competition which meant a sport's pitch full of soldiers dressed as their favourite camp fighter pilot. This took some of us back to Op TELIC memories of volleyball in the sun.

Alpha Tp were again the "best of the best" and remained on top of their game earning another victory in the volleyball.

bravest of driver/linemen to hold his nerve and was enjoyed by those who were brave enough to try!.

Meanwhile, the unit's fair-weather sailing reps enjoyed much sun, light winds and a few fine glasses of rosé to complement the exotic sunsets of the Isle of Wight. With only 2 experienced crew on board, the inexperienced sailors were on a steep learning

Coasteering on the Pembrokeshire coast

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

TACSIG PATHFINDER PLATOON - *by Cpl Wear*

The Pathfinder Pl is an independent unit within 16 Air Asslt Bde. It is made up of volunteers from all cap badges across all three Services and its role is to provide ISTAR info to the Bde Comd to enable 16 Air Asslt Bde ops.

This means that the Pathfinder Patrols need to be skilled in different insertion and patrol skills to enable them to operate at long ranges and completely self sufficiently.

The Patrols are normally made up of 6 men and although everybody is trained to a general standard in everything, each man is a specialist in one area. Recruiting from across the Armed Forces provides a deeper knowledge, e.g. one member is on his second tour and although a Veh Mech by trade, he is also a Sniper and Forward Air Controller.

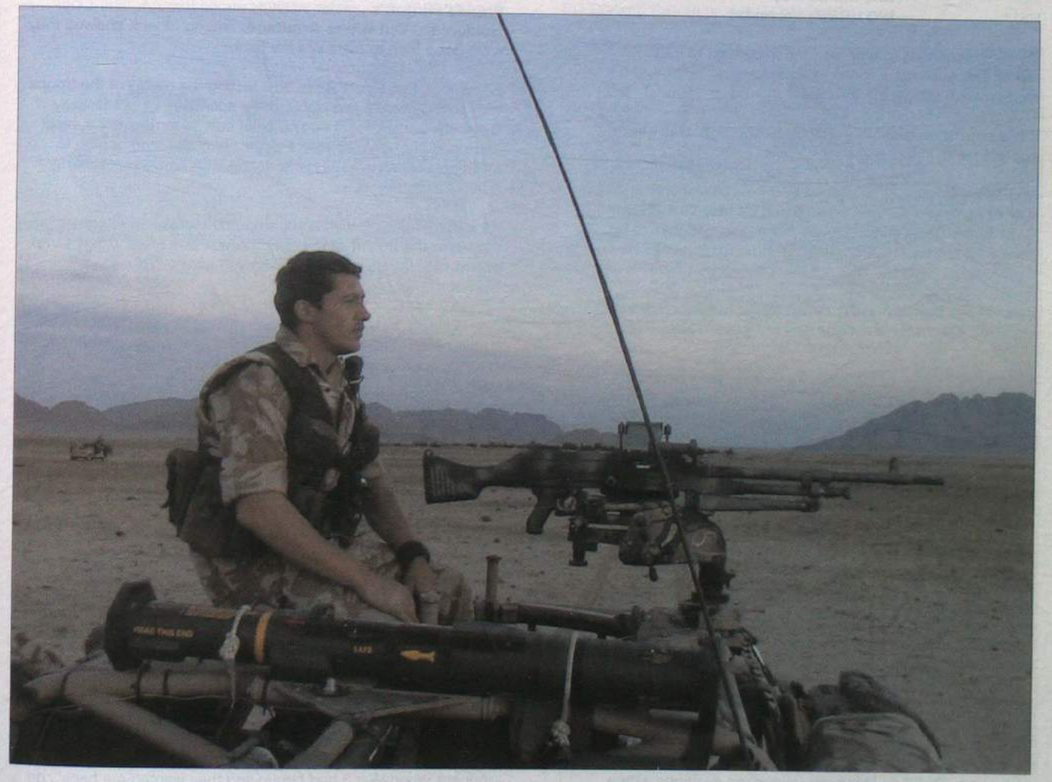
I was posted to the Platoon in January 05 and since then my feet have not touched the ground. My job in UK is to run the Pl Sigs cell which means booking frequencies, crypto, mobile phones and writing CEIs.

I have also spent my time teaching other units in the Bde and liaising with civilian companies about comms kit that may be of use to us and other military units, mainly aviation, to confirm the best way to be interoperable.

During the first 12 months, until we deployed on Op HERRICK, I have been on my Class 1 at Blandford, 3 Bde exs, a squares parachute course, run 2 specialist comms cadres, attended 2 mobility cadres (learning how to live and fight on vehicles such as Land Rover WMIK, quad bikes and Honda 250 scramblers; as well as a full wpns cadre (0.5 Browning, GPMG, Minimi, SA80, Under-slung Grenade Launcher, Browning pistol, claymore, trip flares, AT4 and Milan as well as L96 and 0.338 sniper rifle).

We also conducted a mountain cadre in Snowdon, where we built OPs and practised climbing and ascending steep ground under the instruction of the RAF mountain rescue. When we learnt that we would be coming onto Op HERRICK people were sent on more specialist courses with lads doing photography courses, Tactical Landing Zone Special Operations, the Mountain Wilderness med course, I did a Landing Point Commander course and a trauma med course run by Med Tp, who support UKSF, which culminated in us doing chest drains on pigs, although cannulating each other provided the best laughs and whitest faces.

We did our final Bde ex in January and then began to pack in earnest to come to Afghanistan. We arrived on Op HERRICK in early March, and after an initial trg and rehearsal package including veh contact drills and live Close In Fire Sp with AH64 Apache, day and night, we deployed to our FOB and home for the tour.



Cpl Wear operating with the Pathfinder Platoon

My job has been GPMG top cover and Tactical Air Controller Sig on the OC's WMIK. On our first patrol we quickly came into contact and managed to extract at night under fire with one veh rolled.

Although we had to blow up our own veh with Milan to prevent kit falling into the wrong hands, we suffered no casualties and everyone considered it a success and proof that all our trg and drills do work. Since then we have continued to push out on long range veh patrols, re-supplied so far by Chinook, Chinook under slung and a paradrop, to extend our range and time on the ground.

We have had several more incidents and been involved in some exciting tasks. As a Royal Signals soldier, it has been excellent for my trade. Comms is essential to our success and we have been given some very specialist kit for us to use so we have the ability to send word docs and photos back to HQ. This enables us to pass on vital info without having to return to our mounting base.

So far this tour I have sent contact reports, several med 9 liners, dealt with fast air requests as well as various air requests for re-supply and extraction.

I have also been doing recces ahead of out routes to get early warning of any enemy presence. The Pathfinder Platoon is a very fast paced dynamic and exciting place to work. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Pl so far and highly recommend it to anyone with a taste for doing something different and adventurous.

216 DETATCHMENT - *by LCpl Nancollas*

Throughout Op TELIC 7, 216 Sig Sqn provided a det of 4 soldiers to 2 Para Sig Pl: 3 RS Ops, **Cpl Ben Ford**, **LCpls Dale Savage** and **James Nancollas** and one tech, **Cpl Ben Monaghan**, (now **Pte Monaghan** after re-capbadging to the Para Regt during the tour).

Our primary role was to run the comms det in the ops room, providing comms throughout the BG and up to Bde level. This was achieved using the new Bowman radios as primary means, as well as the PRC 117 TACSAT.

We were also given the opportunity to take part in several of the patrols down to the Saudi border region, sending SITREPs back to Camp Smitty Ops Room. Our time was also spent at As Samawah PJOC maintaining a link to the air assets available to us. **LCpl Savage** spent some time attached to B Coy's Sigs Det, ensuring the Coy's comms were in working order and taking part in patrols in and around As Samawah.

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj MS Dooley**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Forrester**

The Sqn continues to prepare for deployment to Iraq in November, submitting to the joys of Bowman Lt trg and an excellent live firing ex in the past 2 months.

It is a time of considerable change for the Sqn, with new appointments in key positions.

Maj Mike Dooley shortly moves on from a memorably successful tour as OC, to be replaced by **Maj Teri Downes**. **Capt Mark Barratt** has already bid a fond goodbye to his beloved and frenetic Ops desk, leaving it to go and lie down in a dark room in Germany with a damp cloth on his brow.

Capt Marc Bentley has acceded to the hallowed 2IC's slot, replacing **Capt Gordon Wills** and his leopard print smoking jacket.

SQUADRON BATTLE CAMP

Two glorious weeks in June had the Sqn in a state of sweaty exhaustion for the best trg we have conducted in several years. Close Quarter Battlerange, live firing and patrolling skills exs vied for our attention with the delights of Helensburgh and the World Cup.

The battle camp put into practice the range qualifications busily garnered by members of the Sqn in the past months.

Cpl Frost and **Cpl Grimes** started with the basics, covering reaction to contact, fire and manoeuvre and basic fire team patrolling. **SSgt Clarke** then conducted an APWT, after which the real fun began.

Several enemy positions surrounded an injured soldier on the CQB, and although short, the range afforded excellent opportunities to practise individual drills and think about the use of ground. **Cpl Kev Hesketh** impressed everyone with a washout. This was unusual given his excellent APWT score, and he assured us that his several hits 'just weren't registering'. **Sig Freddy Flintoff's** warrior instincts shone through, and **LCpl Holden** and **Cpl Glenn Armitage,** among others, showed they were good men to have in a fire fight.

Elsewhere, **Sgt Scott Rose** was testing the mettle of the troops with some medical and public order scenarios of increasingly Byzantine complexity, bringing what can become a dry subject blazing to life. **Sgt Dougie Porter** spent the time hoping to minimise casualties during the dry trg with some excellent dry contact drills practice.

All was rounded off with a superb confirmatory ex, which stretched the Sqn in all the right places. The RQ and **Sgt Luigi Venni** kept things running smoothly in camp, probably with the help of all that hair gel…

This really superb ex was rounded off socially with twilight visits to the nearby Faslane Naval Base for a spell in the gym and some bevvies, as well as runs ashore to the local towns.

Congratulations to **Sgt Eyers** on her promotion, which served to liven up an otherwise lacklustre performance by England in their opening World Cup match.

ROYAL SIGNALS SOLDIER GETS HIS MEDALS AFTER A 60 YEAR DELAY - *Capt Whillis*

Always keen to recognise the achievements of Royal Signals soldiers, no matter how long ago, it was a pleasure to present 2530898 **L/Sgt Len Howell** Royal Signals with his War Medal and Defence Medal, granted for services in the Second World War, at his 94th birthday celebration n Sedgfield, Co. Durham.

Mr Howell, enjoying a drink with his family in a restaurant in the village, looked only a little startled as **Capt Paul Whillis** ambled in and politely barked out his regimental number. Standing to attention immediately and banging up a crisp salute, the old soldier thought he was being called back to the colours. "I thought World War 3 had begun and they wanted me back", he said. "Either that, or he wanted me to join some organisation".

Barely-stifled sobs were heard from dim corners of the restaurant as the medals were pinned on **Len's** chest.

Mr Howell received his driver trg in Catterick Garrison in 1939. During his driving test in Darlington, he experienced at first hand the high standards of trg of which the Army is rightly proud.

"The instructor asked me to reverse into a cul-de-sac in Priestgate," he recalled. "I reversed in and scraped one side – a huge cheer went up from the section in the back. The instructor said: 'have another go, old chap'. I did, and scraped the other side. I got it the third time. I pulled away, and he said: 'you've passed, old chap'".

Mr Howell was then attached as a signaller to 31 Tank Bde in Eastbourne, where he witnessed the Prime Minister, **Winston Churchill**, christening new Churchill tanks at Beachy Head by urinating on their tracks. He served for 3 years in England, before being posted to Egypt as an operator in a secret wireless station, communicating with clandestine dets in the Balkans.

Mr Howell's son, **Jeff**, organised the medal presentation as a surpise for **Len**, who was so happy to be home in 1946 that he did not pursue the awards to which he was entitled.

After the war, he moved from London to Darlington when his employer, the Ministry of Education, relocated.

Hale and hearty, with a fine collection of anecdotes, he is an active member of his community, playing golf twice a week in Darlington. **Capt Whillis** is available to appear at functions, parties, weddings and hen nights upon request.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj FE Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Yates**

OC SQN INTRODUCTION

We are now over half way through our tour in Iraq and continue to be challenged by comms at the tactical level.

With with the repositioning of UK forces out here, there have been a significant number of tasks, deploying with the BGs in order to enhance their ability to communicate, as well as being a great opportunity for our Sigs to experience life at the sharp end. The op picture is constantly changing, with the arrival of HQ 3(UK) Div bringing fresh ideas and maintaining the momentum of progress across the AO.

This month alone has seen significant changes in Muthanna province, the tear-down of Camp Abu Naji and the associated repositioning of the Maysan BG, and the move of HQ NSE from Shaiba to Basra Air Station (to be known as the Consolidated Operating Base (COB)), with concomitant internal moves within the Div and Bde HQs. Life is not dull!

20 Armoured Brigade Signal Squadron in Iraq

We are now looking forward to the weather cooling down as autumn approaches (this may just be wishful thinking), developing the security situation within Basra City, and the handover to 19 Lt Bde.

The past 4 months have flown by, as I am sure the next 3 will. POTL and Christmas leave will be with us before we know it, and we'll be complaining about how cold and wet German winters are.

EXERCISE LONGLOOK - *by Lt Mike Scott*

Posted to 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207) for Exchange Program Long Look 06, I was fortunate to be offered a detachment to 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200) for the period May – June on Op TELIC 8. Despite the daily average temperature of around 45 degrees Celsius, the lack of humidity was a welcome respite from my home posting locality in Darwin (1st Mech Bde) in Australia's central north. Currently serving as the Regtl Signals Officer (RSO) for the 8/12 Med Regt and with a background in EW, I was keen to see a Bde Sig Sqn employed on ops.

I had several opportunities to provide 'Top-Cover' in the Snatch vehicle multiples whilst deployed – an experience I would compare to standing in a sauna whilst being sandblasted. Despite this it was beneficial to experience first hand the TTPs being utilised to combat the IED threat; drills which were performed to a high standard by Tigris Tp under command of **Lt Dan Lewin**.

Having looked forward to getting on the range and firing the SA 80 (A2), I was surprised when we pulled up on a remote stretch of road and I was informed that we had arrived.

A couple of 'Figure Eleven' targets were placed, arcs and safety briefs were given and the once quiet stretch of road was transformed into Diamondback Range. Regardless of my protests that the nature of the ground in Australia warranted the use of gloves, I was branded '**Michael Jackson**' for my use of a left hand glove during fire and movement. Despite going on to sustain multiple cuts and scratches, **Lt Lewin** continues to dispute the benefits of the 'MJ Glove'

Just prior to my departure from theatre I was given the opportunity to travel to Kuwait for several days on Operational Stand Down where the American PX stores and swimming pool were put to good use. A fine display of American patriotism was observed when the lowering of the flag was played and those in the deep end scrambled to a safe depth at which to stand to attention.

On the whole, the experience was extremely enjoyable and professionally enlightening. I extend my sincerest thanks to **Maj Hargreaves** and 200 Sig Sqn for their hospitality and graciousness in defeat by the Australian Rugby team....twice.

G6 OPERATIONS OFFICER - *by Capt Will Taylor*

The Sqn is now well over half way through Op TELIC 8 and actively planning for the handover in November to 19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.

The previous few months have been busy, with the Sqn continuing its responsibilities to the life sp at Basra Air Station (BAS) as well as maintaining Rear Link Dets (RLD), re-broadcast sites and a whole host of other tasks within and around the Bde and Div HQs.

Al Muthanna was the first Iraqi province to transfer to Provisional Iraqi Control (PIC) which saw Synergy Mobile dets deploy into the province to provide secure in-theatre data and voice comms. Synergy is a commercial system with Pinzgauer vehicles providing the essential 'mobile' link during PIC and on the deployment of the Bde Fwd HQs.

The current op tempo is seeing an ever increasing number of Sqn personnel deploying across Southern Iraq. The recent deployment of a det into the renowned 'Old State Building' (OSB) within Basra City has seen our soldiers come under regular small arms fire and RPG attacks. The very same can be said for the dets at Basra Palace, although they have a 25m swimming pool to cool off in while those at the OSB cool off with bottles of water!

As the week's progress and we move towards PIC in other provinces, the skills of the operators are tested to the full, especially with long range HF comms. As this is written, two BGs are conducting long range desert patrols, each aided by a Royal Signals RLD.

It was a case of rehearsing and applying the basics of A&P with the Yeoman looking to the Corps Museum when he first approached the issue! It was not long before the mobile HF comms were successfully achieved to distances in excess of 80km through the use of the 'vieleport'.

INFANTRY ATTACHMENT - *by LCpl M Duck*

I was fortunate enough to gain an attachment to 7 Pl, C Coy, of the 2nd Bn The Royal Anglian Regt. The Pl's function was to deter Indirect Fire Attacks on Multi National Forces' Security Bases by restricting the insurgents' freedom of movement within our Area of Operations (AO).

My role in this Pl was to provide VHF and Tacsat comms. Most of the ops I took part in were heliborne, but we did do some foot and veh patrols as well.

The most challenging ops that I took part in while attached to the Pl were the 'Strike Ops'. These were tasks which involved targeting specific areas of interest where there were individuals or groups who were known to be conducting some sort of terrorist activity. This included performing tactics which incorporated Operations in Built up Areas (OIBUA), where house clearance drills took place.

Other tasks that were conducted were several 'Eagle VCPs.' This is where Vehicle Check Points (VCPs) are put in place, facilitated with movement by air. The patrol would be dropped at a certain grid square, de-bus at the side of the road and secure the area. Once comms were established with the helicopter, we headed off to the road where we would begin to stop and search vehs that approached the VCP.

After several cars had been thoroughly searched and the patrol comd was happy, we would then call the helicopter back to our location and await its arrival at the chosen landing site.

Throughout the attachment, the Pl had to check certain Vulnerable Points (VPs). The details of these sites were given to the patrol; we were inserted by helicopter and patrolled through the VP, e.g. a small town, bridge, road junction, clearing it as we went through. We also provided 'Illumination Tasks'. These were both foot and helicopter insertions. Once in position we would fire pyrotechnics into the air in order to illuminate a specific area to observe possible insurgent locations.

Overall, the attachment was an excellent experience, where I was able to participate in ops that were of great satisfaction both personally and professionally. Other members of the Sqn are following with similar attachments to the BGs.

JOINT SUPPORT UNIT BASRA - *by SSgt Rory O'Neill*

The Joint Support Unit Basra (JSUB) is a Tri-Service Unit which provides G4 services to all areas of Basra Air Station (BAS), less of course the provision of air movement. The bulk of manning is made up from 200 Sig Sqn supplemented by Individual Augmentees.

BAS consists of some 2000 personnel, who work within the 3 main HQs, several coy sized units, the RAF contingent and civilian contractors.

Overall an extremely busy and diverse unit with the team numbering 1 Officer plus 65 ORs pulling together the stores supply, Force Protection (FP) and veh maint for all that goes on here in BAS. Each dept has a truly Tri Service feel to it and is lead by a WO2, with the Unit QM pulling it all together.

The Unit has been exceptionally busy in the past 3 months keeping up with the tempo of ops, ensuring that not only the BAS elements are provided for but also many other units in the MND(SE) area.

Just over 3 months into the tour and JSUB MT are well into the daily routine, the SNATCH Land Rovers are still breaking down on an almost daily basis and the LAD are putting in some seriously long hours to keep the old girls motoring on. They don't do too badly considering both vehs and crews are covering about 6000 km a month in 50 degree heat.

The constant turnaround of troops in JSUB means that the cycle of trg and ops is pretty much non stop and all are more than ready for R&R, when it comes round.

The Sqn's PT trg program is paying off with **Sgt Daz Pullen** (1 UK Armd Div Sig Regt), who is rumoured to have lost 2 stone.

That said, he is also rumoured to be 34th in line to the throne – so make of that what you will! JSUB MT, much the same as any MT in any unit, is currently undergoing the rollercoaster ride that is ECI and LSI preparation.

So added to the strains of the heat, broken trucks and carrying out FP multiples daily, we now have the **WO2(MTWO) Stu Reynolds** stomping around checking procedures and systems like it's going out of fashion, and managing to show off his new boots to anyone who will look in the process.

This month we say farewell to **Pte Ryan Beech** RLC and **Sgt Pat Dodge** AAC, both top characters who will be missed by the whole team.

We have a lot of new arrivals from 3 UK Div Sig Regt, so Bulford's loss is definitely our gain.

Cpl Sticky Perry, RAF Regt, is ably putting the multiple through a tough trg regime from reports and returns all the way to LFTT ranges, but as the maxim goes 'time spent trg is seldom wasted' and it has been proven on the ground why it is so vital.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj Dennis Weir MBE**
PSAWO **WO1 John Farrell**

EXERCISE MAKEOVER

As mentioned above, the August trg weekend was designated 'Tp Comds' Disposal' and the majority of JSSU (V) personnel took the opportunity to sail in the Solent, canoe on the Wye or study military history in London.

That said, a small number of Officers and Warrant Officers sacrificed their participation in these glamorous activities to roll up their sleeves and give our new bar at RAF Digby a very much needed make-over.

The whole project was managed by the PSAWO, **WO1 John Farrell**, but there were some very valuable DIY contributions from **Maj Al Tuck** and **WO1 Pete Derrick** in the carpentry department, **Maj Graham Barber** and **Lt Steve Rofe** with paint brushes and **WO1(Supvr R) Mark Gould** on curtains and electrics.

The OC, **Maj Dennis Weir** and the Trg Officer, **Capt Nige (Tfc Offr (R)) Watton**, also chipped in with some very skilful passing of tools, plus lifting of heavy things.

Last, but certainly not least, a special thank you must go to Mark's partner **Kim** who gave indispensable advice and assistance on the curtain hanging front!

The new bar will be officially opened next trg weekend, with a few sociable snifters, the first of many games of Shock Dice (Dannenberg Rules obviously) and a story or two from all members of JSSU (V) – bring your own sand bags!

THE WYE EXPERIENCE (AKA EXERCISE DELIVERENCE REVISITED)

One of the highlights of the trg year is the weekend turned over to the respective Tp Comds to organise. This year an especially hardy bunch from Linguist Tp decided to brave the rigours of the Forest of Dean, basing themselves at The Jovial Colliers pub in Lydbrook, to begin a weekend of AT that will no doubt stay in the memories of these seasoned veterans for a very long time!

The intrepid group bunked down in select accommodation, i.e. the skittles alley, kindly converted by the landlady and then sallied forth to the bar to sample the local hospitality.

In an atmosphere thick with bonhomie and the local brew, the 'lads' were treated to a rare display of local knowledge about the planned 2 days of canoeing and hiking.

The main drift of the advice seemed to be that, if they 'stuck to the paths they'd be alroight!'.

Happy in this knowledge Linguist Tp hit the sack in the relatively early hours in preparation for an early start on Saturday morning for their 15 mile journey by canoe down the River Wye.

Saturday morning arrived far too early. The Tp OC, **Capt Geoff Williams**, woke up wondering how he had managed to sleep on a two-seater settee, plainly designed for pygmies.

The other team members, **Lt Steve Rofe**, **WO1 Pat Hannan**, **WO2 Andy Charles**, **SSgts Hughie Devlin** and **John Haggerty** had no such concerns, having had the good sense to either steal the larger settees or erect their own camp beds, while the Tp OC had been keeping the Landlord and Landlady happy!

Although the Tp OC took pains to point out that 'there was no competitive edge to the days activities', it was noted by all that **Capt Williams** and his crewman, the now veteran canoeist **SSgt Hughie Devlin**, set off like rats up a drainpipe, and were unbeatable for the rest of the journey.

Luckily, the weather, though breezy and presenting a number of interesting headwinds, stayed relatively fine throughout the morning.

This allowed the team to make the halfway point at Kerne Bridge in well under 2 hours. At this point the first set of rapids

Kerne Bridge – Linguist Troop consider a plan of action for the rapids

appeared and a short halt was called for a period of reflection and will writing. After the leading canoe had been thoroughly examined for any evidence of an outboard motor the team successfully negotiated the Kerne Bridge rapids.

As the Tp neared the final 5 miles of the journey the weather changed and a lunch break was called just as the rain and wind began in earnest. Cheese and ham sandwiches were eaten and the crews braced themselves for the last leg of the journey.

With aching arms and shoulders, but unbroken spirit, they successfully negotiated the Lydbrook rapids and began the long loop of the Wye towards Symmonds Yat.

As the weather closed in, the looming presence of the cliffs, shrouded by the low clouds, gave the whole area the feel of a brooding 'Lord of the Rings' set, prompting **SSgt Devlin** to say, not for the first time in the day, 'Are we there yet?' The Tp OC gave his standard, if slightly less than truthful response, 'It's just around the next bend'. On Sunday morning, **Capt Williams** once again managed to wake up on the pygmy sofa – will he ever learn?

Today they had a whole new set of challenges, this time involving leg muscles. The team had the traditional Forest of Dean breakfast again, and set off to the start point of a short hike along Offa's Dyke.

Our destination was to be the very pleasant and quiet village of Brockweir, on the River Wye, just outside Chepstow. For this activity, the team was reduced to the OC, **WO1 Hannan**, **WO2 Charles** and **SSgt Devlin**.

The OC briefed the lads that the activity was to be a pleasant stroll along part of Offa's Dyke, with plenty of opportunity for viewing the splendid countryside; and then set off at CFT pace for two and a half miles up a continually ascending path.

As the team moved along the rugged paths, **SSgt Devlin** once again found it in himself to ask the question, 'Are we at the top yet?' Once again, **Capt Williams** was forced to bring his integrity into question by stating, 'It's just over the next hill'.

However, they did reach the top in a very creditable time! The descent back down to the Wye, through delightful, deserted, woodland with rain pattering on the leaves, for some reason prompted **WO1 Hannan** to make imitation banjo noises and quote incessantly from the film Deliverance!

Eventually the team made it to the banks of the Wye and followed the river back to Brockweir where a debrief was held in the Village Hall Café. Bowls of wholesome home made soup were consumed, accompanied by never-ending pots of tea.

Before departing for home the team agreed that in the course of the two-day exercise, they had attained a level of upper and lower body fitness that would allow them to ace the new TA annual personal fitness assessment with ease. Bring it on!

SPORTING FIXTURES

The list below is incomplete but gives a number of matches that are planned for Rugby Union and Football that can be put in THE WIRE sports fixtures list. I am chasing other sports secretaries for their fixtures dates:

DATE	SPORT	VENUE		VERSUS
25 Oct 06	Rugby Union	Worthy Down	R SIGNALS	AGC
27 Oct 06	Football	Blandford	R SIGNALS	RLC
3 Nov 06	Football	Blandford	R SIGNALS	INF
14 Nov 06	Corps Water Polo and Swimming Championships - Colerne			
15 Nov 06	Rugby Union	Chicksands	R SIGNALS	INT Corps
17 Nov 06	Football	Woolwich	R SIGNALS	RA
22 -23 Nov 06	Inter Corps Water Polo and Swimming Championships - Aldershot			
24 Nov 06	Football	Minley	R SIGNALS	RE
29 Nov 06	Rugby Union	Hereford	R SIGNALS	Pilgrims (Armour Cup)
1 Dec 06	Football	Borden	R SIGNALS	REME
13 Dec 06	Rugby Union	Cardiff	R SIGNALS	RAC
10 Jan 07	Rugby Union	Cardiff	R SIGNALS	AMS
12 Jan 07	Football	Ash Vale	R SIGNALS	AMS
21 Feb 07	Rugby Union	Bridgend	R SIGNALS	South Wales Police
7 Mar 07	Rugby Union	Aldershot	Merit Table	½ Play off
16 Mar 07	Rugby Union	Cardiff	R SIGNALS	7's competition
28 Mar 07	Rugby Union	Pontyclun	R SIGNALS	South Wales Fire Service
20 Apr 07	Football	Pirbright	R SIGNALS	INF
26 Apr 07	Rugby Union	Cardiff	R SIGNALS	Cardiff HS Old Boys
5 May 07	Rugby Union	London	R SIGNALS	Corps Officers
14 May 07	Football	Blandford	R SIGNALS	RE
16 May 07	Football	Blandford	R SIGNALS	RA
18 May 07	Football	Blandford	R SIGNALS	REME

SPORT

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS CRICKET SEASON 2006

SECOND PLACE FOR CORPS CRICKETERS IN 2006
- by Capt Alex Senneck

The 2006 cricket season has proved to be extremely successful compared to the transitional season of 2005. The squad came in well prepared for the Grouse League fixtures on the back of a highly worthwhile tour to South Africa in March.

The season openers were our traditional friendlies in May versus the RM and against **Lt Col Roddy Nicholson's** Chairman's XI. Both fixtures were a good opportunity for an early season run out to blow the cob webs away before our first league match against the Inf in the same week.

The Marines were clinically swept aside with surprising ease, with the Corps scoring 279, **Sig Billy Williams** starring with a magnificent 156. We subsequently bowled the Marines out for only 128. Following on was the Chairman's XI. Disappointingly there was only going to be one winner as the cloud base lowered and became greyer as the morning wore on and true to form torrential rain brought an early finish to the match and a very early start to the post match proceedings that had been generously laid on from GD(UK) by **Mr Michael Vickory** and **Maj(Retd) Chris Whitehead**.

The first Grouse Merit League match against the Inf at Warminster Cricket Club was quickly upon us and they looked like a strong outfit as **Capt Alex Senneck** won the toss and decided to bowl in damp overcast conditions. The decision to bowl first proved to be a good one as the Inf were soon up against it, as our bowlers set about their task and made early roads into the top order batsmen. **Sig David Wade** and **Capt Senneck** picked up 6 wickets for 48 runs, before the same fate as the Chairman's match loomed with heavy drizzle taking hold of proceedings.

After an hour sitting around the pavilion, the rain cleared and we were able to get back out to the middle to try to bowl them out. Two more wickets fell in quick succession but not quickly enough to beat the rain. The second match of the week became a casualty of the weather and we had to share the points.

Four fixtures in a row against the AGC, Medics, Gunners and Sappers were the next challenge and we were confident that 4 wins would put us into a very good position and probably front runners at the top of the league. The AGC are one of the improving Corps teams and proved to be a strong side on a slow, low wicket at Worthy Down.

Electing to bowl first, we put ourselves into a very good position by bowling out the AGC for 115, with **Sig Wade** doing most damage. On such a slow wicket it was always going to be difficult scoring runs and this was certainly the case against tight straight bowling. However, **Cpl Keith Ford** proved that with a confident approach and excellent use of his feet and ample frame, he was able to propel us to our target for the loss of only 3 wickets. This was a good win and an excellent start in this important run of 4 matches.

The Army Medical Services were next and proved to be our weakest opponents of the season. On an excellent wicket at the Blandford Oval, we won the toss and elected to bat and took full advantage, scoring 430 for 4 from our 50 overs. It was certainly lambs to the slaughter with centuries scored by **LCpl Stu Jackson** and **Capt Senneck**, along with 94 from **LCpl Paul Atherton** and 66 from **Capt Darren Winfield**. The Medics innings followed in the same vein as their bowling and they were whipped out for 64 with **Sig Wade** again doing most of the damage.

Over the years, the Gunners and Sappers have proven to be strong opponents, both possessing an excellent cricketing pedigree and fine traditions. At the picturesque Gunners' ground at Larkhill with the magnificent frontage of the Officers' Mess as a back drop, the match took a strange turn that resulted in the concession of the match from the Gunners.

This was because a player on the field had not been nominated on the original team list. As it was such a nice day, it was agreed to play the rest of the game as a friendly. The next match was the Sappers, who did not prove to be as strong as in previous years.

Batting first, in excellent conditions for scoring runs, we notched up 297 for the loss of 7 wickets, with the middle order pairing of **Capt Senneck** and **Cpl Ford** underpinning the innings. In reply the Sappers managed to get up to 191 before being bowled out with yet again **Sig Wade** doing most of the damage along with **WO2 Shaun Fardy**. Another good win giving us 4 wins from 4 matches in this batch.

With confidence in the squad running high and a belief that we could get ourselves into a position to win the Grouse Inter Corps Trophy, it was with great relish that we welcomed the Int Corps and the RAC to Blandford for our next fixtures and as it turned out, our next 2 wins.

Electing to bowl first at the sun draped Blandford Oval the Int Corps were soon receiving a tough time from the opening bowlers and wickets began to tumble. In only 28 overs their batsmen had succumbed to our bowlers for 75.

We soon reached that total for a comprehensive victory and maximum points. The RAC followed a similar fate and managed to get up to 83 runs in the same glorious conditions as the Int Corps. Our batsmen outperformed themselves from their previous outing and passed the RAC total with the loss of only 1 wicket.

The last 3 games of the season were now decisive for this very young Royal Signals side. Three more wins and we would surely be in a very strong position to take our first title for 5 years. First up were the AAC, who with stoic batting managed to last 47 overs before being bowled out for 142. All the bowlers stuck to their task well on an excellent batting surface and managed to keep the score down against much underrated batsmen.

The Corps batsmen set about the score with gusto and soon found themselves in a strong position, but a small wobble in the middle of the innings set pulses racing. **Cpl Ford** stuck to his task well and saw us through with plenty of overs to spare and scored a stylish 65 not out.

The hard working and difficult to beat REME were next on the fixture list. Over the years the REME have consistently been one of the stronger teams in Army cricket and they proved to be so

once again. On an excellent wicket and lightning fast outfield at Arborfield, the REME won the toss and without hesitation decided to bat first and make best of use of the favourable conditions.

Their game plan worked very well and the openers soon set about our opening bowlers and were scoring at 6 an over from the start. The slower bowlers soon put the brakes on and we managed to bowl the REME out for a very competitive 266.

Chasing such a target, a good start was essential, but alas both openers were soon dismissed and the bedrock for a good run chase was not laid down.

The middle order partnership of **Capt Senneck** and **Cpl Ford** set about the task of chasing down the target and batted at a consistent tempo, chipped away at the total and managed to get the score well above 200 and the team within touching distance of winning the match. If the middle order pair stayed in then we would successfully achieve an excellent run chase.

It was not to be however and with the REME total in sight, both were dismissed leaving the tail enders to knock off the rest of the runs. Time was against us and we ended up 9 runs short and disappointed that we had been so close to chasing down such a big score.

Our first loss of the season was to prove damaging for our title aspirations but it was a superb match played in an excellent spirit between 2 very competitive teams. The final match of the season was against the RLC, who have been one of the emerging teams in the Grouse Trophy.

This year it was a different story and after winning the toss, they decided to bat first in excellent conditions but did not make best use of the pitch. It may have been a backlash from the loss against REME, but our bowlers bowled with spirit and greater efficiency than before and rumbled the Loggies out for a mere 109.

The low total was knocked off with ease with **Sig Williams** enjoying what the RLC dished up to him finishing off with an entertaining 70 not out and we were soon off the field with an excellent win and positive end to a very good season.

2006 proved to be very successful after a period of rebuilding and blooding new players in 2005. Second place in the league shows how far we have come in a short period of time. The squad certainly benefited from the tour to South Africa and this was reflected in the manner in which the season began with such good results.

We played positive attacking cricket throughout the year and this was shown in the amount of runs that were scored and the rate that they were scored at.

At the end of season dinner, the Captain decided that the player of the year award should go to **Sig Billy Williams** (7 Sig Regt), the bowling award to **Sig David Wade** (30 Sig Regt) and the batting award to **Cpl Keith Ford** (628 Sig Tp).

Well done to the 3 of them for their consistent performances and hard work on the pitch throughout 2006.

My thanks for such a well run season go to the Secretary, **Capt Pete Hammonds**, Asst Secretary, **Sgt Dave Hudson** and to all the players for making the season so enjoyable. My final thanks go to COs and OCs who enable the players to get away from busy units, in order to make the team a consistently strong and competitive outfit in the Grouse Trophy Competition.

The aspiration of all concerned with Corps cricket is that we continue with the progress made in 2006 and move up a level by bringing the Grouse Trophy back to Blandford in 2007.

By keeping the squad together and with the same level of support from units, I believe this to be a realistic proposition and I'm looking forward to 2007 already.

ROYAL SIGNALS ORIENTEERING TOUR 1st – 9th JULY 2006

EXERCISE BALTIC COMPASS

This year the Corp Orienteering Team embarked on Ex BALTIC COMPASS. The ex was run in conjunction with the Junior World Orienteering Championships (JWOC), held in Lithuania.

A lot of people thought it was a bit too ambitious to venture so far away from what was considered the "norm" and especially as it was my first trip away as Team Manager.

With half the team flying in from Germany and the other half from UK, I was very anxious about what to expect in Lithuania.

After a few local difficulties with transport, we were eventually all assembled in Druskininkai.

The team of 8 was made up of:

SSgt Andy Dobson
SSgt Colin Holcombe
Sgt Ben Atkin
Sgt Steve Mallison
SgtMark Ebanks
Cpl Jamie Ranson
Cpl Stacey Lyon
LCpl Laura Hughes

Druskininkai, where we were staying, was a plush spa town in stark contrast to the poor slums we had seen outside Vilnius Airport. It used to be a place where only the wealthy and the top Russian military brass visited.

Local to our site were 2 excellent health spas offering a wide variety of treatments, at a cost of no more than 7. As we had our first day as a "day of discovery", many took this opportunity to indulge in some pampering.

The strangest thing was that it wasn't any of the females; they were too busy shopping. With temperatures not dipping below 30 degrees C, any form of running in open areas proved very difficult and taking on plenty of fluid was a necessity.

The ground appeared very flat with small undulating bumps in pine forest. In UK, these bumps would not have been mapped, but as all the maps in this area were mapped at 2.5m intervals, they were very busy with brown lines.

The event was to consist of 5 consecutive days orienteering on terrain that even the more experienced had difficulty with. The key thing would be to keep it simple and slow.

On Day 1, the team had some very mixed results. I managed to beat **Cpl Jamie Ranson** for the first time in just under a year and **LCpl Laura Hughes** found it really difficult to get the hang of the maps. **Colin** had his usual steady run with few mistakes, leaving the other 3 men who had hit and miss runs. **Cpl Stacey Lyon** was disappointed with her first run, making one big mistake.

This was hard for her to come to terms with as she had seen success only a month earlier, winning an event in Belgium. Lessons were learnt and post race analysis became long and detailed.

The next day, everybody took on board the manager's comments (except the manager) and improved on their performances.

Laura was changed down a course, as it was felt it would be more beneficial to her. I had a howler of a first control losing 18 minutes to **Jamie** but still just managing to beat **Mark**.

Sgt Steve Mallison had a much better result and **Ben** followed closely behind. **Colin** and **Jamie** were to have the best runs of the week with **Jamie** managing to come 22 out of 83 competitors.

It was a steady day on Day 3 for everyone. I took 5 minutes back off **Jamie** and **Ben** had his best run of the week finishing only 27 seconds behind **Steve**, who continued to impress by having an excellent sprint finish time.

On Day 4, tiredness and the heat took its toll as we ran over the same area as Day 3. This gave little advantage as the control locations were more technical. We stopped off at a nearby lake to cool off which was a pleasant way to end a very difficult day.

The last day was held in Druskininkai where we received fantastic support from the locals and fellow British teams. This forest was far better managed with 6 min/km being a definite possibility. **Stacey** had returned to form coming 15 out of 40 despite making a major error.

Sadly, **Ben** had to retire through injury but managed to make the most of the sunshine. I clawed back a further 8 minutes on **Jamie** and **Colin** had his usual steady run.

As the day was still young, we all went down to the local health spa for a Jacuzzi followed by our end of tour meal.

The Results were as follows:

Name	Class	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Overall
Atkin	H21	74	67	72	67	DNF	DSQ
Dobson	H21	36	57	27	51	34	40
Ebanks	H21	45	54	55	63	57	47
Mallison	H21	73	65	71	56	59	51
Ranson	H21	48	22	36	26	46	31
Holcombe	H45	21	16	20	20	19	18
Hughes	D21/D21N	DNF	9	11	DSQ	9 DSQ	
Lyon	D21	33	22	31	24	15	20

We all learnt a lot from this trip, not just physically but mentally too. While here, we visited Russian and Lithuanian war graves and visited *Stalin World*, otherwise known as *Gratus Park*.

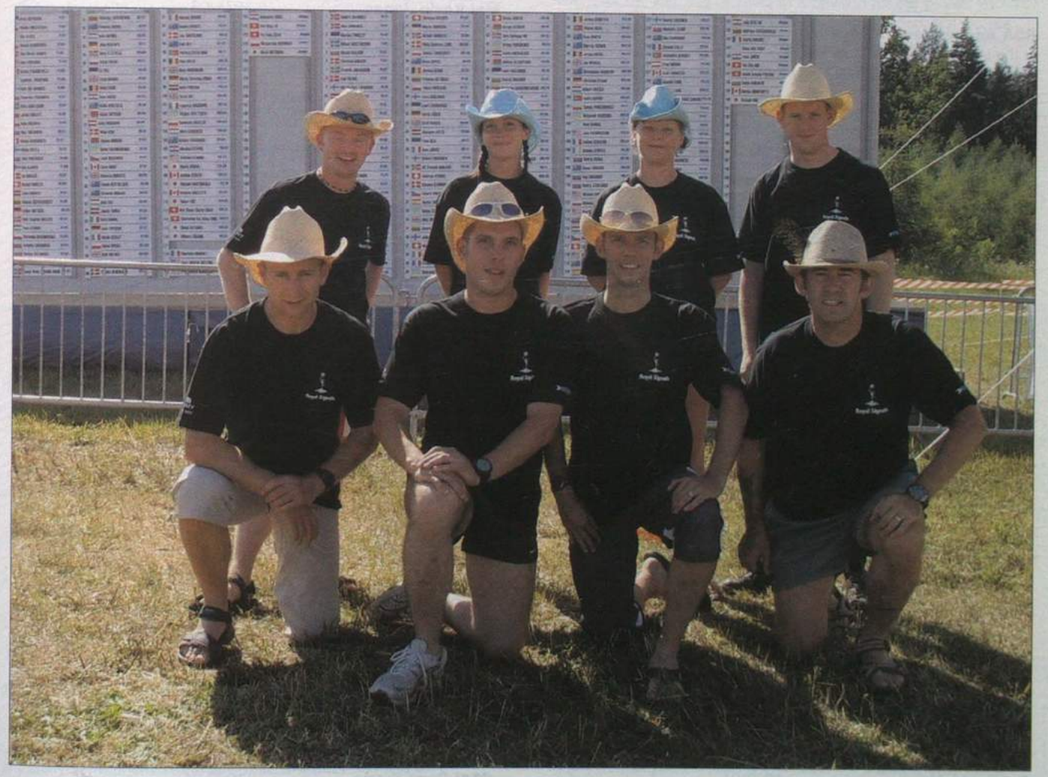
It brought home how lucky we were to be living in a country such as the UK, free from persecution and poverty.

That said, Lithuania is definitely on its way up and we were made to feel very welcome by our hosts. So much so, that many of us have already made plans to visit again. This was my first trip as Team Manager and organiser and would have no hesitation in doing it all again.

The trip was designed to improve skills already attained and this was definitely achieved. Everyone had a terrific time and thank you all for making so enjoyable.

I hope to see you all at the Corps Championships at Blandford in September.

Anybody wishing to find out more about this trip or Corp Orienteering in general then please get in touch.



The Corps Team in Lithuania for the Junior World Championships

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Brig NF Wood

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RHQ Royal Signals
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Blandford Forum
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Welfare Secretary
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Tel (civ) 01258 48 2089
e-mail: welfare@royalsignals.mod.uk

Membership Secretary
Tel (mil) (9)4371 2090
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General Secretary and Treasurer: Lt Col(Retd) CP Conlon
Assistant General Secretary: Maj(Retd) IN Grieg
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr PJ Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

RHQ news. **Maj(Retd) Ian Grieg** assumed the post of Assistant General Secretary in July. **Ian** formerly worked in the offices of the SOinC(A) at the "Engineers Corner" side of Blandford Camp. Our congratulations go to **Lt Col(Retd) Carl Conlon** on his appointment as General Secretary.

Branch news. **Derek Wood**, Secretary of the Lincoln Branch has moved and can now be contacted on: 01522-751 598.

RSA Annual General Meeting. The next RSA AGM will be held in the Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour St, London W2 2HF on Saturday 31 March 2007. All members of the RSA are eligible and welcome to attend the meeting, which starts at 1030hrs. Any member wishing to raise a point at the AGM, is asked to send it to Assn HQ before 1 March 2007. Any point that affects Assn Rules, must be with Assn HQ by 1 Feb to allow sufficient time to address the matter.

Field of Remembrance. All RSA members are invited to join the Chairman at the Corps plot at the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on Thursday 9 Nov 2006. Please be in position by 1030hrs. Members are welcome to plant individual poppy crosses, in memory of loved ones, on the plot

Corps Carol Service. The Corps Carol Service will be held at St Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster on Monday 11 Dec 2006. All serving and retired members of the Corps, plus their families are welcome to attend the service, which starts at 1800hrs. Everyone is cordially invited to the Church hall afterwards for mince pies and sherry.

Photo Gallery. If you haven't yet seen it, may I draw your attention to the "Photo gallery" on our 'Lost contact' web page: www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa.

Reunion 2007. A diary note, the next RSA Annual Reunion will be held at Blandford over the weekend 30 Jun – 1 Jul 2007. Details, including application forms for meals and car passes, should appear on our website in March. Those members without the Internet, who require details, can ask for their names to be added to the mailing list.

New Members. A warm welcome is extended to the following recently enrolled Life members;

Rank/Name	Service	Branch/Unit
Sgt David Alsop	1983-01	
Sig Terry Harvey	1965-71	
Cpl John Hill	1962-71	
Sgt Mac McArthur	1966-date	
Dvr Brian Mace	1953-55	
Sgt Karen Hodges	1993-date	Bristol Branch
Sgt Dave Jones	1997-date	Bristol Branch
Cpl Ron Walker	1971-86	Bristol Branch
Sig David Pegrum	1954-63	
LCpl Bert Prescod	1973-81	
Maj Kevin Jones	1975-06	
Cpl Jason Hanks	1995-date	11 Sig Regt
Cpl David A Tuck	1975-94	
Cpl David L Tuck	1999-date	11 Sig Regt
WO1 Neil Jennings	1985-date	11 Sig Regt
LCpl Jim Coker	1996-02	
Sig Ken Park	1982-92	
Sgt Alan English	1978-00	
Capt Bridie Barber	2000-06	
Lt Col Peter Hryhoruk	1971-06	
Maj Tony Urwin	1986-06	
Sig Alex Simpson	1952-55	Tayside & Fife Br
SSgt Jeff Thomas	1983-06	JFHQ Northwood
Sgt Tony Ellis	1965-76	
Cpl Brian(Dai) Rees	1961-86	
Sgt Michael McCue	1971-93	
SSgt Rob Fieldhouse	1985-date	HQ 11 Sig Bde
Cpl Mike Mason	1960-69	
Cpl Val Gordon(Thompson)	1959-65	
Sig Jim Gates	1950-52	Reading Branch
SSgt Shaun Oliver	1981-06	
WO2 Andrew Smith	1983-06	
Sgt Mick Hay	1984-06	
WO2 Andy Marston-Weston	1977-06	
Cpl Tony Tillyer	1982-94	
Cpl Stuart Wilson	1999-06	
Sig John Warry	1939-46	
Sig George Ogden	1952-54	
Sig Tarry Hayes	1954-56	
Sgt Willie Pool	1984-06	
WO2 Danny Mills	1970-94	
Cpl Mathew Albiston	1997-06	
Sgt Findlay Murray	1951-59	Norfolk Branch
Cpl Ray Roe	1962-74	Norfolk Branch
Cpl Gary Burton	1970-92	
Maj Martin Smith	1970-06	
Cpl Mick Hughes	1981-94	
WO1 Neil Brown	1966-89	
Cpl Alan Bennison	1960-69	
SSgt Dave Evans	1980-04	
Sig Tommy Graley	1952-54	
Pte Kathleen Rodgers(Casey)	1969-70	
Sgt Alex McDonald	1962-73	
Sgt Denys Dollin	1950-63	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
LCpl Joe McAvoy	1971-80	
Sig Darren Rolfe	1985-93	
LCpl Bill Meldon	1972-81	
Cpl James Ball	1958-60	
Sig Kevin Peel	1981-87	
Sig Ian Kirk	1959-68	
Sig Michael Garland	1975-95	
Cpl Hugh Burns	1962-65	Bedford Branch
2Lt David Palmer	1945-48	Bedford Branch
LCpl Andrew Napier	2001-06	
Sgt Geoffrey Gill	1935-46	Cornwall Branch
Sig Brian Rattigan	1946-49	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
SSgt Nicholas Oldcroft	1983-06	
WO2 Frank Tyrrell	1940-47	Air Fmn Sigs Assn

DONATIONS

Drumhead service at the RSA annual Reunion 2006	£618.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£20.00
R Waldron	£20.00
Maj (Retd) K Hadfield in memory of **Capt Brian Overland**	£20.00
Arthur Edmonds	£10.00.
Glasgow Branch RSA	£100.00
Mr T M Danks	£10.00
Maj (Retd) John Stroud in memory of **Capt Brian Overland**	£25.00
Cardiff Branch RSA	£100.00
John Joyce in memory of his father **John A G Joyce**	£20.00
Mr J Riley	£15.00
Kenneth Wills in memory of his brother **Cpl Stewart W Wills**	£100.00
From the will of **Bruce Martin** of Kelvedon, Essex	£4,000.00
Mrs H Ayling	£10.00
From the will of **Lt Col W C Burke**	£500.00
Mr R Meredith	£25.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Chairman **Brig Noel Moss**
Secretary **Mary Pagan**

On a fine day in June, a party of 34 Members and guests visited Lullingstone Castle and World Plant Garden. We were met by a bluebadge guide and conducted along the beautiful lakeside to the Keep, the Chapel and the Castle.

The owners, **Guy** and **Sarah Hart Dyke**, in whose family the House has remained since the 15th Century, prefer to call it a House rather than a 'castle,' which they consider rather pretentious. Their charming son, **Tom**, who has a passion for plants and wildlife, took us round the Plant Garden and gave us a vivid rundown of his
experience as a hostage in Columbia. Lunch at the Visitor Centre was followed by a visit to a Roman Villa with an audioguided tour. This very good day was organised by our very able Newsletter Editor and Quizmaster, **Neville Lyons**.

At the Annual Reunion 2 weeks later, **Fred Bridges** carried our Standard and **Jane Knight** represented us on parade following the drumhead service on Sunday morning. **Mary Pagan**, our Secretary, organised a Pub Lunch for us in July at a friendly hostelry in Farnham's rural environs, well attended and very enjoyabale.

The Branch visit to Lullingstone Castle in June

August began with a happy evening at Kneller Hall, the Royal Military School of Music where we picnicked with great merriment before the concert. This was a magnificent event with a combination of 3 regimental bands; the performance ending with the sound effects of the '1812' accompanied and followed by a magnificent firework display.

The following week at the Final Rehearsal of the Sovereign's Parade at the RMA Sandhurst, we were joined by many friends from neighbouring branches, Southampton, West London, the Reading Branch in great force and a numerous and jovial party of Information Technologists accompanying **Carol Thomas**, friends and colleagues of her late husband **Hywel**, a staunch and much lamented Member of our Branch. We were, as usual, impressed by the parade and this year the speech by the Commandant was the best we had heard. **Paddy Verdon**, though now retired from his appointment as Colonel of the Signal Wing, organised the event for us, with the facilities of a pavilion for our picnic. By relocating, he has defected to the Reading Branch, but we are always happy to see him and **Barbara** when distance permits.

We have had a very sad few months.with the deaths of 2 supportive Members of our Branch, We were sad to hear of the death of **Peter Hoare**, a Second World War officer awarded the MBE, who with his wife **June** attended many events. The loss of **Derek Sherrard-Smith** came as a further shock to the branch. **Derek** was a career soldier who served in the Middle East and the Far East throughout the Second World War and was well known as a serving officer in Aldershot until his retirement. We extend our sympathy to **Sheila Sherrard-Smith** and to **June Hoare** and to their families.

BEDFORD BRANCH

Chairman **Capt (Retd) Alan Newbery TD**
Secretary **TE Holyoake Esq**.

Our AGM took place on the 28th February 2006. The year end reports were given by the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and the election of Branch officials and committee for the current year was held.

On Wednesday 8th March 2006, we had 20 on the coach to Peterborough greyhound racing and arrived at the stadium with plenty of time for the first race. There were 13 races in all during the evening. We had an all-in deal for £10 a head, which included admission, race programme, a choice of food and drink and 2 x £1 Tote Bets. We had to charge £10 for a head for the coach, but it was a great evening for £20; especially for those who managed to win £50 or £60 or more. We may arrange another visit next March; all interested let me know

Our Branch Annual Dinner was held on 8th April 2006. We had 57 diners this year, including our guest the SOinC(Army), **Brig J Thomas MBE ADC**. He gave an interesting speech and update

of Corps activities. Unfortunately our In-Pensioner **Dougy Woollford**, cannot travel to us any longer, and although still reasonably fit, his RSM advised against it. Once again we all sat down to a very enjoyable dinner in very pleasant company. Our Chairman, **Alan Newbery** presented **Kelly Gill** (née **Freeborn**) with a bouquet of flowers. **Kelly** instigated the first Annual Dinner in 1981. For your diaries, a provisional date had been set for next year: the 24th March 2007.

A FLANDERS FIELDS BATTLE TOUR ON 29 MAY TO 2 JUNE 2006

Ten places were eventually booked with Leger on their Silver Service tour. On Day 1, we were collected at Bedford bus station and taken to Dover docks for the change over onto our destination coach, with our drivers for the week. Our Hotel was based at Mouscron, just past Lille.

Day 2 – Battlefields of Flanders. We visited the area of Passchendaele and Tyne Cott Cemetery, Sanctuary Wood, Hooge Crater, Yorkshire Trench, the death cells at Poperinghe, Essex Farm and then finished our day at Ypres for the evening at 2000hrs, standing at the 'Menin Gate' for the Last Post ceremony.

Day 3 – Vimy Ridge, Arras & the Somme. We visited Vimy Ridge, captured by the Canadian troops in 1917 and then went on to the battle of Arras to see the Arras memorial. Then we moved to Pozières, where many Australians died, and finished the day at Lochnagar Mine Crater.

Day 4 – The Somme, Kitchener's Killing Grounds. We remembered the first day of the Somme on 1 July 1916 and went to visit Newfoundland Park, with its impressive preserved trenches and museum commemorating the plight of the Newfoundlanders. Then on to the Sunken Lane (Lancashire Fusiliers) at Beaumont Hemel and Hawthorne Ridge and then to the South African Museum at Delville Wood, where the Allied Forces suffered great casualties. Following a visit to Peronne, we went to a reconstruction of a Belfast castle – a memorial to the troops from Ulster and finished the day at Thiepval, the 'Memorial to the Missing'. It is said that every family surname in Britain can be found on this wall. On Day 5 we returned home. It was a rather busy week, but the hotel was clean, reasonably comfortable and close to the Market Square with good restaurants and bars. **Roger Baynes**, our BIM, has now set up photos on www.http://homepage.ntlworld.com/r.bgynes

MAJOR GENERAL'S REVIEW 3rd JUNE 2006

I received 20 tickets as in previous years, but only 18 were taken this year. All those who went enjoyed the day and had good weather. A cheque for £45 has been sent to the Household Division Charity.

BLANDFORD REUNION WEEKEND 30 JUNE TO 2 JULY 2006

Meeting big **Roy Smith** on camp, we had a total of 9 Branch members attending from the Branch. **Bernie Coply** confused the guards when asked where from and replying 'Hull' and what Branch 'Bedford'. What about your mate in the car asked the guard 'Portsmouth' and Branch 'Bedford'. Confused, the guard issued the accommodation details. During the Saturday evening Sgts' Mess get-together, I met a potential Branch member who lived in London Road, Bedford and went to the old Silver Jubilee school. **Peter** (sorry never got your surname) had traveled from the Shetland Isles, starting out on the Wednesday. I hope he reads this and keeps in touch. Another friend of **Bernie** gave me his £2 Branch subscription **Dennis Parkinson** of Kiltern, Worksop. During the evening, I learnt a great deal about Pigeon Racing from our Manchester friend **Joe**. To all the other friends we met, I hope you read this and book your places for our Annual Dinner next March.

BEDFORD RIVER FESTIVAL 15th – 16th JULY 2006

This takes place biannually and is one of the best in the country. The Bedford Troops held a display of eqpt and offered our Branch space to put out Association Recruitment material. Several exmembers of the Corps stopped and asked for information and from that we have 2 new members.

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

This year it will be held on the 12th November 2006. We will form up outside the Embankment Cafe from 1000hrs. This is always well attended by Branch members with a few more on the route as we march past. It is always good to see our elderly Branch members turn out and how important it is to them, so we must give them that extra support.

For next meeting please check with me the Secretary as we may be moving to another pub. See our Branch Web at: branch web page: www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/bedford

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Chairman **Tony Allibone**
Secretary **Phil West**

The Branch has had some problems with accommodation, which briefly curtailed activities but happily these are now solved. In April we had one of our regular coffee mornings which are popular with many of the older members. In May we had a pub lunch, which attracted 16 members, including 3 generations in the case of one membership. Six members attended the final rehearsal of the Trooping and enjoyed the magnificent spectacle in near perfect weather. A slight breeze sprang up at the critical moment but the subaltern carrying the colour never faltered. It was a memorable occasion.

The Branch Summer Lunch also took place in June at the Courtland Hotel in Hove and was the usual convivial event with 20 people present, including our President **Brig Colin Brown** and his wife **Heather**. Two Burma Star veterans were welcomed among us. Early in July we had an evening meeting, when a local historian gave a brilliant presentation of several hundred years of events around our nearest local river, the Adur.

The Branch now has a new style newsletter which keeps everyone well informed of all activities and also now has a web site which may put us in contact with more ex- Royal Signals personnel.

CHESTERFIELD BRANCH

Chairman **Ken Silcock**
Secretary **Dennis Croot**

We started our New Year in April with yet more new members. The branch strength at the moment stands at 60 including 24 Lady members.

The Easter Bonnet parade

We kicked off with our Easter meeting and held a very well attended Easter Bonnet parade. There were some wonderful entries but the worthy winner was **Ruth Sedgwick** with her magnificent creation. Sorry **Alan Keeton** and **Dennis Croot**, you just did not stand a chance.

Our first excursion of the year was the Blandford Reunion. We travelled from Chesterfield (that was us in the big new green coach) with a party of 35, breakfasting on the way with champagne (well a nice sparkling wine) followed by a quiz and the obligatory game of bingo. The weather that day was lovely and sunny and we enjoyed a picnic lunch in the New Forest, prepared and served by our ladies with yet more wine. We arrived at our hotel in Bournemouth in the late afternoon and spent Saturday and Sunday at Blandford Camp.

On the Monday we embarked on the ferry from Portsmouth en route to the Holiday Inn in Caen for a 4 day visit to the Normandy Battlefields; our numbers increasing on the way as we picked up the rest of our party **Roy** and **Jenny Fidler** (ex **Pte Jenny Wood** WRAC) in the New Forest.

The first day we held a remembrance parade and wreath laying ceremony at Ranville Cemetery. The wreath was laid by our WW2 veteran President **Doug Naylor**. Later we visited Pegasus Bridge and the nearby museum and afterwards visited the invasion beaches of Gold, Juno and Sword.

The parade and wreath laying ceremony at Ranville Military Cemetery

On the second day of our guided tour, we took in the formidable German gun emplacements at Pointe du Hoc which was bravely neutralised by a contingent of the American Rangers. That day we also visited the beautiful town of Bayeux and later called at Ardennes Abbey, the scene of the murder of 18 Canadians by the SS. Our tour guide, **Nigel Stewart**, a Lancastrian who lives locally near Caen was first class and really made the invasion come alive with his formidable knowledge.

The battlefield tour was a very moving experience for us all. After the wonderful reception we had received at the reunion at Blandford, the magnificent arena and static displays, the warm welcome on Saturday evening in the Sgts' Mess (and the delicious buffet supper), the whole 8 days was a memorable and enjoyable experience for all.

We are now busy preparing our winter programme and are in the early stages of planning our annual Christmas shopping trip and perhaps another museum visit to York.

DORSET BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Retd) Ken Hadfield**
Secretary **Mr Dave Walker**

ANNUAL DINNER NIGHT 12 MAY 2006

This year's Dinner Night was held in the Sealy Suite at the Crown Hotel, Blandford. Our President, **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman CB**, was present on the evening with our official guests Comd DCCIS, **Brig J Terrington** and the representative from the SOInC(A), **Lt Col C A Ford**. As usual, the evening was very well attended by our local members and a party from the Poole Branch. The members and guests arrived to a sherry reception, before being seated and made welcome by our Chairman, **Maj Ken Hadfield**. We all tucked into what turned out to be a delicious meal, the main course of which was Chicken Wellington (yes I know, not Beef Wellington but Chicken Wellington, a new one on me.)

Judging by all the happy faces, one assumes the meal went down well, along with the music, ably played by the Stour Valley Brass Band lead by **Tim Stankus**. This was then followed by after dinner entertainment by a group called 'The Word' who are a well known local group from Blandford.

Once again thanks from all go to our entertainment gurus, **Walt** and **Sandy Disney**, who did all the preparation and organsiation for the whole evening, including the raffle, with enthusiasm and professionalism.

The Dinner Night on 12 May

Don't forget to check out our web site for many more photos both of this evening and of previous events and more information about our forthcoming social evenings, trips and meetings. If you have any information to add to the site then contact **Dave Walker** at dave@reklawdivad.fsnet.co.uk or **Kev Falconer** at kema_14white@yahoo.co.uk

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

Forty four Members, supplemented by a good number of ex-Royal Marines brought along by **Roy Andrews**, joined the good ship *Pocohontas* at Gravesend to chug down or up the Thames to a mystery destination. By careful navigation, a following wind and endless encouragement, of a 'leftabit, rightabit' sort, from the lower deck the mystery unfolded as the Wind Farm at the Estuary south of Southend was revealed. Seemingly, there are 30 rotors, each 60 metres in diameter, which generate enough electrical power to cater for 250,000 homes. The rotting and rusting hulks

nearby which were, a lifetime ago, a group of wartime, maritime anti-aircraft gun platforms contrasted nicely with the modern concept. An excellent cold buffet, served and supplemented by a little something from the bottle, completed the summer scene.

Twenty or so Members enjoyed the Corps Reunion where **Brian Calladine**, our Standard Bearer, was awarded a very creditable 3rd place in the competition. **Ex-WO2 Frank Castle** has to accept some thanks for **Brian's** success, for it was he that bullied and pummelled our proud Bearer into improving his posture and bending the knee. Well done!

It is with great sadness that we must report the death of **Mrs Joyce Harris**, wife of **Tony**. The Branch was well represented at **Joyce's** funeral at Deal Cemetery on 27 July and, of course, our heartfelt sympathy goes out to **Tony** and his family.

Pat Andrews who was reported sick in the last issue has been operated upon and is back on the road, so to speak. **Pat** was diagnosed with breast cancer but it seems that all is now relatively well although she has to report back to the hospital in 6 months.

Pretty much at the same time, husband **Roy** had a heart malfunction which needed local hospital treatment before he was transferred up to St Thomas's Hospital in London for something a little more technical, but after a week or so, during which his arteries (and component parts) were given the Dynorod treatment, he was discharged home where he and **Pat**, are enjoying a much needed rest for a few weeks.

A big event in the Branch Social Calendar is the Annual Barbecue held in the house and gardens of our **Gen John**. For several years now the committee has performed with great enthusiasm but with little thespian skill; struggling through scripts of questionable humour, adorned with hairy old khaki uniforms and home made embellishments to entertain the messes. However the cast is growing older and our Chairman (a mere strip of a lad himself) has decided on a new venture. This time the Barbecue will be a 'Ladies Day at the Races' where we will no doubt be treated to decorous big hats, outrageously short skirts, beautifully bred cardboard horses, big dice and lots of fun. But more of that in the next issue.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Joseph Keegan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

The extraordinary AGM was held on Tuesday 20 June 2006. The Branch Chairman **Jim McMillan** chaired the meeting in the absence of the Branch President **Lt Col AS Petrie**, who had tendered his apologies due to family commitments. The minutes of the previous AGM were circulated and approved. **Jim McMillan** then read a foreword from the Branch President. In this the President thanked the Members for their continued support throughout the year and the support given to the various functions organised by the committee, also the Officers and ORs of the 32 Sig Regt (V), for the facilities provided at their HQ in Jardine Street. As a JP in Cumbernauld, the President is unable to attend the Armistice Service in Glasgow, but does enjoy coming to Jardine Street afterwards to meet the Members. He apologised for missing the Burns Supper, which he and **Mrs Norah Petrie** have enjoyed so much in the past. He and his wife thoroughly enjoyed the Annual Dinner/ Dance. In conclusion, he wished to thank all those involved in preparing the premises for the various functions organised by the committee. He also expressed his thanks to **Jim Prentice** for his contributions to *The Wire*, which keep the Corps up to date with the goings on of the Glasgow Branch.

Jim McMillan, who is standing down this year, wished to thank all the Members for their support over the last 3 years. He also wished to thank all Members, partners, friends and family, for their help at the functions and the staff of the TA. He also wished to recognise the help he received from the committee and **Bill Taylor** in retaining a successful Branch. With regret, he was standing down due to work commitments and he will also be involved with the RSA (Scotland). **Ivana Muir**, the Branch Secretary, indicated her wish to remain in the post, and thanked everyone for their help and assistance. She thanked the Chairman and Treasurer for their assistance and the Members for supporting the functions.

Eric McWaters, Branch Treasurer, stated that there were no debts to be paid. He read out the latest statement from the bank. The books had been audited and the Branch account was in the black. He warned however that if the Branch was to retain that position, it required the annual subscriptions from the Members to be paid promptly.

The votes were now taken for the posts of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The only nominee for Chairman was ex-Chairman **Joe Keegan**; he was voted in without opposition. There were no nominees for the post of Secretary, so **Ivana Muir** stayed in the post. **Eric McWaters** was proposed for the Treasurer's post by **Bill Taylor** and seconded by **Jim Prentice**. He confirmed his willingness to remain in the post and was voted in unanimously.

Jim Prentice told the Chairman that a vote of thanks should go to **Eric** for keeping the account in the black over many years. The next visit to Erskine Hospital would take place in July. **Jim Prentice** asked what was happening to the surplus funds held by RSA (Scotland), as this committee was only established for the one event. **Jim McMillan**, who is still a member of that committee, informed the Members, that a final decision had not been made by the committee on the distribution of the surplus monies, but he would keep the Branch Members informed of the final decision when it is made.

The Branch Standard Bearer, **Bill McNamara**, stated that in his opinion the Branch Standard would possibly have to be replaced in about 5 years lime and asked if the committee and Branch Members would consider ways to raise money to replace the standard. The Chairman announced arrangements were being made to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the founding of the Branch. A decision was made to hold a Drumhead Service. By arrangement with the CO of 32 Sig Regt, the Padre, Regtl Chefs and Band members, this will take place on Saturday 2nd September 2006.

Joe Keegan then thanked the Branch Members for their support, and looked forward to the Branch having another successful year. With no further business he banged the gavel (he is sharp with the gavel),closed the meeting, informing Members to proceed to the WOs' and Sgts' Mess for refreshment.

GUERNSEY BRANCH

Chairman **Alec Forty**
Secretary **Maj (Retd) Eric Le Quesne**

The Guernsey Branch of the Royal Signals Association was privileged to have the Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan** and his wife, **Lady Anne**, as visitors at the end of April and beginning of May. They were hosted by Branch Vice Chairman, **Lt Col Peter Buchanan** and his wife **Ruth**, who entertained a number of members and partners to a curry lunch on the Sunday of the visit.

The 5 day programme included visits to Sark and Alderney accompanied by **Peter Buchanan** and Branch Chairman, **Alec Forty**. The Sark visit was organised by Branch Member resident **Tom Remfrey** and involved a tour of the island in a horse and trap and a meeting with the Seigneur of Sark, **Michael Beaumont** and his wife **Diana** at La Seigneurie.

Alderney has a close relationship with the Corps through its affiliation with 30 Sig Regt and that visit was organised by Branch Member resident **Brig John Russell**. The visitors met the President of the States of Alderney, **Sir Norman Browse**, who accompanied them on an island tour that included the breakwater and a memorial to the Todt workers who died there during the occupation of Alderney in the Second World War. The President, **Lady Browse** and senior residents entertained the visitors to a delightful lunch.

The Master and Lady Anne visit the memorial to the Todt workers who died on Alderney

On other days, **Sir Sam** and **Lady Anne** were entertained to dinner by the Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, **Sir Fabian Malbon**, were taken by Branch Secretary, **Eric Le Quesne** to meet the Bailiff of Guernsey, **Geoffery Rowlands** and visit the German Occupation Museum and Castle Cornet for the firing of the noonday cannon. Committee member **Judy Cobb** showed them the Guernsey Millennium tapestry and the Little Chapel, one of Guernsey's unusual attractions. A golf match was held during the course of which Branch Chairman **Alec**, suitably overawed by the status of his partner, withheld any glimmer of talent he might have for the game until they played the 18th hole, where he managed to redeem himself!

On their last evening the Master and **Lady Ann** were Guests of Honour at the Branch's annual dinner to mark the Liberation of Guernsey from German Occupation. This was organised by Branch Treasurer **David Bichard** and attended by 60 members and guests, all of whom were enthralled by the excellent speech given by **General Sam**, who enlightened us with his choice of `Liberation' themes.

He began by saying that the liberation of the Channel Islands had been brought home to him by the visit to a memorial to slave Todt workers in Alderney and then went on to describe the liberation now being achieved by the people of Nepal. He ended by referring to someone he considered to be the most famous Guernseyman, **Gen Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant**, whose competence and vision transformed the British Army, by the pursuit of military excellence. In the early 1800's he had founded the Royal Military College Sandhurst and the Staff College at Camberley and the result of **Gen Le Marchant's** outstanding professionalism was the `liberation' of the Army from the corruption of the `commissions through purchase' system. Altogether a thoroughly enjoyable visit that will live long in the memories of Guernsey Branch members.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

Twelve Members of the Branch enjoyed a blistering 3 days at the RSA weekend at Blandford – the hottest I think since the Colonel In Chief's 1995 visit. The purveyors of various cold beverages within the camp must have been extremely pleased.

Everybody agreed that the curry at the Sergeants' Mess on Saturday evening was quite exceptional. All palates were catered for, hot or mild – thanks to all concerned.

The Sunday evening indoor games between Manchester and Glasgow Branches were declared a "walkover" for Manchester. Glasgow did not turn up!

Our thoughts at the moment are with **Ian Ashworth-Davies** RE, our entertainment officer who is battling a severe illness. We all hope that he will back in our midst soon. Get well soon too message for **Mary Jennings** who is recovering from a hip operation.

On a happier note congratulations to **Terry** and **Muriel Heildren** who are celebrating 50 years of matrimonial bliss.

The Branch would like to wish **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB** and **Ann** a long and happy retirement at the end of his tenure as RSA Chairman and wish every success to the new incumbent **Brig Nigel Wood**.

NORFOLK BRANCH

Chairman **Brian Wilson**
Secretary **Steve Nobbs**

At the Branch's recent AGM, all the Members thanked the outgoing Chairman, **Brian Ireland** for his sterling work. **Brian Wilson** was elected Chairman.

The new Chairman, Brian Wilson on the left being welcomed by the Branch President, Brian Gibbs

The Branch's Annual Dinner had to be cancelled because of problems with dates. It is intended that a dinner be held later in the year, possibly on October 14th, but this is yet to be confirmed. The Branch has enjoyed several outings this year, notably a trip to Bletchley Park, Gressinghall and the Branch's Annual pilgrimage to the RSA Annual Reunion at Blandford. More outings are planned for later in the year.

The Branch has welcomed several new Members over the past few weeks, possibly due in part to the Veterans' Day we had at the TA Centre in Norwich. All the Services were well represented and although it was a long and tiring day, it was thoroughly worthwhile.

We would like to send out an invitation to any ex-Royal Signals living in Norfolk to come and join us at the TA Centre, Aylsham Road, Norwich, where we meet every second Saturday of the month. The exception is August when there is no meeting

because of holidays. Our meetings start at 1030 hrs and you can be assured of a very warm welcome. A full list of officers and Members can be seen on the Branches web page at http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/norfolk/index.htm

PETERBOROUGH BRANCH

Branch Chairman **Bob Rowland**

The Branch was honoured by a visit from the Master of Signals **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE** and **Lady Anne Cowan** on 7th July when we celebrated our 30th anniversary of formation in 1976. A dinner and dance was held in the Bull Hotel in the centre of the city and this was attended by Branch Members and their guests, a number of Life Members of the Association who live in the Peterborough post code area but who are not members of a branch and a number of retired exCorps members.

On arrival the Master and **Lady Cowan** were met by **Bill** and **Rae White** who then introduced the Branch President, **Col KR (Ken) Smith OBE TD DL** and **Mrs Marqaret Smith**, and **Bob** and **Dorcie Rowland**, the Branch Chairman and his wife.

An excellent meal was enjoyed and this was followed by a short speech by the Branch Chairman, **Bob Rowland**, who welcomed everyone and mentioned events leading up to the formation of the Peterborough Branch and talked briefly about founder members, mentioning particularly **Len Voller**, who was to celebrate his hundreth birthday in a few weeks time. The Chairman then presented the Master with a crossstitched and framed corps badge made by **Mrs Elaine Gray**, an Associate Member who also presented a floral arrangement from the branch to **Lady Anne**.

The Master and Lady Cowan with their presentations

The Master gave an interesting and amusing speech, during which he made kind and generous remarks about the Branch and its committee members. He amused everyone by pointing out how easy it had been for he and **Lady Anne**, and other senior visitors to get completely lost when trying to find the Bull Hotel. After dinner **Gen Sir Sam** and **Lady Cowan** met and talked with members and guests.

Later the Master sat and talked for some time to ex-**Cpl Bob Rogers**, who was an Agent with the SOE for part of WW2. **Bob** was awarded the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics "Medal for Valour" in 1944, and this is now cared for and displayed in the

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Corps Museum. This was a quite excellent occasion, organised by **Bill** and **Rae White**, and enjoyed by everyone which also included a raffle with 10 quality prizes which were very popular.

Sadly, the evening was overshadowed for many by the sudden death a few days earlier of **Brian Overland**. **Brian** had been Branch Secretary and a committee member until 2005. Members send sincere condolences to **Anita Overland** and family at this very sad time.

I'm afraid that I have to end this branch report with more sad news. It is with regret that I have to tell readers of the death of **Graham Pollard BEM MSM**, who was a very active committee member for many years. To his widow, **Mo**, and his family, the Branch sends deepest sympathy on this very sad occasion.

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First our congratulations to branch member **Lt Col Hugh Robertson TD**, CO 71 Sig Regt, on the award of the QVRM in the recent Birthday Honours list.

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In the week after Blandford, a dozen or so Branch Members visited Kneller Hall for another of the School of Music's evening concerts. Reports from those attending confirmed once again what a superb evening's entertainment is provided for those who enjoy listening to the full repertoire of a military band. Even more military music was enjoyed when a party from the Branch visited RMA Sandhurst for the Commandant's Parade on 9 August.

This was the full dress rehearsal for the Sovereign's Parade two days later, and music this year was provided by the band of The Para Regt. A tremendous amount of work obviously goes in to these events, and the Commandant was fully justified in his compliments to all concerned. There was no indication of what the Academy RSM thought, but his orderly was kept busy writing names in his notebook! The RSA is always well represented at this event, and at the picnic by the cricket pavilion afterwards, there is an opportunity to meet up with old friends. The weather

was good, but not too hot, and in the superb surroundings of the Academy, it made for a very enjoyable day.

In between the more formal occasions, the Chairman has invited the POGs (Pauline's Old Geezers) to a couple of pub lunches, and rounded off the period of this report with a full Branch Meeting. This was held at the Caversham Heath Golf Club, where the Branch business was dealt with rapidly, giving us more time for lunch and a chat! It also gave **Thelma** a chance to tie up the loose ends for the party travelling to the Edinburgh Tattoo at the end of August.

Looking forward a little, the main event of the Branch year will be the Annual Reunion Dinner at the end of September, but more of that in the next edition of *The Wire*.

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Chairman **Maj (Retd) HJB Wall MBE TD JP Hon**
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The Branch continues to make every effort to interest Life Members to be active and to attend meetings at our superb venue, within Copthorne Barracks, Shrewsbury. The Branch AGM was held in February, at which time the serving Officers were reelected to their posts, and the Chairman thanked them all for their dedication to the affairs of the Association in Shropshire. We regret to announce the death of one of our founder Members, **WO1 Charles Williams**, a past Treasurer whose funeral was attended by the Shropshire Branch with the Branch Colours present, at the request of his family.

In May, the Colours were again paraded by invitation at the Shrewsbury Mayor's Civic Service, attended by our Chairman and others. Instead of an evening meeting, a Branch Luncheon was held in early June for all Members, their Ladies and friends. Our principle guest was **Col(Retd) Ken Smith OBE DL TD**, who is a great supporter of the Association, and in particular the Shropshire Branch. Also in attendance and most welcome was the Area 2 Representative, **Maj(Retd) Brian Iveson**.

The weather was great and an enjoyable time was had by all present, as the photograph will testify. July saw us at a bowls evening organised with the Wem Chamber of Commerce through the good offices of our Vice Chairman, **Brian Harrington**.

The Shropshire Branch June Luncheon

It was a fun evening, the food and company could not be bettered, however some of us seem to have lost that accuracy which we once had on the firing ranges of yesteryear. Our Meetings as always are held at the aforementioned WOs' & Sgts' Mess, Copthorne Barracks, Shrewsbury at 1930hrs every third Wednesday of each month. They are always worth attending for the comradeship we enjoy, and the concern we have for our fellow Signallers, who are unable to be with us due to illness or infirmity.

AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

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After dinner, the team returned to join the RSARS Thursday evening schedule and by 2100hrs, **Peter** had worked a total of 47 stations. In preparation for the following day **Dennis** tuned up on 20m (14.287MHz) using the doublet aerial and almost immediately contacted a station at Katerini on the eastern coast of Greece.

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As a break from these activities, **David** and **Dennis** were invited to attend an LS&GC presentation in the Sgts' Mess and the presenting officer, **Brig Mike Lithgow CBE**, later sought them out to talk on AFSA matters.

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were welcomed by **Jess Weir**. They held a raffle and as a guest **Beryl** was asked to draw out a ticket. She was quite embarrassed to pick out her own ticket and won a very nice bottle of wine at the start of the evening. The Quiz was run by **Brig Paddy Evans**, who had set the questions and all the answers had to have a colour in them. It was a very enjoyable evening.

In return we invited **Jimmy Logan** and his wife **Eve**, to the annual BEBA BBQ given by **Tony** and **Beryl Hull** at their home in Bournemouth on Sunday 16 July. This was during one of the summer heat waves and turned out to be one of the extremely hot days. The 26 guests were glad to make use of the large marquee-type gazebo and parasols and cold soft drinks appeared to be more popular than alcoholic ones!

Our Treasurer, **Peter Smith** and his wife **Wendy** travelled all the way from Kent and camped out in their motor home on the drive, complete with their cat, who travels everywhere with them.

Mary Gray, Tony Coleman, Jimmy Logan, Tony Hull and Peter Gray

At the RSA Reunion Weekend we were able to meet one of our new members, **Dave Oddie** and his wife, **Pauline.** We would also like to welcome 3 more new members, **George O'Mara**, **Arthur Girdler**, and **David Pegrum**. Arthur Girdler had been visiting Beverley on holiday and tried to find the site of the barracks, which is now occupied by Morrisons Supermarket. We have a display there giving details of 6 (Boys) Trg Regt with a contact telephone number, so he was able to get in touch. **David Pegrum** attended the RSA Reunion Weekend, where we were able to recruit him.

LAST POST

Name and Rank	Served Years	Died Date
Allen - Cpl JW Allen	*Served* 1946/48	*Died* 17/06/06
Bullock - Sig T Bullock	*Served* 1961/70	*Died* 12/08/06
Butterworth - ?? CAF Butterworth	*Served* ????/??	*Died* ??/07/05
Cheeseman - ?? PE Cheeseman	*Served* 1951/70	*Died* 18/06/06
Chilcott - Cpl EJR Chilcott	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* 17/07/06
Elliott - Lt Col EB Elliott	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 26/08/01
Evans - Cpl SH Evans	*Served* 1941/46	*Died* ??/07/06
Forbes - ?? RN Forbes	*Served* 1939/??	*Died* 12/05/06
Gorman - Cpl PD Gorman	*Served* 1955/58	*Died* 26/04/06
Hammond - Lt Col W Hammond	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 28/06/06
Heeley - SSgt RA Heeley	*Served* 1950/75	*Died* 15/06/06
Jennings - Sgt P Jennings	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 28/06/06
Joyce - SSgt JAG Joyce	*Served* 1949/71	*Died* 01/07/06
Knights - Sgt RC Knights	*Served* 1951/63	*Died* 08/08/06
McPetrie - ?? J McPetrie	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 20/05/06
Morrison - Sgt JF Morrison	*Served* 1941/46	*Died* 06/07/06
Overland - Capt PB Overland	*Served* 1950/78	*Died* 25/06/06
Owen - Sig T Owen	*Served* 1937/45	*Died* 24/07/06
Pollard - Sgt GH Pollard	*Served* 1963/91	*Died* 19/07/06
Pollard - WO2 L Pollard	*Served* 1958/68	*Died* 07/06/06
Quick - Lt Col CAP Quick	*Served* 1947/??	*Died* 09/08/06
Robertson - ?? J Robertson	*Served* ????/??	*Died* 2006
Rose - Maj DV Rose	*Served* 1939/46	*Died* 23/07/06
Sherrard-Smith - Lt Col DW Sherrard-Smith	*Served* 1941/78	*Died* 15/07/06
Smith - Col IWK Smith ERD	*Served* 1938/67	*Died* 18/06/06
Teague - Sig GAC Teague	*Served* 1939/43	*Died* 20/07/06
Walker - Sig GJ Walker	*Served* 1940/46	*Died* 28/06/06

OBITUARIES

HASHMI – LCpl Jabron Hashmi died on 1 July 2006

LCpl Jabron Hashmi was born on the 23rd April 1982 in Peshawar, Pakistan. He lived in Bordersley Green, Birmingham.

He joined the Army in June 2004 and completed his basic trg at the Army Training Centre Winchester and his intelligence trg at Chicksands, Bedfordshire. He was posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW) in January 2006 and immediately made his mark on the Light EW Troop. His extraordinary determination, sense of duty and desire to learn was infectious and he threw himself into preparations for his deployment to Afghanistan. His CO, **Lt Col Steve Vickery**, said this of him:

"Enthusiastic, confident and immensely popular, LCpl Jabron Hashmi displayed all the qualities of a first class soldier. His enthusiasm for the role he had been given was simply outstanding. He was brimming with confidence and hugely keen to take part in all the training prior to the operation. Once deployed in Helmand Province, his language and intelligence skills proved vital in support of the 3 PARA BG, providing protection for his comrades in the highly demanding working conditions of Southern Afghanistan. A fine young man, his sad loss and that of Sergeant Peter Thorpe will be felt by us all."

The loss of our comrades has reinforced not just the Regiment's but the Corps' determination to see the mission in Afghanistan through to a successful conclusion. Our sympathy and thoughts are with the family and friends of **LCpl Jabron Hashmi** at this time.

HENN-COLLINS – Lt Col Christopher A, CEng, FIEF FIERE died 8 August 2006

Christopher Henn-Collins was born in June 1915, the third son of **Lt Col the Hon Richard HennCollins CMG DSO**, and grandson of **Lord Collins**, Master of the Rolls from 1901 to 1907. He was educated at Shrewsbury, and destined for a military career in his father's regiment, but pleaded to be allowed to pursue his boyhood ambition to be a telecommunications engineer. In 1934 he enlisted as a Gentleman Cadet at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich for signals training and was commissioned in 1935.

After service in Palestine, he earned the dubious distinction of being possibly the first serving officer to come under enemy fire in the first few hours of the Second World War. In August 1939, when he was Bde Signals Officer to the Bde of Guards, he had been ordered to lead a det of signallers and their eqpt into Poland, as part of a British Military Mission under the comd of the battlescarred veteran **Gen Carton de Wiart VC**, blinded in one eye and with an artificial hand. Their objective was to set up radio comms between Mission HQ in Warsaw, the UK and units of the Polish Army. They were to travel in plain clothes, but with battledress in their kit, and 6 tons of eqpt, through France to Marseilles, where *HMS Shropshire* would take them to Alexandria. There they were issued with passports and fictitious occupations, before trans-shipping to a ferry en route to Turkey; by which time Britain and France were at war with Germany. From there they travelled by rail through Rumania, setting up radio comms along the way.

By the time they crossed the Polish frontier, southeast of Warsaw, German armd divs were driving east towards the capital and their reconnaissance planes were taking an interest in this strange convoy, which was now in a war zone. The det was ordered to change into uniform. In Lvov they were under heavy fire from lowflying aircraft; they could not move forward, nor could they stay put, risking further attentions from the Luftwaffe. For several nights they shuttled to and fro a few miles west to east and back again, awaiting orders, and it was not until 8 September when they met up with **Gen de Wiart,** who had moved his HQ from Warsaw to Tarnopol, that their mission was abandoned. They were then ordered to destroy their eqpt, and make their way home in twos and threes as best they could. Back in Alexandria, **Henn-Collins's** instructions were to return to London where he was posted to Staff College at Camberley, and wrote a critical report on the lessons to be learned from this expedition.

Henn-Collins had various postings during the next 3 years, including a period in the Directorate of Military Training as a Maj. On promotion to Lt Col, he served in Allied Forces Headquarters in Algiers as OC Radio Section, to set up links throughout the North African Theatre

He was a resourceful, inventive and practical engineer. He patented an enciphering and deciphering machine, assigned to the Ministry of Supply with no financial benefit to himself; and he had so many ideas for civilian projects which could not be exploited within the service that he resigned his commission in 1947 to set himself up as a consulting engineer.

Partly as a result of his wartime contacts, his company, HennCollins Associates, undertook a wide range of projects for government agencies and commercial organisations world wide, mostly in the field of telecommunications, but in the 1950s and 60s he patented a number of devices of an electromechanical nature as well. In his workshop he developed his idea for a quartz crystal clock, which by using transistors in place of thermionic valves, made possible a much smaller quartz clock than was previously feasible. He described his "mantelpiece" clock in the Horological Journal in 1957 and showed it at an exhibition in Goldsmiths' Hall in 1958, where he was presented to the **Duke of Edinburgh**.

Before he retired to Guernsey in 1970, he represented the Institution of Electrical Engineers and the Institution of Electrical and Radio Engineers on a British Standards Institution committee which produced a Code of Practice for the reception of sound and television broadcasting.

He married first **Patricia Hooper**, who died in 1974, and in 1976 he married **Andora de Quehen** who survives him.

garrison must have felt at that time, and the extreme difficulty of keeping the island's comms up and running.

At the end of the war **Peter** went to Cairo, where he was selected for commissioning before attending OCTU. In 1945, he served in Air Formation Signals in Ceylon before returning to UK to restart a civilian career which was with London County Council. In that role he worked on the electrical side of a number of large projects including the development of the South Bank. He was later awarded the MBE for his voluntary work on electrical safety.

Throughout his life, among many other interests, he had an abiding love of music which he actively pursued in his home area of Great Bookham. He became a member of the Mole Valley Silver Band and the Chantry Singers who sang beautifully at the Service of Thanksgiving for his life. After moving to Alton in recent years, **Peter** was a well liked and enthusiastic Member of the Association, regularly attending Aldershot Branch meetings. He is remembered amongst other things for his outstanding performances at quiz nights as leader of the team, appropriately named Number 1 Set.

His keen and lively interest in his family, his hobbies and the Association was matched by his youthful looks which belied his 86 years. All were greatly saddened by his death after a period of ill health and we will miss **Peter's** cheerful demeanour and sense of humour. The Corps salutes his service at a critical time in our history and offers its condolences to his widow **June** and all the members of his family.

HOARE – Lt Peter Charles Hoare MBE died on 2 June 2006

Peter's military service ran right through the war years from August 1940 to September 1946, during which time he was able to put his engineering skills to good use. After basic trg in Baghdad Lines in Catterick, he served first in 5 Comd HQ, Edinburgh. After a short period there, he was posted in 1941 to the Malta Sig Coy where he remained throughout the siege until 1944. One can only imagine the isolation he and the rest of the

MORRISON – Joseph Morrison (Joe) died July 2006

Joseph Morrison, always known as **Joe,** was born in Scarborough but grew up in Tottenham. As a member of the TA, he was transferred to join the Army in 1939 and served in communications in the BEF in France returning to England at the time of Dunkirk. He became a Sgt lofts man in the Pigeon Service and helped with communication on the Dieppe Raid where there was a need to maintain radio silence.

He went back to France on D Day + 3 and served in the NW European campaign. **Joe** married **Barbara** in December 1944. They went on to have two daughters, **Gill** and **Angela**. After the war, he trained as a teacher and loved education and children. **Joe** believed that a future united Europe would be good for them and he remained a devoted Francophile all his life.

In his later years, he joined the RSA and was a generous and supportive member of this Branch. He served on the Branch Committee for many years, provided notes for publication in *The Wire* and was an enthusiastic supporter of the Royal Signals Museum. Sadly he developed Parkinson's Disease which reduced his mobility and he greatly appreciated visits from **Bill Barlow** and other friends.

At his funeral on 14 July, Branch representatives expressed our final good wishes and the Standard was carried. Through his professional prowess with those very special birds, **Joe** will always remain affectionately known as "The Pigeon Man".

OVERLAND - Capt BP Overland (Patrick) died on 25 June 2006.

Capt Patrick Brian Overland passed away at home aged 74 on Sunday June 25 2006. **Brian** joined the Corps on 11 May 1950. He enjoyed military life to the full and began to make a promising career for himself.

In 1951, at the outbreak of the Suez Crisis, he was promoted to LCpl and posted to Tripoli. In 1952, **Brian** was one of those chosen to guard the Queen's plane as it made a stop over at El Adam airport while returning to London from Kenya after the death of the Queens father, **King George VI**.

Rising swiftly through the ranks, in June 1961 **Brian** was posted to 18 Sig Regt in Singapore as the SSM of HQ Sqn. In March 1970, **Brian** was posted to 34(N) Sig Regt (V) in Middlesborough as RSM, a post he held for 3 years.

In August 1973 **Brian** was commissioned into the rank of Lt and posted to 7 Sig Regt in Herford as PRI and Families Officer. He was later promoted to Capt and finished his service with the Corps as 2IC 3 Sqn at the Junior Leaders Wing in Ouston, near Newcastle.

Brian went on to have a very successful second career serving as the Housing Manager for Minster Housing Association in Peterborough and he was also the Branch Secretary of the Peterborough branch of the Royal Signals Association for many years.

Brian, who was a loyal friend and the very kindest of souls, will be deeply missed by his friends and family, and especially so by his wife **Anita**, his son **Mark** and his grandchildren **Aaron**, **Jake** and **Natasha**.

SHERRARD-SMITH - Lt Col Derek Walter Sherrard-Smith died on 15 July 2006

Derek Sherrard-Smith was born in India in 1923 and came to England in 1937. While at Manchester University, he enlisted in 152 OCTU giving a first glimpse of his sense of duty that was to reoccur many times. In 1942, he joined 45 Div Sigs and began a full and varied career in many parts of the world.

From 1943 – 1944, he was in 203 (Independent) LofC Sig Regt in Persia followed by 2 years with 7 Indian Div Sig Regt, in which he served in several parts of the Far East. After 2 years in the UK, he was again on the move from the Sudan Sig Tp to Tripolitania Sigs and then to 3 Inf Bde Sig Sqn in the Canal Zone. From 1951 to 1954, **Derek** served in the Officer Trg Wing in Catterick, where he made many friends in the Corps.

His experience in this role was later repeated in the Officers Wing at Blandford. Other postings included RMA Sandhurst, 5 Fd Force in Kenya and appointments at the extremities of NATO in AFNORTH and NAVSOUTH. **Derek** was widely known and liked throughout the Corps and latterly the Association

The threads of his personality and extra-mural interests came through in later life. The desire to serve was exemplified first by him taking up a Retired Officer post as Garrison Adjutant of Aldershot, when his military career officially ended in 1978. Later the theme was continued when **Derek** was elected a Surrey County Councillor.

While in Aldershot he was able to develop his lifelong interest in nature by undertaking conservation work. Right up to the end of his life, he remained a keen fisherman and was exceptionally active in the Army Ornithological Society. He played a large part in organising world-wide trips for them in search of wild birds, impressing all with his knowledge and experience. **Derek** remained a fully active member of the Aldershot Branch of the Association until the end of his life.

Sadly **Derek** became ill some months ago and, after a spell in hospital, died at home in the care of his close family, bearing all with quiet courage and dignity. His many friends in the Corps family will miss his cheerful optimism and enthusiasm. Our sympathies are extended to his widow **Sheila** and their two sons and daughter.

THORPE - Sgt Peter Thorpe died on 1 July 2006

Sgt Peter Thorpe was born on the 3rd January 1979 and lived in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria.

He joined the Army in August 1995 as an apprentice tradesman at Harrogate and went onto complete his comms trg at the Royal School of Signals at Blandford, Dorset. He was then posted to 216 Para Sig Sqn in 5 AB Bde. While there he went on to successfully qualify as a mil parachutist, fully embraced his role as an airborne communicator and completed his first tour of Afghanistan in 2001. He was then posted on a 2-year tour to Northern Ireland. Subsequently, he was posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW) in January 2006 to prepare for his second op tour in Afghanistan. **Sgt Thorpe** was a keen sportsman turning his hand to a wide variety of pursuits as well as being an Army PTI. He was a well-respected member of the Sqn whose outstanding trade and soldiering skills combined with his great sense of humour endeared him to all. His CO, **Lt Col Steve Vickery**, said

"**Sgt Peter Thorpe** was a highly motivated, talented and tremendously popular soldier who constantly inspired those around him, whatever the situation. A gifted instructor, he had acquired a huge range of mil skills and qualifications and was happiest when passing on this knowledge. He had recently been selected for promotion to Sgt and was keen to work in an Army Training Regiment.

He undertook his role as a patrol comd with absolute professionalism in support of the 3 PARA BG, providing protection for his comrades in the highly demanding working conditions of Southern Afghanistan. An outstanding man, his sad loss is felt by us all."

Sgt Thorpe was an outstanding soldier, comrade and friend to many. It was suitable recognition of this that as he had already been selected for promotion, this was granted posthumously. The sympathy and thoughts of the Corps go to **Sgt Thorpe's** family and friends.

SPARKS - Sig Sidney Sparks (Sid) died on 9 May 2006

Sid Sparks was born on 6 September 1920 in Sandsend, near Whitby, North Yorkshire. In January 1938, after working as a gardener at the nearby Dunsley and Stainsacre Halls, he joined the Royal Signals in Middlesbrough.

Sid qualified as an Operator Wireless and Line and he first saw action in 1940 with the British Expeditionary Force in France. In 1941 he was with the 7th Armd Div, "The Desert Rats" at El Alamein. He was involved in the landings at Salerno in Italy, again on D-Day in June 1944 and took part in the final advance to Berlin.

In December 1946 he became a Police Constable with the North Riding Constabulary and in April 1947, **Sid** married **Vera Peacock**. From 1957 he spent approximately 15 years working as a gamekeeper for **Lord Zetland** on the estate at Upleatham near Redcar, Cleveland and then several years working at the ICI Chemical Works in Teesside. **Sid** retired from ICI due to ill health in 1980 but still enjoyed many years gardening, cooking and watching horse racing and football.

He died at the age of 85 at the James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough. He will be sadly missed by his wife, family and friends

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

EIGHTH ARMY SIGNAL OFFICE IN THE WESTERN DESERT, ITALY AND AUSTRIA

- by PD Randall MBE TD

As a comparitively young officer, I worked as Signalmaster and Chief Signalmaster in the HQ Signal Office and thus got to know **Monty**, **Patton** and other luminaries. I am the only one left, the remainder having passed on.

I was posted to Base Camp Maadi outside Cairo in early 1942 and then to 4 L of C Signals, which became 8th Army Signals. In the desert, besides being Signalmaster, I commanded a Teleprinter Section. I found their typehead clutches had a very short life as we operated in open trucks.

The Regt manned Rear Army with a det at Tobruk but our personnel were all captured when Tobruk fell. Main Army signals was run by the South African Signal Corps but when they were pulled out, after two retreats, we took over.

Rear Army were for a short time in the shadow of the Pyramids but we soon went forward to Buqbuq. In July, we met **Monty** for the first time. When he first addressed us we were not impressed by a little man with a curt manner and white knees. He told us "Forget retreat and only know the word advance!" Over the passage of time he convinced us. It was an historic occasion.

Originally the Signal Office was in an EPIP tent (like a large marquee). No lights were allowed at night time and being camourflaged it was insufferably hot. Many operators fainted and had to be taken outside. At the Battle of Alamein when the gun barrage began, the sand rippled beneath our feet. The Regt won three MCs for laying lines. We reached Benghazi in December (not very festive as the NAAFI ship had been sunk in the harbour), but the advance continued and we set up our Signal Office in January 1943 at Tripoli.

As April turned into May we were at Sousse and then Sfax. We had a link with the American Army and listened in to several acrimonious conversations between Monty and Patton. They hated each other.

The end of the Afrika Korps was very sudden and I could scarcely believe that after 6 months the campaign was over. Preparatory for the invasion of Sicily, 8th Army moved to Malta and the Signal Office was in a comandeered building.

Italy had lost interest in the war and it was obvious that the Germans had decided to abandon Sicily which we captured in a few weeks. The island was ours. **Monty** chose the lovely town of Taormina as his HQ and here we put on a concert party forr. Rather rudely he said to me "Tell me **Capt Randall**, what else do these chaps do besides singing and dancing?" "Actually Sir, they run your Signal Office". I felt I had scored a point.

Early September saw us on the shores of Italy at Reggio. There was some spasmodic bombing but no opposition. The Italians welcomed us and helped to dig slit trenches around the Signal Office. As we advanced up the toe of the peninsula the opposition stiffened and the weather worsened, so by the time we reached Lentini, the Office had blown down several times. The tents which had served us so well in the desert were practically useless now. Finally we moved into winter quarters at Vasto. Main Army was in the town, Rear Army on the beach where the unit transport suffered at high tide. I was promoted Chief Signalmaster at Main HQ and here together with a fellow officer named **Tony Craik** we devised the famous Mobile Office which became known as 'Randall's Circus' (see attached). It was of fairly simple construction.

The main Signal Office providing accommodation for the Superintendant and Clerks was one large caravan. The sides were split in half so that the top half made a roof and the bottom the floor. The six threetonners each serving its own purpose (teleprinters etc) were then backed up into one temporary construction.

Power was supplied by batteries (125 a.h.) in a separate trailer. All could be assembled in half an hour. Two of these were available so that when we moved and the old Signal Office closed down, the new one could take over. This mobile office was in use until the end of the war and our moves in Italy were so frequent that the 'Circus' proved its worth.

By the end of 1944, matters had gone so well that we were in the north east of the country. The weather was so vile that we moved into buildings in the little town of Cesena. Here disaster struck. For the first time a low flying German bomber dropped its bomb on the Signal Office. Ten men were killed outright and many injured. All comms came to a standstill. I gave instructions for the mobile office to move out and then joined the grisly task of excavating bodies.

The move was not a moment too soon as the Canadian Corps were due to put an attack in that night. All went well and the Regt received a commendation from the Army Comd. For the next 6 months, we alternated between buildings and the Field Signal Office. Mostly the latter. We celebrated VE day in a location some miles north of Venice and could see the lights of the town go on for the first time.

The Regt's final location was Austria with Main Army at the Imperial Palace of Schonbrunn and Rear Army at Klagenfurt. The mobile unit which had served us so well for 18 months was broken up. I still feel sentimental about it. In its way it was unique to our Corps.

RECALLED FOR SUEZ IN 1956

- by Charles Hoare

On 26 July, 1956, President Nasser of Egypt announced to a cheering crowd that he was about to nationalize the Suez Canal in order to finance the building of the Aswan Dam. The canal was a main artery for world trade and fuel and it was also the main link between Britain and much of its Empire.

The 50s was a period when the influence of the Soviet Union was spreading. It was felt that Egypt, through the supply of arms and financial aid, might also be drawn into the Soviet web and thus control of the waterway in the hands of an unfriendly power was a potential threat. With this in mind, Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister, together with France (and the secret help of Israel) announced that they would reclaim the canal. On 2 August, Army Reservists were called up. Among them were the Army Emergency Reserve (AER) Unit 52 Line of Communications (LofC) Sig Regt.

The Royal Signals AER consisted of men conscripted for wartime service, ex-Regulars and ex-National Servicemen. Because of their civilian occupation, maany were highly skilled. A good example was the CO of 52 LofC Sig Regt, who at the time of recall was the technical director of a large electronics company. Many of the officers and men worked for the General Post Office, which then included what is now BT.

It was quite a motley bunch that assembled in Catterick Camp. Most attended camp regularly, or had recently left the army and so their kit and memory of things military was up to date. Others, however, called up to bring the Regt up to strength, had been on the Reserve since the war, but had done no soldiering since. Their idea of military discipline was often "fatherly" and their

uniforms slightly "historic" (one officer still wore the old Royal Signals oval badge) So it was quite a "dad's army" group, which was joined by a small number of serving officers and NCOs, including the SSM, in an attempt to make us into a more soldierly unit.

Our first task was to paint all vehicles a sand colour and place a large white letter H on top (what this stood for no-one knew and none of the suggestions were complimentary). Once these and various other admin tasks had been performed, it was off to Richmond Station, where we climbed on our own train and set off for a camp at Ogbourne St George, near Swindon. It was an old camp that had been mothballed for years but we soon had it looking and feeling like home.

As international negotiations continued and plans were made, we waited on 24 hour standby. Other units were sent to Malta and Cyprus we stayed in Wiltshire. An LofC Regt covered every element of signals in service at the time. This lull was a useful opportunity therefore, to bring every trade up to scratch. The routine established included first works parade etc., but was built around trg. Such a routine was good for morale as we were all kept occupied and given a sense of purpose.

While the world was caught up in the comings and goings of Suez, its attention was dramatically distracted at the start of November by the revolution in Hungary. Though the revolt was shortlived, many people managed to flee the country and soon large numbers were arriving in Britain. Close by our camp was another at Ogbourne St Andrew, also in mothballs. This was quickly opened up to be used as emergency accommodation. To us fell the task of supervising their arrival and settling in, providing for their needs and general admin.

A radio for each hut was requested so that they could listen to Hungarian radio. It was cold but it became obvious that we had not provided sufficient fuel, for soon they were ripping wood from the huts. The cold could also have been the explanation for their apparent inability to read English. The huts were clearly marked MEN and WOMEN and, while in the evening their knowledge of English was sound, confusion must have occurred overnight, for by morning there had been a 'blending". Numbers in the camp slowly declined as our guests went their various ways – most wanted to go to the USA and our responsibility ceased.

The buildup to the invasion continued. Early in October, one of our sqns was dispatched by ship to the Mediterranean, to wait off Cyprus ready to move into Egypt behind the landing troops. Their role was to repair damage done to local forms of comms. On 3l October, the British and French began to bomb Egyptian airfields. On 5 November, paratroopers from both countries were ropped and on 6 November, the Franco-British landing occurred at Port Said. At 2359hrs, after much confusion, a ceasefire came into effect.

The "war" had lasted 40 hours. It was agreed that a UN force would move in. This was the first time that such a "blue helmet" force had been deployed. However, British and French troops remained to maintain order while the UN deployment could take place. Our sqn stayed doing its work of repair until re-embarking at the beginning of December.

By the middle of December, back in Ogbourne St George, it was time to pack up, board the train back to Richmond and Catterick, hand in our eqpt and get back to Civvy Street. But there was one more task. The CO, now in Catterick, received a message that our returning sqn was docking in Liverpool that evening. He decided that someone should go and welcome them home. A young subaltern was dispatched with orders to report to a Signals Office under the Liver Building. On arrival in Liverpool, no such office could be found so the subaltern decided to walk to the docks. A suspicious police car stopped him and, on hearing the story, took him to the correct dock, arriving at 2am.

The dock was lit up, the ship towered overhead but no-one was about. Suddenly, a face appeared over the rail above, then another and another. A cheer went up as the subaltern was recognized. The lads knew now that they were home. A rope ladder was thrown down and with overnight bag hooked on one arm, the visitor slowly clambered up the swaying, neverending rope. At the top he was pulled over the rail and greeted by a welcoming crowd of smiling faces. He was shown the vehs in the hold and the not very comfortable conditions under which the men had lived.

The ship's captain, however, assumed that the visitor was an official from the War Office and his only concern was who would pay for the cleaning of the ship's keel which, because of the lack of activity off Cyprus, had accumulated much seaweed, etc.

By the middle of January, the last member of the Regt had been signed off and gone on his way. They were all to meet again in a few months for their annual camp. And so 52 LofC Sig Regt made its small contribution to the nation's history.

THE FANY IN PEACE AND WAR

The Story of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, 1907 - 2003
- by Hugh Popham

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY) was founded in 1907 by **Mr Baker**, a man about whom remarkably little is known. He was probably a cavalry sergeant major who served in the Boer War where he saw the need for a "*Connecting link between the fighting units and the base where the work of Field Nurses will go on as it has always done*". Thus was formed a unique corps of uniformed ladies who have served the nation continuously from then to the present day.

To stress their uniqueness, members of FANY are volunteers: they receive no pay, find their own uniforms and in the early days, a first aid kit that they were required to carry at all times when in uniform. When necessary, they have raised money to buy equipments they need. FANY is a charity but its members have never flinched from carrying arms. The first lady to win the King's Medal at Bisley was a FANY and if members of other women's services were required to carry arms, they were transferred to FANY.

From the start, members enjoyed summer camps under canvas on military lines where they engaged in horsemanship, first aid, signalling (in semaphore and morse) and later, in driving and maintenance of motor vehicles. With the outbreak of WWI, they offered their services to the War Office but the offer was refused. The Belgian Army was far more receptive and they moved to Belgium, where they drove ambulances, mobile bath units etc, carrying out any task required of them. On one occasion they were summoned to take a motorised soup kitchen to feed a regiment of Belgian Mounted Artillery. For a week or more they trundled along behind the guns and horses and in the evening were expected to 'cook something edible for 140 men on what amounted to one temperamental primus stove'. Their unofficial motto: 'I Cope'!

They gradually became accepted by the French and later, the British. At their peak in WWI there were no more than 450 members, but they were awarded 19 Military Medals, 27 Croix de Guerre and a number of other gallantry awards. The War Office disbanded the women's services at the end of the war, but had no powers to disband FANY, who continued to train throughout the years between the wars and to make themselves useful wherever they could.

During WWII many FANY operated training schools for FANY and ATS drivers. **Princess Elizabeth** was one of their trainees. Other FANYs specialised in communications, and a rapport was quickly established with SOE when that was formed. Seventy three members of the corps underwent hard physical training, 'silent killing', fieldcraft, weapon handling and sabotage at the SOE schools and 39 operated behind enemy lines as SOE agents. Their activities were not confined to NW Europe. Members of FANY served in the Middle and Far East and again the list of gallantry awards made to members of FANY in WWII makes impressive reading: 3 George Crosses, 2 George Medals, 12 Croix de Guerre (6 of these to WAAF transferred to FANY) and no less than 105 other awards.

At the end of WWII, the women's services were again disbanded but FANY continued training and looking for outlets for their expertise. Activities 'half way between work and play' included regularly providing communications for horse trials where they would radio results and reports of accidents to officials and for the Courage Trophy where London branches of the TA take part in two days of gruelling 'military competition'.

In anger, 14 members (7 teams of 2) may be called out by the Metropolitan Police if there is a major incident in the City of London. These teams go to Police HQ, the scene of the incident and to the 3 major hospitals; London, Guys and Barts. Their task is to track victims of the incident and to answer phone calls from members of the public anxious for news of friends or relatives. Think of them next time there is a disaster in London and an emergency telephone number is issued.

FANY also has links with the Royal Corps of Signals and has a formal role to man certain static communication centres. It is appropriate that both Corps share the same Colonel in Chief –the Princess Royal.

THE ARMED FORCES COMPENSATION SCHEME (AFCS)

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) was launched on 6 April 2005. It provides a simple and quick means of compensating Service (and ex-Service) personnel for illness or injury sustained through their Service life. The new scheme also provides guaranteed income payments to dependants for death that occurs due to Service, including a tax-free bereavement grant of up to £20,000.

AFCS covers all Regular (including Gurkhas) and Reserve personnel and for the first time, tax free lump sum awards can be paid to personnel while they are still serving. If personnel have to leave the Service as a consequence of injury or illness due to Service, they may also be eligible for tax free income payments after their discharge. AFCS compensation only applies to injury, illness or death caused on or after, 6 April 2005. It DOES NOT affect those already in receipt of a war disablement or war widow pensions.

As a new scheme, the vast majority of AFCS claims received to date are from those still serving in the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force. Compensation lump sums are paid out in increasing amounts according to the severity of the injury or illness. This is a significant change from the old scheme, where payments could only be made after discharge.

Any condition or symptom suffered can be the subject of a claim as long as it is Service-related. A good example is an injury caused by playing football. If the injury was sustained from playing in a recognised Service team, then compensation can be considered. However, if the injury was caused playing in a civilian team, then it would be viewed as a non-Service incident and therefore discounted.

Whilst a claim can be made for any number of conditions arising from one cause, compensation is paid only for the three severest. There is no limit to the number of incidents/accidents that can be claimed during Service life. AFCS introduces a tariff-based system of compensation payments and as with all such schemes, the line has to be drawn somewhere.

Insignificant injuries or illnesses will not qualify for the smallest tariff available. AFCS has been designed as a 'no fault' scheme, which means individuals still have the option to sue the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for negligence. Claiming is straightforward. A claim form is completed, any supporting evidence attached and sent off to Veterans Agency in Blackpool. On receipt and review, either more information is requested, probably from Service medical authorities or commanding officers, or a decision is made there and then.

More information and claim forms can be obtained direct from the Agency by calling the veterans Helpline free on **0800 169 2277**. Alternatively, visit the website www.veteransagency.mod.uk

THE WAR MEMORIALS TRUST – PRESERVING OUR WAR MEMORIALS

- by Ms Frances Moreton, Trust Manager

War memorials come in all shapes and sizes, from cairns to crosses, from bus shelters to church fittings. Sadly they also stand in a variety of conditions, some are 'at risk'; vulnerable to neglect, vandalism, theft, weathering and ageing.

The names of Signallers may be on these damaged war memorials; on occasion the names will be fading and if action is not taken, future generations will be unable to identify those who made the ultimate sacrifice. War Memorials Trust is the charity that works for the protection and conservation of the estimated 70,000 war memorials across the country.

The charity offers advice, information and guidance to war memorial conservation projects nationwide as well as financial support through grant schemes. One recent example of our work is to support the restoration of a damaged memorial cross in the churchyard of St Chad's in Kirkby on Merseyside.

The war memorial was destroyed 15 years ago and has since lain in storage, in pieces, with only the plinth remaining in situ. Through grants from War Memorials Trust, English Heritage, and local fundraising led by the King's Regiment Association, Knowsley, the £16,000 required has been found and work can commence.

War Memorials Trust also rescues 'at risk' war memorials. A damaged war memorial plaque that featured in the 'Not Forgotten' series about war memorials on Channel 4 in the autumn of 2005 has been held in storage by the Trust for its protection. It is now being restored and will be re-homed.

The Trust holds war memorials from across the country; saved from auctions, tips and even eBay! It is shocking to see war memorials for sale, when they should be respected and cherished as part of our national heritage.

War Memorials Trust cannot do its work alone. The Trust relies entirely on voluntary funding such as donations, subscriptions and legacies.

If you would like to support our work please consider sending a donation, or join us (£20 Annual subscription, £100 Life Membership), to **Winston S Churchill**, President, War Memorials Trust, 4 Lower Belgrave Street London SW1W 0LA or visit www.warmemorials.org.

If you would like advice or information on a war memorial matter please get in touch on 020 7259 0403.

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CORPS AND REGIMENTS AND THE ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND

It was after Veterans' Awareness Week in London in July last year that I became concerned, both as Controller of the Army's National Charity and as the Colonel of a Regiment myself, that although the special relationship between veterans and their

Regiment, and Corps Headquarters and Associations was as strong as ever, and communication was good, there were some aspects of welfare provision which were unknown to many.

I think it is important that knowledge of the support available reaches out farther hence this letter to you. So I am writing to remind your readers of how a welfare problem is handled in case they or someone they know needs it and to explain the critically important relationship between your Corps charitable funds'and ours.

Second, you may wish to know of ways you can all help and I shall outline those later on.

The ABF exists to help in those cases where official State assistance is either inapplicable or unwieldy. **Where there is a need**, it should be identified and resolved and every case is examined on its own merits.

How does it work?
A case emerges and, provided the outline details reach RHQ in the first place, the Welfare Committee (or similar) will initiate the casework to be carried out.

This is normally done by SSAFA Forces Help or the Royal British Legion or in more specialised cases by another organisation, such as BLESMA or Combat Stress.

The casework is sent back to RHQ where it is assessed and a solution proposed. If the cost of solving the problem is within the amount set by Regimental Trustees, the money is found and all should be well; if it is more than £1200 the ABF and others are approached for the rest and a cheque from us to your RHQ is despatched normally the same day.

Where does the money come from?
Regimental benevolent money benefits from donations made to the Day's Pay Scheme contributed by serving soldiers and other charitable donations whereas ABF money has to be raised in an increasingly crowded fundraising market place. The next question you may ask is **how much is needed?**

Well, the ABF has to raise about £5.5 million a year to provide for that need, which may be mobility aids such as wheelchairs (often for serving soldiers with demanding recuperative needs and sometimes costing thousands of pounds), stair lifts, care home top-ups, holidays for soldiers' widows and children or bursaries. About half goes to help individuals and half to other charities that provide specialist help for our people.

The money is raised in a number of ways.
The serving Army, both regular and TA (and we help all parts of the military fwnily, and increasingly the TA) as well as our wonderful cadet forces do a great deal; our fundraising events, helped enormously by bands, drums and pipes, are popular but need sponsorship and organisation; reunion lunches and dinners with speakers such as professor Richard Holmes and Kate Adie are well attended.

Finally, we receive generous legacies from our supporters but this, of course, is not something we can rely on.

What can you all do to help?
Well, a lot actually but most of all, in the area of awareness. Perhaps most people in your Association know how all this works but some will not and I hope you will spread the word that the partnership of the Regiments and Corps with the Army Benevolent Fund is working together to relieve need and has been doing so for over 60 years.

Next, your members might want to be put on our mailing list as they might particularly want to purchase one of our diaries (with its welfare aide memoire and which runs for 15 months rather than the normal 12) now that regiments tend not to produce their own any more.

Finally, readers may be able to help with some fundraising in their local area. Please respond using the enclosed proforma if you feel you need help or would like to offer it. I hope you found the above interesting and useful. Finally, I wish you all the best of good health and happiness to which I hope we are contributing as part of your Army's support system.

Yours sincerely,

Evelyn Webb Carter

ABF RETURN PROFORMA
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Please photocopy or use this page and return to the address above.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Maj (Retd) ETA Webster**

FAREWELL TO ONE 'BARROW' GIRL

You may remember an article in *The Wire* in September 1988 about a reunion of four of the 'Barrow' Girls, who had kept in touch since joining the WRAC (Royal Signals) in 1960.

Sadly, one of these girls, **Joyce Tucker** (nee **Manning**), has had a severe stroke and she died on 15 July 2006 in New Zealand. It was planned for **Joyce** and husband **Neil** to return for a further reunion this year, but this, sadly, cannot be.

I am sure that her many friends from the 'Barrow' days will be saddened by this news and will wish to extend their condolences to her family.

EDITOR'S NOTE

In 1960, the first troop of WRAC to be employed with 1 Sqn, 14 Sig Regt at Gloucester, was formed.

These girls were employed in various trades at the COMCAN Centre, which was situated approximately 8 miles from Robinswood Barracks. The Centre was affectionately known as the 'Barrow'.

Amongst the first girls to be posted in were **WLCpl Denise Longley**, **Ptes Judy Pearson**, **Joyce Manning**, **Dot Miller**, **Jean Mellow** and **Una Mackay**.

Joyce met and married a New Zealander, **Neil Tucker**, and settled there. In 1988, a reunion was held in London. **Maj Eric Webster**, one of the sergeants in charge of their WRAC shift at the 'Barrow', joined them and *The Wire* reported the event.

From: **Geoff Waddoups**
20 Green Farm Close
Newbold
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S40 4UQ

The article – Miscellaneous Stories on page 319, The Wire August 2006.

I served at Tholthorpe in 1947 i.e. the early part of 1947 on a mechanical course and the information **Lt Col G Powell** was supplied with, was wrong. Quite a large number of Royal Corps of Signals people were stationed their. I cant remember the exact date of course, but soon after I was posted to Rhine army to the former Parzer Barracks at Herford. From Herford I moved onto Rhine Army Headquarters in Badoynehausen this was also in 1947.

This town didn't suffer any material damage and only military stayed their. We lived in houses in the town, and no civilians (Germans) were present in the town.

I'm sure some where info on this village and airfield is available, approx 13 miles north of York.

Yours.....

From: **Linda Willis**

Pahlevi camp, Persia 1942

I am trying to research a small group of people who were refugees in India during WWII and were taken by convoy to Persia in early 1942.

I understand that the Pahlevi camp was set up near the Caspian Sea to take in thousands of Polish refugees who were leaving the USSR, and that others from various countries were taken in at the Pahlevi camp as well.

Recently, through a Polish website, I was told that the Royal Corps of Signals was instrumental in getting this camp up and running in early 1942.

I have been in touch with a Polish man, now in his 80s, who passed through the camp late in 1942.

He remembers some of the British officers with whom he came into contact, were with the Royal Signals from the 8th Army.

He also mentioned that some of the transport was by dets from the British Indian Army, using mainly Sikh drivers. I would very much like to make contact with anyone who was either at Pahlevi during April-May 1942 or who might have been on that British Indian Army convoy from India, which left the India in the first week of April 1942 and arrived some weeks later at Pahlevi.

Anyone who can help **Linda Willis**, please contact her on the following e mail address: lwil2@hotmail.com

From: **Mr BC Murphy**,

The above photograph was taken at the RSA weekend of the presentation of the PINGAT JASA Malaysia "PJM" lapel medal to The Master of Signals, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**.

The medal was presented for service between 31 August 1957 and 31 December 1966.

Gen Sir Sam Cowan served with the Queens Ghurkha Signals in 1963.

The Malaysian Government made the first presentation of these medals on 17 July in London. If anyone needs further information they can contact me or the "NMBVA" web site.

Yours....

From: **Mr Nick Mills**,
14 The Promenade,
Wellingborough,
Northants.
NN8 5AL

My father, **Ronald Mills**, now 85 and terminally ill, was a despatch rider in the World War II, serving mainly in North Africa with the Eighth Army.

We learned from him recently that he was an outrider to **Field Marshall Montgomery** during the Victory Parade.

He told us that the outriders were drawn up in four lines of four riders, each line drawn from a different service.

We would very much like to obtain a photograph of Dad in the Victory Parade but our searches so far have drawn a blank. Our hope is that one of your readers may have a photograph which they would be prepared to have copied.

We will of course be happy to cover any costs involved. My contact details are as follows;

Email: millsn @hotmail.com

Tel: 01933354500 (day)
01933272498 (evenings)
07860355421 (mobile)

From: **Mrs Christine Gale**

My husband, **Andrew**, died last November of Leukaemia. His sister and I are doing a charity trek in Peru in his memory. All the donations will go to the Royal Marsden Hospital where he was treated so amazingly well and where such wonderful research is carried out with all forms of cancer. I wonder if you might be able to advertise this fact in the Corps, which was both our 'homes' for nearly 40 years.

Editor's Note: **Lt Col Andrew Gale's** passing was noted in an obituary published in *The Wire* in April. Anyone who knew **Andrew** or wishes to support the activities of The Royal Marsden can support her charity trek through her website, where there are more details: www.justgiving.com/ChristineGale

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

Chris Hayles is trying to contact anyone who was part of the 11 Signal Regiment Guard of Honour on the 50th Anniversary Parade of the Battle of the Marne held in Rheims, France on Sunday 6 September 1964. He hopes to find any photographs of the event and to contact old friends. Contact him on 02380 644608 or at: chris@southernlife.org.uk

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From: **C Sawyer**

I am looking for information on my grandfather, **Ernest Walker Sawyer**, who was a Brevet Maj in WWI. His expertise was in radio equipment having been a business partner with Lord Beaverbrook and Marconi.

I would so appreciate any assistance in guiding me to the correct person who could assist in my inquiry. wandonpark123@aol.com

---

From: **Sarah Camacho**

Sarah Camacho is trying to contact a man she met in November 1998 at the Queen Mother's Sport Centre in Victoria, London. He used to go to a Kick Boxing Club there and she believes he was based in Chelsea Barracks at the time.

His first name is **Craig** and his second name may be **Benson**. She is anxious to make contact again. Her e mail address is sarah.camacho@uk.royalsun.com or telephone 0207 249 0410

Philip Hill is trying to make contact with **William Thomas Cowell**, a Sgt Tech, possibly still serving. He last spoke 3 years ago. Please contact your old friend in Norwich on 07795-598 073.

From: **Michael Teague** 43 Humford Green,
Blyth,Northumberland. NE24 4LY
Tel: 01670 360044

I am looking for an old pal **Paddy Young**. We served together first at 6(Boys)Trg Regt Beverley 1952-1954 and then went on to become LTCs at Catterick, then parted, I went for East, he went Mid East.

We met up again for the last time in 1957 at Distmet Sig Regt Singapore.

Yours.....

From: **Toby Thorpe**

I am sending this e-mail hoping you could help me out in some way. I am trying to find the whereabouts of my father **Jack Thorpe**.

He joined the Royal Signals in 1976 and left after completing his full 22 years service.

I briefly remember him being in Krefeld in 1994 and finished his time in Catterick in 1998. I believe he settled either in Catterick or York.

If you could publish this in the trying to find part of your magazine it, would be greatly appreciated, you can add my e-mail address as well so people can contact me at tobythorpe@hotmail.com

Yours faithfully...

From: **Miss K Ewart**,
16 Paterson Ave, Chaddesden, Derby. DE23 6RP (Tel: 01332 671217)

My father, **George Ewart**, served with 9 Sig Regt between 1963 and 1965.

His regimental number was 22599082. He went on to complete his full 22 years and lost contact with his best friend **David Webber**, who was also in the Signals at that time in Cyprus. **David**, who came from London, married a local lady called **Chrisoula**.

They were in the water polo team together. I would be very grateful for any information concerning **David** as it's one of my Dad's wishes to make contact again.

Yours.....

From: **Dave Mathieson**

I was doing my National Service in 1948 at Catterick 22 Troop 7 Selection Regiment. I am trying to contact some of my old buddies who came to Greece with me. There were 5 of them and I made up the 6th. We sailed on the *Empire Test* in Feb 1949 (approx) stopping at Malta, Port Said, Salonika and Piraeus.

We worked in the Tamian Building. I was superintendent of the Signal Office and I took the parades in the morning or Roll Call.

Anyone who went to Greece with Dave or recognises anyone else in the picture above, contact him at: 3017 Dover Road, Calgary, Alberta. Canada.

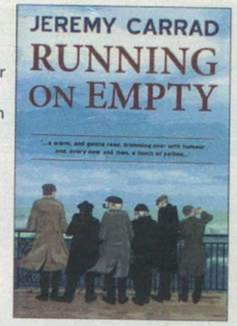
22 Troop, 7 Selection Regiment Catterick – August 1948

BOOKS

RUNNING ON EMPTY - *by Jeremy Carrad*

This is a charming book which describes a year in Oldthorpe House, home of the Cavaliers, a group of retired officers whose lives are never free from complications.

It would be reasonable to expect that a combination of Brig Ainsley Bennington CBE DSO (late RTR), Col Alastair Hunter DSO (late The Queen's Scottish Regt), Cdr 'Tubes' Potter DSC RN, Maj Basil Reardon MC RA, Sqn Ldr Freddy Foster DFC and Bar RAF and Capt Clarence Cuthbert MC Royal Signals would be a recipe for more than the occasional calamity and they live up to that expectation with a vengeance.



The author makes the principal characters authentic with their idiosyncrasies and bad habits and at the same time he finds humour in their 'senior moments' and bonds of service and friendship.

The supporting characters provide more comedy, stretching to absurdity on occasion, and provide some hilarious subplots to the escapades of the Cavaliers. This is a book to enjoy.

There are moments of pure comedy and wit which will make you laugh and there are also passages where you will be reminded that, as the title of the book says, everyone gets to a point where they are "running on empty".

I recommend this to anyone who wants a book which makes them smile, laugh and occasionally ponder just a bit to consider the future. Published at £8.99 by Vanguard Press. ISBN 1843862182

REUNION

CALLING NAMIBIA VETERANS

March 2009 is the 20th anniversary of the commencement of OPERATION PROSPEROUS, the United Nations Transition Advisory Group's mission to South West Africa (now Nambia).

SSgt(YofS) Nigel Brewin is keen to hear from all Royal Signals and attached arms personnel who participated on that groundbreaking op with a view to a 20th Anniversary tour of Namibia in March 2009.

Serving personnel, former serving personnel and their families are welcome to attend. Interested individuals are asked to register with **SSgt(YofS) Nigel Brewin** on 01252 354928, 01252 345891 or mobile 07732 214993.

ADVERTISEMENTS

The Royal Signals Yacht Club is holding its AGM and dinner on Friday 27 October at Blandford Camp. Each of the sections within the RSYC, Offshore, Dinghies & Dayboats and Windsurfing, will be running a number of activities throughout the day.

These will include:
Presentations - Ex MERCURY CHALLENGE update - navigation exercise - dinghy rig tuning and high performance dinghy and yacht racing rules demo - hands on landboard sailing and powerkites/kitesurfing.

The AGM and Dinner will be held in the evening.

For more details contact **Capt Curtin** Blandford (94371) x 5333 - Mob: 07979 705228

HAVE YOU RECENTLY RETURNED FROM AN OPERATION, ADVENTURE TRAINING OR AN EXPEDITION?

Perhaps you might like to consider giving a talk about your experiences to one of the Branches of the Royal Signals Association?
Former members of the Corps, who form the Branch, would be delighted to receive you.

The Association HQ would be pleased to give you the contact of any of the 68 Branches located throughout the UK.

Please contact **Peter Cuckow** on Blandford (94371)2090 (or 01258-482090). Or you can e-mail; rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk

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TO ALL FORMER MEMBERS OF 14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

We are forming a 14th Sig Regt (EW) Association, open to all ranks, all cap badges and all services who have served with the Regt since it formed in 1977.

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 this.

Our Aims:
To renew contacts and stay in touch with old friends. To establish strong links between old comrades and serving members of the Regt.

To build a network of bright and lively people to enable them to support each other. To have a good party every year.

Likely activities may include an annual reunion, the chance to take part in selected Regtl occasions, the ability to stay in e-mail/telephone touch with colleagues and the chance to stay in touch with the developments in the Regt via the Regtl Website, as far as security permits. We intend to run the Association by e-mail and web as far as we can but again, this will depend on the views of the members.

If you are eligible and want to join, then send an e-mail to 14sr.assn@bigfoot.com giving your basic details. You will be contacted by the Acting Membership Secretary, **Capt M R Wallace** Royal Signals and asked to supply further information and contact details. The initial membership fee is likely to be £5.

We need to see now who is interested in joining a 14th Sig Regt (EW) Association and to establish the necessary structure for it. If you cannot send an e mail then contact:

Capt M R Wallace Royal Signals, (see address below)

TO ALL CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS OF 14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (EW) ASSOCIATION

AN INVITATION TO THE FIRST ASSOCIATION DINNER ON 14 OCTOBER 2006

1.The first annual dinner for the newly formed 14th Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare) Association will be held on Saturday 14 October 2006.

2.It would be greatly appreciated if all current and prospective members who wish to attend the function contact the membership secretary by the following means:

a. Snail Mail:
Capt M R Wallace Royal Signals,Acting Membership Secretary, Regimental Association,14th Signal Regiment (EW), Training Wing, Cawdor Barracks, HAVERFORDWEST, Pembrokeshire. SA62 6NN

b. E-Mail: 14sr.assn@bigfoot.com

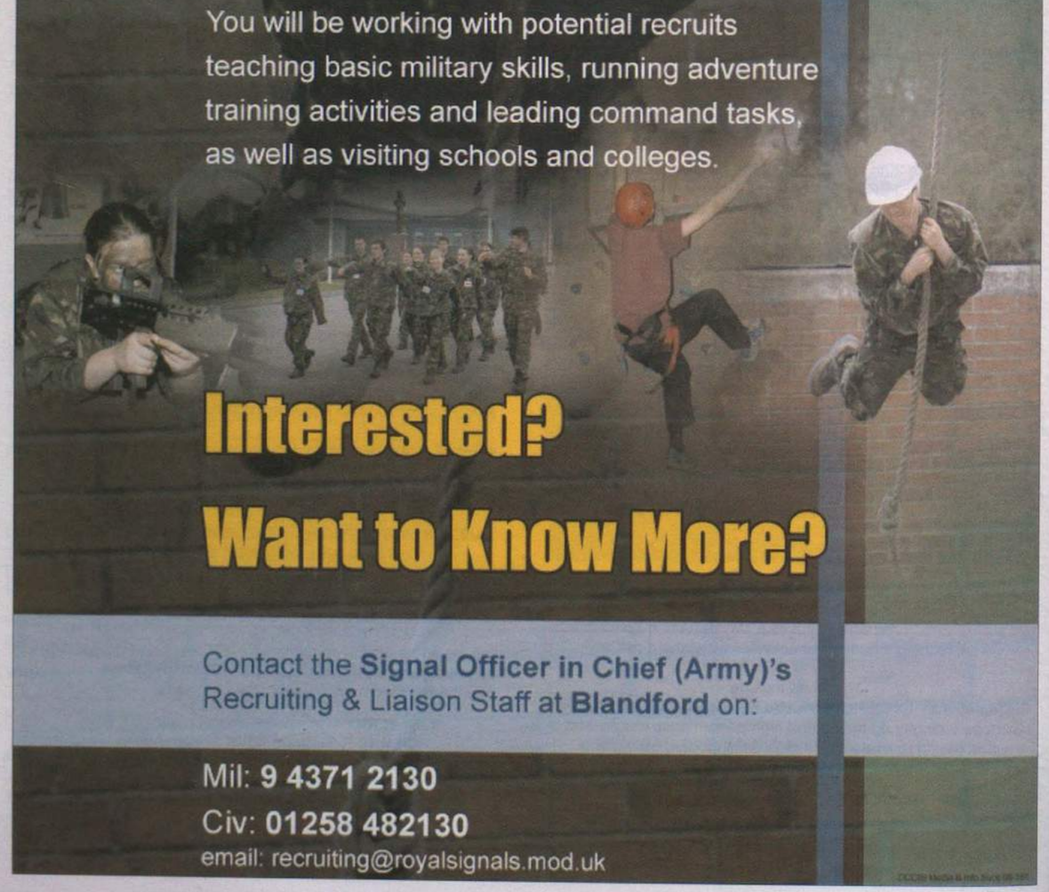
3.We look forward to hearing from you.

Army Recruiting Teams

Do You Fancy a Change and Fresh Challenge?

There will be a number of recruiting posts becoming available through out the UK in April 2007 for quality R SIGNALS SNCOs, JNCOs and Signallers to serve with the newly formed Army Recruiting Teams.

You will be working with potential recruits teaching basic military skills, running adventure training activities and leading command tasks, as well as visiting schools and colleges.



Interested?

Want to Know More?

Contact the **Signal Officer in Chief (Army)'s** Recruiting & Liaison Staff at **Blandford** on:

Mil: **9 4371 2130**

Civ: **01258 482130**

email: recruiting@royalsignals.mod.uk

MERCURY CHALLENGE
HMSTC *ADVENTURE* SAILS INTO THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

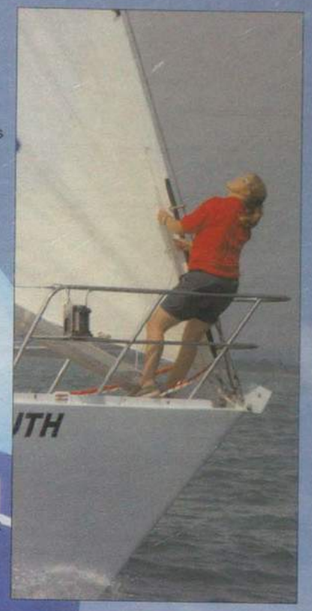
Maj Charles Roberts – raises the ensign at the start of Mercury Challenge

After 2 years of planning, Mercury Challenge, the Royal Signals round the world sailing exped is under way! The yacht *Adventure* left the boat yard in Lymington in early June and was taken to JSASTC in Gosport for a full programme of maint to prepare her for sea.

The Mercury Challenge team, including some crew of future legs worked exceedingly hard with the JSASTC staff to clean *Adventure* and fix any outstanding jobs. State of the art safety and technical eqpt was fitted and tested. *Adventure* now resembles the 'Big Brother' boat with video cameras permanently fitted all over the yacht, so video footage and photos will be getting sent back to the website!

Adventure was loaded with all the stores and spares for the project, and has been branded with the sponsors' logos. The crew for leg 1 arrived on Thursday 29 June and were full of excitement and anticipation. All crew on Mercury Challenge will be given an arrival brief and then go through the documentation procedure and kit issue. Crew will be issued with top of the range, new Musto HPX foul weather clothing, midlayer and boots for the duration of the exped. The crew will be fully kitted out with Mercury Challenge team kit, so the professional look will be visible as *Adventure* sails around the world.

The crew of leg 1 had a tough time, preparing *Adventure* for sea, and ensuring that all tasks were completed before the yacht set off around the world. On 8 July, *Adventure* set sail and started her round the world challenge.



Capt Rachel Thompson – Checks the sails.

Leg 1 was a short sail to Camaret-Sur-Mer, France to put the yacht through her paces and ensure she was ready to cross the notorious Bay of Biscay. After departing from Camaret-Sur-Mer, *Adventure* cleared the Chassee de Sein, littered with rocks and with the wind against them; they made slow progress towards the continental shelf. Fog, poor visibility and rain together with a gentle Atlantic swell made life onboard uncomfortable and simple tasks a challenge. With a passage of this nature, the lows were matched with highs, as *Adventure* was joined by a school of dolphins jumping alongside the yacht. After crossing the Bay of Biscay, *Adventure* made her way down the west coast of Europe and stopped at Bayona, Spain and Porto, Portugal before heading across to Porto Santo, Madeira.

Adventure heads away from England at the start of Mercury Challenge

There will be many challenges with the equipment during Mercury Challenge, but regular maint and eqpt checking will help to prevent damage to the yacht. Some gear failure cannot be prevented and off Madeira, the spinnaker was flying in light winds and suddenly it ripped across the middle and down two sides. The crew leapt into action and after an extremely and efficient drop of the spinnaker, further damage was prevented. **LCpl Ali Rowsell** said, '**Charlie** (the Skipper) and I spent the next hour slicing open the seams of the webbing, pulling off the remaining bits of thread, and examining the extent of the rip, and it was decided that it would be better mended once in harbour'.

The final part of the journey took the crew of leg 1 from Madeira to the Canary Islands, where their adventure had come to an end. All the crew of the first leg of Mercury Challenge returned to England with stories to tell and a great suntan!!

When *Adventure* was in Las Palmas, vital routine maintenance was carried out and the dried food to get the crew from Las Palmas to New Zealand was delivered to customs. Sadly, this brought many problems but after detailed exchanges of documents and the liaison between the shipping companies in New Zealand and Las Palmas, plus the British Embassies, the food was finally released.

On 2 August, leg 2 started and *Adventure* set sail from Las Palmas towards Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. There are many systems on the yacht that will begin to prove their worth during this leg, including the generator and water maker, which converts sea water to fresh water.

Adventure will cross the Equator with the only legal initiation ceremony in the British Forces taking place. The intense heat of the Equator and the potential lack of wind in the doldrums will provide the crew many challenges. To see how they cope, log onto www.mercurychallenge.mod.uk.

THE Wire

December 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

THE wire

December 2006

The Royal Corps of Signals

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER OF SIGNALS

GENERAL SIR SAM COWAN KCB CBE

I am delighted to have this opportunity once again to join with the Signal Officer in Chief to express admiration for your outstanding efforts during the past year, and to send my best wishes to you all at this Christmas time.

The heavy operational commitment of the Army has been the subject of much public comment. The Corps has been sharing this burden in full, and with great distinction, but there has been a heavy price to bear.

Our thoughts at this time are particularly with those who have lost close family members in operational service, with the injured and with all those who are separated from their family by duty at this holiday period.

I know from my contact with serving senior officers how highly they regard the work being done by the Corps. Our stock and standing have seldom been higher.

This reflects great credit on all of you, and particularly on those who share the responsibility and privilege of leadership at all levels. It has been a total Corps effort with our Territorial Army component continuing to make an impressive and vital contribution.

I know that all those serving would want me to pay tribute and thank all the retired members of the Corps whose own valiant efforts laid the foundation for today's success. I have greatly enjoyed the many opportunities during the past year to pass on just that message to members of the Royal Signals Association.

Happy Christmas and every best wish for 2007.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

BRIGADIER JOHN THOMAS MBE ADC

This year has seen an increase in Operational tempo for the Corps and I have in addition to unit visits been privileged to get to both Iraq and Afghanistan during the course of my travels.

The latter Theatre has sadly seen the greatest toll in terms of loss of life for members of the Corps and for other Services and capbadges serving in Corps units.

Additionally, members of our units have lost their life on Military and Adventurous Training and in RTAs. Above all, I have been inspired by the grit and sheer professionalism shown by all in the face of adversity. We have operated well and shared our grief as the strong family that we are.

We continue to achieve success on the sporting and military training front and key activities such as Corps SAM, Lanyard Trophy and the Morrison Cup have been excellent events.

I have also been pleased to see how successful Ex MERCURY CHALLENGE has been to date in providing a key opportunity for individuals to take part in an exciting and challenging sailing expedition.

Equally, the Corps has stood up well to the challenge of the equipment programme and is leading the way across the Army.

Overall, we are well set for the challenges that 2007 will bring but Christmas is a time to take stock and I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and 2007.

December 2006 Vol. 60 No: 6

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Please refer to *Guidelines for Contributors*. **http://www.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/thewire/**

Subscribers

All enquiries regarding subscriptions and despatch of *The Wire* should be made to: 01258 482087 or 94371 2087 (mil). Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund.

EDITORIAL

This edition marks the first occasion we have published a *Wire of* 96 colour pages. This was necessary to allow us to do justice to the abundance of written and photographic material sent to us. Units are to be congratulated for the quality of their submissions and it is regrettable that I have still had to make cuts to squeeze into 96 pages.

The cover photograph taken of **The Princess Royal** visiting us on operations in Afghanistan records a happy meeting with some of our comrades from Canada and Australia, for whom she is also Colonel-in-Chief. I also want to make special mention of the photograph on the back cover, which marks a memorable occasion for 81 Sig Sqn (V).

In the October edition, we published a book review which provoked a valid comment from the CO of FANY (PRVC) about the currency of the last part of the review. We are happy to publish a letter from her which corrects any misconceptions (p492).

This is the end of my first year as Editor of *The Wire*. I have been astonished by the levels of activity reported by virtually every unit in the Corps and the standards of professionalism and excellence being achieved. *The Wire* wishes you all the best for Christmas and may 2007 be a good year for us all.

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FRONT COVER

HRH The Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Cheif of the Royal Corps of Signals, the Canadian Signals and the Royal Australian Signals with Officers and Warrant Officers of the three Corps at Kandahar during her recent visit.

BACK COVER

Members of 81 Sig Sqn at the Inns of Court after the presentation of 34 Iraq Medals by VCDS and Sir Christopher Bland, Chairman of BT.

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. All articles and submissions are published at the discretion of the Editor. This publication may contain official information. It should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

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INFORMATION

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGISTS JOURNEYMAN SCHEME

(For TA Royals Signals Officers and Soldiers who are also IT professionals)

The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists (WCIT) is one of the newer of London's Livery companies and like all of the livery companies is keen to develop links with both society and the services. They do this through both charitable giving and in the WCIT's case especially, by knowledge/skills transfer and mentoring.

The WCIT already sponsors an apprentice award for Regular Army apprentices and a prize for IT courses for Regular Officers at RMCS Shrivenham. The council of the WCIT have decided to generate links into the TA Royal Signals and have now allocated an extra 12 places for TA Royal Signals personnel on their IT Journeyman Scheme to go along with the 6 – 8 Journeyman places awarded annually to civilians.

The scheme gives a successful applicant 3 years of close mentoring from a member of the WCIT, leading in most cases to a Freedom of the WCIT. The mentors will be true IT industry leaders, at the top of their game, who will be able to add advice all the way along the Journeyman's career throughout those 3 years. This is a fantastic scheme that should benefit the TA Volunteer Journeyman, his/her civilian employer and the TA in equal measure and should for the TA lead to increased motivation, utility and retention.

Places on this scheme are open to TA Royal Signals personnel of any rank who work in the Information Technology industry as their civilian employment, and are aged between 23 – 35 (personnel who are 21+ may apply and may exceptionally be accepted on to the scheme).

Volunteers from the IT industry outside of that age bracket are of course free to apply for Freeman membership of the WCIT in the usual way. Regular Royal Signals personnel are likewise encouraged to compete for Journeyman places outside this ring fenced TA scheme but with similar benefits.

There is a membership fee of around £100 per year and a joining fee of around £100; the individual, his/her civilian employer or his/her unit can meet these.

All scheme documentation is available from the Adjt, 36 (E) Sig Regt on 0208 477 7704. Detailed Information can be obtained from the Asst Clerk of the WCIT on 0207 600 1992

Qualifications Required:

An Honours Degree, or equivalent, and at least 2 years experience in IT, or A Modern Apprenticeship in IT and at least 3 years experience in IT, or Work Experience in IT with achievements indicating equivalent learning and capabilities to the above, or Recommendation of the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists Freedom Committee to apply to participate in the scheme.

Applications from eligible TA personnel to join the WCIT Journeyman Scheme are encouraged. They are to be made using the Journeyman Scheme Application Form and sent through units to the Adjt 36 (E) Sig Regt who will forward them to the WCIT for consideration.

OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

Former Yugoslavia
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)
WO2 D Brett JSG HQ NI

Iraq
Mentioned in Despatches (MiD)
SSgt RA Edwards TA

Iraq
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)
WO2 JA White 30 Sig Regt

DONATION 8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON

The Corps wishes to record its grateful thanks for the generous donation of £7960.27, being the remaining monies from the 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218) PRI.

These funds will be held in trust by the Corps, to be called upon when required to assist in the establishment of PRIs within new units or to enhance those already in operation. All former members of the Sqn are invited to take note that their monies have 'gone to a good home'!

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS, OCTOBER 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col DJ Whitby	DCTO IA DCOA
Lt Col DA Simcox	Y List MCM Div
Maj SJ Baldwin	DCA(2)
Maj RC Cory	R Sigs/Int Div
Maj RJ Farrimond	Y List MCM Div
Maj R Patrickson	HQ Land
Maj RW Taylor	16 Sig Regt
Maj MA Wright-Jones	APC Glasgow
Capt DR Allen	HQ ARRC
Capt GD Brown	OCE HQ Land
Capt RD Cowan	16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn(216)
Capt NGA Matthews	14 Sig Regt(EW)
Capt CG Milne	38 Sig Regt (V)
Capt DG Skimming	22 Sig Regt
Capt PA Sutcliffe	HQ SOinC(A)
Capt TJC Walton	RSS
Lt SL Goldsmith	ATR Pirbright

OFFICERS, NOVEMBER 2006

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig EM Flint	HQ DCCIS
Brig DA Hargreaves	2 Sig Bde
Brig JA Terrington	DCSA AD OPS SPT
Lt Col EA Davis	SO1 G6 CD
Lt Col B Hewitt	HQ 2 Div
Maj DG Macaulay	HQ ARRC
Maj DMT Shipley	HQ MND(SE)
Capt KF Allt	2 Sig Regt
Capt RDDB Bennett	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Capt D Hughes	22 Sig Regt
Capt CG Parkes	215 Sig Sqn
Capt BM Stone	2 Sig Regt
Capt S Vaughan	21 Sig Regt (AS)
Lt DJ McGuckian	20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn(200)
Lt VJ Shipley	ATR Pirbright
Lt PJG Wilson	21 Sig Regt 248 (Gurkha) Sig Sqn

WOS AND SNCOS, OCTOBER 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO 1 RD S Mayell	21 Sig Regt
A/WO 1 RD D Brett	RSS
WO 2 RD RJ Ayling	222 Sig Sqn
WO 2 RD MR Eastman	Aberdeen UOTC
WO 2 RD JE Kielty	2 Sig Regt
WO 2 RD AP Minorczyk	14 Sig Regt (EW)
WO 2 FofS GE Dunstone	JCUFI
WO 2 FofS N Kenyon	36 Sig Regt (V)
WO 2 FofS BD Pradhan	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 FofS ML Ebdon	243 Sig Sqn
SSgt K Gowland	16 Sig Regt
SSgt JM Hoyle	2 Sig Regt
SSgt DG Leach	RHQ AFSOUTH
SSgt AM Twizell	30 Sig Regt
SSgt CS Wilson	81 Sig Sqn (V)
A/SSgt Z Dolan	1 MI Bn
A/SSgt JA Lang	PJHQ
A/SSgt WJ Little	Bowtag (N)
A/SSgt S Reeves	10 Sig Regt
A/SSgt JP Spinks	38 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt AJP Ash	7 Sig Regt
Sgt SJ Baulch	3 Cdt Trg Team
Sgt I Blacklock	7 Sig Regt
Sgt NJ Campbell	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt
Sgt CD Doick	15 Sig Regt
Sgt MGD Ebanks	USSO
Sgt DJ Holden	ASPT
Sgt SL Lake	2 Sig Regt
Sgt M Routledge	15 Sig Regt
Sgt CM Stainer	16 Sig Regt
Sgt DS Thorpe	CIS Brunssum Sector
A/Sgt CJ Edwards	16 Sig Regt
A/Sgt DR Hogg	AOS IPT Inst Flight
A/Sgt L Major	2 Sig Regt
A/Sgt TJ McGrouther	24 Cdt Trg Team
A/Sgt S Mead	215 Sig Sqn
A/Sgt PS O'Connor	102 Log Bde Hq & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt L Patterson	16 Sig Regt
A/Sgt LA Peacock	21 Sig Regt
A/Sgt MR Vinten	DCSA Cyprus

WOS AND SNCOS, NOVEMBER 2006

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO 1 RD PT Haughton	33 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 1 RD KN Smith	1 (UK) Div Sig Regt
A/WO 1 RD DP Wilson	32 Sig Regt (V)
A/WO 2 RD PA Jenkinson	London UOTC
SSgt AW Dawson	22 Sig Regt
SSgt MJ McBride	CIS Brunssum Sector
SSgt WWR Smith	MOD A Block
SSgt BJ Spruce	ARRC Sp Bn
Sgt LNG Barr	14 Sig Regt (EW)
Sgt R Brown	628 Sig Tp
Sgt MJ Burdess	30 Sig Regt
Sgt SA Cooper	DCSA Cyprus
Sgt JB Findlay	2 Sig Regt
Sgt G Fisher	DCSA Cyprus
Sgt MA Flintham	243 MI Sect
Sgt MJ Lake	10 Sig Regt
Sgt MA McNicholl	7 Sig Regt
Sgt AW Raby	16 Sig Regt
Sgt PP Richards	30 Sig Regt
Sgt AS Richards	JSSU Cyprus
Sgt ES Rigg	21 Sig Regt
Sgt GA Smith	2 Sig Regt
Sgt DE Thompson	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt KJ Welch	2 Sig Regt
Sgt JL Whalley	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
A/Sgt KJ Abbott	14 Sig Regt (EW)
A/Sgt CJ Craven	RSS
A/Sgt LF Gobie	HQ NRDC Italy
A/Sgt D King	16 Sig Regt
A/Sgt C Sherratt	RSS
A/Sgt GL Smith	243 Sig Sqn

RETIREMENTS

OCTOBER 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Barber - Capt BJ Barber	25 Oct 06
Gillespie - Maj JC Gillespie	16 Oct 06
Hodson - Capt PS Hodson	02 Oct 06
Holt - Maj SR Holt	08 Oct 06
Hume - Lt Col GH Hume	16 Oct 06
Keleghan - Lt Col PS Keleghan	31 Oct 06
Rutherford - Capt R Rutherford	28 Oct 06
West - Lt Col RJR West	16 Oct 06
Whitaker - 2Lt WM Whitaker	27 Oct 06

NOVEMBER 2006

Name and Rank	*Date*
Crowley - Lt Col WP Crowley	28 Nov 06
Docherty - Capt JW Docherty	20 Nov 06
Ewart - Capt JMW Ewart	08 Nov 06
Grieve - Capt E Grieve	20 Nov 06
Hannaford - Capt KE Hannaford	23 Nov 06
Kibble - Capt VJ Kibble	23 Nov 06

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

BLANDFORD GARRISON SUPPORT UNIT

CO **Lt Col Rab Young**
GSM **WO1 Neil Jennings**

GARRISON FETE

Very much the focus of the BGSU efforts over the last couple of months has been the Garrison Fete. Hitherto, the Garrison ran the annual "Blue Light Day".

This was an afternoon affair, held down on the "patch" with a dozen or so stands and activities, principally directed toward children. This year it was decided to beef it up considerably; hold it on a Saturday and open the event to the general public.

From a weather perspective, holding an open air event in the height of the UK summer is a risky business so since ours was in October – the pessimists prophesized doom and gloom and to a degree they were right.

Garrison Fete Opening.
WO1 Neil Jennings, Cllr Gerry Chapman, Lady Mayoress Sheila Chapman.
Brig John Terrington and Lt Col Rab Young

The preceding week was pretty dismal, weather wise, and the forecast was not promising for the weekend. However despite heavy showers early on in the morning the gods smiled favourably and we enjoyed mainly dry albeit overcast conditions. The Fete was opened in fine style by the Town Mayor, **Councillor Mrs Sheila Chapman**, accompanied by her consort**, Councillor Gerry Chapman**.

Unfortunately the parachute display by the Corps' Blue Helmets, scheduled to coincide with the opening, had to be cancelled due to low cloud cover.

This was the only activity that became a casualty of the weather and it was with determination and gusto that the remainder of the activities battled on, in spite of the far from adequate conditions so that those who did venture out had a day to remember.

There were plenty of activities to grab the attention of both young and old. In particular the junior 5-a-side football, in which a number of local schools were participating, was a fierce competition. The final was a very exciting affair with Blandford St Mary taking the eventual spoils, narrowly beating Pimperne 2 – 1 in the final.

Soldiers of 11 Sig Regt impressed the masses with their physical prowess in keenly contested rounds of Tug-of-War. The final was an all 3 Sqn affair with Ulster Tp losing narrowly to Lightning Tp.

Full advantage was taken of the Garrison's in-house attractions and both the White Helmets and the Corps Band contributed significantly in raising everyone's spirits. Indeed it was their busy summer schedule that forced our own event so far back in the calendar. One of the star attractions was the raffle of a Fiat Panda Skydome. The draw was kindly made by the Mayor and the lucky winner was **Mr Terry Disney** of CDA fame.

The finale in the arena saw an excellent display involving the local emergency services. The Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance helicopter arrived and worked in concert with Blandford Fire Brigade and the St John's Ambulance team in dealing with a simulated veh accident.

LCpl Andy Ravenscroft, of Provost fame, volunteered his services as the trapped passenger and he enjoyed the dubious honour of being extracted from the veh with the aid of some burly firemen armed with bolt croppers.

All in all, not the financial success we would have liked but nonetheless overall a great day out for all who braved the elements and lots of lessons learnt for 2007.

SSAFA BIG BREW

The Garrison HQ did its bit in raising funds for SSAFA by holding its Big Brew soirée in the Garrison Community Centre. We managed to raise the grand total of £122 which will swell the coffers considerably.

A special mention has to go to **WO1 Mick Sherridan** in producing the victuals, **Penny Stockell** for organizing affairs, **Sam Purver** and **Tina Hukin** for helping on the day and particularly thanks to **Cpl Buck Rodgers** whose sterling work in cajoling unsuspecting passer-by into joining in, contributed significantly to the eventual takings.

MT TROOP.

MTO **WO2 Billy Lilburn**
MTWO **WO2 Tim Tatler**

Another hectic month has flown by in the Garrison MT. We welcomed the arrival of both **Cpl 'Carl' Stewart** (20 Armd Bde) with wife **Lisa** and **LCpl 'Scotty' Johnson** (12 Mech Bde) into the MT but sadly lost **LCpl 'Amy' Lewin**, who left the Royal Signals for a new career in the Dental Corps.

The winning Braemar Tug-of-War team Sig Cook, Sig Duabikas, WO2(MTWO) Tatler, Sgt Brown, SSgt Orr, SSsgt Davies, Pte Hurst, Cpl McEwan, Sgt Fitzpatrick

Congratulations to both **Cpl 'Tyrone' Christian** and **Cpl 'Sabrina' Heward**, who successfully completed their Skill at Arms course (a lot of money lost with bets) there have been wpn cleaning sessions daily, to the joy of the lads, since their return.

The next couple of months will be late nights and long days due to LSI and ECI prep and on going commitments; keep smiling boys, soon be Christmas. Congratulations to **WO2 'Tim' Tatler**, **Sgt 'Kez' Brown** and **Sig 'Chris' Cook** who took part in the 2006 Braemar Games Tug-of-War and came away with the Plate and the end to a successful season.

Well done to **Sgt Brown** who went to represent the Army at the Tug-of-War World Championships in Holland.

The White Helmets

After another hectic couple of months, the White Helmets are out of the show season and into the selection, trg and maint season. The last few shows have gone really well and rightly so as the 2006 Team has been performing together now for over 6 months. This is not to say however, that there has not been the occasional hiccup!

The Stoneleigh Town and Country Show is one of the biggest events in our annual calendar, and this year was no exception. Although the ground keepers did their best, there is only a certain amount of repair work that can be done following a Monster Truck show, so one of the best arenas turned this year into an asslt course with treacherous ruts and divots. Fortunately the only crash of note was by **Sig Dave Kitchen**, who is quite familiar with making his own divots on the golf course!

It is unusual to be booked at 2 shows close together in the same week, but there is always an exception. The Coventry Motor Show was a great opportunity to perform in front of some real petrol heads, and for a comparatively small crowd they were very appreciative. From there, we headed across to the Welsh border, where we performed at the Kington Horse Show. It was a very different crowd from the people at Coventry and it's amazing how arena times become arbitrary when livestock is involved. We performed a sunset show over 2 hours behind schedule, but I am glad to say that there were plenty of people around to cheer us on. Yet another crowd was waiting for us at the Royal Engineers' Open Day in Chatham.

There was some interesting commentary banter going on between the RE commentator and the Team Captain, but we got one up over the RE when we burnt a large hole in the centre of their parade square with the fire jump. There were some impressive statues commemorating battles at Bromton Barracks, while we were trying to work out whether MCCMLIV was the date of a battle or **Cpl Hooper's** regimental number!

The Team does a show every year at the Forum School, a special needs establishment in Blandford. **LCpl Al Huish** managed to perform his best wheelie of the season – unfortunately he was riding the 'double jimmy' at the time and **Sig Shea Dawson** was thrown violently through the air. There was a moment of trepidation and shouts from the children as the bike lay in the dirt with the engine roaring, but both riders got up and carried on with the show. We were well appreciated, and the Team looks forward to visiting the school again next year.

After a long season the Team deserved a bit of a break. We were fortunate enough to be invited to Javelin Barracks to perform at the families day, so we made a trip out of it and stayed in Germany for 5 days.

We arrived at Elmpt quite late on the Friday night, but the beauty of recruiting from across the Corps is that we have plenty of White Helmets who have served in the area. After a heavy night out in Roermond on Friday night, some of the team visited the indoor ski slope at Neuss on Saturday whilst the rest of the Team nursed their heads back at camp. The show on Sunday went well but the Team were not impressed to get to the bar after the show to find out that all the free beer had been drunk. A few of us made it back to the ski slope on the Monday, and by Tuesday everyone was glad to be returning home.

That brings us to the last show of the season. The Blandford Garrison Blue Light Day was this year replaced with a Garrison Fete, with the gates open to the general public. The weather was starting to catch up with us and a morning downpour almost cancelled the show. Not to be perturbed by a bit of rain, the show went on, starting with 2 of the local scout leaders laying under the jump boards in an bid to raise some money for the local scout group. It was to be **Cpl Jim Brown's** last show before leaving the Team, and needless to say he went out with a bang, dropping the wheelbarrow before reaching the half way marker. As the season draws to a close, Team members are preparing for the selection course; getting ready for the annual charity outreach program to South Africa, and attending career courses not to mention stripping the motorcycles down for major servicing. The selection course this year will run from 19 November to 1 December and we will be taking applications up to 17 November. If you want an exciting tour of duty that is definitely out of the ordinary and think you have what it takes to join the White Helmets and would like to apply for the course, all details can be found in SOinC PD 204 available in your admin office. Alternatively, and if you'd prefer to hear a friendly voice, you can call the team on 94371 2365 and speak to the recruiting NCO **LCpl 'Chalky' White**.

PIPES AND DRUMS

After an all too brief summer break, the Corps Pipes and Drums swung out of the holiday season and into autumn with activity continuing unabated. Especially so for **Sig Tam Coleman** from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt, who recently graduated with distinction and top honours from the Class III piping course at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming at Inchdrewer House in Edinburgh. **Tam's** mettle was put to the test in no uncertain fashion as he took the solo piper slot at the Corps Autumn Guest Night in the HQ Officers' Mess, a duty he discharged with exemplary aplomb and ability, much to the delight of the assembled company. The Corps involvement with the School continues, with **Sgt Jimmy Scott** joining the Class III course this month, and further distinction in prospect.

Following the very successful Trg Camp held at Latina in the Summer, the Pipes Drums will be holding a similar Camp based at Elmpt Station in Germany later this month, when it is intended to repay some of the debts we continue to owe to COs for making pers available to attend trg courses and engagements. The demand for players to perform at a range of events continues to grow, and we would urge everyone to follow the procedure laid down in SOinC(A) PD 205 governing requests for musician support. They are not in any way intended to be obstructive, and may in many cases turn out to actually save money rather than spend it! In any case, it does allow for much better control and management of resources.

Pipe Majs Gordon Rowan and **John Taylor** continue to strive to meet all reasonable demands, and given a true spirit of co-operation we look forward to a happy and busy festive season ahead.

You could be like me one day! Corps Pipe Major concerned his position could be at risk.

NEWS FROM FORMATIONS

1st SIGNAL BRIGADE

HRH The Princess Royal, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals, paid a 2-day visit to soldiers from the Corps serving with 1 Sig Bde on Op HERRICK in Afghanistan in early October. The Sig Bde, normally based in Elmpt and Rheindahlen, is deployed throughout the country supporting both NATO and UK forces. Her tour of Afghanistan followed on from her recent visit to Rheindahlen where she had met the families of many of the soldiers.

The visit began at HQ ISAF in Kabul where **The Princess Royal** received a series of military briefings and was able to meet many of the soldiers from 1 Sig Bde.

She was shown aspects of the work that has been carried out by the Bde including their involvement in the Quick Reaction Force and their experiences working in Camp Hawkeye at Surobi (60km east of Kabul). On a more technical front she was given a demonstration of the new HQ comd systems that have been recently introduced by the Bde. She was accompanied throughout the visit by **Brig Pope**, who said:

"It is always an honour to receive a visit from our Col-in-Chief, and the soldiers in the Bde are extremely appreciative of the interest she has taken in our work and that she has been able to visit us both here in Afghanistan and our families back in Germany"

HRH The Princess Royal also had the opportunity to see the charity work that the Bde has undertaken to improve the lives of children within the local district. Of particular significance were the planned improvements for Bibi Mahro Girls' School and Saduddin Ansari School. She also met with local representatives of Save the Children – one of the many charities of which she is President.

The Col in Chief with all ranks on her visit to Afghanistan

The first day of her visit finished with an all-ranks dinner including one soldier of every rank from Pte to Lt Gen. After a quick photo-call the next morning, she left HQ ISAF to visit those members of the Bde supporting the UK forces in southern Afghanistan.

She flew to Camp Bastion in Helmand Province in a C130, where **The Princess Royal** went on to visit dets of 7 Sig Regt Gp. She was met on arrival by the CO 7 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Alan Blackwell**. Before being introduced to the det, **The Princess Royal** briefly stopped to pay her own respects at the monument, built to commemorate those that have been killed in action during the current operation.

She was then introduced to the Det Comd, **Lt Talitha Kelly**, who gave her a quick brief on the role and responsibilities of the det, before **HRH** went on to greet all the soldiers individually.

She then flew on to visit the Close Support (CS) Sig Sqn at Kandahar Airfield. A photo with Officers and Warrant Officers of the Royal Corps of Signals, The Canadian Signals and the Royal Australian Signals was taken as dusk approached. **HRH The Princess Royal** is Colonel-in-Chief of all three Corps. Following the photograph she was introduced to **Maj Murray Thompson**

of the Royal Australian Signals who escorted the Colonel-in-Chief into the CS Sqn Comd Post, where she met over 70 soldiers from the 3 nations' Signal Corps. **HRH** then flew out from Kandahar to make her way back to the UK having personally spoken to hundreds of signallers deployed on ops throughout Afghanistan.

NEWS OF TRAINING

ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

COMMAND SUPPORT DIVISION THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Chief Instructor	**Lt Col AJ Clewlow**
SIO	**Mr K Mather**
SL	**Mr R Cooper**
DSM	**WO2(SSM) C Jones**

"The King is dead! Long live the King". I have no idea who said that but it remains as true today as it was then, especially so if you happen to be part of Comd Sp Div. There have been some dramatic changes to the hierarchy during the summer. The last Chief Instructor ('dead king') **Lt Col Charles Turner** was promoted to full Colonel and posted to Staffordshire, assuming the appointment of Comd 12 Sig Gp. I imagine the 'blue jobs' are beside themselves with joy at the thought of a 'pongo' taking comd. Congratulations from us all and best wishes for the future.

The new Chief Instructor (long live the king) **Lt Col Ade Clewlow** arrived from the Defence Academy and is, as we speak, impressing (stamping) his authority on his Div. First impressions are that not unlike a former American president, he "speaks softly and carries a big stick!"

Other changes include **Maj Lee O'Rourke** taking comd of Comms Services Gp (CSG) vice **Mr Noddy Baugh MBE**, who is probably frightening the life out of BAe as he blows away corporate cobwebs like some avenging Welsh sirocco. OC Dep Sys Gp (DSG), **Maj Tony Urwin** has departed from our shores and armed forces to take up with our antipodean relatives in Australia, so it's "G'day 1 this is 2 ova" from him.

We welcomed his replacement **Maj Dhan Gurung**, and said farewell to our Trg Adjt, **Capt Ratna Pun**, who has also escaped to Staffordshire.

And last but by no means least, **Chris Davies**, late Corps RSM of this parish, has gone to Upavon as an SO2 Legal bod; the girls in C corridor are bereft, and probably going into therapy next week. The man has no heart.

THE BLANDFORD GURKHA COMMUNITY WELCOMES THE NEW CHIEF INSTRUCTOR – LT COL AJ CLEWLOW
- by WO2(SSM) Hebindra Pun

In the usual Gurkha tradition, the Gurkha community welcomed **Lt Col AJ Clewlow**, with a formal welcome party on 16 September held by the Gurkha community here on Blandford Camp. The Chief Instructor also holds the appointment of Gurkha Focus for the Garrison. **Lt Col Clewlow** is not new to the Queen's Gurkha Signals as he has already commanded 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn in 2 Sig Regt.

The welcome party programme began in the afternoon with various sports, such as golf, basketball, football and volleyball. All the sporting events ended at around 1600hrs when everyone dispersed to prepare for the next phase. This consisted of a dinner night in the Semaphore Arms.

All the community members gathered at approximately 1900hrs to receive their guests, who started arriving at 1930hrs.

On completion of a splendid curry supper, the Senior Queen's Gurkha Officer (SQGO), C**apt (QGO) Tekbahadur Rai** said goodbye to Capt (QGO) Ratna Pun who recently finished his tour as Trg Adjt/SQGO Blandford Garrison. The SQGO then delivered a very warm and welcoming speech to the **Lt Col Clewlow** and his wife **Mafalda**. Afterwards **Lt Col Clewlow** responded by thanking the entire Gurkha community for organising such a thoroughly enjoyable welcome evening, which had maintained the finest traditions of Gurkha hospitality.

The community entered the final phase of the welcome party by enjoying a short cultural show by the Phase 2 Gurkha soldiers, under the direction of **Sgt Bharat Kumar Rai**. The party ended

with the "Khushi Ko Natch" (free dance) where everybody displayed some skilful moves of "Uthyo Basyo".

In summary, the welcome party and its programme was a great success and it is hoped that all the guests enjoyed it to the full.

Lt Col and Mrs Clewlow flanked by Maj(QGO) and Mrs Hitman Gurung and Capt(QGO) Tekbahadur Rai during his welcome function on 16 September 2006

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES GROUP (CSG)

OC **Maj L O'Rourke**

BOWMAN OPERATING TROOP (BOT)

A TYPICAL DAY'S FISHING – 12 SEPTEMBER
- by Cpl Andy Marshall

On Friday 12 September, BOT had a trg break planned into the week's schedule for a Tp team building day. The original programme was to include a day's sea fishing off the coast of Weymouth followed by dinner at a local Gurkha restaurant. Due to "foreseen" weather conditions, the fishing had to be called off by the Skipper the evening before. Apparently the vessel, the *Vallery Anne*, suffers from extreme sea sickness in calm weather! This meant that the day's activity was changed to a coastal walk from Ringstead Bay to Weymouth.

The day got off to a cracking start when the Tp new arrival, **Sgt Jules Taylor**, set a lightning pace to reach the first waypoint. Sadly the pace was so fast the Tp reached the pub an hour before opening. At last, 1100hrs arrived after 2 gruelling hrs of walking, and the Tp reached the second target, the Spy Glass public house. After a couple of light beverages, the second leg of the walk was lead by the senior (older) members of the Tp, **Capt Jim James** and **Sgt Shaun Hutson**. The leg was completed in record time due to it turning into a race to reach the WC.

The final stage of the day was a well deserved sit down at a Gurkha restaurant to devour the whole of an "eat as much as you can" buffet. Overall a thoroughly good day enjoyed by all, but maybe some more than others!

BOWMAN SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT SECTION

LULWORTH TO WEYMOUTH BONDING DAY – 02 OCTOBER
- by CSgt M Thayre

The day of the walk started with grey clouds and the prospect of a wet and miserable time ahead. On being dropped off at the car park at Lulworth Cove and presented with a massive 'mountain' to climb, the first leg did not bode well for the rest of the 18km to come. Fifteen minutes into the walk brought high winds and the start of the rain. **'Milly'**, the Foreman's dog proved to be a very capable Pl Sgt running up and down the line making sure everyone was present and picking up the stragglers at the back (usually the Foreman himself).

The first stop at the Smugglers Inn at Osmington was eagerly anticipated, plus the prospect of "a couple" of the landlord's finest ales, and a bit of a rest for the burning thighs. Just before getting to the pub, the heavens opened and soaked us all, but morale soared at the sight of **Matt** (CAI Administrator) sliding down the hill on his backside because he was wearing trainers; he had been warned!

We set off on the last leg with the sun shining and the promise of no more big hills to come. This leg took us to the outskirts of Weymouth where we stopped at the Spy Glass pub in Preston for a couple or 3 ales and a late lunch. A great day was had by all and not even the rain could dampen our spirits. I can recommend this walk to anyone with its stunning countryside, and the added advantage of getting away from work; it's got to be a winner.

On then, to the Go-Karting. This day was planned to say farewell to **WO2 'Bruce' Lee** as he leaves Bowman System Manager Sect and moves across the road to C2DC. It all started with a bit of the usual banter in the Sect between the "skinnies" and "heavies".

The heavies seemed to think that they would have a distinct disadvantage racing us skinnies, as they are larger in physique. So the skinnies decided that they would race together, all 3 of them, and the heavies raced together, all 4 of them. The heavies team was made up by **WO2 Lee**, **WO2 'JC' Cordery**, **WO2(FofS) 'Dickie' Dickinson** and **SSgt John Batts**. The skinnies elite team consisted of **Sgt Paul Howe**, **Mr Rick Bigwood** and **Mr Matt Bass**.

WO2 Lee decided to re-arrange the course on each lap by banging into most, if not all of the tyres around the track. **WO2 Cordery** drove almost slow enough to drive Miss Daisy. **WO2 Dickinson** decided that his car was not fast or good enough so pulled out on one of the races and **SSgt Batts** just drove like a mad man trying to win all the time. **Sgt Howe** emulated **SSgt Batts** with better results, and won a couple of races. **Mr Bigwood** had a similar style of driving to **WO2 Cordery**, smooth but slow and **Mr Bass** just pottered around trying to keep the others out of his slipstream. Considering the track was wet, a good time was had by all and the eventual winner of the day was **Mr Matt Bass**. Congratulations **Matt**.

Then it was off to the infamous Greyhound drinking establishment for chicken and chips and prize giving. This was a good day for all those who attended and the section would like to say a fond farewell to **WO2 Lee** and good luck in his new job.

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD (BATUS)

SO2 CIS	**Maj Owen Finnie**
YofS	**WO2(YofS) Dave Rogers**
BSM	**SSgt Gaz Tiplady**
Ops SNCO	**Sgt Ritchie Harris**

- by WO2(YofS) Dave Rogers:

Since the last BATUS update, we have seen the departure of the 1 Staffords BG after a very successful Ex MEDICINE MAN 3.

Another successful ex, Ex MEDICINE MAN 4, was then conducted with the 2 R Welsh BG. Currently, BATUS is providing trg sp to 2 RGJ BG in a Lt Role on Ex PRAIRIE BRAVE 2. The ex

SSgt Pete Watson hands over the reigns of 84A to SSgt Gaz Tiplady on the Prairie

is going well and BATUS is proving once again that it is broadening its customer base and is capable of delivering high quality adapting and adaptive foundation trg.

September saw **Sgt Andy Conley** and his family depart for sunny Blandford and a 2 year posting with Trials Tp.

Congratulations on promotion to SSgt – it's well deserved and thanks very much for your efforts whilst in BATUS. **Sgt Ritchie Harris** replaces **Andy Conley** as the Ops Room SNCO and having arrived just prior to Ex PRAIRIE BRAVE 2 has learned very quickly that life in BATUS during the season is hard work. **Sgt Harris** arrives for a 2 year tour with his wife **Laura** – welcome both!

October saw the current BSM(F), **SSgt Pete Watson** and his family depart to 200 Sig Sqn in Germany. For his remarkable endeavour and initiative, making Bowman work and other significant contributions to BATUS, **SSgt Watson** was presented with the Comd BATUS Commendation for his efforts – congratulations. **SSgt Gaz Tiplady** replaces him and comes to BATUS with his wife and young family – welcome.

LOOK FORWARD TO 2007

Planning for 2007 has been ongoing for some time and the prog includes 4 Ex MEDICINE MAN in sp of 4 and 7 Bde. BATUS has also picked up a new task for 2 Formation Level Trg (FLT) exs in sp of 1 (UK) Armd Div. The introduction of FLT involves the Div Staff acting as HICON, a deployed Bde HQ, a deployed BG HQ, a new LOCON build at EXCON and a challenging simulation piece including synthetic wrap. The main effort for FLT is exercising the deployed Bde HQ, although a live BG prairie ex will continue concurrently. There is also an aspiration for Apache Helicopter to ex next year. There are a number of CIS challenges for the small Royal Signals team at BATUS over the winter in preparation for next year and the focus will turn to this preparation as soon as this season is concluded.

26 temporary staff have supported BATUS throughout the year working in the Ops Room and BATUS would not be able to achieve its mission without these hard working soldiers. My thanks must go to all the pers who supported me through the season, and as a final thought, below is a view from the final team of Temporary Staff:

VIEW OF THE TEMPORARY STAFF
- by Cpl Turner

Elements of 215 Sig Sqn have deployed in support of BATUS on Ex MEDICINE MAN 4 (MM4) and Ex PRAIRIE BRAVE 2 (PB2): MM4 in sp of 2 R Welsh BG and PB2 in sp of 2 RGJ BG. The latter saw the last temporary staff deploy to the sunny climate of BATUS, where we were under the C2 of **WO2(YofS) Rogers** and **Sgt Harris**.

Very soon the words 'Ops Room' and 'Will to Live' were barred from being used in the same sentence. Time off was at a premium, however it did not stop the shifts getting away and enjoying all that Canada had to offer. **Cpl Mick Richardson** in between sleeping and generally doing nothing, managed to get a week off sailing in Vancouver with **WO2 Churchill**.

Cpl Karl Turner ventured into deepest Montana to go Black Bear hunting, while B shift under the senior tutelage of **Cpl Titch Taylor** kept the flag flying in Calgary.

The RRB crews under the comd of local **Phil Pacey** kept the area populated though they did need the occasional wake up call from Tac/Ops via his personal heli! **LCpl Simmo Simmons** and **Sig Sharpe** were our ambassadors in the local town of Medicine Hat looking for the mythical red river to sail upon.

Congratulations must go to **Sig Baxter** on her selection for promotion to LCpl off the F board.

Overall Ex PRAIRIE BRAVE 2 has been a challenging but rewarding ex for all involved and the deployed pers are looking forward to some well earned R&R in the Rockies.

The Royal Signals Team at BATUS

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

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

CO **Lt Col CSK Paterson**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGachy**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

It has been another busy period for the Regt and some key pers have come and gone. Starting at the top, we have said farewell to the CO, **Lt Col DG Robson** who has moved on promotion to undertake an op tour in Afghanistan. We thank him for all his hard work with the Regt and wish him well. We welcome in his place, **Lt Col Chris Paterson** and his family; we hope they will enjoy their tour in Herford. We have also said goodbye to the Adjt, **Capt Sofia Hargreaves** and welcome **Capt Pete Brunton** – he certainly has the smartest car in the car park!

HQ SQUADRON

OC **Maj GJ Stoker MBE**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Midgley**

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR...

The ex season is upon us again, (joy of joys), and as such the Sqn has just returned from Ex PREMIER LINK/CHAIN and RHINO STAFF in sunny Sennelager. It was the perfect location in which to dust off the cobwebs and get down to some serious trade trg. Fortunately, the sun shone throughout the ex, proving that the adage: "if it ain't raining it ain't training" is just lies, lies, and more lies! Now the Sqn is well prepared for a couple of months in sunny..... Poland. It is safe to assume shades and sun cream won't be on the kit list this time!

MT - *by Sgt Murphy*

A hearty pat on the back to **Sig Dau**, who on the last ex impressed the SSM and OC 201 in the middle of a DP with his "tactical cylume trouser" dance. He also demonstrated how to fall of a Unit Bulk Refueling Equipment (UBRE) backwards and get up smiling with mil precision. **Sig Sean Beach** demonstrated superb initiative when running out of fuel by calling for a canner to assist. Shame he was in an 8T UBRE full of diesel. **Sig John Royle** showed true potential as a road safety advisor for taking 7 hrs to get from Herford to Haltern (normally 90 mins). We have yet to find out whether he was adhering to speed limits or got completely lost despite having a route card and map! The MT Dept says a fond farewell to **Cpl Tam Rennie** who is posted to Cyprus and a warm welcome to **SSgts Korba** and **Bailey**, and **Mrs Sarah Stones**. Congratulations are extended to **Sig Chris Tones** on his recent marriage to **Sarah**.

IS TROOP

Things are looking up in IS Tp, as soldiers flock to the Tp to receive IT trg with a view to re-trading to IS Engr. After a busy ex where **Cpl Bob Rankin** won the teddy throwing competition and **Sgt Gregg** proved that you should never put your dirty laundry in a black plastic bag in case everyone else thinks it is rubbish and throws it out and you are left meeting the new CO in a Gortex Jacket in blistering sunshine! The Tp is back in barracks, building the networks for the next ex. On a more physical note, our very own **Cpl 'Rocky' Gibson** is busy trg for the Regtl Boxing in November and we look forward to watching his fancy footwork on our return from ex. The Tp welcomes **Cpl Moffat** into its fold having finished his re-trade from Tech to IS Engr.

TM TROOP

Wedding bells are ringing in TM Tp, **Sgt Clough** and **LCpl Thornton** are currently pre-occupied with the pressing matter of getting married (obviously not to each other) giving the Tp good reason to have extra nights out.

We have been decidedly sporty over the last 2 months. First, **Sgt Jim Liddell** recently organised a 24 hr charity run from the Hertz Mountains back to barracks, fittingly called the "Hertz Challenge". The lads raised sponsorship worth 3000 euros and ran in shifts for 144 miles. Well done to all those who took part. Second, **Sgt Mark Collins** organised AT and shipped us off to Bavaria for a week, kayaking, rock climbing and hill walking followed up with a week sailing. Unfortunately as soon as we set sail, the storms rolled in. Wet and windy was the order of the day. Keeping the sporting momentum going, TM Tp was also well represented in the "Race the Sun" with **Sgts Peake** and **Collins**, **Cpl Wedge** and the Regtl Foreman, **WO1(FofS) Leyland** all putting in a good show, (the Foreman needed a good show as he has been laid up with a dodgy leg since then. **LCpl Walls** has been busy representing the Corps at rugby, **Cpl De-Bique** representing the Corps at cricket and **LCpl Thornton** is representing HQ Sqn at boxing.

Cpls Pitcairn and **Miller** and **LCpls Brown** and **Sawyer** recently toured England on a KAPE tour, where they assisted with motorcycle lessons for the kids. Congratulations to **LCpl Walls** who won the prestigious "Tech of the Month" award. A great honour as it shows a great ability to do absolutely nothing useful while at the same time looking bemused and confused.

The Tp welcomes **SSgt Nicky Francis**, **LCpls Platt**, **Kudiersky** and **Saville** (now affectionately known as Jimmy or Ronaldo for his "amazing" football skills) into its fold and says a fond farewell to **SSgt John Brady** and **Sgt Mark Collins** who have departed for pastures new.

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj L Keily**
SSM **WO2 B Sheard**

LANYARD TROPHY – THE FEMALE TEAM - *by Lt Lucy Potter*

"We haven't had a female team enter in 3 years." That was the phrase being bandied about and so eventually **Lt Lucy Potter** and **Sgt Kerry O'Connor** took the plunge and said "We'll do it!"

Team selection and trg proved to be a bit of a challenge, with half the team away on Post Operational Tour Leave (POTL) and the heat of the German summer putting the brakes on any hard trg.

With some creative early morning timings however, we soon got into a trg pattern – only to have summer leave come along and send it all to pot. A 1 week recce of the route proved invaluable. It allowed us to make all the serious navigational mistakes before the competition and let everyone have a chance to see the ground we would be racing on.

Three weeks of ex then followed before we piled into a minibus for a 2 day drive from Germany to Brecon. Bergens were packed, feet were taped up and flapjacks were bought – and all too soon we found ourselves lined up at the start with 240 other brave souls. The air horn sounded and 250 cylumes dotted the hillside as everyone swarmed up the first climb.

The first 20 miles were certainly over challenging terrain and the constant rain between Checkpoint 3 and Checkpoint 5 didn't help matters at all. A couple of individuals had early shocks at some of the climbs. Everyone soon settled down however and we began to cover the ground quite fast. At Checkpoint 4, we were seconds behind 7 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and as the rain came down even harder, people began to put in their best efforts – spurred on by the thought of flapjacks and bananas waiting at Checkpoint 5. In order to keep up morale, **Sig Gemma Patterson** kept telling jokes but she soon reverted to telling one joke over and over again. Somehow it kept getting funnier!

At the halfway point we were met by our fantastic admin team and had a chance to change into some dry clothes. Morale was still high and we launched into the next 20 miles feeling confident. After a fast move to Checkpoint 6, the team hit a bit of a rough patch, despite a lot of the leg being downhill. Spirits were restored moving into Checkpoint 7 and we set off through the forest and onto Sennybridge Trg Area. It was at this point that **Cpl Rachael Allen** suddenly turned into a tabbing machine and pulled the team along for a good 2 miles. Once onto the range road it was a simple move into Dixie's corner, though no-one was capable of running by this stage.

The last 8 miles through Sennybridge proved to be really tough. **Sig Alicia Jarman** and **LCpl Laura Arkley** showed real grit, and lead for most of the way. Checkpoint 10 into the finish was completed in total darkness and somehow seemed to be the longest leg of the entire course! Just when it all seemed too much, we rounded a corner to be greeted by the finish line. Smiles went back on and there was a real sense of achievement as we hobbled onto the minibus. Everyone who started the course, finished the course! Thanks must go to our excellent admin team, **Cpl Dusty Miller** and **Sig Kevin McGibney** for keeping us going!

LANYARD TROPHY – THE MALE TEAM
- *by Sig Dog Barker*

At 0345hrs, we dragged ourselves out of bed to finish our admin for the 40 mile trek. Before we knew it, we were at the start point in the pitch black, however, it wasn't quite dark enough to conceal the big mountain in front of us. At 0530hrs the claxon went off and so began this year's event.

We started with a line up of misfits. Leading us was **Lt Ian Peers**, his 2IC was **Sgt Jase Woosnam** and the rest of the team were **LCpl Chris Rees**, **LCpl Chris Matthews**, **Cpl John McCone**, **Sig Thomo Thomas**, **Sig Mac McDonald**, **Sig Globe** and **Sig Billy Elliot.** Our first checkpoint was a lifesaver; almost all of us were out of water so it was a pleasure to see our admin team, **SSgt Robbo Robertson** and **Sig Andy Buckfast Sheerin**. The typical Brecon weather ensured horizontal rain and high winds but we trudged on. We had our first setback a mile into it when **Lt Peers** went over on his ankle after about a mile and was struggling as we continued on up and down BIG hills for 20 miles. We reached Checkpoint 5 and everybody we met was saying it's all down hill from here. Unfortunately, **Lt Peers** was practically ordered to stop because of his ankle and it was left to **Sgt Woosnam** to lead us merry band of misfits for the remaining 20 miles. He had also picked up an injury before we had even started the challenge by twisting his knee, so was suffering early as well. We carried on up and down big hills; everybody experiencing highs and lows at different times. We finally hit Checkpoint 10 and were met by several RSMs and the Corps RSM, **WO1 Bruce** who told us we had only about an hour to push and we would be finished. So 2 hours later we were all getting a bit cheesed off when we saw a marker who told us it was only 800m to go! We came to the finish and were met by a crowd of people all clapping and cheering, including the girls team who had beaten us by at least 2 hrs.....there is always next year!

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Oliver**
SSM **WO2(SSM) D Churchward**

BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO ARNHEM – RRB TROOP
- by Sig Sutherland

It was payday in September and everyone was anticipating the impending millionaires' weekend that was coming. We were asked to conduct a battlefield tour of Arnhem and give presentations on Op MARKET GARDEN. The journey to the Netherlands was very scenic due to some interesting detours by our Tp Comd, **Lt Hunston** but once we actually hit Arnhem, it was time to get to work. We sorted out our accommodation and headed for the infamous bridge and we weren't disappointed.

RRB Troop on the famous Arnhem Bridge

We found the memorial next to the bridge, where a very nice man called **Pete** (who happened to be present during the actual op) gave us a detailed and very informative talk about the events up to and after the Allies landed. After saying our goodbyes and giving a donation, it was our turn to give the presentations. After lots of hard work preparing our talks the previous night, we were ready to dazzle each other with our historical know how - **LCpl Newbold** is still to give his! Once the tour was done and we had paid our respects to the fallen, it was time to sample the Arnhem of today. The Tp split in a flanking manoeuvre with the Tp senior members going shopping and the juniors going to see the sights after the boss was happy that they were not just going to hit every bar in town.

At not too early an hour on Saturday, we went to the Airborne Museum and were lucky enough to witness the Arnhem parade in honour of the Allied invasion. This was brilliant to watch and

there were quite a few Veterans there who were more than happy to chat. We had a very informative and interesting tour of Arnhem and look forward to going further afield next time.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Gray**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Wilson**

REGIMENTAL EXERCISE - *by Sig Kent and Sig Coughan*

September was a busy month for Sp Tp with MATT trg, a Sqn PACEX, followed by a 10 day ex in Sennelager.

Also there are a few new faces in the Tp, starting at the top with a new Tp OC, **2Lt Burki**, all keen and ready to go fresh from Sandhurst and the Tp Comd's Course. Next in line was a long awaited Tp SSgt by the name of **Dave Wheeler** from 4 Sqn 11 Sig Regt. Next up is **Sgt Dave Rycroft** from 2 Sig Regt along with **Cpl Steve Ireland**, who actually did arrive from Ireland, both going into the Tech Workshops, and last but not least into the MT goes **Cpl Geordie Harrison**, who has spent 3 years at Blandford looking after the Phase 2s, bless him. The Tp welcomes you all!

First off was a Sqn PACEX which took place in Harewood Bks, where the Tp were hard at work supplying Line, Power and Tech sp altogether forming Diamond 1 (Div Main) and Diamond 6 under the guidance of **FofS 'Tibbs' Tibbetts** and **Sgt McNicoll**. Also attached to the Sqn were 2 Cormorant dets from 2 Sig Regt. All of this was done to test every piece of eqpt prior to the deployment to Sennelager for Ex PREMIER CHAIN/RHINO STAFF. Before the move to Sennelager we had a working weekend, where the Sqn went through the all exciting MATT trg (deep joy!).

At 0330hrs the next day, we were all lined up ready for the hour long road move to STC under the supervision of the MT's **Sgt 'Ibo' Ibinson**, for what was the beginning of Ex PREMIER LINK. After arriving in STC, just in time for breakfast, we moved into the accommodation. The set up of Diamonds 1, 6 and 7 began and it had to be finished by midnight that day. With lots of hard work, we achieved our aim with ease. A few days later we were joined by the Div Staff and Ex RHINO STAFF began.

During our 10 days at STC there was little to do besides shifts and duties, so **SSgt Wheeler** arranged a field tactics exam for the Tp with **Sig 'Garfy' Richards** coming top Sig; well done that man! The Sigs were also given 20 min lessons to prepare, so that they could instruct the rest of the Tp in DIT format. Although there was some nervousness when we found this out, everybody did well and learnt valuable lessons from it. As always, there was time for some PT in the form of a few circuits followed by football on the Astroturf pitch, where the Tp also thrashed a team of operators, from Comms and Comd Tp (no surprise there!). A game between seniors and juniors was called off at the last minute due to no key for the pitch, a juniors' win was predicted.

The Golden Maggot was awarded to the Gene Bay's **Cpl 'Tommo' Thompson** who by the way was only in STC for 48 hrs. That man can sleep! A close second was the random Polish guy (don't ask!). The biggest moaner went to **Sig Danny Garnett** who spent the whole of the first day moaning about people snoring only for us to find he snores himself.

All in all, the ex went very well and the Sqn was praised for all its good work by the OC, **Maj Jason Gray**. Back to camp then to turn around the kit and knock off for a well deserved long weekend, with the Tp and Sqn ready to deploy to Poland in November. We look forward to it.

EXERCISE PIRIN DIAMOND – BULGARIA - *by Cpl J Jennings*

Members of 1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt deployed on Ex PIRIN DIAMOND in the Bulgarian mountains of the Rila and Pirin ranges. The exped was a 14 day unsupported trek through both of the major ranges in Bulgaria. The exped was a complete success due to the admin and planning of **Lt Lucy Potter** or "Mum" as she became known. "Dad" was **Capt Ross McLeod**, the JSMEL(S) and illustrious leader of our crew – he decided that admin was not his thing and left it to everybody else to sort out!

We arrived in Sofia, the capital, after a short hop from Hamburg via Budapest. Some of the first thoughts on the city follow..... **Sig Olly Bird** "It's like Turkey here" to which **Cpl Leslie Sunderland** replied "Don't you mean Basrah!"

After a short in-country brief from the Liaison Officer from the Embassy, we departed for our first hostel, 'Hostel Mostel', which was more than adequate and everybody was happy, until somebody mentioned the film 'Hostel' and people started looking over their shoulders! We stayed in Sofia for 2 days which enabled us to source food and provisions prior to starting the trek.

The route for the trek had been decided by doing various map recces and knowledge gained about the local European E4 route. This path had lots of hunting lodges and hostels along it in which we could stay. These huts turned out to be very sparse and were nothing more than a room with mattresses in – mattresses that had never been washed! The first range we traversed/ scrambled/fell across was the Pirin range – the going was fairly tough and we peaked at the highest point of about 2600m. The group was strong and totally comfortable at this point.

After several more nights of adequate accommodation, we walked up to a ridge and saw before us Mt Malevitza and just below the peak we saw our accommodation for the next night, 'Hostel Malevitza'. By this point we had adopted *Hotel California* as the trek song, which we cleverly adapted to "Welcome to the Hostel Malevitza". We were greeted at the door by the most attractive female we had seen in days (no offence intended Leslie and Lucy) and after **Cpl J Jennings** made a dodgy comment, it became clear that she could speak perfect English!

The intrepid trekkers stop for a quick break and pose for the all important photo

We continued the trek over some of the most amazing, breathtaking scenery we had ever seen. The trip passed without any dramas until **Sig Olly Bird** had a real problem with his feet and had to be RTUd from the exped. It was a sad time, waving him off at the bus stop but life went on and so did the rolling mountains.

We arrived at the Rila monastery, not really knowing what to expect and were gobsmacked by what we found. Lying in the heart of the Rila range was a monastery that had not only survived both World Wars, but was still as beautiful as the day it was finished. We stayed there for the night and decided to order some local cuisine. Now a warning to all, beware of what you order in Bulgaria as there is a large range of chicken liver, lung and offal steaks on offer (not recommended).

Having reached our final destination, the trekking was over and it was time to enjoy a bit of tax free shopping and some R&R.

The exped was a complete success, thanks to **Lt Potter**, **Capt McLeod** and everyone else who supported it. Experiences were gathered, lessons were learned and fun was had by all.

2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col AJ Botterill**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) MP Townley**

Not surprisingly, in our capacity as a Very High Readiness (VHR) Regt, 2 Sig Regt has been extremely busy. As well as significant sporting achievements and a heavy change in key appointments, the Regt has continued to sp enduring ops; 214 Sig Sqn is always on standby for any SPEARHEAD Land Element (SLE) contingency.

In addition, 214 Sig Sqn has pers and dets deployed in direct sp of the Senior British Military Advisor (SBMA) to CENTCOM in the USA and Qatar, on Op VERITAS. 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn is currently deployed on Op TELIC with the first op usage of the new Cormorant comms system. Although Cormorant did deploy as part of SLE for Op HIGHBROW in the Lebanon, it was never actually used 'in anger'. RHQ and 219 Sig Sqn are now well underway with their Pre-Deployment Trg for Op HERRICK in the early part of 2007.

RHQ has seen the arrival of the new Regtl 2IC, **Maj Craig Sutherland**, after a formal gap in the 2IC post of nearly a year. He takes over from **Maj Trevor Keates** who filled the gap for the last 4 months, acting as both 2IC and QM(G). Finally, the CO would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the RSM, **WO1 Paddy Townley**, and the Regtl Foreman, **WO1 Carl Heath**, on being selected for commissioning from the October 06 Late Entry Commissioning Board (LECB).

ARMY CRICKET CHAMPIONSHIP - *by Maj Trevor Keates*

This year's final took the format of a 20/20 competition played at Aldershot over 3 days. The Regt's first game was against the BA(G) champions, the Rheindahlen Sp Unit. Having won the toss, we elected to field first and managed to restrict the opposition to 142 runs, mainly due to some excellent bowling from **Cpl 'Johnno' Johnston** and **Sig Reeves.** The runs were easily knocked off from an excellent performance with the bat by **Lt Kerry Waterman** (61) and all rounder **Cpl Johnson** (54 n/o).

This left us a game the following day against 4 Bn REME, who were one of the favourites for the title, boasting some Combined Services and Army cricketers amongst their ranks. Having been put in to bat, we managed to score 165 runs giving us a reasonable total to defend. After 10 overs 4 Bn were well on target. Their Combined Services batsman were knocking the ball to all corners of the ground until the old codger, **Maj Trevor Keates**, held onto a catch on the boundary ropes. This was also the signal to wheel him out of retirement and bowl some overs, which he duly obliged and took 2 further wickets. Needing 13 runs from the final over, **Cpl Johnson** was brought back on and took a wicket with his first delivery and restricted them to only 5 more runs and gave the Regt a place in the Semi Final.

On the Friday, the Semi Final was against a strengthened SEME Borden side and with some of our players returning to York, it was perhaps a game too far against the eventual champions. No disgrace and an excellent team performance over the 3 days with some potential young talent that can be used for the Corps in the future.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MS Tivey**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) D Leask**

Sp Sqn continues to provide the backbone of 2 Sig Regt, supporting the Regt in every deployment whether on ex or ops.

2 DIVISION 3 MAN TEAM SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS 2 – 5 OCT 06 - *by Capt Paul Downie*

The 2 Div 3 Man Team Squash Championships took place at Harrogate over the period 2 - 5 Oct. 2 Sig Regt, as defending Champions, selected a strong team to get the season off to a flying start. They were:

No 1 Seed	**SSgt Dave Gallagher**
No 2 Seed	**Maj Colin Jackson**
No 3 Seed	**Capt Paul Downie**
Reserve	**Cpl Russ Russell**

Although team entries were down on last year, the Regtl team swept through the preliminaries, with only **Maj Jackson** being tested slightly as he had not been on court for a couple of weeks. He soon got his eye in and started stroking the ball around the court like the seasoned old pro that he is. **Cpl Russell** played extremely well and was stretched to the full eventually going down 3 – 2 in a tight match at No 3 seed in the final. However **SSgt Dave Gallagher** and **Maj Jackson** were far too strong for their opponents and the Regt walked off with the silverware once again. This bodes well for the forthcoming season and if there are enough soldiers left in the Regt not deployed on ops, we should do well to repeat the success of last year.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj MF Graham**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) CM Ogg**

Yet again the last few months in 214 have been extremely busy. Saxon Tp have now taken on the SLE role from Roman and Viking Tp having spent a month in Germany impressing the staff with their Cormorant capability on Ex RHINO STAFF. Meanwhile Roman Tp are finding themselves regularly backwards and forwards to Qatar to provide the HQ for the 2 star SBMA, as part of Op VERITAS**,** and are preparing to deploy pers to the Rear SBMA HQ in Tampa, Florida – a job which everyone is keen to do for some reason! The large turnaround of pers that began in early summer has now been completed with the arrival of a new Sqn Comd. **Maj Matt Graham** assumed comd of 214 Sig Sqn on 29 August 2006 and we wish him the best of luck for his tenure at the helm. **Maj Mel Rayner** has now departed to be SO2

Employment at Director Manning (Army) at Upavon and is wished all the best for her future.

LANYARD TROPHY COMPETITION
- by Flt Lt Jamie Thompson

It is widely known throughout the Armed Forces that the RAF is not only utterly, utterly professional but it also possesses some of the fittest pers ever to serve anywhere. It was only natural then that 2 Sig Regt should choose their RAF Exchange Officer to lead the Regtl team in what would prove to be an emotional and enlightening experience for the entire team.

Trg commenced in June with the call going out to all fit and strong guys and girls to come to the aid of the Regt. The 6 of us began with some 'light' runs under the control of the RSM to ascertain our fitness levels and the scale of the task before us. It was not long before some of the team decided that perhaps Lanyard trg was not going to be quite as tame as they first thought and soon identified other more sedate activities with which to pass their time.

The trg levels ramped up quite steeply and after some relaxing walks in the Yorkshire Dales, it was soon time to depart to the Black Mountains to commence some serious hill trg. The initial expeds into the hills came as a surprise to some of the team as we realised that preparation on the relatively flat running routes of York had lulled us into a false sense of security and some serious graft was now required to develop our specialist hill muscles.

However, we were strong and eager and after 3 weeks of chasing bearings around the route we were nearing our physical peak. Looking back, we have now realised that having a sp team in the early days could have been quite useful as the boomerang method of tabbing out to checkpoints and then retracing our entire route to pick up the vehs aided our fitness but wore down our humour! The up side was that we developed a friendly relationship with the girls in the roadside café at the Storey Arms! It was soon the day of the competition and all thoughts of socialising, be it in Cardiff or on the roadside, were forgotten. Rising early and donning our trademark 'Reflex' Hasslehoff apple catchers we carried out our final preparation and jumped into the loaned minibus. All thoughts of catching a few last vital mins sleep were shattered though when the team realised the sp boys were driving us out into the wilderness. After a few choice words on navigation, we were back on our way to the start. At 0530hrs the horn sounded and we were off, stumbling through the darkness with our plan in mind and feeling great.

The first leg went well and we were confident. Unfortunately we lost one of the team **LCpl 'Harri' Harrison** at the first checkpoint but on the other hand, he was the only member of the team to be struck down with injury after giving 110% from the start. Our aim was to finish the course in under 12 hours and from Checkpoint 2 we drove hard, using **LCpl 'G' Gwilliam's** excellent navigation skills to nip corners off the route and climb the rankings until we were sitting in 6th. It was while racing for 5th that we decided to risk all by running down and up a re-entrant, while the team in front went the long way around. The gamble paid off and we stormed into 5th.

It was all downhill now and a shuffle to the finish line. We crossed in 11 hrs 44 min with 9 members and an immense sigh of relief. After the months of trg, the competition passed in the blink of an eye but we all walked away with an immense sense of pride and a tremendous level of camaraderie which was formed both on the hills and in the bar!

FREEDOM OF YORK PARADE - 23 SEPTEMBER 2006

It was that time of the year again when members of 2 Sig Regt brush the cobwebs off their No 2 Dress and start panic polishing their best boots. It was the turn of 214 Sig Sqn this year to take the lead and it all started with us frequenting the astroturf pitch a number of weeks prior to the day, to be taken through some painful rifle drill movements by **WO2(SSM) Chris Ogg**.

The day of the parade started exceptionally early with a practice at 0630hrs outside York Minster. It cheered up the tourists staying in the nearby hotels no end to hear the shouting of **WO1(RSM) 'Paddy' Townley** and the sound of a bass drum echoing around the cobbled streets of York. We then returned to Imphal Barracks for breakfast and with a quick change of dress, we were back on the coaches at 0930hrs. As with all parades, there were numerous buttons popping off and boots being stood on just before the parade.

The parade stated at approx 1015hrs with the right hand marker, **Sgt Emma Dignall** (not exactly the tallest member of the Regt), marching first onto parade. The main parade marched on shortly after to the glorious sound of our Corps March, 'Begone Dull Care'.

Maj Matt Graham presents the Parade to the Commanding Officer

It wasn't long before the whole of the city centre came to a standstill as the local public gathered round to take a glimpse of 2 Sig Regt being given permission by the Lord Mayor of York to exercise our Freedom of the City and march through the streets of York "with swords drawn, bayonets fixed and the band playing"!

The Parade Comd, **Maj Matt Graham**, then turned the Parade to the right and proudly, we marched through the streets of York with the CO, the Lord Mayor and the Sheriff of York taking the salute outside The Mansion Hall. (You wouldn't believe how much trouble those cobbles cause when wearing ammo boots!). A select few were then invited back to The Mansion House for drinks with the dignitaries and since a free drink is rare these days, we all made the most of the hospitality! All in all, another proud day for 2 Sig Regt.

EX RHINO STAFF 06

Viking Tp departed Imphal barracks on 2 Sep 06 to support 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt on Ex RHINO STAFF. Things immediately got off to a great start when one of the Leyland DAF vehs failed to start at the line up, and all the eqpt had to be distributed between the other vehs. The rest of the journey to Herford went without a hitch and the ex began on the Monday morning with a Pace Ex. The Tp introduced themselves to 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt in a smashing way when **Sig Craig Roscoe** forgot to apply the hand break on one of the DAFs and it rolled into a Land Rover belonging to the OC of 211 Sig Sqn!

After that the rest of the ex ran smoothly and a few people even requested to stay for their ex in Poland. Before the long drive back to York we had a couple of days off to relax and had an excellent meal cooked by the Gurkhas on the final Thursday night. We arrived back in York on the Sunday night, tired but pleased with a very successful deployment.

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj AJ Mould**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) J Keilty**

After summer leave, 219 Sig Sqn has had a large turn-over of management pers. We welcome a new OC, **Maj Andrew Mould**; 2IC, **Capt Chris Fulthorpe**; Ops Officer, **Capt Ben Stone**; 2 new Tp Comds, **2Lt Mansel Thewlis** and **2Lt Kat Jones**; and a new SSM, **WO2(SSM) John Keilty**. We also say farewell to **Maj Dave Duggan**, **Capt Si Smith**, **Capt Kate Hannaford**, **Capt Ian Scaife** and **Lt David Higgins**.

Along with the change of pers comes a significant change of role – at least in the short term! Having worked extremely hard in the first part of the year to bring Cormorant into service and to play a key role the Regt's collective trg assessment on Ex KEY FLIGHT, the Sqn has now been warned for ops in Afghanistan commencing in February 2007. We will be taking over the duties of the Close Sp Sig Sqn, providing wide area comms throughout Helmand Province – with not a Cormorant installation in sight! The Sqn has now been reconfigured for the task in hand and trg has already begun in earnest. In addition to the mandatory mil skills, force protection and OPTAG trg packages, there are numerous specialist comms courses which have to be completed prior to our deployment. As recent events have shown, however, we are very clearly soldiers first, tradesmen second and the Sqn is keenly focussed on individual and det level mil skills trg in order to prepare ourselves for the uncertain environment in Afghanistan.

Despite our newly-gained op focus, the Sqn also remains committed to daily life within York Garrison. We will be taking the lead on this year's Remembrance Parade at York Minster and will be sending a number of soldiers away to the Regtl Cadre Course – Ex KEY LEADER. We will also be leaving behind Eagle Tp to develop, amongst other tasks, the concept of the Joint Force Logistic Component Headquarters (JFLogC HQ). This makes use of the Interim Staff Working Environment (ISWE) modular tentage system, although the conceptual work for the HQ is still at an early stage.

Eagle Tp, with the ISWE system and all those personnel who are not deploying with the Sqn Gp to Afghanistan have recently been transferred under the comd of 214 Sig Sqn where they will remain until our return in August 2007. In the meantime, it will be business as usual for the Tp who will continue to have soldiers deployed on ops throughout the world, including a det in Tampa and individuals in the Balkans, Iraq and the Falklands.

246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DM Stoter**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Kedar**

FIRST CORMORANT DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ
- by Sig Kamal Limbu

Cormorant is a wide area network system designed to be used by the Joint Rapid Reaction Force (JRRF). 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn, received a special tasking in June to prepare to deploy 3 CLASPs and TALON to Basra in sp of the Div HQ. This was going to be the first op deployment for Cormorant.

Det 1 deployed in August for an initial soak test while Dets 2 and 3 carried on with the testing and commissioning of the additional tails back in York. Arriving in theatre in August meant having to deal with extremely hot temperatures straight away. At times it was like having an oven permanently blowing in your face. We had a few days to acclimatize and familiarize ourselves with the camp.

Whilst we have been out here, I went with a few boys to an Iraqi barber shop. Unfortunately due to the language barrier we could not communicate to him on how we wanted our hair to be cut and we all ended up with US Marine hairstyles!

After a few weeks the soak test ended and Cormorant had proved that it can adapt and stand the heat up to 50° C. Although the Det was not yet tasked, we started to provide a Video Tele Conferencing (VTC) capability for the GOC and to other staff branches since our VTC was very reliable and provided a consistent link.

Dashain approached and we had hoped to have Det 2 in theatre. **Lt Col Hill**, SO1 IX, managed to source 2 goats for us and the preparations began. Sadly Det 2 was not able to join us but we had a fantastic celebration, apart from a mortar attack! Various members of the Div joined us to celebrate Dashain and we were very proud to share our culture with them. We decided to save

Lt (QGO) Purna Saheb giving Tika to Sgt Robin Rai during Tika Ceremony on Op TELIC

one of the goats for Tihar, so his chuff chart has been extended! Det 2 has since arrived in theatre and we have both received taskings. The deployment of Cormorant has so far been very successful and we look forward to a great tour.

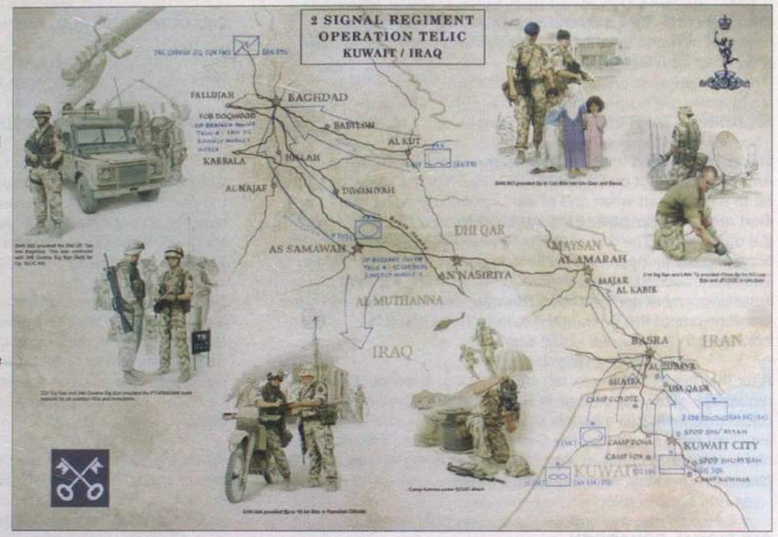
OP TELIC 1 MILITARY MEMENTO

Marking its involvement in Op TELIC 1, 2 Sig Regt has commissioned a series of 6 watercolour studies by mil artist **Kevin Lyles** and used them to create a single limited edition commemorative print featuring the Regt's locations and movements during the war.

The 6 individual paintings depict Royal Signals Dvr Lmn of HQ Sqn with a TALON SATCOM reacting to a Scud alert at Camp Kohima in Kuwait at the outset of the op, Inst Techs of 214 Sig Sqn installing and guarding a SATCOM det in Um Qasr Port, AS Ops with 219 Sig Sqn providing Ptarmigan (Airportable) comms to Paras of 16 Air Asslt Bde in the Ramallah oilfields, Rad Ops supporting Marines of 3 Cdo Bde setting up in Basrah Palace, Gurkha Sigs of 246 Queen's Gurkha Sig Sqn supporting the US Marines during their advance on the northern route to Babylon and members of 246 Queens Gurkha Sig Sqn (Fwd), a composite unit of Regulars, Gurkhas and TA, providing a SNATCH patrol in Baghdad on their return to Iraq in 2004 for Op TELIC 4/5.

Any soldier who has served with 2 Sig Regt during Op TELIC, or anyone else interested in the purchase of a print is entitled to a discounted price for a copy of the limited edition Op TELIC print. Those wishing to order a copy should send a cheque for £7 (which includes P&P) made payable to Central Bank 2 Sig Regt to **Sgt Vince Key**, Unit Welfare SNCO, 2 Sig Regt, Imphal Barracks, York YO10 4HD or call mil: 94777 2366 for further details.

Additional information relating to the print may be sought by contacting **Maj Mark Tivey**, OC Sp Sqn, 2 Sig Regt, mil: 94777 2518. Mil artist **Kevin Lyles** welcomes commissions from units and can be contacted on 01442 828695 or email kevinlyles@freezone.co.uk



2 Signal Regiment Op TELIC 1 Print

3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col A G Hill**
RSM **WO1 Wakeling**

The last few months has been packed with Sport, Exercise, Marches, and Inspections; in other words business as usual! Most notably, **Maj Lee Hawkes** has been preparing 202(Armd) Sig Sqn for deployment to the Balkans on Op OCULUS. By the time of going to print, we will have 2 Fd Sqns deployed on ops – ideas on a post card for the third please!

QMSI Lundie starts them off

THE KIWI TROPHY COMPETITION (MARCH AND SHOOT)

Everyone who has been to Bulford never forgets the sight of the Kiwi carved on Beacon Hill. It was carved in WW1 by New Zealand soldiers who were then based at Sling Camp, Bulford. In 1980 care of the Kiwi fell to 249 Sig Sqn, who brought it back to its former glory. Current responsibility falls to 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt.

The Kiwi Trophy itself was presented by the New Zealand General Staff in August 1981, in recognition of the maintenance work that 249 Sig Sqn had carried out on the site. The trophy became the award for the first official competition which was held on 8 September 1981. It was then a 22km Bergen run which also included a range shoot and then a finish at the top of the Kiwi. The format and route have changed little since it began.

The responsibility for organising this year's event fell to 222 Sig Sqn. This was considered a great honour as they are about to

Sigs Jackson and Foulkes-Walker mark the route

move to Stafford and this would be the last time they would participate in the event. Overall organisation fell to **WO2(SSM) Andy Minorcyk** of 222 Sig Sqn, with the sp of **QMSI WO2 Lundie** and his gym staff. Not only did **WO2 Minorcyk** organise it but he was adamant that we would be successful in our last attempt (on the pain of death if the Sqn failed)!

So with all the kit packed as per the official list, the first competitor started at 0830hrs on the morning of 31 August. Everything on the first day ran very smoothly and the last competitor had finished by 1430hrs. The fastest competitor on the first day was **WO1(RSM) Matt Wakeling**, which was a great boost as he is considered one of the elders of the Regt! The fastest female competitor was **Cpl Amy Filipo** from 222 Sig Sqn.

Day 2 got off to equally as good a start with the added bonus of the attendance of the HE the High Commissioner for New Zealand, The Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt ONZ, the SOinC and the Corps RSM at the finish line to welcome the competitors home. The Regt paraded at the Nuffield Hall for the prize presentations by the New Zealand High Commissioner.

The results were as follows:

BEST MALE			BEST FEMALE		
First	**Sgt Middleton**	HQ Sqn	First	**Cpl Filipo**	222 Sqn
Second	**Sig Price**	HQ Sqn	Second	**Capt Byfield**	
Third	**WO1 Wakeling**	HQ Sqn	Third	**Capt Giddings**	

And then came the announcement of the Champion Sqn and there was a very large grin on the faces of both **WO2 Minorcyk** and the Corp RSM as 222 Sig Sqn were announced as the victors, closely followed by HQ Sqn. This was a great achievement by the Sqn, who had fared poorly in previous years and it will nice to be remembered as the undefeated champions of the Kiwi Trophy!

BAGHDAD SIGNAL TROOP - *by Sgt A Gallagher*

The Tp has now been deployed for almost 3 months. We are well and truly into the swing of the daily routine here in sunny Baghdad. A number of us have moved locations and been employed in different roles in order to gain experience from the different working environments and dets. More importantly, this ensures that everybody has a chance to eat at the American DFAC (Dining Facility). Americans really do know how to look after their boys – it puts our guys and girls under a lot of strain trying to decide what flavour ice cream to choose from the ice cream parlour.

We have already had to say some fond farewells to some of the short tourers that initially deployed with us. **Maj Paul Smith** and **WO2(FofS) Tony Nicholls** both had to return early to HQ Land and Norway respectively. For the FofS, this is the sublime to the ridiculous climatically.

We also had to say goodbye to **LCpl Vicki Marsh**, who had been attached to both 212 Sig Sqn and our Tp. She had a colourful tour from her home base at 30 Sig Regt and made a valuable contribution to both Sqns. Shortly, we also say farewell to **Sgt Daz Powell**, who returns to the UK in time for the birth of the twins. Good luck to **Ann** and **Sgt Powell**.

As with all departures come the new arrivals and a big welcome is said to **Maj Helen Bosley** and **WO2(FofS) Danny Fielding** who have been posted into the Sqn mid-tour.

In addition, we wish a warm welcome to **Sig 'Caz' Caswell**, who is attached to us from 2 Sig Regt for the remainder of our tour. **Cpl Kenny Kennedy** has finally decided to knuckle down and join the rest of the Sqn, albeit mid-tour, and we are hoping that he will last through until our departure in January. He is now happily in charge of the COMMCEN. **Sgt Tony Gallagher,** promoted on tour, has now been able to assume the role of crypto Sgt – not everyone is that lucky out here!

Time is passing quickly and the R&R period is already upon us. **LCpl 'Jacko' Jackson** was the first to escape for a well earned 2 week break but others still have over 2 months until they escape on their R&R. **Lt Alex Manley**, who has only just returned from an extended period of OSD in Kuwait and a stop-off in Basra is recovering, and has reduced his R&R period accordingly.

TOUGH GUY 06 – NETTLE WARRIOR - *by 2Lt Nick Purdy*

On 30 July 06, a hardy bunch of 8 soldiers travelled to Mr Mouse's 'Farm for Unfortunates', near Wolverhampton to compete in the bi-annual 'Tough Guy Competition'. For those who are unaware of the aptly named competition, it comprises a rather unusual 6 mile cross-country run and two 4 mile laps of a different and rather arduous assIt course.

This venture was organised by **Sig Aaron Brown** and we were running for Breast Cancer Breakthrough. Gluttons for punishment, we set off fast from the start and began to eat up the miles. We were clad in unmistakeable pink t-shirts and lycra leggings and, we made short work of the bracken maze and the never ending hill-reps. With the other minor obstacles completed, we progressed to the assIt course where we were required to climb 40ft obstacles with little thought for our own safety and dodge live electric cables.

Reaching the end of the mud swamped tunnel ridden lap of the course, **Sigs Mike Tyler**, **Matt Chappel** and **Cpl Jay Smith** were delighted to hear that 'Summer' Tough Guy was "too easy" if you only complete 1 lap of the assIt course and that there was a second unexpected 4 mile lap remaining. **LCpl Marc Del-Valle** from the Regtl Gym was genuinely excited by the prospect of a second lap and celebrated this news with an impromptu 50 press-ups.

Cpl Ade Barrow and **LCpl Liam Frater** had enormous fun struggling through the "Viet-Cong" style tunnels. All 7 runners named above spent the entire event telling **2Lt Nick Purdy** how much easier it would have been to just say "No!" The team believe themselves to be the first team ever to finish with each member consecutively placed, finishing 4th in the mil category. Look out next year because we'll be after 1st place.

The Magnificent Seven

EXERCISE CORNISH BULL
- by Lt James Perring

Ex CORNISH BULL set off with the aim of developing the leadership and confidence of the junior soldiers within 202 Sig Sqn. It consisted of 53 Cpls and below and was set in and around the Newquay area.

The week was designed with progression in mind and it started with a number of leaderless comd tasks. The embodiment of heroism and dedication was **Sig Dannielle Rankine**; she became stranded in the middle of a mine field after falling face first onto the comforting cushion of a jerry can.

In preparation for the final hurdle of the week, **Sgt Paul Chamberlain** organised an extreme orienteering event over a World Cup course. How **Cpl Garvey** and **Sig Tom Richardson** managed to post the worst time after giving a detailed map reading lesson the night before defies belief!

The culmination of the week's activities was **SSgt Tim Bishop's** Ex ENDURANCE CHALLENGE: a test of endurance, initiative and above all, confidence. This consisted of the participating troops being dropped off in gps of 2 at random locations across the length and breadth of Cornwall. All they had was a map, a letter of introduction, a list of 60 tasks and a MOD Form 90.

The award for the Most Commendable Endeavour goes to **Cpl Mickey Sale** and **Sig Dan Kelk** who headed straight to BBC Cornwall and serenaded the populace with their dulcet tones. This was to the advantage of the rest of us as without the kind generosity of the locals all the tasks would have been unobtainable. Lastly, congratulations go to **WO1(RSM) Matt Wakeling**, **WO1(FoS) Rob Clifford** and **WO1(YoS) Alex Yates** on their recent success at the Late Entry Commissioning Board. Good luck to them as they prepare for their 'knives and forks course'!

EXERCISE DESERT DRAGON 02/06 *- by Capt LD Webber*

To steal a line from the Defence Intranet: "The Catterick-based Bde has been taking part in Ex DESERT DRAGON, with a scenario based on the recent experience of troops in Iraq." Sounds exciting, doesn't it?

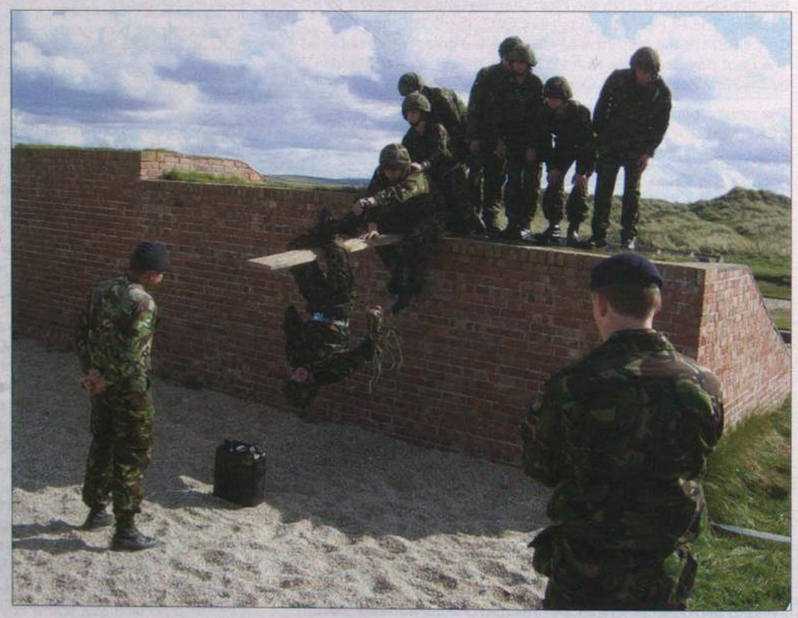
Well, the role of Bulford based 3 Div HQ & Sig Regt in all of this was a little less exciting but integral to the ex all the same: simulate I-NET and Synergy Blue Comms across DTE(SP) with, yes you guessed it, Ptarmigan! In addition, provide HICON facilities for the Div Staff and Real Life Sp at West Down Camp.

The deployment of Ptarmigan assets and armd SAN gps is never without some form of enthralling mini drama, but once in their respective BG HQs all 4 Sqns pulled together to provide the required voice and data facilities, including **SSgt Jim Lang's** provision of an ATacCS router that only "worked upside down!"

In true Royal Signals fashion, a number of work-around solutions had to be provided throughout the ex, including the employment of **Sig Dave Taylor** (Dvr Lin) as a Class 2 AS OP, allowing him the opportunity to constantly remind **Cpl Lee Pearce** (Class 1 AS OP) that his input was easily worth that of 2 operators. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, **WO2(SSM) Adam Torrington** was providing the well known Royal Signals FRAGO tpt option to the BGs – the Land Rover!

A great deal has been learnt during this ex, and with many more to come in preparation for future deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, the Regt is well set to be able to provide the best possible sp to the exercising troops.

Now, if only the Staff would learn how to use a Sub set..... "Signaller!"



Sig Rankine walks (?) the plank!

7th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col AR Blackwell**
RSM **WO1(RSM) T Lappin**

The Regt is now truly embedded across Afghanistan. Sqns from the Regt have been deployed across southern Afghanistan (Helmand and Kandahar provinces) since March of this year, the main part of the Regt deployed in August and September. Comprising RHQ 7, HQ Sqn, 229 Sqn and supported strongly by 231 and 232 Sqns, the Regt has been augmented by 230 Sqn from 16 Sig Regt to form 7 Sig Regt Gp. This ensures the Regtl Group has the wide capability to cover responsibilities across the whole theatre: close sp to the 3 star HQ ISAF in Kabul, running the Kabul Sp Unit in the north, providing close and general sp ICS across all bases in Kandahar and Helmand provinces, including the Jt NetCen and RHQ 7 in Kandahar. Back in Germany, 231 Sqn are on their Post Op Tour Leave following their 6 months in theatre, and Elmpt Sqn continues to train in order to fully support the deployed elements of the Regt.

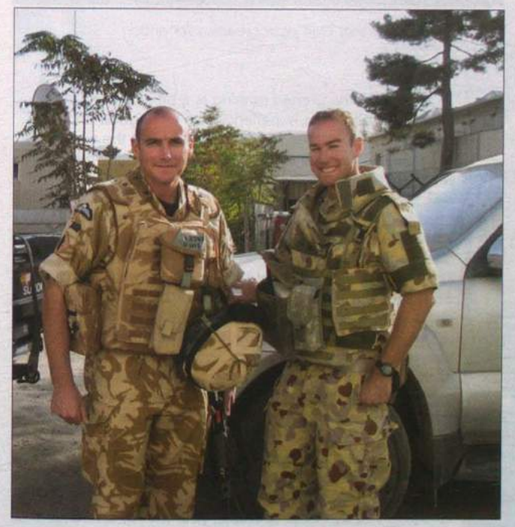
These notes highlight some of those tasks. They are written largely by the junior soldiers who have recently taken over the op responsibilities and give a flavour of the work out here.

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AFGHANISTAN)

OC **Maj Murray Thompson** R AUS SIGNALS
SSM **WO2 Dean Whitworth**

229 Sig Sqn once again finds itself deployed on ops. Last year it was Bosnia, this year we are sampling the delights of Afghanistan. The Sqn's role is to provide strategic and op level comms for UK elements in Theatre.

As a result we are spread over 3 main areas in Afghanistan; Helmand Province, Kabul and Kandahar. While these places are quite geographically dispersed, I think you could characterise them all as hot, dry and dusty (perhaps in varying degrees). A bit like Australia, but none of these spots would be on my top holiday sites wish list.



OC and SSM 229 Signal Squadron about to embark on a drive into downtown Kabul

From the outset, everyone has been extremely busy. There have been long days and nights engineering in comms interspersed with other duties, such as 'stagging on' in the sangars and patrols outside the wire. From all the locations I have been impressed with the selflessness, grit and determination of our people.

These couple of articles I hope will give you a greater idea of what we are up to and also a taste of the good humour which is indicative of 229.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE PRICE (HELMAND PROVINCE) *- by SSgt Nowosielski*

Forward Operating Base (FOB) Price is a small camp and on arrival the familiarisation tour took a whole 5 minutes. However **LCpl Mills** still managed to get lost getting to his first shift. The incoming crew were welcomed with open arms by the outgoing crew, complete with side burns and flip-flops (I wonder why?).

The lads at FOB Price unload the communications kits, while LCpl Antoine skives

As the old crew left, we wondered if they would find the rocks we had hidden in their bags for them before they got home.

The Det has changed since our arrival. As well as settling into the daily rhythm of eqpt checks, returns, eqpt checks and more returns we have been trying to make life a bit more comfortable. **Cpl 'H' Hagger** has developed a knack for turning rubbish into rubbish that can be used to store things in and the nightly timber hunt has now created a rest area outside the Det.

The term "Meganism" has now been coined by this Det, due to the words of wisdom and great insights uttered by **Sig 'Megan' Spillsbury**. "What is wrong with my spit, it doesn't work on blueys?" is just one example.

All in all, time is passing quickly and morale is high at FOB Price.

CAMP SOUTER (KABUL) *- by Sig Natalie Wynn*

We departed 7 Sig Regt on 4 September under the delusion that our flight would go without a hitch and that we would arrive in

Kabul the next day. This was clearly not to be the case, as an hour after we departed the bus promptly turned around and went back to camp. This 24 hr delay was to be the first of many.

We tried it again the next day; after checking our luggage in, we were then sealed in the departure lounge for a further 4 hours. Then we boarded for the 6 hour flight, eventually landing at Kabul International Airport. The free-for-all that ensued was the grab for kit. We then donned our CBA and helmet and as we were whisked away in a Saxon, all of a sudden we realised this was not an ex – we were actually here on ops.

On arriving at Camp Souter, there was a quick initial brief. **Cpl Brown** then took us for a scenic and informative guided tour of the camp itself. This was followed by the ritual issue of ammo and morphine.

There was no rest for the wicked as we immediately relieved **Sig Penniston** and **Sig Clayton** from their shift at the Commcen. There being no time like the present, we started our ho/to and began shadowing those we were replacing. They were helpful in teaching us everything they knew about the eqpt we would be working.

CAMP BASTION (HELMAND PROVINCE) - *by Lt T Kelly*

The "Bastion Massif" moved in to secure the comms from the previous det. The transition was seamless and we soon set about finding what was in various closets and ISO containers.

Under the direction of **SSgt Miners** and **Sgt Chacksfield**, the operators started to consolidate their existing skills and learn a few new ones. **Cpl Yuille** has been conducting "Basic Woodwork" and **Cpl Parkes** has expressed a wish to become an operator, because "It can't be that hard".

The techs are now enjoying the fact that they are no longer the "Geeks", this honour is now firmly in the hands of the IS gurus. One of which is **Sig Luther**, nicknamed "Lizard" by 3 Para Ops. This is said to be a term of endearment, bearing in mind that the Paras have been here for a long time and **Luther** is a bit of a pretty boy.

LCpl Gurung and **Sig Williams** have flown on to run comms for COP Robinson in the Sangin valley. On finding out they were on rations, they bought a goat and set about the job of butchery and making a Gurkha curry. All in all the lads and lassies are working hard and achieving above expectation.

LASHKAR GAH (HELMAND PROVINCE) - *by Sig Andy Heydon*

On 1 September, we left Javelin Barracks by coach to Hanover airport only to be told that there would be a day's delay. We finally started on our way the next day. When we arrived in Afghanistan we were detached from the main Sqn Gp. The Tp stayed in Camp Souter for the night, and in the morning boarded a Hercules bound for Camp Bastion via Kandahar.

Following a further 48 hr stopover in Camp Bastion, after a "lastminute.com" ammunition run by the OC, we boarded a fully loaded Chinook for a 20 min "nap of the earth" flight to Lashkar Gah. On arrival, what we found was a pleasant contradiction to a lot of the ideas we had originally had of the place. First of all Lash, as it is called, is a camp which accommodates approx 300 people. It has an excellent cookhouse and limited, but really good, facilities including a good gym, a well stocked EFI, a world class beach volleyball pit, and decent welfare facilities.

We quickly got stuck into our overdue handover with the outgoing Det. Amongst the satellite systems and tasks we were taking over, we were also pleasantly surprised by our first "on the ground tasking". We have also been actively participating in many of the Camp's Internal Security Tasks including Sangar and Escort Duties, as well as top cover on veh patrols, when deployed in Lashkar Gah.

Lashkar Gah patrol readies for action

The Bastion Massif

To say we hit the ground running is a bit of an understatement. The experience has been good and has given everyone in the Det the chance to get the widest possible exposure to all the possible challenges this tour is likely to bring us.

CAMP ISAF (KABUL) - *by Lt Stef Archibald*

The Det has been working well together, with **Cpl Simpson** and **LCpls Thornley** and **Kirkby** keeping the shifts in tip top shape.

Everyone has their own job to do; techs looking after routing and switching, operators looking after satellites and messaging and the IS experts chasing about trying to keep the computers working.

Off shift, everyone has a chance to use the camp facilities, which are excellent. There is a market on a Friday, where you can buy DVDs, jewellery and rugs. This requires discipline, so as not to spend all your money on things you don't really need – which I have learned the hard way. In between our grafting away with the comms, we have faced other challenges. This week it is the Camp basketball tournament. However, when a member of the opposition is 6 feet 4 inches tall and our average Tp height is about 5 ft 4 ins, this may present a problem. We will let you know the outcome.

VISIT OF HRH PRINCESS ROYAL

HRH Princess Royal visited the Regt in Kabul, Camp Bastion in Helmand province and Kandahar. She arrived at Camp Bastion escorted by Comd 1 Sig Bde, **Brig Nick Pope** and was met by the CO, **Lt Col Alan Blackwell**. The Royal Party was introduced to **Lt Talitha Kelly** and the Royal Signals soldiers of the Det. **Lt Kelly** gave an excellent brief to the Princess on the wide ranging responsibilities of her soldiers before escorting her to lunch.

After lunch, and once the RAF had fixed the blow-out on the C130 wheel, the Royal Party and the CO moved to Kandahar to meet elements of the Close Support (229) Sig Sqn. On arrival the Princess joined the Officers and Warrant Officers from the Royal Signals, the Canadian Signals and the Royal Australian Signals all of whom are serving at Kandahar for a photograph.

Following the photo the Princess was introduced to the OC 229 Sig Sqn, **Maj Murray Thompson**. **Maj Thompson** escorted her into the 229 Sig Sqn CP, where more than 70 Signals Officers and soldiers from the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia were gathered to meet her. It was an enjoyable and proud day for the Regt. HRH also took the opportunity whilst visiting the Mighty 7th to meet other troops in theatre.

ELMPT SQUADRON (GERMANY)

OC **Maj Jim Large**

Elmpt Sqn, the non-deployed element of 7 Sig Regt, continues to provide sp to Op HERRICK in the form of trained manpower and eqpt requests, keeps up the best possible veh maint and inspection schedule (Short Term Storage Plan) and continuing mil and physical trg in order to provide for the maint of morale for all those pers remaining behind. We are also trained and prepared to deploy individuals to the Op if necessary. The tempo remains high but the equitable division between work and trg allows for a balanced work regime, with the occasional weekend off!

ASCOT DAY AT THE KREFELD RENNBAHN – 10 SEP 06
- by LCpl Staples

Crowds in their thousands gathered as the Burgermeister of Krefeld and the CO, **Lt Col AR Blackwell**, welcomed them to the annual Ascot Day held at Krefeld Race Course. Even though it was a slimmed-down event due to the majority of the Regt serving in Afghanistan, the tradition was nonetheless continued in some style.

The Band of the Warwickshire Regiment (Royal Regiment of Fusiliers) provided entertainment under **Band Master Barnes**, playing both the German and British National Anthems at this truly bi-National Day.

The Regtl Piper, **Cpl Glenn MacDonald** of 229 Sig Sqn, followed this with a solo performance during the band's rendition of Highland Cathedral. The band marched off to the Corps Quick March.

The first race of the day was the "7 Sig Regt Stakes" at 1400hrs, a very close race with 5 horses in contention as they approached the final straight. It proved to be a great start for the day's racing which comprised a further 5 races.

Volunteers from 232 Sig Sqn taking the lead provided an 'English Beer Garden' with Fosters and Pimms being served to the German public in vast quantities.

A contingent of chefs from Javelin Barracks sold a whole school of cod from the 'Fish and Chips' marquee, and followed this with a dessert of strawberries and cream.

Dr Monika Blackwell judged the wide variety of womens' hats that were on show, in true Ascot fashion. Wide ranges of age groups took part in this part of the proceedings, and were a great spectacle to behold.

The day concluded with the lowering of the flags after the final race at 1800hrs. Again the band was on hand with another excellent performance. All those from 7 Sig Regt and other units from Javelin Barracks who turned out on this hot September afternoon had a great time, some winning and some losing!

Next year promises to return to the full event when the Regt has returned from ops.

10th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Richard Quinlan**
SSM **WO1(RSM) Mark Gilbert**

Life in RHQ of 10 Sig Regt continues apace. With **Maj Dave Duggan** as the new Regt 2IC, **Maj (Retd) Allan Duncan MBE** as the new Regt Co-ord Officer, **Maj Martin Elphee** as the new Ops Officer and **Capt Kelvin Grice** as the new Adjt, RHQ represents a brave new world of learning…

The Regt is undergoing a major restructuring process that enables the CO to better deliver his UK Ops Commitments.

As Adjt, and working near the Regt Ops Cell, I have first hand exposure to the high op tempo this Regt has, and one thing is certain, a tour at 10 Sig Regt will be a fascinating and challenging experience. I firmly believe that any post in this Regt will augment your career profile in a unique way.

While we go about our business, with deployments to Ops TELIC, HERRICK and BANNER as well as work ongoing in JCUFI, and of course the UK Ops piece, it is clear that diversity and opportunity exist in abundance. What I must also stress however is that it is not all work and you will read several examples of the outdoor, AT and physical pursuits undertaken by members of the Regt below.

10 SIGNAL REGIMENT - LANYARD TROPHY TEAM
– by SSgt Wedge

After spending a number of trg days in Wales preparing for this year's Lanyard Trophy and hundreds of hours sat on the M4, competition day finally arrived.

The team met in Corsham and we all travelled to Sennybridge together with a good deal of banter between the Sqns. On arrival, we squared away our admin and settled down for a relaxing evening in preparation for what was to come. The team was buoyant apart from **Cpl Wood**, who seemed to have lost his chat for the first time since birth.

Eventually he plucked up the courage and announced to the team that he had forgotten his boots – the things people will do to avoid a gentle walk! After some hectic telephone calls, the admin team deployed to Chippenham for the urgent collection.

Boots in hand, the team finally went to bed, although I'm not sure if anyone actually managed some shut eye.

After an early o'clock wake up, we found ourselves on the start line where the whole team were deep in their own thoughts, and you could feel the nervous tension.

Once away from the start, the sun started to shine and we felt a lot happier as we enjoyed the solitude on the mountains. All that was soon to change on the way to Check Point 2. In true Brecon style the heavens opened, and continued for the next 3 hrs, awesome!

Towards the end of the day, and still with a full team, it became clear that we had a chance of some silverware. Sadly, we left ourselves too much to do and 11 Sig Regt were the first across the line with 10 competitors.

We can look back with satisfaction, however, as we completed the course in 12 hrs 8 mins in a creditable 7th place out of a field of 29.

The team would like to thank our admin team for the sp they gave us both during trg and during the event and to all the Regtl and Sqn hierarchies who made it possible.

10 Signal Regiment Lanyard Trophy Team

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON (CHELSEA)

OC	**Maj James Vosper**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Jim McEwan**

After a busy July spent providing troops to assist with Her Majesty the Queen's Garden Parties, joining the Regtl AT in Devon and ensuring our Incident Response Teams (IRTs) would be ready for the September exs, we all enjoyed a relaxed August maximum leave period.

The pace picked up again in September with all 3 of our IRTs deploying on demanding exs in STANTA and Brecon. On a more pleasurable note, **WO2(SSM) McEwan** led an AT ex to the Grand Canyon for a bit of walking, rafting and pony trekking – very nice!

The posting plot has been slightly quieter than normal. However we say farewell to **Sgt Dave Holden**, who, after mastering his fake tan and Johnny Bravo poses, is off to the School of Army Physical Training to begin the course to become a fully fledged Gym Queen in the APTC.

Sgt Graham Firth has left us for the greater benefit of the Corps as he will be instructing on trade at the RSS, lucky young signallers! **Cpl Mikey Gee** leaves us for Civvie Street and finally **LCpl Rees** has departed for Germany with his shiny new baby girl. All the best to you all. The Sqn would also like to welcome **Sigs Hallewell** and **Newton**, who joined us in August and have easily slipped into the London groove.

241 SIGNAL SQUADRON (CORSHAM)

OC	**Maj (TOT) Tony Jenkins**
SSM	**SSgt Andy Fisher**

The last few months have seen a number of new faces arrive at Corsham. Firstly, a warm welcome to the new Sqn 2IC and Ops Officer, **Capt Irene Gordon**, fresh from a 6 month tour with the Italian Army, where she was attached to their 11th Sig Regt just north of Rome.

She arrives complete with tan and trendy Gucci sunglasses. Sqn HQ is now complete, with the addition of **SSgt Andy Fisher**, who has moved across from Lima Tp to act as SSM.

LIMA TROOP

OC	**Capt Neil Clements**
SSgt	**Sgt Scott Tomblin**

As usual, both Lima and Kilo Tps have been extremely busy. Under our newly implemented op rotation cycle, Lima Tp is currently responsible for covering the Sqn's Op TELIC and other worldwide commitments. These include Bosnia, Brunei, Nepal or any other worldwide task. Very soon, there will only be a couple of Tps based back in the UK, as we prepare to deploy a team to Iraq and another to Bosnia.

In July and August, Alpha Sect of Lima Tp enjoyed a productive deployment to Afghanistan. **Sgt 'Coops' Cooper** headed the team and he was ably assisted by **Cpl 'Fozzy' Foster**, **LCpl 'Penfold' Williams** and **Sigs 'Charlie' Brown**, **Lloyd Cromar** and **Jimmy Tearle**.

The tour consisted mainly of living out of bergens and tasting the food in various camps in theatre; Camp Tombstone scored top, as the American cookhouses always do, with Twinkies and Gatorade all round!

The team left their mark in Camp Faraway, Kandahar in the shape of a large octagonal gazebo constructed in their spare time from scrap wood. NASA have reported that this structure is visible from space! The challenge has been set for future deployable teams to beat this on a budget of $3!

Afghanistan Installation Techs in front of their Gazebo

KILO TROOP

OC	**Lt Alex Reid**
SSgt	**SSgt Matt Stowell**

Kilo Tp welcomes its new Tp Comd, **Lt Alex Reid**, who joins us from 8 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in NI. He replaces **2Lt Sandy Hennis**, who will begin her Tp Comd's course in October. We wish her luck and we will miss her entertaining dancing, as demonstrated during our Sqn AT week, in July – another story... Kilo Tp is now covering both the NARO commitment and preparing to send a team to Afghanistan to install Bowman racks in a number of Ops rooms in theatre.

ARDUOUS TRAINING - *by SSgt Andy Fisher*

Although Sqn pers are deployed throughout the year, every effort is made to get guys away on Adventurous and Arduous Training. By the time you read this, the Regt Snowboarding Team should be racing to medals and glory on Ex MERCURY GLACIER 10 – the Royal Signals Snow Sports Trg Camp and Championships, held every year in Austria. Wait out for a full report early next year.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON (WILTON)

OC	**Maj Carl Shead MBE**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Tam Ewart**

It has been another busy period for the Sqn. Ops Sp Tp has recently supported Ex HORSESHOE EAGLE, Ex BARDIC MASTER and Ex MINI CAST whilst 600 Tp continues to provide ongoing sp to all ops, both UK and Expeditionary. Hot on their heels, we had the Sqn Ops Team participating in Ex BEAR CHASE, a Regtl comms planning ex, fine tuning us in the use of the ICS 7 Question Estimate.

September has seen the Sqn welcome **Capt Ed Cuthbertson**, as the first DE officer in charge of the Ops Sp Tp. We also extend a warm welcome to **Sig Merlin Andrew** who returns from JCUFI. We say farewell to **Sgt Neil Tarry** who departs to Blandford on his IS Supervisor's course, **Cpl Nikki McNeal** to 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and to **Cpl Kev Tarrier** who leaves for Civvi street.

Finally, all ranks of the Sqn would like to congratulate **LCpl Mike Kiff** on his recent marriage to **Linda** and to **Cpl Pete Sochon** and wife **Kelly** on the birth of **Jacob**.

CO's CUP 2006 – ORIENTEERING - *by WO2(FofS) Pradhan*

The early morning blue, chill sky over the Bulford ridge promised a good day for orienteering. The event organisers from 243 Sig Sqn, under the supervision of **WO2(FofS) Pradhan**, erected the tents and GS tables and decorated the notice boards with paperwork. Everyone was in a joyous mood as they lazily hovered around the empty reception area.

The CO, Adjt and RSM formed part of the RHQ team, which increased everyone's competitive spirit. The event was well attended with more than 60 runners from the Regt eagerly poised at the start line. After the initial brief and the CO's encouraging words the boys and girls were off and running.

Half an hour later the trg area became alive with runners and followers. It was a fantastic show of competitiveness and willingness to support their Sqn and the Regt. The CO's objective was 'for individuals to work as a team, for the team'. This event certainly brought about cohesiveness and competitiveness.

243 Sig Sqn took the glory on the day by winning the competition. Nobody remembers the runner-ups! A successful day and let us hope the rest of the CO's Cup will be well attended and supported as enthusiastically as was this first event of the year.

600 SIGNAL TROOP (CORSHAM)

PEN Y FAN HILL DAY - *by SSgt Flynn*

Due to the nature of 600 Sig Tp with our high op commitment, it is not always practical to conduct week long periods of AT, so it was decided that what was needed was a hill day with Pen Y Fan being the highlight of the walk. This would enable the desk bound Tp members some well earned fresh air and some much needed navigation practice.

It was a dull and misty morning as 10 members of the Tp began their long journey to the Brecon Beacons. We finally arrived at Talybont Reservoir and as is traditional the sun popped out just as we were preparing our kit. This ensured that the first climb to the spot height at Twyn-Du was a warm one. With the first climb well under way the group began to spread out with **Capt (TOT) Mick Cowie** and **WO2(FofS) Mick Oliver** leading the way. The rear was brought up by **WO2(AQMS) Nick Sparrow** who was frothing like a rabid dog. Once on the high ground we stopped for a quick cup of tea before continuing along Craig Pwllfa and Craig Cwareli Ridge lines. Lunch was taken with Cribyn and Pen Y Fan lurking in the distance.

Deciding to motivate the group, I informed them that once over Pen Y Fan the pub awaited. The motivation worked well with the entire group bounding up Jacob's Ladder to the summit. A quick photo and cup of tea whilst taking in the stunning views and off we headed to our finish point, The Storey Arms. On arrival a flaw in the plan became apparent. Our driver, whose only job whilst waiting for the group for 4 hours was to find a pub for a well earned pint, had failed. True he found a pub, but he failed to check the opening times and as we arrived for a nice cold pint we were met with closed doors.

The Tp headed back to Corsham and after a good 10 mile walk and with no chance of beer the majority slept all the way back. We did have a good day and eagerly await the next instalment, which promises to be of a greater distance and over more challenging terrain.

600 Troop on Pen Y Fan

251 (UK OPS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (ALDERSHOT)

OC	**Maj Jez Toze**
SQMS	**SSgt Sean Wedge**

The Sqn has had a well earned rest over the summer months and most have been able to take some well deserved leave. As ever we have a few announcements to make. First, on the baby front, **SSgt Sykes** and his wife now have a second son. We wish him and his family all the best. Also after months of being asked if he was pregnant, **Cpl Haughan's** partner gave birth to a bouncing baby girl. There was also a wedding in the Sqn when **Sig Hiorns** took the plunge – so congratulations to him and his new wife **Keely**. We have some new people to welcome in the form of at

university. Shock! Also **SSgt Pengelly**, who will be **Capt Kamara's** new right hand man, and lastly to **LCpl Kean**, who has joined us from 3 Div HQ & Sig Regt. Sadly a few farewells too: to **WO2 Graham** and **Cpl Kirby**, who will both be missed by the Sqn. Perhaps **Cpl Kirby** might still be able to get back and play a few games of cricket for us!! Good luck to both of you both in the future.

The winning team at the Braemar Games

EDWIN DETACHMENT – EX HORSESHOE
- by LCpl Allard

EDWIN, the Sqn's 100 – seat, deployable LAN deployed to West Tofts in Thetford in support of 2 Sig Bde Ex HORSESHOE.

As Det Comd, **Cpl Russell** led the crew into location and after some changes were made to the initial comms plan, full capability of Restricted and Secret voice and Data was established for the Bde HQ and 2 (NC) Sig Bde ORBAT. Airwave and mobile signal at West Tofts were poor but the EDWIN team cracked on with the job supplying high quality comms to the Bde staff. Having the job well in hand in short time, some members of the Det were re-deployed to other parts of the ex and conducted Share Point trials, Web publishing and assisted with the engineering of the REEBOK Det.

EDWIN received lots of visits during the ex including **Brig Hargreaves**, the new incoming Bde Comd. This was also **Brig Lithgow's** last ex before leaving the Army for pastures new. Visitor's day went well and one question was asked repeatedly by the staff: 'Where can we get EDWIN?'

The ex went well and the EDWIN Team got some good experience from the ex with Class 3-2 upgrading and new Det staff familiarised with this unique Det which is the largest ICS capability within the Bde.

ECM (FP) SIGNAL SQUADRON (NI)

OC	**Maj John Fraser**
SSM	**WO2 SSM Jay Saunders**

THE BRAEMAR GAMES
- by LCpl Daniel

With an early start of 0100hrs arranged for Saturday 2 September 2006, 5 eager members of the Sqn left Thiepval Barracks for an epic journey to the Braemar Games.

On arrival in Scotland, **Sgt Harvey** quickly passed the admin side of things over to **Sgt McDonald**, so that he wouldn't feel left out! Whilst he was booking in, he was approached by the Navy team and as they were a man down, they asked us if we could spare a runner. Naturally we obliged and decided to award this privilege to **Cpl Fowler**, who strangely enough did not seem very impressed by the honour. All the nice boys love a sailor!

In the heats, we observed the other teams going through extensive and rigorous warm ups and stretches and mainly due to a little fatigue from the journey, we decided to sit it out until our event was called. Fortunately we gave a decent team performance, and managed to make the final! **Sgt Harvey**, with a masterstroke of tactical genius, decided to change the order in which we were due to run. The first leg was run by **Cpl Haase**, who did a magnificent job of actually managing to keep up with the real athletes before handing over to **LCpl Vatu**.

A natural runner, he stuck close to his man all the way before handing over to **Sgt Harvey**. He, in turn ran an excellent leg before handing over to me, **LCpl Daniel** for what would be the glory leg! With the pressure on and a bit of friendly shoulder barging between the closest competitor and I, we managed to cross the line first to win!

As we waited for the rest of the competitions to finish, we were informed that we would be meeting Her Majesty the Queen and with that in mind we ran to the toilets to spruce ourselves up. With no hot water or mirrors we knew this would be some feat! We waited in trepidation, however when the moment arrived, only one of us was granted the opportunity to meet Her Majesty.

Our captain, **Sgt Harvey**, the self-proclaimed best looking man in the world; a Geordie with an accent unaltered by the time he has spent in the Army. None of us could really understand him, so we didn't hold out much hope for the Queen.

Sgt Barrington Harvey being presented the Braemar Games Invitation Relay Race Winners Shield by HM The Queen

11th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col MJ Fensom**
RSM	**WO1 C Symonds**

TRAINING STAFF LEADERSHIP DAY *- by Capt Rhodes*

Early on the morning of Thursday 14 September, the permanent staff from 11 Sig Regt boarded the coach for what we had been told was a 'team bonding day'. There had been rumours flying around about what exactly this would entail, but OC Beaufighter Tp, **WO1 McPherson**, who had organised the activity, was keeping the details a closely guarded secret. Thus, when we finally arrived at Bramley a good 3 hours later to find ourselves faced with a high wire confidence course there were a few ashen faces and wide eyes as we surveyed our tasks…40ft above us!

Just one small step for man .....

Four groups were formed to tackle each task; these included the low wire rope race, the telegraph pole 'double jeopardy', the crate 'building' stacking and the 40ft rope assault course. First up was the 4 man telegraph pole, whereby 4 people, in turn, had to climb to the top of the perch. Then, when the 4th person was standing at the top with the others, they all had to lean out. Needless to say there were a few Elvis impressions and some severe bouts of jelly legs on the ascent! Next was the trapeze telegraph pole.

This entailed a 40ft climb to stand on the top then perform a death defying leap to catch the trapeze lying a tantalizing 4 ft away. Special mention for this task must go to **Cpl Redpath**, who overcame a near crippling fear of heights to achieve the most impressive trapeze dive, but then had to be strongly encouraged to let go again!

However, it was not fear but manly pride at stake with some of the younger bucks, **Lt Andy Rea** and **Capt Alex Eros** both trying to outdo each others trapeze time. Let's see how they both fare against each other in the forthcoming Regtl boxing!

The high rope asslt course was the one which seemed like most people's personal Everest, judging by the sheer concentration and lip-biting of most who undertook it. The 'leap of faith' and the slippery log took most casualties with a few knocked shins and harness groin strain! Some 'monkeys' took to it effortlessly, while others, **WO2 Bell** to name but one, provided ample amusement for the onlookers. The mood was far more jovial at 5pm with everyone swapping heroic war stories over a sociable pint or two and dinner at the gastro-pub on the way back to Blandford.

Timber!

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2006 *- by Cpl Jamie Ranson*

The Royal Signals Orienteering Championships 2006 were organised by 11 Sig Regt and Blandford Garrison Support Unit. This year was the second time in history that the Championships were held over 3 days.

Day 1 was originally to be the Short Course Championships but was changed at a late stage due to lack of entries. Instead, a trg day was organised with the help of the Wessex Orienteering Club map of Shillingstone Hill just a few miles north west of Blandford.

Day 2 was the Individual Championships held in conjunction with the Military League South event at Vernditch Chase it consisted of a 'get as many controls as you can in an hour' event which was excellently planned by **Maj (Retd) Pete Doherty** and controlled by **SSgt Andy Dobson.** Our thanks to the Forestry

Commission and SARUM Orienteers for the use of the area and the map. The perfect conditions for Orienteering saw over 230 competitors take part with over 30 visiting all the controls inside the hour!! Notable performances were from **WO1(YofS) Mark Bentley** from Blandford and **Maj Duncan Parkinson** from 30 Sig Regt.

After collecting in all the controls and placing them in their new locations around Blandford Camp we were all set for Day 3 of the Championships - the Team Harris Relay. On a drizzly Thursday morning, the teams assembled and were set off from Pond Bottom to put their team strategies into practice to collect all the checkpoints around the camp. There were people running in all directions both inside and outside of camp. By midday all the teams had been out 2 hours and most had returned apart from one member of the maroon T-shirt team! It nearly got to the stage where we had to send out a search party!

The championship prize giving was held in the Jubilee Hall Community Centre and the prizes were presented by **Brig Hargreaves**, Chairman of the Army Orienteering Association. I was fortunate to be presented with the Corps Champion trophy and **Maj Mel Rayner**, from Upavon Support Unit, won the Female open class. In the Team Harris Relay, Minor Unit winners were DCSA, Female Team winners were Upavon Support Unit and Major Unit Winners were 11 Sig Regt/Royal School of Signals. The Team consisted of **WO1(YofS) Mark Bentley**, **Sgt Colin Gent**, **Sgt Maw**, **Cpl Hem Rana**, **Cpl Padam** and **Cpl Jamie Ranson**. The Regt/Garrison Female team came a very respectable 2nd with the team consisting of **Capt Kelly Rhodes**, **Capt Sarah Clifford** and **SSgt Angie Ghale**.

The Corps Female Runners Up; SSgt Angie Ghale, Capt Sarah Clifford, Capt Kelly Rhodes

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj DE Cain MMM**
SSM	**WO2 MA Bell**

EXERCISE HOLTON LEE - by *Sig Longlands*

It was 0650hrs Saturday 23 September 2006 and we were all still half asleep, when we had to parade outside 1 Sqn accommodation block. We knew that we were doing some community work on Holton Lee Residential Park but we did not have a clue exactly what we were doing, so we all got on to the minibuses and sat in them waiting to go. We arrived at around 0745hrs and we all wished we were still in bed because it was a Saturday and we should have been sleeping not working. When we arrived at Holton Lee, **Cpl McCall** gave us a safety brief and introduced us to the Director of Holton Lee, **Mr Tony Eaton**. **Mr Eaton** gave us a brief and welcomed us all and thanked us, stating that 1 (Ouston) Sqn had been coming to help out for the last 6 years. **Cpl McCall** then split us down into 2 groups, one with **Cpl McCall** and one with **Cpl Pallis**. I got selected to go with **Cpl Pallis** and we immediately got stuck into the task. I got to push the wheelbarrow around when we filled it up with the weeds and loose soil from the trench which we had been tasked to clear.

We removed nettles, brambles, leaves, rocks and the occasional frog which was dealt with correctly by someone moving it away from us, because we had pickaxes and spades, which could do some damage to a little frog! It took us about an hour to clear this trench, with me doing lots of emptying of the wheelbarrow. After we did that we had a 10 min break in which we just sat chilling and drinking the juice which we got from the cook house during breakfast. After that we got shown how to take down the huge marquee.

Whilst we were doing this, the other 2 groups were slowly digging out both sides of the road and making it nice and tidy, as it was full of litter and leaves and twigs. It took us about 15 minutes to get the marquee fully down, all the pegs out and tidied away and put into piles ready for it to be put away. Once we had done that we helped the others sort out all the rubbish and put it in the compost heap or the fire heap. Once we had done all our tasks we checked that we had all of our tools and loaded them onto the vehs. Just as we were about to depart, **Mr Eaton** said a big thank you to all of us. We then departed Holton Lee and got back to Blandford Camp about 1605hrs and we were all so knackered we fell asleep on the bus back.

VETERANS VISIT 24 AUGUST - *by Cpl Gray*

The Veterans started arriving at 1030hrs at 11 Sig Regt, Blandford from all over Dorset on an unusually sunny day. The 42 Veterans, whose exploits ranged from the Normandy Landings to Red Arrows pilots, had their welcome speech in the Princess Mary Hall, which was given by the Regt 2IC, **Maj Cory** and OC 1 (Ouston) Sqn, **Maj Cain** from the Canadian Royal Signals. After the speeches, the escorts for the day from 1 (Ouston) Sqn, namely **SSgt Adams**, **Cpl Pallis** and myself, **Cpl Gray** had time to meet them on a more personal level over tea and biscuits.

After the Burco boilers and coffee percolators had been drunk dry, it was time to move on to the next event which was a photograph taken with the Veterans standing next to **Monty's** comd veh in the Royal Signals Museum; with the Regt's professional photographers taking some superb photographs along the way.

From the Royal Signals Museum we then moved to the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer (DCCT). Under the watchful eye of 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, **Mr Gary Ledger** the Veterans, aided by 10 Soldiers Awaiting Trade Training (SATTs), were taken through grouping and zeroing and then onto a few different scenarios. These ranged from coming into contact in a woodland area to defending a position in desert conditions. The Veterans proved they could hold their own with some very high scores at the end of both scenarios.

Feeling hungry after repelling the enemy's advance in the DCCT, the Veterans were then loaded on to the coach and taken to the Officers' Mess to be wined and dined, hosted by **Maj Cain**. Hearing the appreciative comments made by the Veterans, it was clear that the Officers' Mess chefs had pulled out all the stops and produced some top quality meals.

After the Veterans had finished their lunch, it was then time for the tactics demonstration with **SSgt Mason** and newly promoted **Sgt Chorlton** of 1 Sqn at the helm. The Veterans were shown how trained soldiers react to effective enemy fire through to the re-org. The Phase 2 trainees had rehearsed thoroughly all week and managed a professional display, apart from having 2 misfires with the Chorley grenades. This was due to **Sig Hickton** from 3 Sqn failing to remove the transit clip! Big bangs eventually went off thanks to **Sgt Chorlton**. The demo was thoroughly enjoyed by the Veterans, who were impressed by the way tactics had progressed and the lightness of the A2 rifle. They all thought the kit used by soldiers today was much more movement friendly and were impressed with the speed, fitness and reactions of the soldiers.

Sgt Chorlton briefs the Veterans

We then had the green light to go for the White Helmets Display. Due to the heavy downpour the night before it had been touch and go as to whether or not the White Helmets would be able to put on a show for the veterans up on the airfield. Yet, like the true professionals they are the White Helmets put on an outstanding display lasting well over an hour with running commentary from the Team Capt **Capt Moody.**

To finish off the day the Veterans were split into 2 groups and given a guided tour of the Royal Signals Museum by the staff working in the museum before then climbing wearily but happily onto their coach home.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC	**Maj I J Carter**
SSM	**WO2 M Tench**

EXERCISE IRON BRIDGE - *by Cpl Jamie Ranson*

On Sunday 03 September 06, 13 soldiers and myself of Iron Tp departed to Dartmoor Trg Area to deploy on Ex IRON BRIDGE. The aim of the ex was to develop fitness and leadership skills, whilst aiding the environmental maint of Dartmoor National Park. The team was based at Okehampton Camp on the northern edge of Dartmoor.

The first project was to clear and carry out essential maint on a stretch of footpath near Ivybridge. This was carried out on Monday and Tuesday and saw the soldiers employed in a number of tasks including the clearing of vegetation and some dry-stone walling. They were taught and supervised by the Dartmoor National Park Ranger Service.

Wednesday was a day to relax from the tiring schedule and so off we went to learn some skills of another kind! Fistral Beach at Newquay in Cornwall was the setting, and the skill (or in most cases lack of it) was surfing! **Sig Johnson** and **Sig Day** proved to be excellent potential surf dudes, the rest of us fell off and got a bit wet but a good day was had by all, and it was all under the watchful eye of the Lifeguards.

On Thursday and Friday it was back to the task in hand and a new project. This time it was to the east of the moor near the village of Lustleigh. The task was to create veh access along a path, as well as replacing footpath signs.

Two trainees who excelled themselves in this task were **Sig Fuery** and **Sig Hankey**, even the Tp OC was seen with a shovel (once)!

The ex proved a great success with a number of soldiers developing a variety of new skills through hard work and determination. Our thanks go to all of the staff at Okehampton Camp, who made us very welcome, and also the Dartmoor National Park Ranger Service – especially **Rangers Rob Taylor** and **Andrea Crisp**.

EXERCISE CATTERICK ENDURANCE - *by SSgt Fraser*

The trg staff of 2 Sqn were in need of some quality team building activities. So to that end I set about organising a day in the Brecon Beacons that would not only be challenging, but also enjoyable and rewarding.

So off we went and fulfiiled probably the hardest challenge of the day; getting on the road by 0500hrs. The trg staff thought that this was a joke but once the laughter died down everyone was aboard and we were off.

We arrived at the Storey Arms at the foot of Pen y Fan to embark on what was to be the hardest part of the day**. Cpl Sean Dinsdale** and **Cpl Jamie Ranson** were at the front, setting the pace with the map, this turned out to be one of my worst decisions as we were off like a steam train.

The Guys laying drainage

The day started with some pretty miserable looking weather but we were treated to a freak day in Wales and the sun came out! The resulting views we were privileged to witness were second to none. At about 1200hrs, 3 hours into our hard slog, we paused for breath and ripped open our gourmet packed meals.

As we started our descent down towards the chequered flag, the view over Talybont and the reservoir took our breath away. I am still not quite sure if this was because of what we saw or if it was because the finish line was in sight!

Once we completed the descent we met our driver and saviour for the day **Cpl 'Richie' Bastow**. We sorted ourselves out and made our way back to the bunkhouse at the White Hart Inn, Talybont. As we arrived at the Inn, it was clear to me that admin was not a top priority and that refreshments and beer were. After 1 or 2 beers, I can't quite remember; we got ourselves sorted out for dinner and carried on the motion well into the wee hours. This posed an excellent opportunity to welcome **SSgt 'Red' Davis** and **Lt Andy Rea** into 2 Sqn.

The ex was concluded at the road side café as we dug into our breakfasts in a bun, before returning to camp. All in all, I think it was a very productive ex and definitely one that everybody enjoyed.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Jennings**
SSM **WO2 JM Swanston**

GORDON'S CUP COMPETITION 2006 - *by Sig Musto*

After many weeks of build up trg and last minute preparation, the second Gordon's Cup of 2006 kicked off on Saturday 9 September. The Gordon's Cup is a mil skills competition for Phase Two soldiers at 11 Sig Regt undergoing their trade trg and consists of 10 mentally and physically challenging mil events over the course of 1 day.

The Sqn team paraded at 0700hrs under the guidance of **Cpl Blake**, our chief team organiser and mastermind behind the selection process for the competition.

The first event was the drill competition, where all 3 Sqns were under the spotlight from **Capt Barry** and the Regtl SSMs. The pressure was already starting to show, as certain members from 1 and 2 Sqn started to feel somewhat queasy and had to be escorted to the side of the square. After the main inspection there followed questions about Corps history and the drill format but it was the triumphant 3 Sqn who took the first honours of the day.

Throughout the day the events unfolded and it looked as if the mighty 3 (Harrogate) Sqn had performed well in all of the tasks that had been set by **Maj Ruddock** and the staff from 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn.

The competition culminated in the CO's event, which was based on a troop level tactical extraction carrying associated eqpt from the trg area to Pond Bottom and ended with a Land Rover and trailer dash.

After a long and demanding day the Regt paraded for the prize giving at Pond Bottom. As **WO2(SSM) Rowan** started to read out the scores, it was apparent that the Sqn had outperformed the rest, much to the delight of the OC, **Maj Jennings**. In the end **Cpl Blake** accepted the Gordon's Cup from the CO again (!) after winning 8 out of the 10 events on the day.

Raring to go! Maj Ian Carter, SSgt Al Fraser, WO2(SSM) Mark Trench, SSgt Red Davis, Lt Andy Rea, Cpl Jamie Ranson, Cpl Shane Wilson, Cpl Sean Dinsdale

All that remained was for us to enjoy ourselves in the NAAFI, as the Regt had provided a bucking bronco and a bungee run for all Phase 2 soldiers at the evening function.

EXERCISE CATTERICK DRAGON SAIL - *by Cpl Tuck*

As fate would have it, **Capt Neil Matthews** had organised a sailing trip for 2 (Catterick) Squadron. Unfortunately he was unable to go and asked for any volunteers who would like to take up the reigns of organising a 2 week exped to Germany and Denmark. Without hesitation, I gladly volunteered my services, and so the ex was happily hijacked by 3 (Harrogate) Sqn. With all t's crossed and i's dotted, 6 Phase 2 soldiers and I set off from Blandford Camp at 0800hrs on the morning of 11 June 2006 in eager anticipation of what was in store for us.

We started our journey with one remaining hitch in that we were a Day Skipper short but were in hope that the British Kiel Yacht Club could supply a willing volunteer. For some of the trainees this was going to be a once in a life time opportunity and for others it could be the start of a hobby that they continue throughout their career. On our way we stopped off at Elmpt Station, where the trainees got to see serving soldiers within the Corps and managed to meet up with a few friends from trg.

At Kiel, the worry that the exped could be cancelled was starting to take effect and everyone was praying that a suitable volunteer would be found. Thankfully the Coastal Skipper was happy taking 2 Competent Crew members and the exped set sail. The trainees and I were in for a treat as the boat we lived aboard was made in 1935 and represented Germany in the 1936 Olympics. It was an awesome boat and turned heads everywhere we went.

During our time on the boat we sailed around the Baltic Sea and stopped off every night at different Danish ports including Middlefahrt and Sonderborg which enabled us to still watch England in the World Cup. The trip turned out to be even better for the trainees as they all managed to gain their Competent Crew Qualification, which came as a surprise to some after initial steerage problems for **Sigs Cailleau** and **Clements**. **Sig Wells** unfortunately suffered from sea sickness and spent most of his time with his head over the side of the boat; whether that was a result of my cooking is still in debate.

The trip was fantastic and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. I would gladly go on further sailing exped and I hope the trainees take any future opportunities to carry on offshore sailing throughout their careers.

Life on the ocean wave for Sig Featherstone, Sig Cailleau, Sig Tox, Sig Wells, Sig Clements & Sig Boddy

EX HARROGATE DRAGON 06 - *by Sig Firth*

On Friday 4 August, 54 members of Ulster Tp, 3 (Harrogate) Sqn deployed for a weekend of AT in North Devon. On arrival, we all became very nervous as we had clearly arrived at the Bad Lads Army Camp, complete with 50 man rooms.

Whilst we waited for all the minibuses to arrive, an impromptu football game began, Gurkhas and the old men (the Phase 3 upgraders) versus the Phase 2 soldiers, including several members of the Regtl team. The result was extremely close at 7-0. I won't say who won but we were red faced with embarrassment and the Phase 3 upgraders had barely broken into a sweat. The result may be attributable to the likes of **Sig Binod**, **Sig Agnesh** and **Sig Pramesh** who clearly had mistaken the term "friendly match" for "battle to the death." The next morning we were split into groups for mountain biking, rock climbing and kayaking. The kayaking group set off on a dramatic and epic journey against the tide and wind to a beach as distant as it was beautiful. Incredibly the return journey seemed much easier, but maybe that was merely the thought of the bar calling. Even more unbelievabe is that no one practised the capsize drill for real!

The other groups were deployed to mountain biking and rock climbing stands. The rock climbing proved more difficult than it had first appeared and everyone found it both challenging and really rewarding. **Sig Morrison** deserves a special mention for overcoming his fear of heights and climbing a massive 5 ft off the ground. The mountain biking was over the Tarka trail which proved too much for some of us and rumours of bike sabotage were heard as an excuse to avoid the need to cycle another metre. The scenery was beautiful, especially when we arrived at the beach.

That evening, everyone gathered at the "Jack O'Lantern" bar for the traditional skits and quiz. The Quizmaster, **Cpl 'Cowboy' Redpath** began the quiz, and amazingly enough, it turns out he can speak clearly. With a top prize of £45, it was all to play for. It was revenge for us, as the Phase 2 team thrashed the Tech Upgraders easily, and this time it was us who hadn't broke in to a sweat. The evening continued well with some funny skits, **SSgt Davies** taking the most abuse, closely followed by **Cpl 'Scouse' Dibbert**, which is surprising since he wasn't even with us. The weekend was rounded off with a game of ten pin bowling and laser quest. The ex was a huge success and thoroughly enjoyed by all. It would be fair to say that more than one of us now has the AT bug. And finally, a big thank you, to **Cpl Redpath** for organising the ex.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col SJ Vickery**
RSM **WO1(RSM) J Reid**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj DJ Williams**
SSM **WO2(SSM) W Morris**

LANYARD TROPHY 2006

This year's competition was organized by 14 Sig Regt (EW) due to op commitments faced by 216 Sig Sqn. **Capt Chris Drew** organised a particularly tough course over the Brecon Beacons and SENTA which tested even the fittest of teams. Congratulations to all members of the 14 Sig Regt (EW) teams that took part.

Special mention should go to members of the B team who got round the course in 10th position with no prior trg and only a week's notice that they were taking part!

COLLINS CUP

Over 4 – 6 September, 14 Sig Regt (EW) sent a squad to compete in the Corps annual inter-regimental rugby competition – the Collins Cup. The competition was played at Cardiff High School Old Boys RFC with each team playing 5 matches. In a spirited performance, the Regtl Squad finished runners-up in the plate competition. The squad, which had never played together as a 15 before, gained valuable experience and came away a much stronger unit. Congratulations go to the 6 players selected from the Squad to join the Corps Squad over the next season: **Capts Alex Stanger** and **Steve Davis**, **WO2(SSM) Morris**, **Sgt Vernon**, **LCpl Jones** and **Sig Lilino**.

TM TROOP ADVENTUROUS TRAINING.

On Sunday 10 September, TM Tp left with a smile on their faces ready for the second week of AT in North Wales. Nobody quite knew what they had let themselves in for. The pads however were the happiest, as they had been allowed out to play with everyone for once. Everyone was anxious to check out the local 'sights' on arrival.

With many activities on offer, ranging from rock climbing, hill-walking, canoeing, sailing and power boating how were we going to fit it all in?

It all started with rock climbing, taken by **Sgt Thorpe**. One of the more interesting rock formations climbed was called Damo's Crack, which before the climb had most people feeling ill at the thought! On arrival, the climb looked almost easy however it was soon realised that this was not the case. Everyone was smiling as they reached the top intact, except for the odd bruise or graze.

Hill walking was next on the list. This was taken by **Cpl McMillian** and was included many of the local peaks including Snowdon and Tryfan. All the sweat and tears were worth it just for the views from the top. This was also where on impulse the 14 Sig Regt (EW) Extreme Ironing Team was formed. **LCpl DeJonge** proved to be the winner of this but made us promise not to tell his wife.

During the week sailing and power boating were also undertaken. Power boating was done in the waters off Puffin Island; the home of the local seal colony where one of the young techs enquired if seals only eat fish. He will remain un-named but you know who you are.....ahem.... **LCpl Welsh**. A near miss was had when **Cpl Weller** managed to crash the powerboat into a sunken log nearly ending power boating for the week; thankfully the only thing damaged was pride.

Canoeing started with a nervous look from some people; the SSM was running it! However this apprehension proved unfounded. The evening's activities included cultural visits to Bangor's local churches now converted and renamed to Weatherspoons and Vanities.

The AT was an enjoyable week; a much needed change away from the hustle and bustle of TM Tp and was enjoyed by all.

224 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Brown** INT CORPS
SSM **WO2(SSM) Shuck**

EX PREMIER PEAK - by *Cpl R Greaves*

The aim of Ex PREMIER PEAK was to teach the more junior members of the Sqn some new skills and for the "hardened" members, it was a confirmation ex with a bit of team bonding thrown in for the challenges awaiting in Afghanistan.

On arrival in the trg area, the willing participants were split into 2 sects and each sect was given an orders lesson and then set about practising a set of their own orders and creating a model. This process took up most of the day and by last light, the 2 sects were left to start their night routine. The whole ex was fairly relaxed and thankfully there was no need to stag on! On the following 2 days, the sects took part in various lessons such as sect battle drills, fieldcraft, map reading and BCDT. More practical lessons were also conducted where a member of the sect was given a role, e.g. sect comd or 2IC and their skills were tested on mine strikes, casualty extractions and anti-ambush drills, both veh and foot borne. **Cpl Oliver** either died or was injured on numerous occasions throughout the week! The map reading theory was tested in 2 map reading practicals. A daytime and a nightime route were organised by the SSM, **WO2 Shuck**. The distances of each were about 7km and most of the troops on the ground found the flags without too much trouble, except that is for **Sgt Nutbrown** and **Cpl Woodfint** who claimed they could not find them.

The Thursday was a very enjoyable day, a helicopter visit was organised by **Flt Lt Dear.** The Loadmaster gave a lesson on under-slinging various eqpt to the helicopter. This will be important when D Tp are deployed. After the lesson we were broken down into 4 chalks of 6 and each chalk went up in the Puma for a little jaunt around the countryside. It should be noted that despite wearing a light blue beret **Flt Lt Dear** did look a little off colour once the chopper got off the ground! Everybody thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it was a first for many people. Friday was the final morning and after the clear up, the final event was FIBUA.

The sects were given a set of orders and **WO2 Mitchell** (who "died" even before entering the house) was the sect comd. The mock attack was conducted on Stapleford Palace and the enemy included members of the HQ element. The attack was a good end to the ex and there were enough rounds left at the end for another go! After the usual end of ex declarations, we made our way back to the Sqn lines and carried out a quick turn around and finished for the weekend. By the end of the ex, most people were exhausted after a tough week and many lessons were learned.

SSgt Janvier and Cpl Allen with the Pathfinder Platoon in Helmand Province

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC **Maj C Crowther**
SSM **WO2(SSM) I Conlan**

LIGHT ELECTRONIC WARFARE TROOP (LEWT)
- by LCpl Adam Fear

Currently deployed on Op HERRICK 4, the Tp has been divided into 3 elements, each performing a similar EW role in different areas of Afghanistan. The Tp has found itself in high demand throughout the deployment, working on virtually all of the ops carried out by UK forces in Helmand Province, providing both static and mobile EW.

It was on one such operation in early July that 2 members of the Tp and a LEC interpreter were tragically killed in an attack on the District Compound in the town of Sangin. **Sgt Peter Thorpe** and **LCpl Jabron Hashmi**, were working shifts with **LCpl Adam Fear** and **Sig Rob Taylor**. Their professionalism throughout the op was of the highest order, **Jabron** as a truly superb linguist and **Pete** as a fantastic and highly experienced patrol comd. Both will be missed incredibly by their friends in the Tp.

The smaller 6 man element which deployed a month earlier than the main body, is working exclusively with Pathfinder Pl. Their contribution to EW has been highly significant and has on a number of occasions directly prevented Taliban ambushes and IED strikes on the unit they are supporting. In fact, the Pathfinder Pl would be reluctant to deploy without the protection of its own EW sp.

The larger element of 17 men based out of Camp Bastion has been working in support of the 3 PARA BG providing a wide range of EW capabilities in all ops leaving Bastion. This element is extremely busy at present with patrols currently working in several locations.

Operating in very hostile Taliban occupied areas, the Tp has on many occasions helped to prevent enemy attacks on UK forces, working in extremely hot and arduous conditions. Repeatedly proven in this theatre, the Tp has been quickly recognised by ground comds as an essential asset, now being exploited to its full potential. LEWT is a demanding role within the Corps and attracts Parachute Pay after completion of AAPPSC and the Jumps Course. Volunteers should be fit in body and mind and be prepared to work at a high security classification dealing with sensitive information in a BG environment.

LEWT in Helmand Province

ROMEO TROOP

Romeo Tp is a unique electronic int collection tp which is found in 226 Sig Sqn (EW). A busy period of trg is now coming to a close with a forthcoming deployment to Greece as part of Trial Spartan Hammer 2006. The largest NATO EW trial ever undertaken, it will enhance 14 Sig Regt place as part of the NATO Integrated Air Defence Network.

The Tp's role involves looking for non-comms emitters on the battlefield such as ground based air defence and battlefield surveillance radars. Recent deployments have included a week long trial with various government agencies and defence contractors, using Ince on new target sets.

The Tp operates Ince eqpt, the very latest British Army ELINT collection tool. The job is highly technical and requires a motivated individual with a keen and analytical mind. Regular briefings to high ranking officers are part and parcel of being part of the Tp.

640 (AIRMOBILE) SIGNAL TROOP (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

The Sqn's MEWT Tp (640) has been held on very high readiness for a number of months as part of the SLE commitment. The Tp are warned off for many different theatres worldwide at less than 48 hrs notice to move. Thus members of the Tp have to be flexible and tuned in to current affairs. Ex WHALES SEARCH 06 was a combined mil skills and EW ex held in SPTA in September 2006. SLE and manpack role EW was proved together with a physically demanding FIBUA phase designed to test det comds. 640 Tp operates directly for the SLE BG in providing timely int and EW to the comd on the ground. 640 use an enhanced version of the LEWT EW eqpt based in Pinzgauer vehs. Opportunities exist for Special Operators and Radio Systems Operators within the LEWT, R Tp and 640 (Airmobile) Sig Tp (EW). If you are interested, put 226 Sig Sqn (EW) on your next Preference Posting Proforma. More information can be obtained by calling 2IC 226 Sig Sqn (EW) **Capt Chris Hill** on 94359 5801.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC **Maj S Cole**
SSM **WO2(SSM) M Morgan**

Our first thoughts must go to the family of **LCpl Jonathan Peter Hetherington**, a Radio Systems Op from the Sqn who lost his life recently on ops in Helmand province. He had only been a member of the Sqn for a relatively short period but in that time had become very popular with both his peers and those in comd. He will be sadly missed. The Sqn now has a new OC in the form of **Maj Steve Cole**. Very best wishes go to his predecessor, **Maj Paul Flavell** in his new role as Ops Officer, 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt in sunny Bulford.

EX LION SUN

A curious hush has descended over the Sqn hangar at the moment with the vast majority of personnel having been whisked away to Cyprus for some 'fun in the sun' on Ex LION SUN. Shortly before departing for Cyprus the Sqn conducted some preparatory trg at Copehill Down FIBUA village. This robust and comprehensive 3 day package was put together by the Sqn Scary Monster, **WO2(SSM) Mark Morgan** and **SSgt Ross Glieve** (not quite so scary but has potential). For some members of the Sqn it was revision of previous FIBUA battle lessons, for others it was an all guns blazing introduction to the 360 degree battle. The trg was really brought to life with the assistance of a Warrior AFV, a seemingly endless supply of blank ammo, lashings of smoke and a generous dollop of P4 plastic explosive! Many crucial lessons were learnt, including the one that when throwing smoke to cover an advance, you have to make sure the grenade actually goes out of the window and doesn't bounce back in off the sill!

The final attack started before dawn and lasted well over 4 hrs. Two platoons of 3 sects each had to break into and clear a number of well defended houses before assaulting a final objective. At times confusion reigned supreme but some strong leadership and hard work at all levels won the day. All the troops were tired but happy as they made their range declarations, packed up asslt kits and filed onto the coach for the long return trip to Brawdy.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

OC **Maj S Scott**
SSM **WO2(SSM) K Smith**

EX DEVILS BOWLER

After returning from a thoroughly deserved summer leave period, the Sqn have begun trg for their deployment to Op HERRICK 6 in 2007. With both mil and trade skills to brush up on prior to the deployment, an intensive trg schedule has been put together by **WO2(SSM) Ken Smith** and **SSgt(YofS) Steve Binks**. This package includes Ex DEVILS BOWLER, a 5 week EW ex in Sierra Leone in support of 40 Cdo. Phase 1 took place in barracks with the team increasing their stamina with lots of PT, trg on new eqpt and practising patrolling skills. The team then moved up to Brecon for a confirmatory ex, where somehow **WO2(SSM) Smith** managed to simulate jungle conditions giving the team expert tuition in the use of both hammocks and machetes. After an intensive week, the team returned to barracks and the Sqn then wished them well as they departed to climb aboard *HMS Ocean* alongside 40 Cdo. Emails back from *HMS Ocean* have been both regular and informative with stories of sea sickness and what we on dry land believe to be exaggerated tales of rough seas.

The last we heard they had dropped anchor in Gibraltar, where they were having a run ashore for a few wets no doubt! We wish all the guys well and look forward to seeing them back in Wales soon.

16th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mark Baines OBE**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Jase Goldsworthy**

16 Sig Regt continues to be deployed on ops in Afghanistan providing ICS sp to ISAF IX. The first roulement of soldiers from the Regt have now completed their tour and the second roulement has deployed. This is an update from the various locations.

ISAF IX SIGNAL SUPPORT GROUP HQ ISAF KABUL

OC **Maj David Allison-Green**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Paul Walledge**

ISAF COMMAND NETWORK - *by LCpl Muhl*

When I deployed to HQ ISAF, I was introduced to what would be my new home for the next 5 months. Before I knew it, I was driving into Kabul in 2 armd Land Cruisers, with my trusty rifle and my not so trustworthy knowledge of the Kabul area. Having run the gauntlet down Route VIOLET (aka 'Violent'), I was introduced to the eqpt by a knowledgeable southern geezer called **LCpl Dean Luck** and **Cpl John Norton**. I then had to sign for nearly 1000 bits of eqpt that move around the surprisingly large Kabul area on a daily basis. Eventually the team was bolstered by the arrival of **LCpl Mark Haigh** and **LCpl Lisa Balshaw**. We are now awaiting the arrival of our illustrious leader, **Sgt Zak Williamson**, who is currently busy trying to fail his YofS selection. Once the team is complete, nothing will stand in the way of the mighty ICN det apart from two 2500m high mountains, which we will have to negotiate using vehs too big for the tracks and a menacing quad-bike with wonky handlebars!

TACTICAL SATELLITE GROUND TERMINAL (TSGT) DETACHMENT HQ ISAF - *by Cpl Gildea*

On arriving in theatre, I completed a handover/takeover of a giant sky dish and a portacabin held together by nicotine, otherwise known as the TSGT. Before I had a chance to make the det my own, I had visitors from SHAPE to carry out modifications, and the det went through some major changes. With the arrival of my new crew, **Cpl Ian Andrews**, **Cpl John Evans** and **LCpl Rachel Hay**, we set to work taking on our own links as well as other dets. After solving major linguistic problems with the non-English speaking Turkish ground station, came the mighty task of scrubbing and reconstructing the det office.

With all the changes completed, the crew have settled into routine monitoring and controlling of the links. We are now on 12 hr shifts with an extra colleague from the German Army. In our spare time we are supping our 2 cans and getting massive in the gym!

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM NORTH (RCST(N)) – MAZAR-E-SHARIF - *by Sig Fox*

OKTOBERFEST

On Saturday 23 September, members of the small RCST(N) team based in Mazar-e-sharif who are soon to finish their tour, attended and provided a great deal of input to the much-loved tradition of 'Tapping the barrel' better know as Oktoberfest. The evening started off well with a detailed presentation on the history behind the custom by **Lt Claire Mikulla** and **Lt Col Stefener**. Afterwards, a banquet of traditional food was laid on for us all. The food was a very nice change to the norm of the cookhouse.

After all the presentations, came the German folk music. We knew from that moment that it was to be the beginning of a brilliant evening. **Cpl Neil Margrie** led the way with the dancing; donning the ceiling decorations as accessories, he headed onto the dance floor. A short while later a contribution from **LCpl 'Rob' Westmoreland** and **Sig Chadwick** raised the evening to a completely new level, with a mixture of River Dance and air guitar, which soon caught on with the soldiers from other countries. The evening turned out to be an educational one and a great way of building relations with members of other nations.

Oktoberfest

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM WEST (RCST(W)) – HERAT - *by LCpl Watt*

RCST(W) continues to provide ICS sp for NATO strat comms throughout Regional Command West. It has been an exciting couple of months for us. Most have been and returned from R&R, with lots of stories to tell. We have had a new Tp OC, **Lt 'Billie' Bill**, who replaced **Lt McDonagh** who has, to his great pleasure, been posted to ATR Litchfield.

There have been many deployments to the Provisional Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) as RCST(W) endeavours to improve ICS in the region. **LCpl 'Forrest' Hart** went to PRT Qen for the day and he has now been there for 2½ weeks; no-one can be sure exactly when he is coming back. **Sig Griff Griffiths** has just been sent out to join him. **Sgt Douglas**, **Sig Allen** and **Sig Cockburn** have all been to PRT Farah, where, among other things, they got to ride a camel. **Sig Cockburn** recently deployed to the Lithuanian PRT in Chaghcharan to fix a workstation. The Italian PRT in Herat is also visited on a regular basis.

LCpl Watt, **Sig Allen** and **Sig Cockburn** created an outside rest area named "The Gravel Pit" because it has lots of gravel in it. It is fully fitted with a football table and a dart board. We opened it with a BBQ and were pleased to have **WO2(SSM) Maylett** and the 2IC, **Capt Caveen**, come from Kabul as honoured guests.

The comd gp here arranged a "Sports Day" which started with a 8km speed march with 7kg of weight. Being Brits, we thought 7kg was ridiculous and put 14 – 20kg in our bergens. Unfortunately, what **LCpl Watt**, **Lt Bill**, **Sgt Douglas** and **Sig Cockburn** found out at the start of the race was that while they said "speed march", what they meant was run. After 500m we were knackered but still placed comfortably in the top third of participants. We also played in a volleyball and basketball tournament. Here we weren't so successful and came last in both!

Before the multinational loaded march competition

We have been lucky enough to have the opportunity to go on a night shoot on the Italian ranges, ride their 350cc Cagiva motocross bikes as well as travel to Camp Stone a few km down the road. There we went on the heavy wpns range and fired other foreign wpn systems.

The food has not improved much here so some of us have been resorting to going to the pizzeria. To work it off we have been playing volleyball regularly with the Spanish Paras and the Italians; as well as regular running and gym sessions.

Everyone in the RCST(W) team is having a great time in Herat. All we're waiting for now is for the new RCST team to arrive and the flight home!

REGIONAL COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM SOUTH (RCST(S)) – KANDAHAR

HANDING OVER IN REGIONAL COMMAND SOUTH

HANDOVER - *by Sig McGee*

RCST(S) have the task of providing the Regional Command (South) HQ with NATO comms. We have been working alongside the Canadian-led Multi-National Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and it has

been a great experience. They have been a pleasure to work with and helped us out wherever possible; from providing us with accommodation to installing our fibre installation. The Canadian Forces made us feel very welcome in Kandahar from start to finish and we have been fortunate in being able to work alongside such a professional force. I'd like to wish the girls and lads all the best and we look forward to seeing them in Germany or Canada.

TAKEOVER - *by Sig Carlton*

On 19 September, soldiers from 230 Sig Sqn paraded in Elmpt after months of preparation and looking forward to flying out to Afghanistan. By that evening we were on our way from Ramstein to Kabul in a huge American C17. About 30 minutes before our arrival we were told to put our body armour on and we all sat in our seats with the lights dimmed and looking nervous. That's when it hit me where I was actually going. As this is my first tour, I didn't know what to expect.

As I stepped off the plane, the heat hit me and I knew it was going to be a hot 6 months. At first it was hard to breath because of the dust in the air, but I soon got used to it. On arrival at Kandahar airfield I was shocked at how large the camp was. There are lots of facilities including a gym, cinema, cafes, internet and phone rooms, Burger King and Subway... all the necessities! In the short time I have been here I have taken part in volleyball against the Afghan National Army and the Canadian Army. It has been great to meet the locals so soon.

Of course, being here is not all about the fun things, I am here to take over the role of the RCST(S). After being here only a few days, already I can see we have a lot of work to do to keep up the high standards set by our predecessors but we are all looking forward to the challenge of working on a NATO task to provide comms around the Southern Provinces of Afghanistan.

The det at Regional Command Capital

THE DETACHMENT AT REGIONAL COMMAND CAPITAL (RCC) - *by Sig Nathan Southgate*

After 2 weeks of delayed planes, we finally made it to Afghanistan for our 6 month tour at RCC (Camp Warehouse). **LCpl Ian Corner** and I are System Admin for the networks that are already in place. **SSgt Charlie Kama** heads our det and our team consists of **Cpls Kev Bewick**, **Chris Lyle** and **Dave Scott**, **LCpl Ian Corner** and **Sig Jay Dunn** (attached from 628 Sig Sqn).

We are awaiting the arrival of 2 other members, **Cpl Conrad Hadnett** also System Admin and **Sig Chris Cargill**, our resident Electrician Driver. Our op roles are System Admin of the ISAF Networks, maintaining the TGST det, the maint of the trunk links/telephone exchange and Video Conferencing. Our group spent 2 days in HQ ISAF before moving to RCC (Camp Warehouse) and there was a big difference between the meals. As this is a French camp, the food is cooked in a very French Haute Cuisine way and generally speaking, the meat products are rare. When we left from HQ ISAF for RCC it was a night move. It was the first time that I had seen the streets of Kabul and I found myself thinking back to the many weeks of pre-tour trg. It was then that I had realised that the trg we had been given had much more of a point to it than I had expected.

Regional Command Support Team (South)

Morale is high and all members of the det go about their everyday tasks in a determined but relaxed manner in order to ensure that comms are maintained to their utmost capability. The changeover between the French and Germans has not been noticed and relations with the host nation have been a good factor in ensuring that we are firing on all cylinders (to coin a phrase). Although we are an isolated det, this has not caused a problem and the lads continue to crack on and get the job done.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO **Lt Col DA Craft**
RSM **WO1 R Dyer**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Horton BEM**
SSM **WO2 Gaz Chapman**

Since our last report, the Sqn has been focussed on supporting the Fd Sqns during Ex GRIFFEN FOCUS and deploying ourselves onto Salisbury Plain Trg Area for Ex RED BEAUFIGHTER 2 which due to the Fd Sqns' commitments was drawn down to Sqn Level trg, mainly focussed on the new MATTs.

As is the norm with the large beast that is HQ Sqn a number of farewells must be said to the following pers; **Maj Dave Stachini** (QM) to 35 Sig Regt (V) – the Football team and Trophy Cabinet will miss you, **Capt Bob Wymer** off to CPO 10 Sig Regt, **Capt Digger Barnes** REME to Apache IPT Yeovil, **WO2(MTWO) Lee Hopkins** to DHU Chicksands, **WO2(RQMS) Tony Wringe** to 37 Sig Regt (V) to hone his fishing skills, **WO2(Supvr IS) H Jones** to 30 Sig Regt, **SSgt 'Shotgun' Hannah** to 19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, good luck with the GB team selection and **SSgt John-Allen**, good luck to you in your new civilian career. Many thanks to you all for all your efforts

And with farewells come the welcomes to the following:

Maj Guy Richards (QM(G)), **Capt Elisabeth Roberts** (Adjt), **Capt Dave Coffey** (Tech Adjt), **Capt Dave Mitchell** (UWO), **Capt Steph MacKenzie** REME, **WO2(MTWO) Fudge MacPhee**, **WO2(RQMS) Andy Paling** and **SSgt Richards** (TM Tp), **SSgt Crompton** (TM Tp) and **SSgt Griffiths**, Master Chef. A warm welcome to you all and your families.

SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES HALF MARATHON 2006
- by SSgt Jock Castle

The British Army were invited to enter an 8 man team to participate in the Singapore Half Marathon on Sunday 27 August. Three athletes from 21 Sig Regt were selected to take part in this event**, SSgt Jock Castle**, **Cpl Kev Conlon** and **Cpl Smudge Smith**. The team travelled out on Tuesday 22 August to allow for acclimatisation and to prepare for this race and afterwards they had 2 days to recuperate and see some of the local sights before the long flight back.

The trip started off well with a 7 hour flight to Doha then a further 7 hour flight to Singapore. We were delighted to be met by our hosts, members of the Singapore Army Signals. After a few hours rest, the team was invited to take part in Regtl PT in the form of a run. This was our first taste of running in humidity and everyone was delighted to be sweating within the first few paces!

After the perspiring had stopped and the pulse rate had returned to some form of normality, we had a guided tour around the Island by our hosts and then spent an hour with the High Commissioner at the British Embassy. We were also invited to a pre-race lunch and met members of other Armed Forces from numerous countries around the world, including Vietnam, Malaysia and India. This was also an opportunity for the team meet the Comd Singapore Army. The following day our hosts kindly organized a trip to the Allied War Cemetery for us to learn and appreciate the history of the Island.

The race finally started at 0530hrs on Sunday morning and all runners were soon to find out how hard it was running in such humid conditions. All team members ran well and completed the course but were amazed at how much it had taken out of their bodies. Despite this, the team still managed to get 6 runners in the top 20.

We spent the next few days recuperating and enjoying the hospitality of both our hosts and the people of Singapore. The team was very fortunate to be given the opportunity to take part in this trip and we would like to thank our sponsors the Army Athletics Association and our CO, **Lt Col DA Craft**.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj GB Lamb**
SSM **WO2 Wayne Dunbar**

OP HIGHBROW – BEIRUT EVACUATION - *by Cpl Perry*

On Tuesday 18 July, **Sig Tom Purvin** and I were a week into our 2 week duty fulfilling 21 Sig Regt's National Standby Mobile Air Operations Team (MAOT) commitment at RAF Benson, Oxfordshire. It was early afternoon when the Ops Room received confirmation that the other High Readiness MAOT with the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) was required to deploy with C Coy 2LI on Op HIGHBROW to evacuate British nationals from Beirut during the current troubles.

With the SLE Det already tasked in Wales, **Sig Purvin** and I were tasked to deploy instead. After assembling all the eqpt required to complete the task, an excited Sigs Det and team leader, **Flt Lt 'Russ' Gleeson**, arrived at the Air Mounting Centre in South Cerney. The next 36 hours were to be somewhat hectic and following our mid morning departure from RAF Brize Norton we arrived in Cyprus on the early afternoon of Wednesday. After another sleepless night involving some interesting bus trips and admin, our det with team leader left Cyprus, accompanied by C Coy and a med sect, bound for Beirut in a Chinook.

We were set to task immediately and had to locate and mark a suitable Helicopter Landing Site (HLS) for the forthcoming evacuation. Over the next few days we had to liaise with the helicopter crews and the evacuation handling centre to enable the safe running of the HLS. We used ground to air comms to talk to the inbound helicopter crews to inform them of what their load would be and which Landing Point to use. **Flt Lt Gleeson** co-ordinated the helicopter and evacuees movements and assisted with marshalling. As well as the helicopters, 2 naval vessels, *HMS Gloucester* and *HMS Bulwark*, and chartered ferries were used in the evacuation and we were also involved in assisting to board people onto these ships.

Our task in Beirut lasted 5 days. It was very rewarding and nearly 5000 people were helped to safety and there was a tinge of sadness on leaving Beirut. The Lebanese Army and civilians had been extremely welcoming towards us and we left them in great uncertainty of their safety and future.
Our return leg was slightly more leisurely than our arrival and we were shipped into Limassol by *HMS Gloucester*, managing to squeeze in a couple of days rest in Episkopi before returning to the UK. This task was a rewarding and interesting experience and proved that the High Readiness teams can indeed be rolling out the gates within hours of tasking to anywhere in the world.

REGIMENTAL CHARITY DAYS

21 Sig Regt recently had a push to raise money for St John's Ambulance. The CO, in a flash of genius, offered the Regt the chance to miss the traditional Friday thrashing in the gym for the

price of a £3 donation to the fund. Being a charitable bunch, not one member of the Regt refused to dig deep and cough up the loot. I have to admit to feeling a warm glow in my heart (as opposed to a tight chest) as I left the gym knowing that I'd 'done my bit'.

Stage 2 was a Regtl Family/Open Day within Azimghur Barracks; a chance for the friends and family of the Regt to come and see a bit of what we do and join in some fun. Each Sqn provided a mil display stand and a game. Luckily the weather held out and hundreds turned out to see a C130 Hercules flypast and have a punt on the raffle. The RCWO and his team kept attendees happy with a hog-roast and **SSgt Steve Pope**, never one to miss an opportunity, deployed the bar into the "field" – have to remember that one on the next Regtl PACEX.

Stage 3 was a Regtl 'It's a Knockout' competition – a combination of potted sports and an Ironman competition, with events including 'Atlas Stones', 'The Crucifix' and er..... welly throwing! Despite the fun and charitable nature of the day, competition was fierce and in the end 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn ran out the winners by a narrow margin. The event was followed by a Regtl 'Do' at the bar which ended up featuring **Sgt 'Stan' Stanley** taking on all comers at arm-wrestling and a horse race which was won by a CO and a 248 syndicate – not that there's any suggestion of race-fixing at all.

In all the Charity Day proved to be a resounding success and raised £4000 for Saint John's Ambulance. Many thanks to all who dug into their pockets and particularly those who generously volunteered to skip PT to raise this fantastic amount.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj I Blower**
SSM	**WO2 S Lithgow**

This month the Sqn welcomes the new OC, **Maj Ian Blower**, and bids a fond farewell to the old OC, **Maj Lloyd Golley** who is off to the Comd Trg Wing in sunny Blandford.

EXERCISE COASTAL DRAGON - *by Lt Holly Dyer*

Monday 17 July saw the beginning of Ex COASTAL DRAGON, a Coast to Coast walk for the fit and keen members (and **Lt Boardman**) of 244 Sig Sqn. The ex was planned and executed by **SSgt Steve Brown,** who managed to convince everyone that it was going to be a gentle 'bimble' for a few days.

The gentle bimble turned out to be a 2 week long tab, starting at St Bee's Beach in Cumbria and finishing in Robin Hood's Bay, North Yorkshire. The walk was in aid of the charity, the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (FSID).

Each day we covered between 11 and 23 miles over varying terrain. Beginning in the Lake District was a sure-fire way to warm up the legs! This, coupled with the record high temperatures, ensured we took a few days to get into the pace of the ex.

The admin team was headed up by the beautiful Charlie Tp **Sgts Griffiths** and **Fisher**, who were responsible for meeting us at various water stops and ensuring the campsites at the end of the day were set up with dinner ready on our arrival!

The whole admin team was excellent, ensuring that everything behind the scenes ran smoothly. After the first week, we had a swap round of personalities, with a few more people joining us and others returning to camp. However, the hard-core few managed to griz it out for the whole 193 miles. The walk covered the Lake District, the Yorkshire Moors and finally the Dales, so there were plenty of Kodak moments to immortalise our journey on celluloid. The 2 weeks turned out to be a great success and we managed to raise over £3000 for FSID. Bring on the 3 week summer stand-down to recover!

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj KA Jeeves**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) Surendra**

The Sqn bade a fond farewell to the following personnel who all left the Sqn after successful tours; OC Sqn, **Maj Jase Kennedy**, 2IC Sqn, **Capt Buddhi**, **Sgt Lawes**, **Cpl Smith** (now Sgt), **Cpl NabinKaji** (now Sgt) and **Cpl Mekh**. In turn, we welcome the following; the new OC Sqn, **Maj Karl Jeeves**, 2IC Sqn **Capt Ratna**, **2Lt Harryman**, **SSgt Bharat** and **Cpl Bishnu Chochangi**.

248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON WELCOMES THE CO
- by Sgt Sanjeev

With a hectic year so far the Sqn somehow managed to eventually welcome the new CO, **Lt Col DA Craft** and his family in the traditional Gurkha fashion. Prior to the start of the cultural show, **Maj Karl Jeeves**, OC Sqn, took the opportunity to welcome the CO to the Sqn. He also thanked everyone involved in the organisation and smooth running of the function, especially the chefs led by **Sgt Sundar Yakkha** for preparing some fantastic Chinese dishes and the ever popular Gurkha curry. Everyone enjoyed the evening immensely.

EX KHUKURI CHOP 17 – 22 SEP 06

Ex KHUKURI CHOP was 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn's annual Sqn level comms fd trg ex, which took place on Salisbury Plain Trg area (SPTA) from 17 to 22 September. This was also the first ex for the new OC Sqn, who was able to spend much of the time getting to know the soldiers of the Sqn. The main aim was integrating all the Sqn's deployable assets and fd sp functions whilst continuing to evaluate Regtl SOIs.

All 3 Trunk Nodes, 3 Switching Centrals and 2 SAN gps from 220 Sig Sqn and 244 Sig Sqn were deployed with OSC 132. Once all the assets were in their locations, each trunk node began a 12-hr rotational cycle of preparation, move and establishing routine. All 3 switching centrals and 2 SAN gps followed a similar pattern of move under the control of OSC 132, in order to provide mobile comms to the Trunk Nodes. Without doubt, this ex gave the Sqn the ideal opportunity to enhance the comms skills at all levels and to integrate the newer members of the Sqn.

LANYARD TROPHY 2006 – A BLOKE'S PERSPECTIVE
- by Lt Richie Boardman

The 29th of September had been a day in waiting for the Lanyard Teams of 21 Sig Regt. Three months before the event the Regt began its initial planning stages. Trg started in Camp comprising runs, tabs, circuits and a bit of swimming to entertain the team. Of particular note was **Cpl Conley** with his Olympic standard Doggie crawl! Several weeks later saw the end of about 10 team members through op tours, courses and natural wastage. Those that remained "stepped sharp" and continued to train despite the never ending pressures from the DCOS and commitments at work.

After trg on camp, the first week after Summer Leave started the build up in earnest with some serious hill work in the Brecon Beacons. A week of familiarisation and recces along the route followed. The team soon adapted to the 'steady state' tabs and maintained the progressive trg to increase fitness and ground awareness. The team was looking optimistically strong, although the week saw several injuries raise their ugly head.

The team selection for the two male Regtl teams was slowly coming to the forefront. With **WO2(SSM) Si Lithgow** and **Lt Richie Boardman**, as the 2 Team Captains, selecting the team members would prove to be a difficult decision. With a further 2 weeks being spent in the hills, building on the foundations of fitness and stamina, the 2 teams eventually became apparent. With the experience and advice from **Capt Pete Griffiths**, **SSgt Brown** and **SSgt 'Manny' Man**, the teams were decided.

Eventually the day arrived and an early start saw both teams side by side and ready for the long haul. The horn sounded and the sprint began. It was a tight start up Fan Llia, but disaster struck with an unfortunate injury. The first team lost one of its strongest runners, **Sig MacEnaney** who badly twisted his ankle in the darkness and unfortunately had to retire from the event at Checkpoint 1. After cracking on and maintaining a solid pace the team took another blow. A second team member, **Sig 'Jaffa' Abdulrehman** was lost between Checkpoints 3 and 4.

With only 8 of the boys left at such an early stage, the pressure was on, but the team ethos proved to be faultless. With no complaints, the team pushed on to close the gap with 216 (Para) Sig Sqn. Endless amounts of carbo gels and snacks were thrown down the guys' throats and the Gurkhas, **Sig Bharat** and **Ramesh** typically enjoyed all the luxuries of coconut bites and fairy cakes to keep their energy levels up!

Throughout the course the teams proved their merit. The A Team coming in a close 2nd was an excellent result with the time achieved and as the B Team came a close 3rd, the trg and dedication by all team members and sp crew spoke volumes. A big thank you to the Regt and in particular the admin parties, **Capt Pete Griffiths**, **SSM Gaz Chapman**, **LCpl Deepak**, **Cpl Yam** and **Cpl Monty Learmonth** for all the time and effort spent ensuring the teams were well prepared and supported.

LANYARD TROPHY 2006 – THE LADIES' PERSPECTIVE
- by 2Lt Suzie Wallis

On Friday 29th September, 8 ladies from 21 Sig Regt won the female title in the 27th Lanyard Trophy. This year's competition was set over a gruelling course, starting in the Brecon Beacons, moving through to the Black Mountains and then onto Sennybridge Trg Area, before finishing at the back gate of Sennybridge Camp. The competitors were carrying 25lbs as a minimum but with the heavy rain we received on the day it was much closer to 35 lbs for all the team, not much less than the 40 lbs the males carried.

The female team comprised **Capt Erin Brookes-Smith**, **2Lt Suzie Wallis**, **Cpl 'Titch' Vellacott**, **Cpl Stacey Lyons**, **Cpl Nikki Harrison**, **Cpl Morag Duxbury**, **Sig Fox and O/Cdt Atkins** with 6 of the 8 ladies having to finish. As the Team Captain without a Senior NCO as 2IC, **Capt Brookes-Smith** had the unenviable task of having to finish the competition herself in order for us to qualify and she also had to motivate the rest of us to finish with her. Most of the team spent up to 3 weeks in Wales selecting the best routes to navigate between the 11 checkpoints on the course.

Therefore, by the time it came to competition day the team were feeling strong and had hopes of doing extremely well. At the beginning, putting a full team together had been problematic; our 8th member was only introduced to us at 1000hrs the night before the race. Waking at 0330hrs, we were at the start line and off to the buzzer at 0530hrs, making a slight navigational error but quickly getting back on track! At Checkpoint 2, we saw our admin team for the first time and taking onboard bananas and isotonic drinks, we hardly stopped to find out how we were doing. At Checkpoint 3, we unfortunately had to lose **Cpl 'Titch' Vellacott**. She had returned from an ex just 1 week previously and without any trg had done well to complete 3 of the hardest legs of the competition.

By Checkpoint 5, where we had some encouragement from the three Sqn OCs, we were spurred on when we were told we were an hour ahead of the next female team and in the top 10 teams overall. After a longer break and a weigh in we set off in high spirits. Legs 5 to 7 were our strength and by this point we all knew mentally that we would finish and had the potential to do extremely well. By Checkpoint 7, after 3 mammoth hills, we were informed that our lead had been reduced to only 40 mins and we did not feel as certain any longer that we could just relax on the final push into camp.

The route up to Checkpoint 9 was more painful than it had been in rehearsals and with throbbing feet, we did not stop and pushed onto 10 without a break. With a male team hot on our heels, we could also see a male team half a km in front of us. As we moved through the Checkpoint and down into the valley, we caught up with and overtook the men. With 300m to go, we still could not see the finish line and it was with relief that the back gate and all our supporters, including the male team came into view. We ran in as a squad, as we had been the whole way round. Exhaustion sunk in and muscles cramped up immediately. A final weigh in, team photos and then we were off to the showers before a welcome dinner in Sennybridge Cookhouse.

The presentation the next day was given by the SOinC (A) and we all received a bronze trophy as well as the large silver team one. To have beaten the majority of male teams is a fantastic achievement, a testament to the hard trg and teamwork we fostered in the time prior to the competition. Although challenging us all mentally and physically at some point, the Lanyard trg and race were a fantastic experience and it is likely we may see some of the team out on the course in the future. Finally many thanks to our Admin Sp Team – **Sgt Buz Bury** and **Sig Mark**, without whose superb assistance the going would have been that much harder.

SUMMARY – A CRACKING RESULT FOR 21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AS)

As a Regt, the Lanyard Trophy was an outstanding success. The male teams finished in 2nd and 3rd place with the A team finishing in under 10 hrs and the B team only 45 mins behind them. The female team completed the course in 11 hours 55 minutes, one of the fastest female times ever, winning the Female competition and more remarkably coming 6th overall. Our TA team, 43 (Wx) Sig Sqn, pulled out all the stops and had a cracking run winning the TA category and competing hard against many of the Regular male teams. Congratulations to all and see you next year!

XXII 22nd SIGNAL REGIMENT

Adjt	**Lt Col Neil Fraser**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Reed**

Post summer leave the Implementation Team has swelled from the "dirty dozen" to the "filthy forty" or thereabouts. We have welcomed a number of RLC, REME and AGC individuals into Stafford who are all beavering away setting up their depts and pushing our tentacles further into the station. We would like to start by welcoming **Maj Dougy Wright** (2IC) from JCUFI, **Maj Dougie Craig** (OC Sp Sqn) from deepest Helmand, **WO1(RSM) Olly Reed** from ATR Lichfield and finally **WO2(SSM) Daz Collins** from DCSA Henlow. The new Station Comd, **Col Charles Turner** (late Royal Signals), has also started work. Alas with few Station Staff, he is having to use those newly arrived in 12 Sig Gp to assist him getting to grips with the variety of agencies in this large station. This should mean that the CO, **Lt**

Col Neil Fraser, and the QM, **Maj Tom Smith**, can worry more about creating the Regt and less about the medical and dental centre and how the DLO will draw down in Stafford. The RSM has been "acquiring" some of the tribal items that will help the RHQ and messes develop an Army and Corps flavour and also he has been discovering some of the nooks and crannies about the place.

The RSM would like to thank those units who have already donated plaques to 22 Sig Regt and asks all other formations if they are willing to contribute their unit plaque to the Regt and if so could they please send it to the address at the base of the article. All donated plaques will be displayed in RHQ. Those kind enough to donate one will receive a 22 Sig Regt plaque in return.

Contact Address: 22 Sig Regt. RHQ, MOD Stafford,
Beaconside Stafford. ST18 0AQ

UPDATE

Key personnel for the LAD started to arrive in August, namely **WO1(ASM) Smith**, and **Sgts Hilliard**, **Anthony** and **Baxter**. An action plan for the configuration of the workshop was developed. This was a new experience for everyone and attention to detail was vital to ensure the workshop will be fully operational for the formation of the Regt next year. They are making steady progress having obtained a stores area and office areas in the hanger identified as their workshop. The task is being made harder as a small RAF fitter team and DSDC who maintain a variety of MOD vehs already occupy the same workshop! The offices now enabled them to have a stable work base from which to identify and demand all tech publications, Special Tools and Test Equipment (STTE), veh spares, implement the management of Health and Safety, organise the workshop design, etc.

The Ops Officer, **Maj Dave Whitaker**, is now beginning to think about exs and the forecast for 2007, but with 3(UK) Div and the JHC pretty heavily committed trying to work out which FFR we have spare to go to Germany to support ARRC is proving tricky! That said, since we do not have any FFRs yet, perhaps we should consider a Transit Van for the Regtl Ops team! **Sgt Leigh Necrews** is working on the development of the J1/J4 IOS (CROW as it has become known 'Comms for the Rest Of the World' to distinguish it from PTARMIGAN and FALCON) and is going balder by the day! We are also trying to populate the 8005 (with the support of MCM Div) but since every week or so we have to cut an LSN due to some "change management" programme, this is proving tricky!

The MT Dept is now up and running under the supervision of **Cpl Jacko Jackson** who has taken charge of our massive fleet of 3 vehs and is being hit from all directions with tasking requests. The paper war in the QM's Dept is now in full swing now that the RQMS (T), **WO2(RQMS) Ash Ingham** and **Sgt Marie Bailey** have joined the fold. The Gurkha contingent has now been boosted to 7 with the arrival of **LCpl Gautam** (detached to 12 Sig Gp as Comds Dvr) and **Sigs Prabeen** and **Shin** who have all arrived from 30 Sig Regt. They are already being 'gainfully' employed assisting **Sgt JP Jaya** and the RQMS with the endless list of tasks.

Building work has now started, the first stud wall being built in the Regtl G4 compound so we are a bit more confident of things taking shape. Detailed planning is now underway with 222 Sig Sqn and 248 Gurkha Sig Sqn for the movement and integration and we are continuing to host a variety of visits including the Stafford Task Force (County and Borough Councillors), Stafford School and Commander Regional Forces (CRF) who was briefed on some of the estate issues and problems the Team has faced.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Team has somehow managed to find the time for a spot of AT under the guidance of **Maj Dave Whitaker**! Ex Beacon Stride took place between 25 – 27 September at Ambleside in the Lake district and consisted of an 'amble' over Helvellyn and Langdale pikes much to the surprise of **WO1(FofS) Karl Scaife** who was convinced that he was going to fall to his death. Again that evening he lost his footing after a few sherbets!

LCpl Garside, Sig Tek, RSM, ASM, SSgt Bagbir, Adjt, Ops Officer and RQMS at the summit of Helvellyn

30th SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col DB Warne**
RSM **WO1(RSM) JS McGaw**

250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj JR Anderson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Lokbahadur Gurung**

A warm welcome to the new Sqn Comd, **Maj JR Anderson** and the Ops Officer (Des) **Capt B Jeffery**, and goodbye and best of luck to **Maj JHN Harrington** in his new post as a Project Manager in NATO HQ Brussels.

OPERATION HIGHBROW (LEBANON)
- by LCpl Ashok Sunuwar

On 12 July 2006, the Hezbollah carried out a raid into Israel provoking a military response. This caused concern for the safety of all UK citizens in Lebanon and so the British Government tasked Joint Force Headquarter (JFHQ) to deploy its Operational Liaison and Recce Team (OLRT) to plan for the evacuation of UK passport holders. A 2 man team from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn (GSS) deployed with the OLRT to provide secure comms on Extreme High Readiness.

On 15 July, the lead OLRT det was activated for a deployment, despite all QGS personnel being deployed on Ex TRAILWALKER 06. With the kit ready to go, the team attended an O Group in Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ) in the early hours of the morning and deployed on the next civilian flight to Cyprus from Heathrow. Once in Cyprus comms for the Main HQ was set-up and the team prepared for the worst-case scenario by testing all its eqpt and wpns. Five staff officers, 1 clerk, our Close Protection force, **Sig Min** and **LCpl Ashok** then deployed forward into Beirut on the first UK helicopter rescue mission of Op HIGHBROW and set up a fwd HQ in the British Embassy,

A group photograph of OLRT team in Cyprus before the departure to Lebanon

Lebanon. Meanwhile, 2 more ORLT comms teams deployed from 250 GSS to Cyprus and to *HMS Bulwark* with the Royal Marines.

On arrived in Beirut, Israeli bombing in the southern part of the city was ongoing. At the Embassy, we met the British Ambassador and had to set up comms for the fwd HQ on the top floor as quickly as possible. By the next day we were communicating with PJHQ and other Joint Forces situated in different locations. The evacuation soon began with several thousand British citizens being taken to Cyprus by ship or helicopter over the following 11 days.

Due to the high level of threat we maintained 24 hour watch keeping providing secure comms and situation reports to London, Cyprus and other locations. It was a challenging deployment with the team having to deal with power cuts, daily bombings, lack of office space and providing access to many different platforms/HQs.

During the task, the team was visited by the British MP, **Mr Ken Howell**, who said they would be heroes when they got back to UK and **Brig J Page** who was in overall comd of the Op. On successful completion of the evacuation, all teams were safely recovered back to UK. It was 250 GSS's first overseas opn since taking on the JTFHQ role in March 2006 and the teams were the first in and last out of Op HIGHBROW.

Unfortunately, the weather was not on our side and the flight experienced incredible turbulence and a violent storm.

Due to aircraft problems, we had to stop in Ascension Island for 2 days. Finally we landed at our destination on 11 September after a bumpy ride that everyone will remember.

The comms phase was well co-ordinated by **SSgt Binod** and ran smoothly, even though not all the cargo had arrived. The aim of the ex was successfully achieved in time due to our 'Comms Guru', **Sgt Pratap** preparing well prior to deployment. Therefore, we had a lot of time for another test, which was to get our Cormorant and Talon systems working on the Falkland Island's Synchronous Digital Hierarchy.

The following week we had a range day conducted by a Royal Welsh Inf Coy. It was very exciting to be refreshing our inf skills of sect battle drills in the snow and wilderness of Onion Range. On 22 September, we had a battlefield tour where we paid our tributes to 3

A group photograph taken on the Falkland Islands after the completion of live firing in chilly environment

Para Regt and the brave soldiers who lost their lives. The story of late **Sgt Ian McKay** who won the Victoria Cross at Mount Longdon is a source of inspiration for every soldier. Besides these activities, we also had a chance to fly in the cockpit of the Hercules during a tactical flight along the Island. Similarly, we improved our friendly relationship with the JCUFI pers during sports afternoon and a Gurkha curry night. With all the excitement, enjoyment and achievement, Ex GLOBAL GOOSE 06 proved to be very successful and fruitful.

EXERCISE GLOBAL GOOSE 3 – 29 SEPTEMBER
- by LCpl Dakswor Rai

Ably supported by W Tp pers, X Tp had a great chance to explore the Falkland Islands, nearly at the bottom of the southern hemisphere on Ex GLOBAL GOOSE. The ex was led by **Lt Dominic Finch** and it successfully conducted the pre-deployment trg, deployment, establishment of comms, live firing and recovery phases. The aim of the ex was to provide a comms link back to UK using the Cormorant system via a Talon Satellite link. On 7 September, 20 pers flew from Brize Norton to Cyprus.

EXERCISE RALEIGH KHUKURI *- by Sig Chijkumar Gurung*

Victor Tp from 250 GSS visited the Ship Damage Repair Instruction Unit (DRIU) at *HMS Raleigh* in Plymouth on 29 June. This is where the Royal Navy conducts trg on how to save a ship when it is damaged by a missile strike. The visit was organised to get a feel for things aquatic in order to prepare for the Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTFHQ) Afloat task.

At *HMS Raleigh* we were introduced to *HMS Havoc*, a mock-up of a ship on huge hydraulic pistons which was able to 'sink' on a

regular basis. The 'Ship' had a number of compartments, each of which had a variety of holes of various shapes and sizes which would leak violently after the attack. The container itself could be made to swing from left and right to simulate a sinking ship at sea. Before boarding the 'Ship', we were taught how to stop the water gushing in. We were then split into teams and sent to save the sinking ship!

As we entered *HMS Havoc*, the ship doors were locked and the water was released, all lights went off and the container started tilting left and right. Therefore, we had to grope our way into respective compartments and repair the holes. By the time we entered the compartment the water was already at waist level. It was very difficult to stabilise ourselves inside the container and put the wooden wedges into the holes to stop the influx of water. By the time we had put the wedges into all the holes, the water was at neck level. It was a difficult exercise, but we all completed it successfully. When the ex was completed, the lights were switched on and we walked out of the compartments completely soaked from head to toe. It was certainly a different and challenging experience, and one long to be remembered.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj JS Hiorns**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) DW Burdus**

A VISIT TO HMS ILLUSTRIOUS
- by Lt J Barr and Cpl Robinson

Due to a long traditional affiliation between 30 Sig Regt and *HMS Illustrious*, 4 members of the Regt were presented with the fantastic opportunity of going to sea with the ship in July as part of an annual exchange between the 2 establishments. They joined the ship on its Athens to Gibraltar leg of a Maritime Strike Deployment, in which *HMS Illustrious* had been participating in various ops. These included the NATO led Op ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR and the coalition led Op ENDURING FREEDOM, where *HMS Illustrious* and its crew had been conducting Maritime Security Ops in both the Mediterranean and Arabian Sea, whilst concurrently conducting a Maritime Strike ex in Oman and a straight naval ex with the Indian Navy.

On Monday 3 July, the team from 30 Sig Regt, comprising **Lt Barr** (258 Sig Sqn), **SSgt Lawton** (Sup Sqn), **Cpl Robinson** (250 GSS) and **LCpl Roberts** (256 Sig Sqn), deployed to Athens to board *HMS Illustrious*. We were going to spend 2 weeks at sea to see how the Royal Navy carry out their daily tasks.

Tuesday was a free day to explore Athens, including the famous Acropolis and the very busy local flea markets. The following day we were set to depart and commence our journey to Gibraltar. The morning consisted of a brief tour around the ship including all the safety points, allowing us to become orientated within this huge vessel. In the afternoon we were given a briefing on all HF, VHF and SATCOM Systems in the ship's Main Comms Room and on the radar systems within the Ops room. On Thursday, we were shown all the different SATCOM assets and services provision within the ship.

Then it was time for PT in the Hangar; which in 35 degrees is not easy. On the Friday morning we were due to arrive in Augusta for a fuel pit stop.

Following this we met the aircraft engineers who showed us around both the Sea King and Merlin helicopters. The Sea King was the main surveillance aircraft being utilised by the ship for Maritime Security Ops and as we were about to be fortunate enough to get a flight in one the following day, we paid special attention to the flight safety brief. Yet again the day was rounded off with more PT which was conducted on Augusta jetty with the heat making it a very arduous task.

We departed Augusta on Saturday morning and began to enjoy the extraordinary views as we sailed through the Massena Straits between Sicily and Italy. In the afternoon we attended our flying safety brief and spent around 40 mins in the air, during which the crew identified all the sea vessels in the area using its highly capable radar eqpt, after which we had a little go handling the aircraft ourselves! The heat inside was unbearable. Sunday saw us attending a church service, which was a unique experience; hosted on the Quarter Deck and especially as it was followed by champagne and cake! The remainder of the day was spent on the ship's bridge gaining an insight into how to command and drive the ship. Again, we were given the opportunity to jump into the driver's seat and drive 22,000 tonnes of ship.

All of Monday was spent with in the marine engineering (ME) department where we were shown all the electrical and mechanical parts of the ship. This ranged from the ship's Rolls Royce engines to the production of water. We then got to relax that evening with 'Hands to Bay' (swimming), a BBQ and horse racing on the flight deck. On Tuesday, we were allowed to spend the day with a department of our own choice, which included the Bridge, the comms room and the engineers. Wednesday was spent looking at the information systems side of life and Bowman. We also got a tour of the ship's wpn systems which were highly impressive. That evening was our last PT session.

Finally on Thursday, we took to the bridge roof proved to get the best view to witness our entry into Gibraltar Port, including the 'Rock' and all the colourful buildings crammed around its base. Following Sundowners (drinks for members of the ship's company at the end of a long voyage or tasking) we were given the time to explore Gibraltar; venturing up the famous rock to see the rock monkeys and caves.

Overall, our time at sea has proved to be a great experience which was thoroughly enjoyed by each and every one of us. We have learnt a lot about the Royal Navy and of course have made many new friends. Many thanks to the friendly crew of *HMS Illustrious.*

SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Duckworth**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) MD Wilford**

EXERCISE RAMPANT LION - *by Sgt Mechen*

Ex RAMPANT LION is the annually held working week designed to develop a relationship with the locals of Alderney Island. This year our tasks were many and quite diverse. From digging holes to placing mile markers and digging out WW2 German trench systems. Running along side our work program we had an opportunity to help out the local Militia with their trg and take part in the Army *v* Islanders Competition, which we won for the first time.

On the journey to Alderney, **Sig 'Stealth' Titus** gained a reputation while manoeuvring the mini bus onto the Ramped Craft Logistics (RCL) causing only minimal damage…to both vehicles. The crossing was calm with only one succumbing to motion sickness and that was one of the RCL crew!

After 10 hours of bobbing up and down in the RCL we had our first sight of the island shrouded in sea mist. The port, dominated by Napoleonic, Victorian and German WW2 fortifications was a formidable sight in it's own right, but made even more so with our CO and RSM standing on shore waiting for us.

Our mini tented city was built without any great fuss and the work detail for the following day issued. Back breaking work was followed by elbow bending fun in the local establishments, both were enjoyable but one more so than the other. **SSgt Chalky White** after the stresses of ensuring we all had a dry night and warm food decided to carry out the harder task of completing a recce of the local golf course. We are not too sure but rumour has it that he only managed to find one hole, the 19th.

Alderney Cadet Force and soldiers from 30 Signal Regiment join together for a briefing session

Our largest task was the digging of a drainage trench, later to be completed by the locals to incorporate a sewage pipeline. This was located along side the Militia's main building. After many tons of earth and a few 'dead' trees the task was complete, but not without the help of a mechanised digger. Great fun was had trying to work out the controls of the machine, but eventually the job was done and to a very high standard. It would have made any council worker proud.

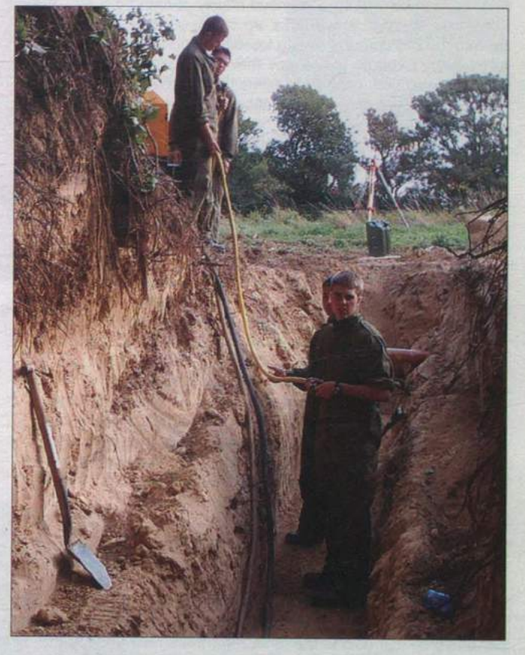
At the Militia building, a revamp of a room was carried out with ceilings and walls ripped down and new ones erected. An old storeroom was turned into a smart and clean office area, and a full stock check of the Militia's holdings was undertaken. WW2 British webbing and a German P38 of the same era were just some of the more interesting items found and catalogued.

The Alderney Militia can trace its history back to the 1200s. Used as a local defence force for many years and gaining its Royal warrant in the 1800s for actions carried out during the Napoleonic Wars. The Alderney Cadet Force now holds this historic title. During our visit we also had the pleasure of instructing the Cadets on basic radio use and also giving them a Battle Lesson around one of their impressive Victorian Forts. They all went away with a smile on their faces and sweat on their brow.

Another large job was the uncovering of a German trench system which was 2m deep and about 20m long. This formed part of the Island's defences against an allied invasion. At the beginning of WW2 the islanders where evacuated and brought to the mainland…bar one man. This one unfortunate chap apparently slept in on the morning of the evacuation and missed the boat. During the occupation of the Island the Germans turned the whole placed into a fortress, placing anti aircraft and shore based batteries on every available inch. Everywhere you look you can see signs of these defences and they only managed to complete 40% of what was programmed to build!

As part of the trench team's brief they where instructed that if they came across anything large, metallic and ticking the first IA was to run like mad then call the local Historian for advice. Halfway through the dig they had to do just that, but thankfully it turned out to be an old pipe that was discarded in the trench years before. After the incident the guys started to pay more attention to their digging. Although it had its setbacks, the trench was finished in record time and to a very high standard.

The local historian/Government official was very happy that another part of their history had come back to life. The milestone



Digging out the German defensive trenches

project was by far the easiest, but still had its fair share of sweat and tears. This project was to support the local wildlife trust and tourist agency by placing large granite blocks around the Island to mark the coastal path. Steep, narrow tracks with large lumps of granite rolling around the back of a GS can make for some very hairy times.

Apart from all the work carried out, our main goal was to win the annual competition and bring the cup back to where it should be. It was a close run thing but we managed it. The competition was mainly based around sports; football and golf with a large helping of pub games put into the mix. Towards the end of the week it was 2 all, a decider was needed to break the tie. Tug-of-war was

deemed to be fitting. So after a 15 minute practice, which included a 5 minute rest, our team was raring to go. We decimated the Island team and in so doing we won the Cup. Congratulations to all that took part in the many sports.

To say that the week was all work and no play would be a lie. Every evening there was a social event; either having a BBQ with the President of the Island, free meals at a local 5 star restaurant or joining the locals in their bars. Some of the guys made it their duty to show the locals that we can party, even to the extremes of singing the theme tune to Titanic at the Karaoke night.

Another fun part of the week was the 10km fun run. That distance on the morning after the night before was hard but we lost no one!

The team led by **Maj J Duckworth**, **SSM(WO2) MD Wilford** and **Capt KP Innes** showed the young un's how it should be done and both gained a respectable position overall. All in all it was a fantastic week. The balance between hard work and hard play was perfect. Everything worked like clockwork and all the tasks were achieved, cementing the bond between the Regt and the Island.

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

CO **Lt Col SL Streete MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) McGrail**

The Regt has had a busy summer with the Annual Camp being the main focus. This year's Camp comprised both a Regtl and Bde Ex, resulting in our assets and pers being deployed on Salisbury Plain and up in Thetford.

The first week of Camp comprised mainly of regtl trg. There was a day of 'in barracks' trg, ranging from Operator trg to good old defence writing lessons, which was then followed by a day on the ranges with the Regtl Skill at Arms Competition – congratulations to 5 (QOOH) Sig Sqn (V) who came out on top. The following 2 days were in the field with some mil and comms 'round robin' style trg, including survival trg, ambush drills and standard patrolling exs. Fortunately we were blessed with near perfect weather.

On the Thursday, the Sqns competed in our annual competition for the Duchess of Gloucester Cup, which coincided with our official Visitors' Day. This was attended by a wide selection of Mayors and Lord Lieutenants from the regions where the Regt's sub-units are based, past members and the Associations of the Regt and Sqns, members of other organisations that have close ties with the unit such as the Worshipful Company of Innholders, and of course our Hon Col, **Maj Gen JD Stokoe CB CBE**, who presented the prizes. It was an excellent day with both guests and the Regt enjoying the interaction between mil and civilian gps. This is an area that the Regt prides itself on, with sub-units and local community gps and associations developing close and mutually beneficial relationships.

The Regt then moved onto the Bde ex, although some soldiers were able to be spared and the lucky few partook in a series of different AT activities. The main body deployed to Thetford and from the Friday to Wednesday exercised with the other Regts in the Bde. Being the first unit to take the 'lead regt' role, we were thrown straight into the scenario and felt justifiably proud of our performance. Of course the other regts were able to copy the successful performance and learn from our errors – the few that there were!

The last few days of Camp comprised a day of Sqn Comds' disposal, a Regtl 'smoker' and both Officers' and Sgts' Mess functions. All pers successfully recovered to their sub-unit homes, where of course end of Camp parties took place. Several promotions also took place during the Regt's Annual Camp, from 2Lt to Lt and Sig to LCpl, and congratulations should go to all those who worked so hard for it. All in all, it was a very challenging, enjoyable and successful 2 weeks.

Apart from the Annual Camp, all the Sqns have been following the CO's direction with recruiting drives in their respective regions. 56 Sig Sqn were particularly successful with many new volunteers being taken on and now being processed. The

Col P Willmott OBE TD, Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde and Maj J Kendall, OC 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn, promoting Lt J Cleary – 'Mess kit pips' were too expensive!

RRRWO, **Capt Andy Haines**, organised our input into this year's Op LONDON SOLDIER with OC 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn and his team running the stand on the days.

As ever we are extremely grateful for the sp of the Worshipful Company of Innholders who this year were once again very generous with their financial support for members of the Regt who are on ops and their families, and with an AT grant. We were very pleased to be able to host the Master of the Worshipful Company of Innholders and their Liaison Officer at this year's Visitors' Day.

Finally, congratulations must go to our CO, **Lt Col Sarah Streete MBE TD**, who was exceptionally successful at the Corps Orienteering Championships in September and as such was selected to join the Corps team – the only TA representative!

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON (83 SUPPORT SQUADRON)

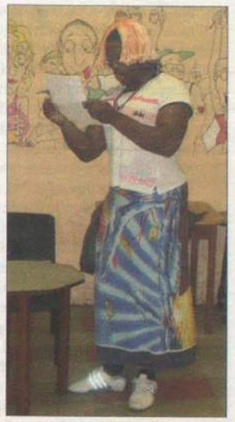
OC **Maj A Walton**
SSM **WO2 Harris**

ANNUAL CAMP – THE 'SOCIAL SIDE'

A simple enough request from the CO: "Each Sqn is to prepare a 'skit' for the Regtl Smoker ... no excuses!"

The Regtl 'Smoker' was a chance to wind down after a taxing annual camp split between Salisbury Plain and Thetford. All sqns

successfully contributed their skits which were to say the least, totally scurrilous, very amusing and some would say, true to life! Of particular note was 56 Sqn's 'permanent staff pre-camp briefing' which **LCpl Jo Reader** entered into with some gusto. Does OC 41 Sqn, **Maj John Kendall**, really give that many briefings? It was with HQ Sqn that a deathly hush settled across the bar as a newly promoted **LCpl Garvin Yarde**, looking very fetching in a bath towel, false boobs with a coloured mop on his head, selected candidates for HQ's skit, called the 'Leakest Wink'. **Anne Robinson** he wasn't but the sight of the permanent staff getting 'pinged' seemed to amuse the multitude. Of particular note was the Adjt, **Capt Jez Wadia's** attempt at moonwalking!



LCpl Yarde dressed as Anne Robinson!

It was on a more formal note that the Regt's Seniors and Officers gathered together for their Regtl Dinners in Bulford - the Seniors at the WOs' and Sgts' Mess in Ward Barracks and the Officers in the Normandy Mess at Picton Barracks. Good food, good wine and good company was the order of the night, and the Officers are very grateful to **Col P Willmott OBE TD**, Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, who joined us as our guest of honour – sorry our driver got you lost on the way! A great evening, although it has to be said that the PFT at 0530hrs the following morning contained less banter during the warm up than it normally does.

5 (QOOH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Murison**
SSM **WO2 M Taylor**

Annual Camp 2006 was to be a new experience for 5 Sqn. We had just transferred to a new regt, with a new OC and new eqpt. Could we have asked for a more testing environment?

The first Saturday of camp we deployed out the gate on time and on our way to the delights of Knook Camp on SPTA. All was secured and ready for the following day with the final of job of collecting our US exchange soldier **Sgt First Class (SFC) Golab**. Sunday morning arose with some in trepidation, as 5 Sqn was to meet most of the Regt for the first time. Any cause for concern was quickly lost due to the overwhelming joy held by all soldiers of having to complete a PFT at 0500hrs in the rain and dark. It was a bonding moment! The first part of Camp began with the testing of eqpt and repacking ready for deployment into the fd. As some of the eqpt was new to some of the soldiers, a crash course was given. We then went onto a range day planned by the SVWO. There were 2 ranges conducting 3 shoots in total with points awarded to individuals, which would count towards a team place and ultimately prizes. By the end of the day it was clear that the 5 Sqn 'A' team, lead by **Lt Alex Orr**, had done well but the final scores had not been released. As the Regt came together the prizes were read out. Third best male shot was **Capt Dave Cornick,** best male shot was **Sgt Milner** and best female shot was **Sgt Goodwin**, the latter 2 both in the A team. As such it was no surprise that the Best Team was 5 Sqn 'A' team. This was by no means the end as the B team came in 3rd which also included **SFC Golab**. It was a well-run and thoroughly enjoyable day which finished on a high for the Sqn.

OC 5 (QOOH) Signal Squadron, Maj Carolyn Murison with her proud 'shooting stars' and an American!

The Tuesday morning saw the Regt deploy onto the plain for the inf phase of annual camp. 5 Sqn were attached to HQ Sqn under the direction of **Capt Mike Zazzi**. After an early start, the units deployed out to various stands to conduct low-level inf trg. This comprised trg in Close Target Recces, Veh Recovery, Media, a Survival stand and Defence of a Comms Site. This went well into the day followed by a night phase which incorporated a recce for an ambush site and then the occupation and execution of an ambush. 5 Sqn along with HQ conducted themselves well, taking no prisoners and banishing the enemy elements back to their harbour areas.

LCpl Ali Rowsall on the survival stand during the two days of military training

The Thursday brought the Duchess of Gloucester Cup, something we had been informed about but not experienced. The team consisted of 10 soldiers, lead in 5 Sqn by **Lt Ollie Gleave.** There were a number of challenges ranging from the erection of a 12 x12 tent blind-folded to a trailer push up-hill. The final challenge of the day was the infamous Ops Maj's Ordeal, a physically demanding experience. All that can be said was that it lived up to its reputation and yes, it became emotional at times. A mention must be given to **Sig Dean**, who had only arrived that morning in preparation for her GAP continuation trg. She had left Banbury at 0400hrs, joined the team at 0730hrs and was completely shattered by the end of the day - good effort! We all completed the task and waited for the final parade and results. 5 Sqn came 4th, but consoled ourselves on being able to shoot well and we can't win everything all the time – well, it's just not cricket!

Friday saw the Regt deploy onto the Bde ex phase, which meant 5 Sqn deploying to the area of Norfolk incorporating a number of TA Centres. Whilst the OC and 2IC had been taken off to assist the RHQ and Bde elements, the Sqn was left in the capable hands of **Capt Dai Jones**. The Sqn conducted itself well using the eqpt in some cases for the first time. Although at times it was testing and hours of sleep were few, it was an enjoyable ex and many of the soldiers were happy to finally be using eqpt that they had spent the last few months trg on.

By Wednesday, the ex had come to an end and the Regt deployed back to Knook Camp for the Smoker. It was during this that **WO2 Taylor**, **SSgt Scutt** and **LCpl Machin** were all

promoted. With the smoker finishing in the early hours and the day off completed, and the various Officers and Seniors Mess functions completed, the Regt departed Knook Camp.

The Friday night held one last surprise for one of the soldiers, **LCpl Hone**, who although he had not been on camp had come in to assist in the turnaround of the eqpt. In his own words "When I arrived on Friday night after a busy day saving lives, I was approached by the SSM and informed that the OC was not happy with me and that I was due a roasting over an incident in which I had tried to take a SSgt's boots on ex. I went into the bar where every one was looking at me. I went up to the Boss who told me I was incorrectly dressed. Not being happy and thinking about being on guard duty for the next year, the OC handed me my first rank!" The night was concluded with many stories and on Saturday the eqpt was turned around followed by a much welcomed dismissal parade.

Overall the Sqn had an enjoyable camp. It was at times demanding and testing but most of all it was enjoyable.

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj J Kendall**
SSM	**WO2 I Mackay**

LANWARD EXERCISE – ANNUAL CAMP 2006

41 Sig Sqn undertook a 5 day Comms Ex which confirmed the Sqn's abilities to run a continued LONGHAUL link with the US whilst changing control to various UK locations.
We left the dodgy delights of Knook Camp for the salubrious accommodation provided by Highfield House, near Beckingham. Here we set up a marvellous site with comfy admin, dry sleeps and even penthouse accommodation in the rafters! A large herd of cows serenaded us in the mornings and investigated the 1000W antennae system at night.

Those jolly tricksters at RHQ then surprised us with a move to Yardley Chase. When we arrived and the LANWARD crew picked their way through the long grass like pygmy warriors, we wished we'd brought some of those cows or a lawn mower! **Cpl Ollie North** and **Sgt Anderson** kept spirits up with a comfy admin tent and plenty of boiling water. Enough in fact for **Sig Carol McMillan** to enjoy a moments peace with 'Hello' and her hair wrapped in a towel after washing her hair for the first time in days (not weeks as some suggested!).

We were fortunate to have a special visitor "**Jim**" from the MoD with us and kitted him out in a suitably eclectic mix of pre-Falklands War combats. Needless to say he loved it and said so to his boss afterwards. Thanks for the "thank you" letter.

On the fifth day the news that we'd all be waiting for arrived and we formed up our convoy (after manhandling generators out of ditches) to head back to Knook and full cleanliness. The highlight of the journey back was watching **Sig Neilsen Von Reitzig** hammering his socks against the wheels of a 4-tonner in a vain attempt to make them bend. Once back, we then relaxed with a few pints at the Regtl smoker. This was a tough outing for the boys and girls from 41 but all came through it with the Sqn's characteristic sense of humour, and a sense of a hard job well done.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	**Maj A Lamb**
SSM	**WO2 S Hall**

Whilst most of the Sqn were away on annual camp in September, a small recruiting team was left in Eastbourne to help attest and administer a small batch of new recruits. A medical, hearing test and measuring for kit allowed 16 recruits to finally join up. Many thanks to **Capt Andy Haines**, the Regimental Recruiting Retention and Welfare Officer (RRRWO) for coming down and speeding the process along and to the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Keiron Francis**, for his hard work and commitment to recruiting. These recruits are now booked on the first of their 6 trg weekends starting at the end of October. The Sqn is now one of very few TA units to actually be over strength on established troops.

Several other recruits have recently successfully completed their 2 weeks recruits' courses. Well done to **Sigs Stephanie Barron**, **Ray Taylor**, **Andy Kitching**, **Cara Brockett**, **Terry Smith**, **Georgie Adey**, **Pat Mays** and **Mansell.** In addition, 6 members of the Sqn have just completed their BSS (Basic Signalling Skills) at Eastbourne and we hope to get them traded at the next trade course in Edinburgh in November.

884 Tp in Brighton also welcome 2 ex-regulars to their ranks. **Sig Emma White** was previously a musician in the Corps of Army Music and **Sig Andrew Jarmin** was an armaments engineer in the New Zealand Air Force. Congratulations also go to our newest recruit, **Sig Sarah Clark**, who has just been selected for the England Under- 21 Karate Team.

The bell in the bar has been rung several times in the last few weeks. This is due to several well deserved promotions within the Sqn. First, congratulations to the new SSM, **WO2 Steve Hall**. Two further additions to the Sgts' Mess are **Sgt's Paul Hawes** and **Tim Still.** Our 2 Sqn PTI's both picked up their second stripes – **Cpl Jo Reader**, for the second time in her career (!) and **Cpl Gareth Hulin**. Finally, **Pte Steven Jukes**, one of our chefs, becomes a LCpl and **LCpl Tom Flint** of our LAD also gets his second stripe.

Finally congratulations to the 56 Sig Sqn pers who took part in the Regt's Inter-Sqn Competition – the Duchess of Gloucester (DOG) Cup. The Sqn walked away with 1st and 2nd prizes and next year the aim is to get the bronze medal as well!

56 Signal Squadron Duchess of Gloucester Cup team members with the Mayor of Eastbourne

2 (NC) SIG BDE EXERCISE - *by LCpl Ali Rowsell*

The Regt deployed to Thetford in readiness for the planned op to assist the Civilian Authorities during the forthcoming flooding scenario. On arrival at West Tofts Camp the eqpt was checked out and units prepared for deployment.

The Comd elements under the direction of **Maj Ros Brown** deployed to the Ops Room to prepare for the beginning of the ex. Saturday morning began with the usual hum of soldiers running around drawing the final pieces of eqpt and with officers and seniors writing orders. It all came together and the troops deployed to their various given destinations. The ex had begun and reports were coming in that a ferry had sunk off the Norfolk coast! Units were being deployed. The comd element was busy with Op Orders, frago's and the various R2 elements, ex and real time issues, which arose throughout the ex.

56 Sqn was attached to an extremely organised and friendly 60 Sqn from 36 Sig Regt, who immediately welcomed us into their camp kitchen with a full English breakfast, tea, tables, chairs and cutlery!

The next 5 days were to be very different to what we had been used to. 56 Sqn supplied 2 experienced HF RATT dets, under the comd of **Cpl Justin Hewett** and **Cpl Paul Renaud**. Unfortunately, to 60 Sqn's suprise, we didn't have any VHF assets, so had to make do throughout the ex with insecure HF voice and a new toy – 'Kipling'. **LCpl Stella Jennings** masterminded the little green box with the help of lots of caffeine, after we had received limited trg. It was good to see that many of the soldiers were using new eqpt for the first time 'in anger' and that they were putting their full effort into making it work. Notably, a long distance link was made with 4 of the AGV's that had not been tried before. As **LCpl Machin** said, "It was good to see it work at last after all this trg."

The last few days gave us a further chance to work with 60 Sqn. Our secure RATT assets proved more than useful, enabling 36 Sig Regt to utilise the 2 experienced crews for another secure data link. All in all, the ex was a complete success. It demonstrated the expertise of 2 very different, but extremely capable sqns and showed we could adapt and work under pressure, even when the comms were very difficult.

It was certainly an eye opener for us in 56 Sqn to see how other regts approach trg and different ways of approaching comms problems.

Over all the ex went well and many of the elements of the Regt were tested and all came out learning a great deal and ready for the next deployment.

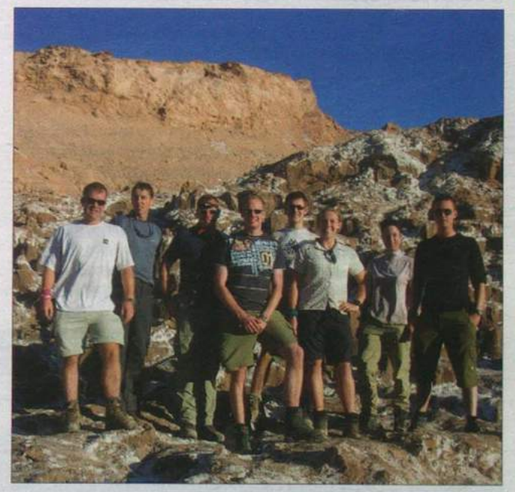
34th (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col DE Sixsmith TD**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) Legg**

EX RED HOT CHILLE TREKKERS - *by Lt JC Burke*

Ex RED HOT CHILLE TREKKERS was a trekking exped, which took place from 3 – 24 September and was 34 (N) Sig Regt's major Level 3 exped for 2006. Exped OC, **Lt Ross Anderson**, took 7 other pers with him on this adventure. Chile, and more specifically, Torres del Paine National Park and the Atacama Desert, were selected for a number of reasons. Torres del Paine is a trekkers' paradise, in fact, "proper 'Pan Handle Kit' " as the exped 2IC, **SPSI SSgt Tom Woodall** succinctly put it. The breathtaking and rugged charm of this UNESCO recognised World Biosphere Reserve, which is a remote and beautiful place residing on a spectacular mountain range with challenging and varying terrain, coupled with the variety of well maintained trekking routes, made it a prime choice to spend the first phase of the exped. The second phase in the barren Atacama Desert, working out of San Pedro de Atacama, offered high altitude trg in a completely contrasting environment. Santiago, the Chilean capital, was chosen for the R&R phase as a good all round base for AT and cultural activities.

The outward journey was long, but a good bonding experience for all 8 participants, flying via Madrid, through the night to Santiago and then flying south to Puntas Arenas for our first night in country. A "vino tinto" recce was undertaken and several specimens found to be suitable. It was an early breakfast, then a long day's journey on a coach into the National Park and then transferring in Perto Natales to a bumpy minibus that was heaved and squeezed through several small bridges. Relieved to have made it one piece at long last, we entered the Park, paid our fees and set up camp in Torres. Slightly disconcerting were the 3 stoves that refused to take the local fuel, and being armed with rice and pasta for 6 days, we were slightly worried about cooking! Thankfully **Maj Smith** had brought his own Gucci little burner and we were able to chow down on some well needed pasta and sauce, with a little of **Lt Anderson's** "gentleman's relish" for flavour. Realising we were in one of the coldest places on earth (it certainly felt like it at least!), a giant camp fire was soon set going and we all huddled around. Let me tell you now, those of us without down doss bags were incredibly reluctant to go to bed that night! That was pretty much all of us except **Maj Smith** and **Sgt Pritchard**, who both emerged incredibly smug and well rested the next morning. I still can't believe that we didn't fill their bergens with rocks in revenge...!



The 34 Signal Regiment Red Hot Chille Trekkers

The first day of trekking the famous "W" route began with an 18km route along towards Base Torres and back again. Unfortunately, due to poor visibility and inclement weather conditions, we were unable to reach Base Torres in all its splendour. However, the spectacular scenery of Patagonian steppe, glacier-fed rivers and alpine forest was almost enough to compensate, and everyone enjoyed the first day as a warm up for things to come. We also started **Lt Anderson's** contribution with his "Recipe of the Day". Being out in the fresh air, rationed and living without such luxuries as roasted chicken with crème fresh and spinach stuffed between the skin and the bird (don't forget the lemon shoved up its cavity), we were all grateful for this regular, tortuous instalment.

We set off the second day along Lago Nordenskjold, reaching Camp Italiano late afternoon. A remote campsite, with no facilities and perched alongside a glacial river (which, crazily enough, **LCpl Robinson** found ideal for bathing in), we were offered rest and reflection in this place of astonishing natural beauty. The third day's trekking was up through forest and along undulating ground to Camp Britanico for a quick lunch of flavoured steam, then pushing on towards the open top where incredible views were to be savoured, not least witnessing a small but very loud and awesome avalanche cascading from a glacier.

Day 4 of trekking saw us leave Camp Italiano and head around the lakes, with a trek up the valley to Glacier Grey. We were all awestruck as we greedily drank in our daily ration of steam and the view of this incredible chunk of ice looming ominously and defiantly at the river's mouth. That night, the hostel let us use their hot kitchen for cooking in, if that is what you can say we did to our rice, lentils and bockwurst sausages. We wouldn't have minded if there hadn't have been the locals baking fresh bread, a huge vat of meat stew and roast chicken! It was with a degree of pain that we extracted ourselves to our piece of ground outside. The faces staring from the warm hostel lounge couldn't comprehend what a bunch of people were doing out in the cold when cosy beds lay within sight. The fifth day was a test of endurance for our stomachs, beginning with lentils, pesto, chicken curry powder and rice. Actually, it wasn't bad at all. However, I am confident that **Sig Dean Ness** and **Sig Claire Cambridge** do not want to see another lentil as long as they both live! We began the last day's trek, climbing out of the rocky valleys and onto the vast grass plains, following the river to the Park Administration to spend our last night camping under the stars. We couldn't have picked a more picturesque and serene place for dinner that night, gazing out onto the lake, watching the ducks and other wildlife splash around. We left Torres del Paine the following morning in a flurry of snow and made our way back to Punta Arenas by mid-afternoon. Luckily we had a 2 hr wait between buses at lunchtime, and it was an enormous relief to find a warm café selling enormous jugs of beer and even bigger steak sandwiches! So, it was a day of admin back in Punta Arenas, a couple more wine and steak recces and another cosy night at Al Fin del Mundo.

Phase 2 began with a flight to Santiago, then Calama for a quick overnight stop, then finally a bus ride to San Pedro de Atacama. This vibrant, tourist touting town, situated at an altitude of 2400km, was an ideal base for day treks, cultural visits and explorations. The Valle de la Luna provided an arid, desolate, Martian type landscape with glowing red sand dunes as the sun set in the evening. **Maj Smith** was more than delighted with the salt caves and the multiple tasting opportunities. Also within travelling distance there were the Tatio Geysers, a chance to swim in a natural thermal pool, to eat freshly barbequed llama meat kebabs and to be introduced to a whole range of flora and fauna in this ecologically diverse land. Trekking across the Altiplano with a local guide was a highlight for many, the culmination being the scenic salt lakes at the end of the day, which had seemed to us at first as a mere illusion and unreachable oasis.

Heading to Santiago overnight on a comfortable coach ride, we arrived and began the R&R phase. Our JESMEL, **Maj Smith** took to the ski slopes while **SSgt Tom Woodall** practised looking cool on his snowboard. **SSgt Woodall** then gave away his only decent piece of kit, a windstopper, in exchange for a small and inferior fleece. Luckily he got it back just before we got our flights back home to Blighty! The rest of the group got to grips with some Grade 3 white water rafting and hiking up a very big hill. Of course, we had to visit a local vineyard before we left to sample some more of the excellent Chilean wine.

The exped to Chile was a challenging and enjoyable experience for all involved. Whether it was improving personal administration, developing leadership, overcoming fears or tasting new cultures, every single participant benefited and took something away with them. We all agreed that AT is an incredibly valuable tool within the TA and we hope to encourage and fund more expeds in the future, aimed especially at developing junior soldiers and offering them opportunities that they would otherwise not be able to experience. A massive recruiting and retention medium and incredibly good fun, we all look forward to the next 34 Sig Regt exped.

EXERCISE NORTHERN ABLE SEAMAN 10 – 17 AUGUST

Stuart Beange – Skipper
Cpl Milly Millington
Maj (QM) Mick McKenna
LCpl Alison Bibby
SSgt Stu Taylor – Skipper's Mate
Sig Kat Marsden
SSgt Tracey Downs
Sig Sammy Sampson
Sgt Scotty Burton
Sig Nick Mackenzie
Sig Tom Waterman

"Ahoy there, all hands on deck" came the call from our well travelled adventurous skipper, **Stuart Beange**. Today was to be the first day when we would set sail for a week of venturing upon the high seas, well OK as far as the Channel Islands. The mode of transport was to be one of the Joint Services Adventure Yacht trg vessels; *Chaser*.

The morning of the first day was to be filled with safety briefs and examples on the correct use of eqpt. The skipper superbly covered this along with his Mate, **Stu Taylor**. So much so, that one of the extremely eager members of the group, **Sig Andrew Sampson** deployed his life jacket on the pontoon, before we had even set sail. To demonstrate what a working example looks like of course.

After all the excitement of the morning activities, the time had arrived to don wet-weather clothing and make headway for not so distant shores. Having been broken down into 2 watches that would comprise 5 pers; each group working 4 hrs on, 4 hrs off, while providing one team member to be 'mother watch'. This is a sailing term for general pot washer, cleaner, chef and generally looking after all crew members. This would prove to be an interesting learning curve during the exped for the members on board that had never spent time living and working within a close confinement with 9 other budding sailors, let alone have to look after that same number of other people.

Cowes offered a well-earned first port of call with an all-inclusive overnight stay on *Chaser*, our trusty 25 year old plus sailing yacht. Some crew members took in a little local culture in the way of a live band at the local pub, whilst others found that an early night would be much more therapeutic. Reveille the next morning was early in order to prepare the boat and the crew for sea. Sunny Cherbourg was our steady heading for the second port of call. Once out of the security blanket of the harbour walls, the main sail was hoisted to words we would all become acquainted with "kicking strap on, topper off, now haul the sail up under control".

Relaxing into a channel crossing routine, would indicate becoming ready to spring into action upon the words of command "ready about", meaning the bow of the boat was going to turn through the wind. To you and I this means, pull one rope in as fast as you can, while another crewman releases the opposite rope system.

The outbound route to France took the crew through the Albany race. This is a section of particularly robust water in which tide meets wind creating large wavelets. It was in this section of water that most crew-members felt a little seasick, enjoying the roller coaster ride of their lives. Other significant memorable moments whilst plunging through this section of water would have to be awarded to **SSgt Tracey Downs**, (aka Downsy) who left the hatch above her bed space open. After being awoken by water dripping in, she decided to deploy her life jacket since she was wearing it in bed anyway. Two crew-members in a matter of days! Was this going to catch on?

Our third port of call was Jersey. Although this is one of the English Channel Islands, it is much closer to France than England. This could explain the euro currency; of which all crew-members would spend a lot, helping exped organiser **Sgt Scotty Burton** celebrate his 28th Birthday.

Sgt Scotty Burton enjoying his birthday breakfast

A rest day was allowed the following day in order to revive and recover body and soul. A chance was given during the day to take in the beauty of this wonderful isle. That evening, the crew went to the pictures to watch *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Well, whilst in Rome...

Early morning sunrise would provide the light in which to commence the journey back to England. The return journey remained pretty uneventful. Indeed the crew had now found their sea legs. The evening watches give a fantastic opportunity to star gaze and this came with full narrative descriptions from **Sig Nicolas Mackenzie** who has studied star and planet constellations. Back in England on dry land at last, all crew-members worked their fingers to the bone to ensure a swift handover/takeover of the wonderful *Chaser*. Goodbyes and thank yous were offered to the Skipper and his Mate. The remaining members of the crew set off on a cultural visit to *HMS Victory*, the oldest commissioned warship in the world, famously sailed by **Lord Nelson** at the battle of Trafalgar.

Final evening activities would be a fine three course meal that was reasonably priced, meaning that all could indulge in a quiet drink in the local bars of Gosport. A good evening was enjoyed by all.

THE FINAL TEAM – UK/US EXCHANGE PROGRAMME 2006

As part of the 2006 UK/ US Exchange Programme 5 members of the US National Guard attended Ex GRYPHONS FOCUS with 34(N) Sig Regt, taking part in AT in glorious sunny Penhale and military skills trg in the blistering heat of Sennybridge. **Lt Krista Schuster**, **SFC Bill Meggs**, **SFC John Yankowski**, **SSG Amanda Young** and **SPC Sam Nelson** all had a thoroughly enjoyable time, even when sweating profusely running around the Sennybridge trg area in full IPE or when fighting against the current and winds while canoeing on the River Fal in Cornwall.

The 5 members of the Regt taking part in the programme attended their exchanges with the Massachusetts, Michigan and Wisconsin National Guard. **SSgt Tracey Downs** RLC (HQ Sqn) being the first attending her exchange in May with **SSG Amanda Young** in Massachusetts. **Sgt Richie North** (HQ Sqn) visiting Wisconsin with **Lt Krista Schuster** and the remaining 3, **WO2(SSM) Heather Taylor** (HQ Sqn), **SSgt Frank Mason** (49 Sqn) and **Sgt Mick Jemmett** (50 Sqn) having a fantastic time in Camp Grayling, Michigan. Our hosts were at all times professional, courteous, willing to please and great fun to be with and we thank them sincerely for their time and effort in making our exchange a very memorable event. Long may these exchange programmes continue.

The plaque (ceiling tile) in the NCO's Club was designed and hand drawn by **SFC John Yankowski** and presented to the NCO Club in Camp Grayling as a memento of our visit. If you are ever in the neighbourhood, check out the ceiling.

EX MERLIN MARCH

In August, members of 49 Sig Sqn participated in Ex MERLIN MARCH. **Lt David Chalmers**, **SSgt Kev Young**, **Sig Seymour** and **Sig Thompson** along with pers from HQ 15(NE) Bde and other units in the North East trekked up the Pennine Way to raise money for charity. Working in a relay of 3 teams, all 268 miles of the long distance footpath between Edale and Kirk Yetholm were covered in a time of 93 hrs. Despite periods of torrential rain during which small streams had turned into raging rivers the spirits of the teams remained high. On arrival at Kirk Yetholm, a piper accompanied the team completing the final leg to the finish and a well deserved helping of bacon butties.

The end of Ex MERLIN MARCH for 34 Signal Regiment

35th (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col CW Edwards TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RJ Coupland**

RUSH TO THE FINISH – FOREWORD BY THE CO

As the latter part of my tour rushes toward me, I reflect on the changes both within the Regt and in the world around us. My headline is the fact that we topped 82% recruited this quarter with a target of 85% by March 2007. In simple figures that represents a growth from 252 to 402 in 2 years. This has put unexpected but gratefully received burdens on areas such as : budgets; the Doctor, who works tirelessly on weekends to draw blood and reconcile issues with the health of the newcomers; and last but not least the huge admin and management effort by my excellent PSAOs and their AOs required to document, induct, brief and retain new recruits.

Thirty to forty on induction in 2 days can be testing! The knock-on effect on my G4 team is immense and intense, but the QM, **Maj Dave Stachini**, and his team operate a slick ship. The Sqn Recruiting Teams are pulling out every effort to find, cajole and coerce unsuspecting members of the public to join this great Territorial tradition. I speak to most of the inductees as they arrive and their initial experience within the Recruit trg team is first class. I am blessed with an RRTT that really know how to motivate, inspire and train these young people. As it is a Regional Forces Main Effort, most of my attention goes quite rightly into recruiting.

I then look to the Trg Maj, **Maj Neil Turnbull** and the YofS to provide me with as many trade courses as they can and **YofS Pip Crowder** put through 32 extra soldiers in July with 3 weeks notice. My trainers again pulled some superb trg out of the bag to add more to the capability of this Regt in the Ptarmigan sphere. As a Corps, we do need to look at the skills set that we ask of the TA. Ptarmigan is an excellent trg platform but the force protection issues and OTS comms eqpt may mean that we should be dual trg and maybe using the local Technical Colleges to gain additional key skills.

We are trialling different methods of ensuring that our soldiers have the best and most convenient opportunities to undertake driver trg, as we are still suffering the repercussions of the driver trg waiver, as we expected. The trial involves a Bde incentive to have Instructors, of which we are blessed with a slack handful in the Regt, to go anywhere at any time for driver trg periods – much as one would expect in Civilian Street. This should relieve some of the pressure on recruits in the early years to attend ATR, Camp, Trade trg and the like.

Looking forward, I will be welcoming **Lt Col Matt Hansen**, from HQ Land, to takeover this great Regt, the projected move to MOD Stafford, Camp 2007 and Ex JAVELIN STRIKE with 1 Sig Bde. In closing, Camp 2006 was the best ever in the 22 years that I have had the pleasure to serve in 35 Sig Regt and finally it has been a great honour and privilege to command it. Thanks to all my team.

EXERCISE ALPINE DRAGON

With camp firmly behind us our attention returned to carrying out some vigorous AT which has now become a firm annual tradition in the Regt. This year the exped, composed of 19 participants/trekkers, was off to Chamonix in France over the period 29 July – 12 August to carry on where we left off during our trip to Wales. ALPINE DRAGON, in contrast, involved arduous trekking, alpine mountaineering and rock climbing around the peaks and glaciers on the dramatic Mont Blanc range. It also provides the opportunity to assess participants for the Summer Mountain Proficiency Certificate. As expected, the exped was lead by our indomitable trekker, **Maj John Middler**. Preparatory trg was intense and involved many weekend trg activities in North Wales that involved not only exhaustive and demanding trg but also included applying mountain first aid skills, navigation and dealing with exposure under realistic conditions. **LCpl Jim Turner** was so enamoured by the exped that he took on the role of exped author and maintained a vivid account from Day 1 and his account is summarised below:

"On arriving at our campsite near Chamonix, our first priority was to purchase some additional provisions for the coming days. Soon after, we were busy being taught basic climbing and rope-work skills and had some exposure to height in the safety of a crag environment. The next stage in our instruction was to visit the Mer De Glace, a huge slow moving glacier, to learn some ice manoeuvring skills. This done, we moved on to the day's main event; a crevasse rescue where we simulated a crevasse fall and recovery of a stricken climber – exciting stuff! The following day we split into two alpine and one summer group. I was part of the first alpine group together with **Capt Paul Rodenhurst**, **WO2s Dave Dewfall** and **Andy Wilkins**, **SSgts Dave Arnot**, **Ken Barker** and **Ray Blanchette**, **Sgt Ritchie Roberts** and **LCpl Zoe Trimm**. We were led as a group by **WO1 Mark Bradbury** from the AGC RMP, who ensured we had a tough 2 days of trg on the Glacier Tre La Tete.

Meanwhile the summer walking group, who were being trained by **Maj John Middler**, were completing the Summer Mountaineering Certificate in just slightly less arduous conditions. Friday and Saturday brought some bad weather and this provided a good opportunity to rest and recuperate with many exped members visiting the swimming pool and the Alpine museum. A couple of the summer group, **Cpl Andy Carroll** and **Sig Duncan Sleigh** (no relation to Bob)**,** tried out the bobsleigh activity. **Andy** decided that it was unnecessary to use the brakes and found himself airborne on reaching the second bend, causing not only a loss of dignity but also some minor abrasions and serious damage to his new coat as well as his reputation!

The summer Alpine Group

A dramatic view of Klettersteiging in the Alps

On Sunday, members of the summer group got their turn for some alpine trg when we visit Refuge Albert Premiere and the next day made an attempt on Aiguilles de Tour which proved exhilarating. Following our exertions on the glacier we had a less strenuous couple of days crag climbing. This took place at Vallorcine, where we were given the opportunity of some superb multi-pitch climbing and lead climbing skills. We then moved onto Clusaz for the following day for more crag climbing and a thrilling Via Ferrata route led by **Mark Bradbury.**

All good things must come to an end and the grand finale of the trip was a stay in the Refuge des Cosmiques, followed by an ascent of Mont Blanc du Tacul. This was an exciting and rewarding climb at the top of which was a short rock and ice scramble. A massive sense of achievement was experienced by all on summiting this peak and for most of us; at 4248m, it was higher than we had ever climbed before. Without exception, everyone felt that this ascent coupled with the trip as a whole was amongst the most rewarding and satisfying AT they had ever completed and for some it will certainly have sowed the seeds for a lifelong interest in climbing and mountaineering.

LANYARD TROPHY COMPETITION

We now turn out attention to trekking of a slightly different kind – the one where you have to carrying a 40lb pack on your back and then throw yourself into a time trial race over difficult terrain, usually in poor weather, and try and beat all comers – sometimes with very little trg. Courage, determination and personal conviction in yourself is sometimes not enough when your legs give way or you suffer injuries preventing you from making that final push to the finish – that is when the taking part is all that matters and dead weight means that you can no longer move forward in your boots! Trg for the team under the direction of **Sgt Robbo Roberts** took place in earnest some weeks before the event but unfortunately not all team members benefited because of other commitments. Immediately prior to the event one or two key members dropped out because of illness or injury and urgent replacements had to be found just a day before the trip to Sennybridge where the competition took place. On 28 September, the team patched together with short notice replacements moved to Sennybridge, hardly the most hospitable of places and despite one or two fitness issues, there was a visible air of confidence and resolve to do well. The fitness issues though were clearly an area of concern. This would undoubtedly have an impact on our performance, as some preparatory trg for this arduous competition was essential if we were to meet the team finish requirement of 8 members out of 10 crossing the line which had to include the Team Captain and 2IC.

The morning of the competition soon arrived and after a very early breakfast we moved to the start point at 0400hrs already feeling weary and apprehensive as we tried to gauge the standards of the other competitors. As we set off at around 0530hrs, the adrenalin kicked in and we were determined to fight our way to the finish despite the toughness of the opposition. This was going to be a long haul; the fastest team was not expected to finish until 1600hrs so the race was now on and we were determined to get back for the evening meal that was planned to start at 1630hrs. But would we navigate through every checkpoint and avoid disqualification? As we tentatively progressed we soon suffered our first casualty at Checkpoint 2, **Cpl Jethro Towers**. To his great credit, he had only joined the team on the day we deployed for the event and although driven by sheer guts and determination, this just could not sustain him and he succumbed to an old injury exacerbated by lack of trg. The next casualty was **Cpl Trev Carter**, who also fell at

Checkpoint 2, having dislocated his knee. We were now down to our 8 remaining qualifiers and time was running out. Then disaster struck as we lost our third team member, **Sig Will Nichols**, whose blisters and a sprained ankle proved to be just too big for his boots and he could not proceed further than Checkpoint 3 and had to be helped off the course. This was quite a blow to our morale, as we knew we could no longer qualify as a complete team. Despite this, our Team Captain, **Capt Chris Moseley** was equally determined to finish with at least 7 team members intact. We had come too far to give in, even though the finish line now seemed a million miles away. Nevertheless, we pulled ourselves together and determined to cross the finish line as soon as we could which we managed to do late in the evening. We did miss the meal planned for 1630hrs, which on reflection was a little ambitious on our part. Nevertheless, despite the injuries we all had a fantastic time and hope to return with a well trained team next year and qualify.

NEWS ROUND

Our recruiting efforts continue to pay dividends and not only are we processing many new recruits through our doors, who are also bringing along their friends but many more are also continuing through to their ATR CMSR trg.

On Saturday 30 September, **Lt Col Edwards** was invited to be the Inspecting Officer at the TA Recruit Pass Off Parade of the celebrated Deane Drummond Tp. As well as many soldiers from both the West Midlands and North West, 4 members of the Regt all passed off at this parade adding to the long and impressive list of recruits who have fully qualified this year.

New recruits proudly display their pass off certificates

Newly qualified **Sigs Matt Donnison**, **James Back**, **Ronnie Baird** and **Gary Steinhert** were joined by their families at this special parade and can be equally proud of their achievements so far and are now looking keenly at completing their trade trg in time for annual camp in Germany next year. Maintaining the best traditions of the TA family, it was particularly pleasing to see **Sig James Back**, from Rugby, qualify as his father, **Graham Back**, served many years with the Rugby TA as a Cpl Tech and only left when **James** was born in 1989 making **James** one of our youngest soldiers. A week later, **Sig Ed Geraghty** was joined by his family and friends at a similar Recruit Pass Off Parade at ATR Grantham. Many congratulations to our newly qualified recruits.

A family affair - Sig James Back with proud father Graham

Elsewhere in the Regt, we have said our farewells to outgoing permanent staff and welcomed their replacements. To RHQ, we have welcomed **Capt Matt Jones** who has replaced our outgoing Adjt, **Capt Ross Collins;** we also welcomed **WO2(RQMS) Ash Doe** who replaced **WO2(RQMS) Ash Ingham**. To 48 Sqn, we have welcomed **Cpl Scott Morgan** who replaced **Sgt Lee Norman**. To 58 Sqn, we have welcomed **SSgt Dave Purdon** who replaced **SSgt Pops Poppa.** To 89 Sqn, we have welcomed **SSgt Jason Lowe** who replaced **SSgt Paul Coxon** and finally the biggest changeover occurred at 95 Sqn, where we welcomed **Cpl Chris Nixon**, **SSgt Steve Foord**, **Sgt Paul Newall** and **SSgt(FofS) Mark Collins.** Here we have said farewell to **Cpl Seth Campbell**, **SSgt Dave Pope**, **SSgt(FofS) Mark Ebden** and **Sgt Andy Jackson** who moves to Blandford for his FofS trg**.** To all our new arrivals – have a happy but busy and rewarding tour with the Regt and to all those who have moved onto pastures new – thank you for your support, efforts and achievements during your tour of duty with the TA.

Finally our *Wire* notes would not be complete without some mention of our favourite competitive military trg pastime-orienteering. Again we scored considerable success in this area during the last Corps Championship weekend held on the 27/28 September at Vernditch and Blandford. **Maj Tom Jeffries** helped the team along to become Major Unit runner-up against some difficult opposition, just pipped at the post by 11 Sig Regt and also scored a double whammy by taking the Individual runner-up honours. Not to be outdone **Cpl Andy Price** was the M21 runner-up while **SSgt Colin Richards** was the M40 winner. To all team members – well done!

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col M Smith TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) KD Gratrick**

36 SIGNAL REGIMENT HOCKEY TEAM - *by Lt A Wood*

No sooner had the decision been taken to get a hockey team, than I was rushing to get ready for our first tournament. A selection weekend was held at Colchester on the last weekend of June, attended by 18 hopefuls, most of who had never held a hockey stick before, let alone knew the rules. Luckily I was ably assisted by **2Lt Mason** who holds a coaching qualification and she set to work with what can only be described as a bunch of people who thought they were playing golf! By the end of Saturday, we had made some progress and proceeded to enjoy the delights of Colchester town centre. Knowing that the recovery the next morning was likely to be slow we started with a video showing how the professionals play, to demonstrate how it should be done. Then we attempted to put the techniques to use on the practice field.

The next weekend was the competition, the TA mixed 11-a-side held at Aldershot. It started badly when our goalkeeper turned up late and I found myself covering in the goal. An inspired use of a shin pad stuffed down my shorts ensured the protection of my valuables at the last minute. By half time we were 1 – 0 down but had been playing well for our first outing. With the keeper now able to take his place on the field, I was released to my usual position in midfield. In the second half we managed to get an equalizer, only to see the opposition get a second just before full time. The rest of the day went in a similar vein with the team's best result being a draw. However this saw us through to a play off for 7th/8th place. It was here that our lack of substitutes really started to show as most squads were nearly twice our size and we lost 3 – 1 with **2Lt Mason** and **LCpl Peachy** scoring our only goals of the tournament.

One month later and we were again off; this time to a civilian 7-a-side tournament held outside Birmingham. Due to availability, only 5 of the original squad were available. It was here that we were introduced to the tradition of serving alcohol by means of a 14 pint watering can and funnel. **Sgt Bufton** took to this tradition particularly well!

Playing under the pseudonym of the "No Hopers", we were on the look out for the RAF 'under 23' XI rumoured to be there. We found them to be the only other team to be wearing pink (must be a forces thing). Not that we would point fingers in our well-bonded team, but our excuse is basically that was **SSgt Howson's** fault.

The Saturday saw some excellent play by the team, whose skills were obviously improving, but the results yet again didn't reflect this as we lost our matches. Still there was time to drown our sorrows in the bar. Luckily we didn't drown them as much as our opponents did, as on the Sunday we got wins in both our remaining games, whilst dodging water bombs being hurled more than 100m by the RAF, via a large catapult they had produced from nowhere.

Sunday evening culminated in the fancy dress competition, where we went as Austin Powers featuring my battery powered outfit (which required inflation). Needless to say we didn't pick up any more prizes, but it was an outstanding weekend of hockey, teamwork and fun.

The team gathered in their fetching new strip – SSgt Howson on the ball

EXERCISE STEELBACK RESPONSE - *by Capt Tex Bennett*

On 16 September, Norfolk witnessed a tragedy when a light aircraft was in a mid-air collision with a packed airliner heading to Norwich Airport. Wreckage and body parts fell over a large area, thus instigating a major incident for the Blue Light Services (BLS). It quickly became apparent to the Gold Commander that the scale of the incident needed specialist mil sp, so after a request to Whitehall, the 49(E) Bde CCRF was called out, in the guise of 3 R ANGLIAN, to assist with the recovery and investigation. Luckily, this did not happen for real, but the scenario was the basis for the Norfolk Resilience Forum's Ex STEELBACK RESPONSE, which was held at STANTA on the last Saturday of 36 (E) Sig Regt's annual camp. As the Regt's Close Sp Sqn, in its new role, 45 (Essex and Cinque Ports) Sig Sqn provided specialist ICS sp for both the Norfolk Blue Light Services and the 3 R ANGLIAN CCRF.

The immediate need was for video conferencing to be available between Silver and Bronze HQs, to enable the Silver Commander to control and co-ordinate his response to the incident. This was established using a video conferencing system linked over an INMARSAT link. This proved a very useful resource to the BLS, with users queuing to use it. The police were amazed that such a facility could be provided from a fd location. The Sqn also provided an insecure voice capability to 3 R ANGLIAN via the Airwave Gateway Veh and the VHF Ranger radios. Pl and Coy Comds utilised this to co-ordinate their ops and to gain access to the Airwave system. With so many users on the local system, there was a real danger of congestion, so

45 Sig Sqn used VHF CNR as an eng and guard net, thus freeing up traffic for users on Airwave. Additionally a Ranger Radio to Helicopter trial was successful, demonstrating the versatility of the system.

It was a very successful ex all round with good customer feedback received from the users. More importantly, it was the first real test of the Sqn in its new role and it was passed successfully – which is a real credit to the soldiers involved, especially as many were very new to the kit and role. 45 Sig Sqn will now build on the skills learnt on HORSESHOE 2006 and STEELBACK RESPONSE to enable it to fulfil its mission in its UK Ops role.

RAYNET AND WEEK TWO - *by Sig O'Regan*

The second week of camp was the comms phase. The first part was working with RAYNET, who supply civilian comms. RAYNET seemed to have a much more luxurious set up and deployed with a caravan – complete with a kettle, sofa and self erecting antennas, much better than our 9 x 9's, hexi blocks and mast kit! As a collective gp, we designed protocols on how to establish and communicate with RAYNET. RAYNET is insecure and they don't use the same VP; it's more like an informal chat. These are just 2 of the many issues that had to be resolved. This was a very important trial, as there is a high possibility that such an interface may be needed within a UK operational role. The second part was deploying and setting up comms. For us, this was a culmination of a year's back to basics trg. This was very challenging to many, as we were deploying with only one trained radio operator and one NFQ, and we were free rolling into location - a concept that will probably base the next year's trg on – navigation!

Once all the dets were in the correct location, we did manage to install comms in pretty good time, considering some dets had to move twice, one det achieving very good comms with a local farmer! The ex was a great success, with a lot being learnt, most importantly knowing and having confidence that we can do it!

37th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JW Cooper**
RSM **WO1(RSM) DE Cupit**

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Bowden**
SSM **SSgt M Bellamy**

The last few months has seen quite a big change in the Sqn. The TA Centre in Strafford is still undergoing a major re-vamp, so drill nights have changed to the Ken Kennet centre, a local facility which is ideal for the Sqn's needs. At the same time as the TAC is seeing major changes, so has the Sqn hierarchy.

We say farewell firstly to our OC Sqn, **Maj Karen Metcalfe**. She was with the Sqn as OC for over 2 years and we thank her for all her effort she put into the Sqn. The second major personality we've lost is the SSM, **WO2 Roy Francis**. He only served with us a short time but his experience was invaluable to us and last but not least we say farewell to **SSgt Adie Sims**.

SSgt Sims was our SPSI in the Sqn for over 3 years. His enthusiasm was there for all to see and every one thanks him for his hard work. Even if it did mean he forgot to book meals once in a while.

With the comings and goings there are also some 'welcomes' to make. So we say 'hello' to **Maj Richard Bowden** as our new OC, **SSgt Matt Bellamy** as our new SSM and **SSgt Nick Ions** as our new SPSI. Welcome to the Sqn and we all look forward to working with you all over the coming months and years.

As for work, there have been plenty of events for us to crack on with. We've been deployed on various exs. The most noticeable being Ex MARBLE TOR, Ex HORSESHOE 06 and Ex RONGBUK DRAGON. The first of these, Ex MARBLE TOR, was an OTX in Gibraltar. The majority of the Sqn that deployed on this were the junior ranks, and they enjoyed it considerably.

There were opportunities to partake in AT and a little sightseeing in between some very arduous work. Two of the hardest events were the rock race and the tunnel asslt. With all this, there were a few memories that people took away. The most vivid of these would be a toss up between **Sgt Derek Spry** being scared half to death and opening up on the 'ghost' of the tunnel, and **Sig Lauren Beardall** not comprehending the 'don't go near the monkey' warnings and getting mauled and bitten by a rampaging monkey.

Ex HORSESHOE 06 was our main annual camp this year. This year we provided a close sp Sqn to 2 (NC) Sig Bde. The Sqn was a composite sqn made up of individuals from all over the Regt. Everyone worked hard providing comms for the Bde. The ex went very well as a whole.

The OC Sqn, **Maj Bowden** had to stay up all night till 0500hrs on the night shift, even though he was in work the next day. Such was his dedication. Even though the ex meant long hrs and hard work, we did get a day out in Great Yarmouth, which was just the morale boost at the half way stage that every one needed.

There were many other events that the Sqn took part in. A special mention has to be made of the Sqn football team. In the Regt Sports day, our all conquering 6-a-side team swept aside all before them. Winning 3 and drawing 1 (due to the ref disallowing one of our goals), we romped home top of the table. Each game was a low scoring affair with the goals being small, but it was the points that mattered as we came through 2-0, 1-0, 0-0 and 1-0.

Sig Mike Weston was our keeper and was in magnificent form and was given 'Man of the Tournament' award. But the goals were scored by **Sgt Derek Spry** in the first game, and **Sgt Kev Lucas** in the last 3 games. The team was definitely inspired by having to wear the Everton home strips (1985, 1999 2006), supplied by their friendly PSI (T).

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

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

July 2006 saw most of the Sqn going to Gibraltar on Ex MARBLE TOR for 2 weeks with 3 pls rotating through a cycle of mil trg, AT and a MACC task. The mil trg included OBUA and tunnel fighting in the tunnels that run through the rock, which proved difficult in the heat, but very enjoyable. The ex culminated in a dawn attack on the village which offered a chance to test the skills learnt in the build up phase of the ex. The AT package was mostly water sports based, with canoeing, windsurfing, and sailing amongst other activities on offer.

The Sqn says farewell to **Capt D John** and **Capt A Peploe** who both move on to new posts, and the PSI **SSGT Mick Robinson**, who is posted back to the Regular Army. The Sqn welcomes the new PSI, **SSgt Chris Moore**. Good luck and may he have a successful and fulfilling time with us.

97 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Cosgrove**
SSM **SSgt A Shrewsbury**

DAGGER

August in DAGGER has brought a few changes for us, first **Sig Postlethwaite** is to be congratulated on her promotion to LCpl. She has also been working in ISIS sect due to changes in pers deployed on Op OCULUS. **LCpl Postlethwaite** is happy with this because prior to deployment, she completed the ISIS course back in the UK, therefore utilising the skills learnt on the course whilst in theatre. The mood has been upbeat which I have concluded was because many of us are about to or have just had R&R, also the half way point for the Tour has been reached. Time for me has passed quickly because in between Ops, there are plenty of camp organised activities to keep you occupied.

On that note we have welcomed the new RSM, who in acknowledgment has upped the PT sessions during the week but he has also organised out of Camp activities for Saturdays, such as hill walking. We've also had the CO's 8mile run building towards the half marathon in September. Being TA, I generally manage a few runs each year but this Op will be the first time I've done 2 half marathons in 1 year!

Ops have continued at a steady pace for us courtesy of both 2nd Bn Yorkshire Regt and the NLD (Netherlands) Coy – we've enjoyed some good success with them. With the continued deployments, the DAGGER crews have renewed confidence and capabilities with the DAGGER Dets. All of the Dets are now fully working and operational which is a testament to our DAGGER Tech who is affectionately known as **Sgt 'Cowboy' Lambert**. His enthusiasm and work ethos, often working late into the night, to ensure the Dets were task worthy after faults had frustrated the crews themselves has been inspirational. What does the next month have in store for DAGGER? Well the build up towards the elections in October will be ensuring that the DAGGERS are maintained to their current standard and exercised to that effect.

TSCP/COMMCEN

Overall it has been a quiet month in TSCP/COMMCEN. There have only been 2 major points to note. The first of these concerns the running of the 2 depts, which have now officially merged into one. This has meant that our shift patterns have changed once again but the new shifts work better than the pervious one.

Another incident of note was that a major link to the UK went down for 4 days which meant added work and pressure for the TSCP/ COMMCEN team. Both teams worked closely with FRT and agencies back in the UK to rectify this fault and it was found to be a number of minor faults that snowballed into a major link failure.

SQMS DEPARTMENT

The MISU SQMS Dept had successfully hosted 7 employers from the UK as part of SABRE. Both the range day and BBQ that we held in their honour were a complete success. All of the employers returned to the UK reluctantly, having thoroughly enjoyed their time with MISU.

A Board of Officers held on Tuesday 8th August found the team 100% correct – undeniably perfect! The SQMS/SSM has now departed Banja Luka for a month and left me in charge of all the accounts. The hand over/take over before he left took just 1 day, a great improvement on the week long procedure that we had when we first arrived in theatre. This was in no small part due to **SSgt (SSM/SQMS) Shrewsbury's** ingenious ssr/1033 crossreference system and my newly designed stores database. And people think we just play Solitaire and drink tea all day.

SPORT RELIEF 2006

On Saturday 15 July, BLMF joined the rest of the UK in sp of the charity event, Sport Relief 2006. There were a number of activities set out during the day beginning with 'Dancing to Music'. Fortunately there were no males in lycra leggings and leg warmers, only bright red socks from the Sport Relief packs that they had purchased with the money going towards the charity. Other events included giant Connect Four and giant Jenga, badminton and an auction in the Brit House.

The last event of the day was 'The Sport Relief Mile' run around the camp. Several depts dressed up in various costumes for the event but MISU stole the show with a spectacular Viking longboat. The crew consisted of **Maj Cosgrove**, **Capt Walker**, **WO2(YofS) Tucker**, **LCpl Edward**, **LCpl Collins** and **Cpl Collin**. Although a grand spectacle, the longboat certainly wasn't built for speed, taking a gruelling 38 minutes of arduous `shuffling' round camp. Other MISU contenders included **LCpl McDermott** as a Bunny, **LCpl Cook** as a small child, **Sig Postlethwaite** and **Sig Swindell** as water spurting Ninja Turtles.
Great fun was had by all and over 4000 Euro's was raised for Sport Relief, ending the day on high.

38th SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col AD Smith MBE TD**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Simcock**

THE RE-OPENING OF 46 SIGNAL SQUADRON'S DERBY TA CENTRE ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2006 - *by Sig Holly Cornish*

At Christmas 2005, 46 Sig Sqn moved out of their spacious TA Centre into a single 1970s decorated garage and 3 small adjacent offices. The garage was our lecture room, conference room, bar and anything else you care to mention all rolled into one. This was to be our home for the next 9 months, while our TA Centre on Windmill Hill Lane, Kingsway, Derby was given a facelift by East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA), our landlords.

During those 9 months, all the normal trg continued in our extremely cramped temporary accommodation and towards the end of the period of upheaval, preparations were started for the official re-opening. Soldiers underwent vigorous rifle drill lessons (with many self inflicted injuries being sported) and jobs were allocated to the troops for the big day, including lessons to be taken, the manning of stands, etc.

With 3 months to go it was revealed that the re-opening ceremony was to be performed by the UK's most senior TA officer, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Reserves and Cadets) **Maj Gen The Duke of Westminster KG, OBE, TD, DL**. This was going to be an important day for 46 Sig Sqn and the City of Derby.

Six weeks to go and the pressure was on. The builders had pretty much finished, so we began to move back in. The weekend of the opening soon arrived and the fun began on Friday night with the troops vacuuming, sweeping, polishing, ironing, draping cam nets (oh joy), chair arranging, cooking and the thousand and one other tasks necessary to ensure that the re-opening went smoothly.

The Duke of Westminster inspecting the 46 Signal Squadron Honour Guard

By the morning of Sunday 3 September, the TA Centre looked squeaky clean. As friends and families began to arrive, there was a mixture of nerves and excitement in the air as the OC, **Maj John Pearson**, said 'even my butterflies have butterflies'.

The Duke spent the morning being shown around the TA Centre and talking to troops, whilst friends and family toured the stands and presentations in the garages.

The TA Centre was formally re-opened by the Duke of Westminster in front of the very proud members of 46 Sig Sqn, their families and invited guests. A lot of effort was put in by the soldiers to ensure the day went to plan and it most definitely paid off.

Our Derby TA Centre is bigger and better than before. Even the caretaker's flat has been altered to accommodate soldiers on weekends and includes a kitchen and several rooms. The main kitchen has been refurbished, as has the bar, the social hub of the TA Centre. The drill hall has had a silk marquee fitted for use at functions, the Initial Trg Wing now has a new recruiting suite, including offices, and the SQMS has a huge store to fill with goodies.

Congratulations for a never-to-be-forgotten day are due in particular to the PSAO, **Capt Steve May**, who was the project officer throughout the refurbishment phase. Many thanks also go to East Midlands RFCA for providing us with an excellent TA Centre and especially to the families of the Sqn's TA pers for their continuing sp.

46 SIG SQN ADVENTUROUS TRAINING – EX RAMS BUNDLE - *by Sig Holly Cornish*

Partly as a thank you to the Sqn's members who had worked so hard to ensure that the Derby TA Centre was ready for its official re-opening, 46 Sig Sqn held an AT weekend to Capel Curig in North Wales.

There was a choice of either hill walking or a package of other activities. For those who chose the activities package, the day started on a dry ski slope where the participants were split into 2 groups, experienced and less so. The next 2 hours provided a lot of amusement as the novices attempted to stay upright and those more experienced tried to go as fast as possible down the slope, and then stop successfully at the bottom.

After lunch they moved to the climbing wall. Again split into 2 groups, half climbed with ropes and half tried bouldering, which is climbing without ropes. The staff decided to make things more interesting on the bouldering wall. The climbers were challenged to pass a hoop over their bodies while still holding onto the wall. They were then roped together in groups of 4 and tried to navigate their way around the wall while under fire from the 5 year old son of SPSI, **SSgt Johnny Fawcett**, using plastic balls.

By now muscles were starting to complain so the next activity, raft building and racing wasn't greeted with a lot of enthusiasm. However, as soon as the stopwatch started competitiveness kicked in and 2 rafts were assembled and ready for launch within 20 minutes. The aim was to cross a stream, pick up a rope from the opposite bank and come back again. Congratulations to the winning team who took the victory with ease.

A well built raft

Those who elected to do hill walking set off on Saturday morning with a spring in their step, expecting a gentle stroll with the opportunity to see some stunning views. How mistaken they were as they were each tasked with navigating a leg of the 15km route, which was described as precarious but exciting.

Their navigation was successful, with only one error early on. It turned out that certain LCpls, who shall remain nameless, were trying to take an easier route than the one given them. In all, 3 peaks were conquered, the highest one being the 999.9m, Glyder Fach.

The only casualty of the day was **Padre Sean Robertshaw's** dog, which was splashing about in puddles, only to discover that one of them was a lot deeper than it looked and it promptly disappeared under water, re-surfacing none the worse for wear and a lot cleaner.

It was a tough but satisfying day all round and was celebrated in the bar until the early hours of the morning. Many thanks to the OC, **Maj Pearson**, for a very enjoyable weekend.

The HQ managed by 38 Signal Regiment

EXERCISE GRIFFIN FOCUS 10 – 24 JUNE
- by Capt Hamish Fell

Our Annual Camp 2006 was Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS, which took place in Eastern Scotland, primarily over the period 10 – 24 June. The ex provided a real opportunity for 64 Sig Sqn and indeed the whole Regt to work in a combined arms environment which was something new to many of those talking part.

Despite a marked change in tempo, from the initial simulated scenarios to full ex play, 64 Sig Sqn's Comd Sp Teams performed to a very high standard and came through the ex with a much fuller understanding of how they fit into the big picture.

Ex GRIFFIN FOCUS provided a valuable learning experience and will ensure that all those who attended are that bit more proficient when the Sqn next deploys.

EX JOINT FORCE 8 – 10 SEPTEMBER - *by Capt Hamish Fell*

Under the re-structuring of the Regt, as part of Future Army Structure (FAS) re-organisation, 87 Sig Sqn in Nottingham was reduced in size and has become Nottingham Tp, 64 Sig Sqn

Ex JOINT FORCE took place at Chetwynd Barracks in Nottingham over the weekend 8 – 10 September with the joint aims of trg for the TARA Cup competition in October and of integrating the Sheffield and Nottingham elements of 64 Sig Sqn.

A round-robin of 5 stands was organised for the Saturday. They were the Confidence Course, the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer (a very realistic indoor video laser range which has replaced the Small Arms Trainer), a Battlefield Casualty Drills stand, Comms Trg and Comd Tasks.

This was followed by the Personal Fitness Test, a 1½ mile run and the day ended with a quiz organised by the OC, **Maj Andy Powell,** which conformed to his own special brand of humour. Once the SQMS had made sure the Sqn bar had made enough money the troops were unleashed on Nottingham for the evening.

The weekend achieved its joint aims and the general consensus was that it was both a worthwhile and a fun weekend.

BAFMA EVENTS WITH 87 SIGNAL SQUADRON

So far this year we have completed 5 BAFMA competitions. We started off on Ex ROUTEMASTER, which proved to be a good first event and provided an opportunity to blow away the cobwebs for the 3 teams entered.

The beginners' course followed a much more road-based route than the more advanced classes, with the emphasis being on keen observation and accurate route following. The first section of the main course covered some off-road navigation on tracks through forest areas, where a snow-covering provided some early entertainment on the bends. The course was then entirely on public roads, following a route provided cryptically in the roadbook until the dinner halt, over 6 hours later. Although the navigation was largely straightforward, particular care was required at triangular junctions, where the long-way-round option is a route-setter's favourite to catch out the unwary.
The evening sections were similar to those earlier in the day, but observing the marker boards dotted at random intervals along the route became considerably more difficult in the dark, and the prudent option may have been to drive particularly slowly to ensure all boards were sighted and incur minor penalties for lateness. With over 10 hours of near-continuous route plotting, navigation and driving, the ex proved a tiring but certainly enjoyable event, with a good result for **SSgt Kevin Bedford** and **LCpl Darren Watkinson**, who were placed 4th overall and 2nd Novice Crew.

Ex MAGNUM SPIRIT was the second event in the 2006 BAFMA Land Rover Championship series and was held at Javelin Barracks near Bruggen, Germany. The aim of each event is to test and improve both off-road driving and navigational skills using standard mil vehs. Three teams were entered for this event, 2 from 87 Sig Sqn and a combined team from 87 and 64 Sig Sqns, and it proved to be an enjoyable and fruitful journey.

The event began on Friday with 3 distinct elements to the contest. The first section was a simple navigational ex through a wooded section using an aerial photograph with a pre-marked route as a gentle warm-up. The second section was the Scatter event, essentially an orienteering-style ex in Land Rovers. 10 marker kites were spread out over the terrain, and another pre-marked aerial photo gave the locations of the checkpoints, with a time limit of 30 minutes to get to as many points as possible.

The final section on Friday was the Regularity event. At the allocated start time, each crew were given the distance of the marked route and the time that they were required to complete this in. By calculating (and hopefully sticking to) the average speed, the crews should complete the event in the correct time, with penalty points awarded for early or late arrival.

Saturday started as a day for the drivers. Six tests were laid out, round-robin style, consisting of a number of slow-speed manoeuvring tests and comd tasks between navigator and driver. Sadly the hotly-anticipated skid-car section had to be cancelled, replaced instead by a blind driving challenge. The drivers however got to have their fun on the trials sections, with 5 small sections laid out over challenging terrain, each consisting of a series of 11 gates through which the driver must negotiate. This section was a real test of off-road driving skills, with slippery terrain, tight turns and steep slopes the order of the day.

A few hours of rest gave crews a breather before the final element of the event, the Night Navigation section. This section was the navigator's test, with around 4 hrs of navigation down tarmac roads, green lanes and through forested sections, to truly test the mettle of any map reader. An hour before the start each crew received the route information in cryptic form allowing time for crews to plot the route, and once underway careful tracking of the route was essential to avoid getting lost. Wooded sections in the pitch black, with their complex network of tracks, sorted the

men from the boys. It after midnight before the first crews returned, with some of the more navigationally challenged crews finishing up to 3 hours later.

By the end, **SSgt Bedford** and **LCpl Watkinson** achieved a typically strong result with 5th place overall while **Sgt Barbara Bedford** and **Sig Stuart Rowell** were just behind in 6th place. Also taking the honours with 1st in the beginners' class were **Sig Christopher Stokes** and **Sig Robert Agar** who had been performing well all weekend but the challenging wooded section on the Night Navigation saw them further back in the overall standings. However, the combined efforts of all 3 crews resulted in the team prize for 87 Sig Sqn and yet another trophy to add to the cabinet.

As the next competition, Ex WHITE ROSE, was held on the first weekend of Annual Camp, only 2 teams entered this with **SSgt Bedford** and **LCpl Watkinson** not faring too well and coming last (you live and learn by your mistakes). However there was an excellent result for **Sig Stokes** and **Sgt Victoria Nevill** as they were placed 8th overall & 2nd in the beginners class.
This was followed by Ex CATTERICK CRUISE early in July which was the last BAFMA Rally to be entered by crews from 87 Sig Sqn, just before the Sqn was reduced in size to become Nottingham Detachment, 64 Sig Sqn on 1 August 2006 under the Future Army Structure (FAS) restructuring.

Three teams were entered. **LCpl Watkinson** (Navigator) paired up with **Sig Stokes** (Driver), **Sig Rowell** (N) with **Sgt Bedford** (D) and **Lt Nick Carter** (N) with **Sgt Nevill** (D).

There were fewer elements to this event than in previous rallies, with a trials section on Saturday afternoon, leading to the usual night navigation ex starting in the evening and progressing into the night.

The trials section comprised 4 tests. Each test presented the crews with 10 pairs of gates to negotiate, marked out by canes. The layout of the gates and their narrow width required slow speed, tight turning and careful forward planning in order to avoid contact with the gates. The length of the veh's used (110 Land Rovers), their heavy steering and relatively poor turning circle combine to make this a very challenging part of the event. Sections look straightforward on foot, but proved to be anything but that once underway.

Sgt Nevill's effort was notable for her attempt to drive through a barbed-wire fence, buried in the long grass, in search of a larger turning area than other crews had used, but swift arm waving by the marshals and the creaking of protesting fence posts sadly put paid to this. With the back of her veh full of balloons in recognition of her birthday, this proved quite a sight! Most crews were only able to complete half of the first section before contact with gates, while the second section proved equally challenging, most crews again managing to get no further than the half way mark. The third and fourth sections proved more fun, with lots of ups and downs through the gates, with some crews able to complete Section 4 even in long wheelbase vehs.

The night navigation section was run in a similar way to previous events. Crews were given their route-books, in which the route was broken down into sections and presented in a variety of forms. These included trace sections, grid references and map photocopies. Once the route had been plotted crews then had to navigate the route, looking out for and noting down letter boards by the roadside. For this event, the route was navigationally straightforward and largely road-based, where previous events have included more off-road sections.

The event was, nonetheless enjoyable; the benefits of simpler navigation meant more time for banter with the other crews at the control stations and an opportunity to compare experiences. As usual, the event was a success for the 87 Sig Sqn crews. It was a close battle throughout the event between the pairings of **LCpl Watkinson** with **Sig Stokes** and **Sig Rowell** with **Sgt Bedford**, there never more than a couple of points separating them. In the end, the 2 teams finished equal on points, although the **Sig Rowell** and **Sgt Bedford** pairing was placed higher in the final standings as a result of a better score on the final section. Silverware for 2nd overall in the Novice Class was the reward, with **LCpl Watkinson** and **Sig Stokes** just behind in 3rd place.

That was followed by Ex BENSON BURNER at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire with only one recognised pair. It was a very hard event for all competitors and it was a baptism of fire for the 2 newcomer teams from Nottingham Detachment, 64 Sig Sqn (the new title for what used to be 87 Sig Sqn) as this course is renowned for being one of the hardest of the year. There was a driving skills test first, which included driving through gates, reversing a trailer, speed driving, measuring a bearing and a written question test. This was followed by a night navigation event covering 150 miles.

On the training area element **Cpl Watkinson** and **Sig Stokes** were rescued after spending 40 mins in a ditch, by none other than one of their own crews, **Cpl Darren Welsh** and **Sig Jonathan Smithers**. As a result, there was quite a bit of cutting and running to get back on track to achieve good results. In the end our efforts were rewarded as we won the unit team award. **WO2 Michael Hallam** with **LCpl Jez Clarke** were placed 6th overall and 2nd beginners. **Cpl Welsh** with **Sig Smithers** 5th overall and 1st beginners while **Cpl Watkinson** and **Sig Stokes** were 2nd overall and 1st in class, but unfortunately received no prize for the class win as they finished in the overall top 3 and were part of the winning unit team as well.

So all in all a lot of silverware has been won over these 5 events and at the time of writing we are looking forward doing even better at the next event, Ex ROADMASTER in October.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR 4 – 6 AUG - *by LCpl Joanne Coy*

From 4 – 6 August, 38 Sig Regt conducted a Battlefield Tour around WW1 sites in Northern France and Belgium. It provided an opportunity for the members of HQ Sqn, 46 Sig Sqn and 64 Sig Sqn to welcome 93 Sig Sqn back to the Regt following the implementation of the Future Army Structure (FAS) re-organisation.

The tour held particular significance for HQ and 64 Sig Sqns, based in Sheffield and 93 Sig Sqn, based in Blackburn and Manchester, as it included visits to the Somme where the Sheffield and Barnsley Pals Bns fought alongside the Accrington Pals, which was recruited from Greater Manchester.

The tour guide, **Col (Retd) Andrew Duff**, provided an excellent narration of the sites visited. He gave the historical military background and provided moving descriptions of the events that occurred at each site, concluding at each location with question and answer sessions which were greatly appreciated by all present.

Col (Retd) Andrew Duff describing the fighting in Thiepval Woods to the attentive members of 38 Signal Regiment

The Regt learnt a great deal about the hardships and tremendous loss suffered by the soldiers of the Great War. Visits were made to famous battle sites along the Somme, the Thiepval Memorial in France and to Ypres in Belgium. On Saturday evening, the Regt attended the poignant Last Post held at the Menin Gate in Ypres. As well as reflecting on the Great War and the men who lost their lives in it, thoughts were spared for our friends and colleagues serving in ongoing conflicts around the globe.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

OC **Maj CM Dawes TD**
SSM **WO2(SSM) MKS White**

Firstly we would like to congratulate **LCpl Marie Perry** and **LCpl Tom Watson** on their recent promotions to LCpl. Well Done! In addition, we say congratulations and farewell to **Capt Iain Sainsbury** who leaves us on promotion to Maj to take over command of 57 Sig Sqn and finally farewell to **Pte Tom Fairman** who leaves us on transfer to 266 Para Bty RA.

Over the last month the Sqn have been heavily involved with the preparation for the unit run Driving Cadre and Annual Camp, which this year incorporated a 2(NC) Sig Bde FTX on the Beckingham/West Toff trg areas.

DRIVING CADRE

The Driving Cadre was expertly organised and run by the ever elusive MTWO, **WO2 Dennis Griffiths** who successfully arranged the cadre to clash with Annual Camp, thus avoiding the need for him and his merry bunch of instructors, namely **WO2 Graham Peet**, **Sgts Kerry Hill**, **Sue Palfry**, **Andy Gray** and **Dale Sterry** to deploy on Annual Camp in the field.

The Driving Cadre took place in Sywnnerton Trg Camp and was a great success for all who took part. Forty-three different licences were obtained including Category C + E for **LCpl Marie Perry** and a Category C licence for **Cfn Ali Tibbatts.**

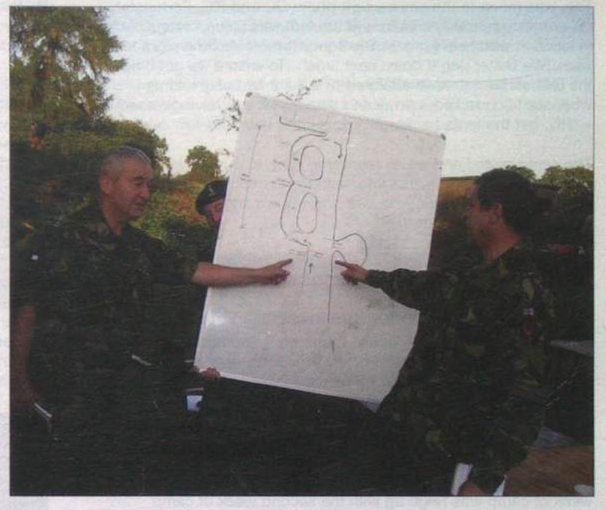
ANNUAL CAMP

After the normal mobilisation ex on the Saturday morning the Sqn set off for the long trek to Beckingham for the start of the 2 week Annual Camp. The camp was split into 2 separate phases, with the first week being spent on mil trg and preparing for the second week, which included the Bde FTX.

We also welcomed our 2 United States Reserve Force (USRF) pers who were on the UK TA/USRF Exchange programme, namely **SSgt John Tolliver** and **Sgt Zac West**. The mil trg phase incorporated an asslt course competition, orienteering competition and instruction and firing of foreign wpns, although the Sqn didn't win this competition, good fun was had by all involved.

Under the guidance of the QM (V), **Capt Phil Smith**, the Sqn practised the art of loading and unloading vehs until we got it down to a fine art. We deployed into the field in preparation for the Bde FTX under the direction of our new OC, **Maj Clive Dawes**, who much to the dismay of the 2IC was heard to say on numerous occasions – "I've had an idea!"

Without doubt, the highlight of the first week was the Sqn smoker where we deployed to a nice rural country pub/hotel, which had the biggest collection of whisky ever



Maj Dawes puts in a last minute change to SSM Simpson's replen plan while WO1(SVWO) Lee wishes they would hurry up so that he can put the board down

While waiting for the last packet to arrive, Maj Shipley, the Ops Maj, proves he is head and shoulders above the rest of the Regiment.

seen outside of Scotland. Several members of the Sqn participated in sampling the local tipple, including **Cfn Nev Hancock** who tried (unsuccessfully – thank god!) to order a £325 tot of whisky!

The second week saw the Sqn deploy to the field collocated with 94 Sig Sqn. Here we perfected the art of erecting and taking down 12 x 12s with of course the exception of the female members of the Sqn. **WO2 Jayne Tuck**, **Sgt Karen Hodges** and **Sgt Pat Pocklington** erected their 12 x 12 tent, only to see the wind send it 10ft into the air landing on the Camp SSM, **WO2 Tony Simpson**, pinning him to his bed as he let out a girly scream.

This was much to the amusement of the OC and 2IC. Fortunately no-one was seriously injured and the tent was placed safely back in location with help from 94 Sig Sqn. Comment of the night was: "We better peg it down next time". To ensure we got it right the OC left his veh keys attached to a 9 x 9 and only told us when we had packed it away and then – yes, you have guessed it – "RQ, get the tents back out!"

The camp ended and we all recovered back to our relevant TA Centres without any further ado, with the exception of the REME Recovery Vehicle breaking down! - but that's another story and one for the REME magazine!

57 (CITY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON ANNUAL CAMP
- by Lt Trevelion

39 Sig Regt deployed on Annual Camp on 9 September 06. 57 and Sp Sqns moved to Beckingham Trg Camp near Newark on the same day, while 94 Sqn conducted their own trg before joining us on Sunday 10 September.

Our first Regtl activity was a promotion parade, where 10 members of the Regt were promoted. After this we moved into a series of briefings on the events for the following week. The first week of camp was Regtl trg with the second week of camp mainly consisting of the Bde FTX.

Two days of the Regtl trg was devoted to Ex ABLE ARCHER where soldiers from each of the Sqns were mixed up into 4 teams, each led by a Subaltern or a WO. Each team then attempted a series of tasks as part of the competition and were marked on each stand.

The stands included the asslt course, orienteering, grouping and zeroing, CBRN, BFAT, comd tasks and a foreign wpns shoot. The foreign wpns shoot was by far the most popular stand, though some imagination was needed to imagine that you were in a defensive position and not on the range! The only down side was cleaning the wpns afterwards! Ex ABLE ARCHER was eventually won by Team 3, lead by **2Lt Will Henry**. Though I'd still like to contest that my team didn't get as long on the orienteering stand as the other teams!

The other 3 days comprised of Ex COOL CROSSBOW which was a Regtl tac comms ex on Beckingham Trg Area. 57 Sqn deployed to 2 separate locations, whilst 94 and Sp Sqns collocated. The aim was to practise using our eqpt prior to the Bde FTX, but with defence of the comms sites thrown in for good measure. The highlight of the ex for some was the veh ambush that was set up by 94 Sqn's SPSI, **SSgt Daniels**, to catch the DS, who were acting as enemy.

What we didn't know until the DS were captured was that our 2 visitors from the US National Guard were also travelling in the Land Rover – I'm sure it added an extra twist to their visit! **Sig Herniman** enjoyed the ambush so much that he was quoted as saying that he'd rather lie in an ambush all night than stag on in the det – he'll learn!

The ex finished off with the Regt meeting at Fulbeck Airfield to go through a replen ex. Unfortunately I managed to get my packet slightly lost trying to find the airfield and as a warning to others I'd like to point out that if you want to inform someone you're lost, make sure you use the Airwave handset in point to point mode or the whole Regt hears and you never live it down!

But don't be fooled into thinking that the Regt only had time to work, as we still managed to fit in a few socials. The Officers departed for their mess dinner at RAF Digby halfway through Ex COOL CROSSBOW, much to the soldiers' delight I suspect! Then the Sqn smokers took place at the end of the ex.

All the Sqns had picked different locations for their smokers and there seemed to be a Sqn theme running. 57 'sailing' Sqn in typical fashion had their smoker aboard a boat moored alongside in Newark, whilst Sp Sqn went to a pub that reputedly contained the largest selection of whiskies in the UK! After our smoker, 57 departed to various pubs in Newark.

Next time I will know not to let the OC and the SQMS choose the pub, though it was a very interesting evening I have to say! All in all it was a very busy camp, but everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and finished the Regtl phase ready and prepared for the Bde FTX.

94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON SUMMER CAMP *- by 2Lt Henry*

With so many soldiers on courses, it was a smaller number than normal that deployed from Windsor to Pirbright on Saturday 9 September where the PACEX took place under the comd of **Capt Davies**. All vehs were prepared and then the move to Beckingham took place without incident. This was the first time a lot of the 94 Sqn members had met the rest of 39 Sig Regt and it

Lt Col Adams congratulates Maj Connelly on a well deserved promotion prior to the Officers' Dinner Night on Annual Camp

proved an excellent opportunity to work with 57 and Sp Sqn and learn their roles. For Ex ABLE ARCHER, an inf skills competition, 4 mixed teams were put together. All the 94 soldiers put in a fine effort and did the Sqn proud and **2Lt Henry's** team won.

The SPSI stole the show with his foreign wpns stand and gave us the chance to fire some unusual weaponry from Sniper Rifles to Minimi. Thank you **Staff Daniels**!

With newly promoted **Maj Connolly** at the helm for COOL CROSSBOW we deployed for a 3 day CNR ex. Comms were established seamlessly, despite roving enemy patrols which pestered us, but were eventually ambushed and detained by a crack squad let by our fearless PSIs.

While all this was going on, the officers deployed to Digby to be initiated into the ways of the 39 Sig Regt Officers Mess, including sniffing snuff from the rams head!

Ex HORSESHOE 6 had the Sqn deployed in a Bde Ex to Norfolk to deal with flooding. This was the first time the Sqn has exercised on UK Ops and their CNR skills helped the ex to go smoothly. As well as moving the dets quickly and professionally, there was also teaching and lessons which despite little sleep worked well while the SCP managed and introduced some interesting traffic.

After all the hard work, the Sqn put on a good show at the Regtl smoker, not only with the skits but also leading the field on the karaoke! Having already taken over the pub in Beckingham once, they had a day out in sunny Lincoln to finish off the camp and returned to Windsor certainly more tired and all having learnt something as well.

The following received their promotions from the CO at camp:

Maj Connolly, **Sgts Andrews**, **Nicholas** and **McCoy**, **Cpl Stacey** and **LCpls Anderson**, **Pearce** and **Harrison**.

Having returned to Windsor a farewell dinner was held for **Maj Simon Walker** who has handed 94 Sqn over to **Maj Connolly**. This was well attended and enjoyed by all.

40th (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col FER Whichelo**
RSM **WO1 Littlefield**

The Regt has had a busy schedule since it commenced its re-role from Euromux to UK Ops in April 2006. This has included conducting a CPX and FTX as part of 2 (NC) Sig Bde, a very successful Battle Camp ahead of the FTX, an initiative and leadership weekend in London and the first of a series of planned exs in Scotland.

With a completely new trg programme for this year and next, the schedule is challenging, but should develop the Regt quickly into its new role, as well as ensuring that mandatory mil trg and trade trg is completed and that the high proportion of soldiers volunteering for Op Tours are well prepared – 40 Sig Regt has deployed 62 pers since Op TELIC 1.

The Regt has recently overtaken other TA units in Province with its recruiting statistics, and is on target to achieve full manning by the end of 2008. On a recent recruits cadre in Ballymena, 18 of 35 soldiers passing out were from the Regt, including the Best Recruit, **Sig Auld** of 69 (NIH) Sig Sqn (Belfast).

40 (U) SIGNAL REGIMENT (V) PARTICIPATE AT NISAAM

Following the Regt's victory at CORPSAM only weeks previously we knew we were in with a shot at this year's NISAAM.

2Lt Jones, **Sgt Gordon**, **Cpl Hagan**, **LCpl Wilson**, **Sig Youll**, **Sig Johnston**, **Sig Colgan** and **Sig Harper** represented the Regt. The standard at that meet was extremely high and the 5 shoots were demanding; Moving Target, FIBUA, Roupell, Whitehead and Combat Team Snap; and the Falling Plate.

Sig Harper demonstrating that it was not just beginner's luck at CORPSAM, won the Best Young Soldier. **Cpl Hagan** won the Whitehead, showing the younger members of the group that experience can count as much as youth. Also, to his credit, **Cpl Wilson** was runner up in the Moving Target Match.

The highlight of the competition was undoubtedly the Falling Plate. It is very unusual that 2 teams from the same Unit should meet in the final but 40's A and B teams showed just how good they were and both fought hard to reach the final. Team B missing out by a fraction to Team A.

MT SECTION 66 SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj Cliff Montgomery**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Don Holmes**

The Regt deployed on their Annual Camp (Ex HORSESHOE WARRIOR) on 1 September 2006. Prior to the FTX, the Sqn immersed itself in a multitude of mil trg tasks at Otterburn Trg Area.

This included map reading (working towards the new Navigation MATT), range work (with the opportunity to fire different types of wpns), CBRN and BCD. The fun element included having the Sqn Comds as Sect Comds – a taste of reality for some! The MT dept were kept particularly busy, not least with the usual airport runs and planning the moves across GB for the different phases of the ex.

The initial phase was the move to Otterburn from Belfast. Everything went reasonably well, with only one breakdown to dampen our spirits. After the fun and games of rolling in the mud at Otterburn, there was the move to join the FTX at STANTA and then the final phase of moving to Altcar for some well deserved R&R, prior to hopping on a ferry back to Belfast.

OC 69 Sig Sqn, **Maj Andrew Woods**, must be issued with a compass. That way he will know that STANTA is south of Otterburn and not in Scotland but he was by no means the only one! The MT dept as ever was dial a cab, UPS and general duties but then we always are the oil that makes the machine run. We will get DII (F) next month and are hoping that it will have a crystal ball programme to aid in our anticipation of the tpt requirements for the next ex.

BRITISH ARMED FORCES MOTORING ASSOCIATION (BAFMA) – EXERCISE ROADMASTER 06

We enjoyed success for the Regtl BAFMA Team. The team represented by **Maj Ian Kyle**, **WO2 Billy Lyle**, **Cpl Billy Kane** and **LCpl Alana Murray** competed in the annual Armed Forces Driving Championship event over the weekend of 20/22 October based at Salisbury Plain. Crews representing all 3 Services, the German Army and the French Army participated. The team left NI on Thursday, travelling to Salisbury Plain in atrocious weather with some very heavy rain. Fortunately the rain eased for the

event. Very many thanks must go to **WO2 Billy Lyle** for his excellent map reading and navigation during the ex as well as his "Bleep-Bleep-Bleep" advice when on several occasions there was more water inside the Land Rover than out. He was heard to compare it with a sieve.

Following a very hard fought battle with the RAF and The Scottish Tpt Regt, the team were successful in finishing an excellent 2nd overall, winning the Southern Comd Trophy. They also won the very prestigious President's Trophy for best TA crew as well as the Northern Ireland Cup

EXERCISE EDINBURGH EDUCATION – A NEW RECRUIT'S TALE - *by Pte N Gribben AGC(SPS)*

As a relatively new recruit to the TA, only completing my Phase 1 Trg at the end of January 2006, I took the opportunity to attend Ex EDINBURGH EDUCATION which took place over the weekend of Friday 10 – Sunday 12 February 2006. Some 58 members of 40 Sig Regt attended a "Navigational Treasure Hunt" in Edinburgh, organised by 85 Sig Sqn. The aim of the ex was 'to enhance team spirit, develop leadership and encourage retention of the TA soldier'.

The advanced party left from Bangor TAC on the morning of 10 February, with the main party departing mid-afternoon of the same day, under the control of **WO2(SSM) Don Holmes**.

A warm welcome and accommodation was provided by 61 Sig Sqn, based at Lanark Road, with **Capt Phil Campbell** from that Sqn kindly acting in the dual roles of both host and bar/profit manager for the weekend. Friday evening saw the members being briefed by **WO2(SSM) Johnston** and **Sgt Colin Sanlon** of 85 Sqn (who had organised the weekend), on the details of the ex.

Members were then broken down into 12 teams with certain individuals being specifically selected (at random?) as team leaders for each.

On Saturday morning, team leaders were provided with an envelope containing clues, maps and additional information on the tasks to be performed at certain locations dotted across the city. All teams were also required to carry a digital camera to record their efforts at each location. At 0900hrs all teams were transported into the city centre and deposited... and the ex began.

Competition was fierce with some teams preferring to complete the ex by taking taxis, buses and any other means at their disposal.

But even the best laid plans of mice and men can often go astray, as it was soon discovered that some of the locations were temporarily closed until later in the day, thereby throwing the teams' timings up in the air as new routes had to be quickly drawn up and acted upon.

The given tasks at each location were specifically designed to stretch the imagination and initiative of each team, and some clues were also very much open to interpretation. This resulted in teams having to consult members of the general public and staff at each location. (Some even went as far as to 'phone a friend' and ask them to look up information on the Internet, often with little success).

At 1530hrs the ex finished and all teams were transported back to Lanark Road to submit their completed task sheets for evaluation. After much laughter at some of the answers, the results were delivered.

Six of the teams were qualified as "winners" and received a bottle of champagne, while the remaining 6 were classed as "losers" and were promptly issued with marigold gloves to enable them to do the washing up.

In his final comments, OC 85 Sig Sq, **Maj Ian Craig**, concluded the ex had been a resounding success in that it had achieved its aims of getting people to work and think together in an unfamiliar setting. He also thanked everyone who attended for giving their sp and commitment to the ex.

OPERATIONAL TRAINING - *by Lt Simon Farmer*

Over the weekend of 13-15 October 06 the Regt conducted the first of 6 trg weekends at Kirkcudbright in Scotland. The aim of these weekends is to provide all ranks with a full range of trg including Mil Skills, Comms Trg, Physical Trg and Theatre Specific Op Trg. During the first weekend, Ex CELTIC WARRIOR 1, the Op Trg was based on Force Protection (FP).

Early on the Saturday morning, while the rest of the Regt was being put through it's paces by the PTIs, I headed off onto the Trg Area accompanied by **Drum Maj Shaw, SSgt McCann** and **LCpl Smart** to set up for the first of the trg stands. Each of us has recently returned from an Op Tour in Iraq or Afghanistan employed in a FP role. Although the Regt has deployed numerous pers to theatre over the past few years, the first lesson was back to basics. The troops were introduced to the fundamentals of FP, including Top Cover drills and Rules of Engagement. It was then time for the sects to put this trg into practice, but not before **SSgt McCann** and **LCpl Smart** talked them through some real-life scenarios and the lessons they had learnt.

On Saturday evening it was time for Part 2 of the FP Trg Package. Armed with PowerPoint and a marker board, a range of different types of veh contact were covered. Although everyone had had a packed day running around the trg area, few fell asleep and the presentation ran over due to the number of questions directed to myself and **SSgt McCann**. Sunday saw the culmination of the weekends trg with each of the sects being put through their paces during an assessed practical. The scenario was based upon a veh contact involving an IED with a small arms contact immediately afterwards.

All the sects performed well although the last 3 sects were disadvantaged with the arrival of a second enemy gunman. This turned out to be Ops Maj, **Maj White** who took to his new role surprisingly well.

All in all, the weekend trg went very well, with a diverse trg package being successfully delivered. Roll on Ex CELTIC WARRIOR 2!

IN THE PUBLIC EYE - *by Lt Simon Farmer*

Over the past few months the Regt has undertaken events in order to boost its profile within the local community. One such event was a Charity Bus Pull for the Northern Ireland Blind Centre along a 4 mile circuit in East Belfast.

The day was a huge success with **LCpl Hanna** determined to pull the bus the entire way! This coupled with **Sig Bradshaw's** flair for street collecting resulted in £451 being raised!

Another event, which was equally well supported by members of the Regt, was the cleanup of the garden and playground area of Belmont Primary School. Despite experiencing all 4 seasons over the weekend, a great deal was achieved, including the repainting of the snakes and ladders board on the playground by **Cpl Jones**.

Meanwhile at the front of the school **Cpl McKeown** and **Cpl Small** rediscovered their green fingers along with **Capt Dowell**, as the garden area was restored.

As normalisation continues to progress in the province it is hoped that a series of such events will be conducted over the next year. Watch this space!

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

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

OC Sqn **Maj C Wood**
SSM **WO2(SSM) J Krikorian**

Once again it has been a busy period for 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC), with 12 of the Operators deployed on ops and the remaining Operators in the UK taking part in some challenging and rewarding AT before the start of the next Special Comms (SC) Course on 25 October.

We also had summer camp in September for the Territorial members of the Sqn, which saw us deploy to Browndown and Longmoor Camps, where we conducted both mil and trade trg for all members of the Sqn.

Preparations for the next SC Course have also been underway and the YofS is already off on his recce to the locations for Ex GLOBAL LYNX, the final confirmation ex for the SC Course, who this year will be deploying dets to Singapore, Bangkok and Toyko.

EXERCISE AQUATIC LYNX - *by Cpl C Johnson*

A culmination of Ops Tp and Comms Tp, 11 pers in total, deployed on a Sub Aqua diving exped to the Red Sea. The week was spent on board and was a chance for the Sqn members to gain their next diving qualification. Amongst them were 10 Sports Diver qualifications, 1 Ocean Diver as well as some PADI qualifications, such as Master and Rescue Diver.

We were averaging 4 dives a day, which took in some of the best wreck dives in the world, such as the world famous *Thistlegorm*. We managed to get in some reef diving as well and the world famous condom fish was spotted numerous times. Along with the many lectures and trg dives, the guys also got time to dive with dolphins and practice their high dives off the top of the boat.

Sgt Donaldson and LCpls Honey, Watson and Lawrence show off their buoyancy skills

EXERCISE ANNUAL LYNX - *by Cpl A Yates*

1(RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) moved out of the TAC, destination Browndown Camp, at 1200hrs 2 September. After prepping the kit and a quick Mobex for the TA members of the Sqn, we were on our way. An uneventful journey took us to the location of the original Bad Lads' Army series and the male ORs moved into the sect rooms as seen on TV.

Sunday started with PT and a bracing run along the beach and seafront, then it was into 2 days of mil skills lessons provided by both TA and Regular cpls. Topics covered included patrolling, admin in the field, sect battle drills and model making so that we were all refreshed and newer members learned new skills for the mil ex. Before we took off into Longmoor Camp for the mil exercise, the Sqn held its own SAAM at Chilcomb Ranges and newly arrived Tech, **Cpl Chris Haslam**, took the honours with excellent shooting on the APWT and the Whitehead Cup.

TA soldiers also shot well with **Cpl Anna Yates** and **Cpl Tony Lock** coming joint second on the APWT.

After declarations, we were off to Longmoor where we began our actions against the 'MILF'. Several successful patrols located the MILF's lair and a dawn attack, after 15 mins suppressive fire from the LSWs, put paid to the MILF in the Petersfield area.

The MILF were dug-in in strength however and **Cpl Anna Yates'** and **Cpl Rachel Morris**' sects, under covering fire from **Cpl Paddy Morrison's** MSS, had plenty to do in that time. New recruits to the Sqn who have not yet got to this stage in their career came down to watch the asslt.

The ex culminated with a Sect Competition which was a 2km run back to the Bergen cache. Congratulations to 1 Sect who came first. After that came the usual admin and wpn cleaning. Saturday morning saw us back ashore in Portsmouth at the OC's disposal looking around *HMS Victory* which impressed us all.

The comms ex began in earnest on Sunday after a plug-up and 3 dets were dispatched to Thorney Island, Blandford and Little Rissington. Blandford was expected and Green, then Red set up on the football pitches whilst Brown broke down on the way to their location and so stayed where they were to setup.

Red det found the move to Blandford sweet relief having been attacked mercilessly for 2 days by the mutant mosquitoes that inhabit Thorney Island. Poor old Green det had it all to come. Squashing the little buggers is most satisfying but when they are full of your blood, it does make a bit of a mess!!

Thursday morning saw the first rain and made the course for a cheeky stretcher race all the more fun. The heavens then opened for a serious downpour which forced the turnaround into Browndown's hanger/gym. Friday, back to Bletchley for us to move our Pinzgauers into their purpose- built garages which will make maintaining and trg with them far easier than with the facilities that we previously had. A fantastic meal at the Golden Curry for Comms Tp was a great way of bringing camp to a close, bar some veh and wpn cleaning.

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

OC	**Maj S Nesmith**
RSM	**WO1(RSM) A Caulfield**

The pace of life within the Sqn remains at a canter with most of the Sqn Operators in Canada, while the remainder back in Tidworth get on with routine business interspersed with MATTs and a spot of AT.

Since the last instalment, Ops have bade farewell to **Cpl Eyre** who has managed to escape the Crypto Cell by being selected to join the Army Recruiting Team. We wish him all the best. Ops also welcomed **SSgt(YofS) Cox** into the Bowman Yeoman slot.

SABRE TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt P Hodgkinson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S Barrass**

This month Sabre Tp say hello to **LCpl Dodman** and **LCpl Virtue**, who have just arrived into the Sqn and say goodbye to **Cpl Turner**, who is heading off to work with 47 Regt RA.

The past few weeks have been another hectic period with the mighty Sabre being spread to the 4 winds – exs in Canada, Italy and Wales to name a few.

For **Capt Hodgkinson**, **Lt Eros**, **Cpl McKenna**, **LCpl Grochowina** and **Sig Arbon**, Ex DOLOMITE DRAGON proved to be an awesome experience. The day after returning from summer leave the exped team packed their kit and headed off to the Italian Dolomites for 2 weeks of Via Ferrata.

The team were based for the duration of the expedition in Cortina d'Ampezzo and enjoyed a number of challenging days out in the mountains. During the exped, the team tackled some pretty hairy routes and took the opportunity to stay overnight in the highest refugio in the Dolomites, at just over 3000m.

Over the next few months Sabre Tp will be looking forward to getting some action on the Plain, preparing for next years deployment to Iraq and a spot of snowboarding in Austria at the Corps Championships.

BENGAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt Chris Anderson**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Sean Kelly**

A relatively quiet month for Bengal Tp, with a handful of people posted in and a couple posted out. The lack of business is mostly thanks to Bde exs in Canada which have taken all but a slack handful of the troops from Tidworth. That said, the troops have been keeping themselves occupied. There has been AT for the Sqn in Wales in the last week of the month. A highly successful week was had kayaking, climbing, and walking around the Pembrokeshire coast. **LCpl 'Bushy' Bush** thought the day's coastal trekking would be a 'pulling' opportunity, after hearing about all the old women that were seen walking the coast and so went in his smartest jest t-shirt combo, with a beige cotton jacket to keep the rain off. Needless to say he did not get any action that day! Morale in barracks is being maintained at a good level, with no small thanks to **SSgt Kelly** and his daily outbursts during which he claims to hate all people.

The Tp are now of the opinion that aggression is the first sign of affection and in fact he loves them all. Though he denies it, we know the truth! So now to the hale's and farewells:

We say hello to **LCpl Martin,** who has come from 2 Sig Regt, **LCpl Taylor**, who came from 1 Div HQ & Sig Regt, **2Lt Jankiewicz**, straight form RMAS on her attachment prior to attending Blandford, and finally myself, **2Lt Anderson,** fresh from the Tp Comd's Course. We say goodbye to **Sgt Welsh,** who moves on to keep the TA in check and **LCpl Mears,** who moves on to 102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in Germany.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt MA Webb**
RQMS	**WO2(RQMS) Bickerstaff**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Hounsell**

Sp Tp has been spread to the winds the last few months with several major activities taking place. **Cpl McKenna** and **Sig Arbon** took part in Ex DOLOMITE DRAGON, which was a week climbing, trekking and mountain biking in the Dolomites in Italy. Both soldiers returned to give a superb presentation to the Sqn.

Sig Keenan has returned successfully from a 'Rat Catchers' course. With the major demolition of buildings in Tidworth - all of the pigeons and rats are migrating uphill to Jellalabad Bks. He will be busy for several months reducing the pigeon population. He is currently dusting down his 'shooter'.

The MT is pushing hard to qualify Sqn pers in Cat C (SNATCH) vehs prior to our deployment on OP TELIC 10 in June 06. We have heard that since our summer tour in 2004 that due to global warming the weather is now much like the UK – fairly mild in the summer!

Welcome to **SSgt Paul Hounsell** who joins us in the MT from his long awaited arrival from 11 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE TIDWORTH DRAGON - *by 2Lt C Anderson*

On Monday morning the troops taking part in Ex TIDWORTH DRAGON formed up on the parade square outside Sqn HQ. The weather was overcast but dry but the forecast was bad, really bad for the week. With this in mind, we set off for Castlemartin and a week's AT on and around the Pembroke coastline.

After an uneventful trip, we arrived in the early afternoon in Castlemartin and proceeded to admin ourselves before a quick football/basketball tournament in the afternoon. This was followed by dinner and a trip to Tenby, the first 'cultural' visit of the week.

On Tuesday, we kicked things off properly with climbing and kayaking and to make things better the weather was awesome. Though the weather did not hold beyond Tuesday, the trg remained excellent and all involved got to go climbing, do some sea kayaking, and get some coastal walking done. It was the first time some of us had ever seen seals 'in the flesh' and there were plenty to see swimming amongst the kayakers and lounging on the beaches.

The cultural visits continued, with a particularly entertaining visit to Haverfordwest on Wednesday night. Most of us discovered the local culture to be 'interesting', but some of the younger participants out that night found it 'very interesting'!

Thankfully the interest didn't last and everyone was back to the bus on time and free of the locals. On Friday we returned to Tidworth, tired but happy that we had had a good week, ready to crack on with normal work the following week.

UNIT CADRE COURSE - *by SSgt Sid Barrass*

1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn held a unit cadre course from 24 – 28 July. The course was designed to assess the potentially outstanding Sigs, Ptes and Cfns from within the Bde.

The second aim was to develop the skills already learned and give all soldiers attending the course a chance to better themselves and help on their push for promotion.

The course started with a hot morning and afternoon in and around the Gym in Tidworth Garrison doing comd tasks. Every soldier had a go at leading the group through a series of mental and physical challenges. At times it was panic, pandemonium, blind leading the blind and all out war, but great fun was had and at the end of it all lessons were learned. The eqpt managed to survive some scares including **Sig Jase Campbell** balancing on a gym bench suspended by another bench and 2 soldiers. It must be the only time a gym bench has ever looked like a banana and not done untold damage to the gym or the soldiers.

After a physical start to the course, it was a sharp contrast to have to complete appreciations and finish Day 1 with a discussion group led by the OC, **Maj Nesmith**. The course PTI, **Cpl Mick Richardson** was trying his best each morning at 0600hrs to push the physical limits of the soldiers to breaking point but all coped well with the battle PT and boot runs.

A contrasting second day started with the 7 questions estimate delivered diligently by **Lt Alex Eros**. This is a subject that is hard enough to grasp for JNCOs and SNCOs, but even harder for Sigs especially given an outside temperature around 30 degrees C. One Sig was quoted as saying he got as far as "Hello, I am Lt Eros and I am here today to take you through the estimate" before he started pushing out the ZZZs in the classroom.

The estimate drifted into orders to give the soldiers an insight as to how they will be expected to deliver on their JCLM in the future. The course were split into 2 sections and after receiving a set of Tp Comd's orders from **Capt Pete Hodgkinson**, they prepared and delivered Sect orders back to the DS. The biggest obstacle to any junior soldier is the ability to get up in front of other personnel and deliver a presentation on something they may know little or nothing about. This was the final act on Friday morning before an end of course lunch. Each soldier was tasked with delivering 15 mins of information on subjects such as Op GRANBY, the Battle of the Somme or the History of the Royal Signals. Some of these presentations were excellent and worthy of experienced instructors. Of note was **Sig Dave Tannock's** presentation on the Battle for the Falklands.

As the course drew to a close and summer block leave loomed on the horizon, it came down to a close call as to who attained the prestigious award of 'Top Student'. This accolade was awarded to **Sig Johnno Aiken** after some outstanding efforts during the course. Most Improved went to **Sig Woody Wood** for a massively improved performance, not just during the course but from well before the course even kicked off. This pleased the QM no end.

Overall a successful course where some of the soldiers surprised a few of their bosses and others really pulling good performances out of the bag. A well deserved rest was earned by all with 3 weeks summer leave the reward for some hard toil.

Due to deployment on Op TELIC 10 next year, the cadre course may have to take a rest but it will appear again as a fantastic way of assessing the potential of future JNCOs.

601 TACP – LIVING THE DREAM - *by Cpl Hodgetts*

As I have been in this post for nearly 3 years and never written anything in *The Wire*, I thought it was about time I enlightened the Corps as to what I have been up to and to tell everyone just what I actually do. 601 TACP is a 4 man unit consisting of 2 x Forward Air Controllers, a Driver and of course the most important part of the team, me, the comms expert! The team controls Fast Jet Aircraft and Attack Helicopters to deliver air wpns close to friendly forces.

Contrary to popular belief, I have not been on a 3 year holiday but have been working really hard; some people just don't understand that living in hotels in places such as Las Vegas is quite stressful. However I always alert them to the fact that I do go on quite a few op tours especially to the place we all know and love, Iraq.

Over the last few months we have been really busy with lots of live wpn practice in Scotland and also deploying on MED MAN 4. BATUS was quite scary as I had to dig out my Bergen and not my suitcase and nobody mentioned I had to wear cam cream (first time in 3 years). Coming up in the next few months I have exs in Cyprus, Las Vegas, Arizona and Louisiana - nobody said it was easy! The team will then be putting all the practice to good use on another op tour. However on a serious note I am posted soon, so if you are a LCpl/Cpl RS Op, up for a challenge, you fancy something out of the ordinary and an op tour with a difference, get 601 TACP or the just formed 626 TACP (both based in Tidworth) on your PPP.

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

- *by Capt(QM) SF Lawes*

On return from TELIC 7 the Tp were given a well earned break and many soldiers made the most of this, disappearing abroad with loved ones or friends. The single soldiers bombarded Zante in Greece, returning even more tanned than they were when we got back from Iraq.

Over the next few months the Bde Comd's directive was to have fun and this is exactly what we did; a welcome home party was organised and went extremely well.

The Bde SMI was tasked with organising a fun day for both families and single soldiers. Fun was certainly had, especially by the singlies seeing the 2IC getting thrown in the dunk tank. Over the month of September AT was carried out for the whole Bde and all soldiers had the opportunity to choose an activity.

Many travelled to Bavaria to multi-activity lodges, while others went sailing at Kiel and parachuting in Sennelager.

The QM really never found his sea faring legs and spent most of his time admiring the Baltic Sea hanging over the side of the boat.

Now that the fun has finished the Sqn has started to train and prep ready for their first major ex supporting 1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt in Poland at the beginning of November.

LANYARD TROPHY 2006 - *Cpl Ryan and Cpl Dodgson*

After a hectic month of exs, battle camp and AT, only one physical task remained; the Lanyard Trophy Competition. **SSgt Chris Brown** stepped up to organise the teams, one male team,

one female team and the trg required to turn us into tabbing specialists. The female team was able to 'borrow' **Sig Sophie Townsend** from 4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204) as their final member, as the Sqn had no further females available – thanks 204! The excellent admin team deserve special thanks. Headed up by **Capt Nathan Streetley**, it included **Cpl Mike Morgan**, **LCpls Dave Anderson** and **Cheryl Stevenson**.

Hohne offers great flat forestry blocks for miles in all directions and so preparing for the Welsh mountains was difficult, especially with a hectic work schedule to contend with as well. Two weeks prior to the competition, 4 of the female team and most of the male team spent 2 days in Brecon to cover the ground and know what to expect.

The gruelling 17 hour drive to Brecon began on Wednesday evening and we arrived on Thursday afternoon with stiff legs – before even leaving the start line! That evening both teams had an early night, after meeting with colleagues and friends from other units, ready for the 0530hrs start. **SSgt Brown** issued out blue cylumes in order to reduce confusion at the start with the fateful words – "Hopefully nobody else will have blue cylumes". At the start point the sight was quite impressive, approximately 300 people on the hillside in the dark... most of whom had blue cylumes!

The weather was pretty bad and unfortunately by the halfway point both teams were down 2 members, which meant that nobody else could afford to drop out. Undeterred the teams pushed on, driven by the friendly faces of the admin team and the hot brews they provided, although their humour was sometimes lost on the teams. The afternoon saw the male team lose **Cpl Rocky Rockett** to injury, ruling out the chances of a position finish, while the girls had a competition to see who could fall over the most.

The male team ended up finishing in a respectable time of just less than 14 hrs and the girls, after a sprint finish, were the third female team in with a time of 15 hrs. The whole competition had to be the hardest physical and mental challenge most of us had endured so far. **Sig Andy Stephen** deserves a special mention as he only arrived at the unit from Blandford 3 weeks before the competition. A well organised event, our thanks go to 14 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE SOLDIER RAT - *by Sig Kimber*

Ex SOLDIER RAT was a week long, 2-phase Sqn level battle camp on Haltern trg area, near Osnabruck. Phase 1 consisted of lessons and trg and Phase 2 was the ex scenario. The main focus was back to basics following the recent op and not being beasted around the trg area.

For Phase 1 of the ex, we took part in lessons including target indication, fire control orders, quick battle orders, composition and types of patrol, sect battle drills, harbour areas and observation posts. In addition, we also had map reading lessons and a night navigation ex. For this, everybody was split up into pairs and had to navigate around the area, locating checkpoints where we would stamp our cards; not an easy task when the majority of the area is dense woodland.

The ex scenario was composed of observation posts, anti-pers ambushes, insertion marches, harbour drills and the final Coy attack. For this phase there were two Pls, both kitted out with cutting edge night vision and image intensifiers which **SSgt Chris Brown** managed to borrow from the BGs. The Pls were picked up from the forward mounting base by 2 Puma helicopters and dropped off a few kilometres from the new harbour locations. The first Sect on the ground secured the landing zone for the next 2 lifts and then when complete the Pls patrolled to the new location.

Once there, we got into routine until the ambush patrol left during the early hours of the morning. The patrol moved to an RV to drop off bergens and then on to the ambush location. The ambush was sprung and all the enemy died theatrically; a few tried to get away but were stopped by the cut-offs.

SSgt Chris Brown gives orders

LCpl Bain secures the Landing Zone

The following night each sect moved into an OP for 24 hrs. From the OP we then had to carry out a Close Target Recce to gain int on the enemy, an easy task for the pair that went forward as there was a thick low lying fog. **Cpl Rockett's** sect, 1 Sect of 1 Pl, carried out the OP undetected by the enemy and **SSgt Brown** could not find them even with an 8-figure grid.

The finale for the ex was a Coy attack. H hour was at 0650hrs but when the time came the Fire Sp Sect had stoppages on the GPMGs and so 1 Pl provided their own suppression and took the first objective. With the first position taken 2 Pl made light work of the second and dealt with any enemy in depth. The Best Sect shield went to 1 Pl 1 Sect, commanded by **Cpl Rockett** and **LCpl Wood**. This was an excellent experience, thoroughly enjoyed by all that took part.

MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL LIBRARY PROJECT
- by Capt Streetley

Cpl John Ryan had already produced some noteworthy artwork whilst in Iraq on Op TELIC VII. A photograph of him in *Soldier* magazine caught the eye of **Sally Clifton**, a teacher at Mountbatten School, near Celle, Germany. **Sally** had a vision that the library within the school needed to be moved to a new classroom, refurbished and improved to provide a facility that the children would really want to use and look forward to the future with – all in a short time and with a limited budget.

Sally invited **Cpl Ryan** to the School where she explained her idea and he did some sketches of ideas to work on. Having done some research during summer leave, it was time to meet up again and make a start on the library.

The project and scale of painting is the largest that **Cpl Ryan** has undertaken so far. The first wall to be completed was a 'Pirates of the Caribbean' theme. The second wall a NASA space scene, the end wall and window wall was a Rain Forest and finally, with a neck and back breaking finale, the ceiling was skilfully covered with a 'Finding Nemo' theme.

The project was working to a tight time-line, which was made harder by **Cpl Ryan's** work commitment and deployment away from camp on exs and trg with the Sqn. But with careful planning and commitment, time was made up using weekends and evenings and eventually the job was done.

The Library was opened on 2 October after 6 weeks of hard effort. To mark the occasion the Mountbatten School children were invited to dress up for the day as film characters; the Headmaster held a School Assembly explaining the project to the children and finally each class was taken through the Library during the day and could see for the project themselves for the first time. **Cpl Ryan** explained: "It was a nervous morning waiting to see the children's reaction to the library; however their faces said it all as soon as they walked in – they loved it ....I think Bruce the shark from Finding Nemo was one of their favourites, however everyone seemed to like all the characters".

A simple idea, enhancing the lives of many and all made possible by the commitment and self-sacrifice of a few people.

An excellent example of the ability and diversity of our Royal Signals soldiers!

EXERCISE RED RAT DIAMOND - *by Sig Wright*

Sixty lucky members of the Sqn were given the opportunity to take part in some AT in Bavaria as part of Ex RED RAT DIAMOND; a month long Bde wide AT initiative. The members of the Sqn were split down into 3 different lodges in Bavaria, 2 of the lodges were multi-activity while the third lodge was single activity and gave those that attended a qualification in hill walking, rock climbing or kayaking. There were also other activities scattered around Germany that included parachuting, paragliding and sailing. At Drei Mühlen, one of the multi-activity lodges, a gp of 12 from the Sqn enjoyed a week of activities including canoeing on the first day, where the main aim seemed to be toppling each other's canoe over. Being located in a small, quiet and isolated village in Bavaria there was not a great deal to do in the evenings and so we entertained ourselves with a game of cards and a few cheeky beers, occasionally venturing out to the only pub in the village.

Day 2 was much the same as the first, but this time in kayaks which saw **Sigs Colin Brookes** and **Mark Wynn** among others, attempt an Eskimo Roll much to the amusement of the many onlookers. Day 3 was a return to dry land for rock climbing which was great fun, especially watching 'The Cat' aka **LCpl Billy Burns** effortlessly running up the rock face. That evening we

travelled down to Haus Magnus lodge where we met up with other members of the Sqn and visited an Irish bar where the 'tuneful' duet of **Sgts Chris Palin** and **Eddie Banks** sang karaoke after a few lubricating beverages.

On Thursday, the activity was hill walking and it was the hottest day of the week. The gp recovered from the previous night's exploits by drinking plenty of water and then proceeded to sweat most of it out due to the fast pace. An MLT instructor, who shall remain nameless, was struggling to keep up.

On the final day the gp went white water rafting and again the main aim seemed to be getting each other wet by boarding another raft and throwing each other into the rapids. Although nobody saw the boss, **Lt Steve Maben**, get wet once! The day and indeed the week ended with a quiz night in the lodge. Top tip, if you want a chance of winning don't have **Cpl Johnny Howells** in your team, have the Sqn resident quiz master **Sig Brookes**!

BRIGADE SKILL AT ARMS MEET 2006 - *Lt Maben*

The Bde Skill At Arms Meet (SAAM) was held on the Horsten and Oeberke ranges over the period 9 – 11 October 2006. The Sqn is currently extremely busy preparing for the forthcoming trg year which made it difficult to find time for events such as this.

Time was found however and 8 members of the Sqn, under the instruction of **Sgt Alex Alexander**, spent 2 days on the ranges and in the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer in preparation for the competition.

The highlight of the first day of competition came on the pistol range where both our pistol shots, **Cpl John Ryan** and **LCpl Dave Wood,** performed well with **LCpl Wood** narrowly missing qualification for the final round. Day 2 involved the Fire Team Assessment Combat Infantryman for one of the fire teams, a 2 mile march with 25lbs in 20 mins followed by a testing shoot.

This was our best event of the competition where we beat our minor unit rivals 29 CS Med Sqn, largely due to the comd and control exercised by the fire team comd. On the final day, the team was unlucky to be knocked out of the falling plate competition in the first round by 2 Bn REME, the eventual finalists.

The three-day competition was an enjoyable event for all the team but identified the requirement for as much appropriate trg as possible prior to the competition; a lesson learnt for the British Army (Germany) SAAM early next year where the team hopes to build on its experience and perform well.

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

OC **Maj Andy Parsons**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Daz Sheerin**

8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn was released from ops after a successful relief in place by 39 Bde HQ & Sig Sqn on 1 June 06. On that day, the Sqn had completed 13,276 days on ops since 1970 – we believe second only to 213 Sig Sqn as the longest serving British Army unit ever on continuous ops. By the time you read this, the Sqn will have disbanded, its soldiers scattered to the 4 corners of the globe and many of them already on ops again in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The historic occasion was marked on 8 July 06 by an extremely well attended family day. In typical blustery conditions for the Ballykelly airfield, members of the Sqn paraded for an emotional Drumhead Service. This was followed by various displays including a superb performance by local Irish dancers, and the Royal Signals Parachute Display Team, who performed faultless jumps despite the difficult conditions. A lunch followed, and in the evening all ranks attended "the mother of all parties" with the theme "Wild Wild West". The day was attended by numerous VIP guests, including **Brig David McDowell**, a former OC and SOinC(A)'s representative.

Maj Andy Parsons giving the reading at the moving disbandment drumhead service

THE SOMME TRENCH

Also to mark the disbandment, a team built a trench in Somme in France! This needs some explaining. Earlier in the year, the RSM, **WO1 Daz Sheerin** (now a Captain, congratulations **Daz**) ran an excellent battlefield tour to the Somme. Unlike many battlefield tours, this was primarily aimed at junior soldiers.

During the trip, the team encountered the formidable Englishwoman **Avril Williams** who runs a "historic tea shop" in Auchonvillers. **Avril** keeps the cellar to her property in exactly the same state as it was in 1916, when it was variously used as a HQ, a dressing station and a radio room. Indeed, HQ 8 Inf Bde was based in the area and it is possible that elements of 8 Bde may have been based or billeted there.

Avril opens up her cellars, and some original comms trenches which she has had excavated, for educational visits, but was desperate to build a replica trench above ground, for younger children or the infirm to be able to experience them. It took seconds to convince the Bde Comd that this was an excellent project, especially considering the link with 8 Bde, and so a team of 10 volunteers found themselves working hard in the soaring July heat to build a historically accurate trench – but above ground.

Almost all the work was completed, save cosmetics, and a plaque was placed there to mark the disbandment of the HQ & Sig Sqn.

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

EXERCISE MERCURY LEADER 2006

Ex MERCURY LEADER was the Sqn Cadre Course and was designed to test the mental and physical robustness and leadership potential of the more junior members of the Sqn.

The Cadre began with a 3 day in barracks phase consisting of field craft lessons, comd tasks and physical trg. Students also gave presentations on a number of topics, varying from awards earned in the Falklands to the Iranian Embassy raid by the SAS. These gave the DS a good idea of who were confident public speakers and who had spent time preparing for the course.

The week long tac phase took place on Salisbury Plain Trg Area. It began with students delivering their pre-prepared battle lessons. **Sig Brown's** 'hygiene in the field' lesson was an exact replica of last year's, so well done to him for good 'initiative'. Then it was time for the students to be at one with nature; camouflage and concealment was so enthusiastically applied that many even looked like moving trees. This was particularly amusing during the following tab to the first harbour. On the first evening in the field, the students' map reading and navigation were tested to the limit with a long and demanding night navigation ex. Some fared better than others; **Sig Ferguson's** determination was worthy of note as he returned to the Patrol Harbour 3 times (with very few check points completed) before he was allowed to stay. The next day students' leadership skills were tested with an array of comd tasks. Sect and Pl level attacks were also revised before the assessment phase began in earnest.

The final testing phase was the culmination of the trg the students had received during the Cadre. Students were put through their paces on a number of recce and standing patrols before a deliberate dawn attack on a defended enemy position. The attack went like clockwork until the Pl were attacked from a position that had not been seen by any of the Close Target Recces. Cue the VC winning dashes with bags of smoke and a reminder that no plan survives contact with the enemy!

After the final attack, a Chinook arrived to move the students back to Aldershot; the smiles stretched from ear to ear on everyone except **Cpl Atkins** (the Sect Comd). Despite being a stalwart uncompromising leader he looked a tad green around the gills for most of the journey home.

The course was topped off by a Sqn Smoker and the prize giving. Congratulations go to **LCpl McGrane** (Top LCpl), **Sig Dixon** (Most Improved Soldier) and **Sig Brown** (Top Sig) whose outstanding performance on the Cadre earned him promotion to LCpl.

EX PADDLING TIGER 9 – 20 JULY 06
- by L/Cpl Emma Martin-Law

On Sunday 9 July, the kayakers of 261 arrived at Sqn HQ in different states of consciousness. Some due to tiredness, others alcohol induced, but one thing was for sure, we were all looking forward to 2 weeks paddling in Bavaria. We set off on what was to be a very long minibus journey – 24 hours long to be precise and there is only so much Vengaboys and John Denver a person can take! Early Monday morning, we eventually reached our destination. It was decided that this day would be dedicated to admin and Egyptian PT much to everyone's relief.

Tuesday arrived and so the adventure began. Our instructors **WO1 Ash Clare** and **Capt 'Gunny' Gunson** set about teaching us the basics and fitting out our kayaks. We were soon loaded up and ready to rock and Eskimo roll! Our first paddling was conducted on the Rottachsee, a very picturesque and extremely cold lake. Fortunately we were given a warm up by **Cpl Ian Atkinson**. The APTC would have been proud! We learned basic paddle and rescue techniques which proved very useful in the days to come.

With the first day over we headed back to the lodge, but not before **Emma Gullen** and **Martin Dixon**, aka the Terrible Twins, had their daily intake of nicotine. With aching arms we all decided that an early night would probably be a good idea, especially as the paddling was going to be harder and faster the following day. We began with a morning on another lake, the Gruntensee, perfecting our paddling before spending the afternoon in lessons. The lessons on reading water and white water formations were to stand us in good stead for our trip onto the River Iller the next day.

Exercise Mercury Leader Survivors

Low and behold the rescue techniques we had been taught definitely improved as on our first day on moving water, everybody did a little underwater sight seeing, including me. I seemed to wait enough time to give myself a shampoo and rinse before I realised that I was not going to be rescued. So sticking to the saying 'if in doubt pull out' I did so and found myself surrounded by kayaks that had all being trying to rescue me but had been pushed away by my frantic flapping. I don't remember that bit! Oops!

The next few days increased our confidence in our abilities, and we could even manage to give a wave to **Matt Turner**, who when not driving or paddling, was hiding in bushes taking photos of us. I think everyone managed to have their photo taken during the exped, however a certain **Jamie Clark** was strangely on 90% of them!

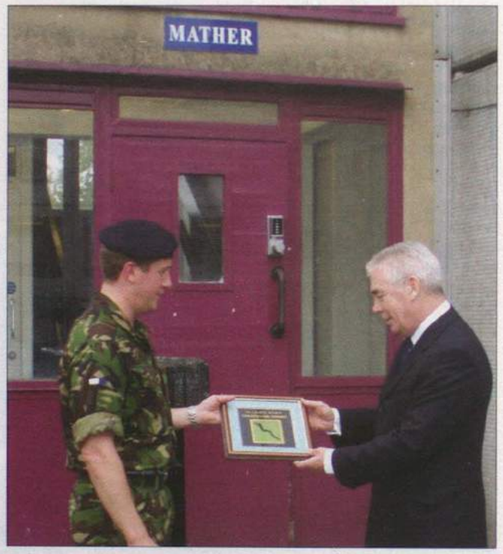
Cpl Atkins about to go underwater sightseeing

Our last day on the water was upon us and a treat was in store; we were heading for the River Inn, Austria, for a spot of white water rafting. This was an opportunity to see some really big white water. Split into 2 boats, we raced each other through the rapids and practiced somersaults and just generally falling out of the boat. **Capt Gunson** decided that the rafts were too big and safe so decided to run the gauntlet in his playboat, the smallest kayak in the world. There were a few moments of sheer panic on his face when approaching the rapids, but ever the true professional, he battled through and emerged victorious on the other side. A small shot of schnapps to warm us up and we were ready to head back to the lodge for our final night where a BBQ and drinks awaited us. You'll be glad to know that we struggled through and some of us were still going at 3am the next morning!! That made the journey home even more emotional for some.

After many renditions of Queen and Dire Straights we arrived back in Aldershot. It had been a long tiring journey but the memories that we all had and the photos to remind us were worth every second. We all gained a qualification too.

RENAMING OF THE SOLDIERS ACCOMMODATION BY GORDON MATHER MM

The 261 Sig Sqn single soldiers' accommodation recently moved from Browning to Buller Barracks in an effort to bring the unit geographically closer and improve accommodation standards. The new block was renamed 'Mather Block' in honour of **Gordon Mather**, the ex Royal Signals and SAS soldier who was awarded the MM for his action in the Falklands and the subject of the Corps painting"Contact Wait Out". **Gordon** visited Aldershot in October and spoke to the Sqn about his time in the Army and how best to prepare for Ops. He then attended a games night in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. The Sqn would like to thank **Gordon** for taking the time to rename the accommodation and talk to the soldiers before they deploy on Op TELIC.



OC 261 and Gordon Mather in front of the new 'Mather Block'

12 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

OC **Maj RJ Watts**
RSM **WO1(RSM) RD Burrows**

The Sqn returned back fresh from summer leave and welcomed back those who had deployed to BATUS. It continues its sp to the Bde as the end of the condensed trg year draws to a close and the focus switches to Pre-Deployment Trg for HERRICK 6. **Maj Taff Watts** took over from **Lt Col Rich Spencer** as OC during a short HO/TO period and the Sqn then launched straight into exs, Bde competitions and preparation for ops.

The entries into the trg calendar and the tempo are increasing with Sqn Ops now down to counting individual days and men when looking to task. However moral remains high, as the Sqn focuses its skills for the upcoming op and looks forward to a relaxing Christmas break.

The happy face of Independent Squadron Command as Lt Col Rich Spencer hands over to Maj Taff Watts

EXERCISE MED MAN 3 - *by Sig Davies*

Those of us lucky enough to be selected from the Sqn to go to BATUS for Ex MED MAN 3 waved goodbye to our colleagues on 23 June. We were tasked to provide safety comms for the BATUS trg area and as we had no HQ to establish we all hoped that we would be in for an easy ride.

Initially this proved to be the case because the first part of the MED MAN ex is live firing. We got roped into various jobs including being safety staff for the live firing, using the GPMG on the SF stands or controlling switch fire for the exercising troops' safety. All of this was something we have never had the opportunity to do back on the Salisbury Plain, so it was a real education for all.

Following this period of trg, we commenced the battle simulation part of the ex. During this period we deployed to an EXCON building situated on the BATUS area which proved much more comfortable than the Bowman Tents we are used to. From here we provided the safety comms, but we could not escape the Staff forever and ended up monitoring the radio nets for them whilst they controlled the battle.

Fortunately this was only for 1 week before we handed over to 3(UK) Div and we all had a week before our flights back to the UK. During this period some people got the chance to go AT whilst the others enjoyed the local area. An opportunity we all relished after a hard but rewarding BATUS deployment.

EXERCISE ACE HIGH 2 - *by LCpl 'Screech' Phillips*

Ex ACE HIGH 2 was the Bde Staff's confirmatory fd ex and was designed to introduce the new Staff Officers to the Bde HQ as well as blow away the cobwebs the Sqn old sweats had accumulated over the leave period. The weeklong deployment in exotic Salisbury Plain was a steep learning curve for some of the new members, both on the Bde Staff side and the Sqn's. One particularly noteworthy culprit was the new Complex Screw, **Cpl 'Baggie' Rees**, who immediately upset the Crypto Cell by wiping all of the HQ fills on the 1st day!

Occupation of Tin Head Hill Barn by Brigade Main on Ex ACE HIGH 2

We all know that everybody anticipates End Ex but thinking it is on Day 1 is just excessive! The role of Sqn idiot wasn't just reserved for the new guys. The favourite of the ex has to be one of the more experienced guys, **LCpl Stewart**, who didn't feel the need to put diesel in his 436. His excuse about having a dodgy fuel gauge certainly does not excuse him for the shame and embarrassment he endured.

Despite these set backs and the obvious teething problems of having a new set of Staff to deal with, "No Sir, that is a head set, you put it on like this.", it turned out to be a worthwhile ex.

All can feel that they learnt something and it now gives the Sqn a firm footing for the next ex which, with the current busy forecast of events, is not too far away!

2Lt Alison MacDonald completing the gruelling Brigade Military Skills Competition

COMMANDER'S COMPETITION - *by LCpl Cascarina*

The 12 Mech Bde Comd's competition was a 2 day event consisting of a mil skills competition and a Bde sports concentration. The mil skills competition was held at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst with teams from each unit within the Bde being entered. Ten members of 228 Sig Sqn lead by **2Lt Alison MacDonald** made up part of the 20 strong Bde Comd's team, with other members coming from the Bde Staff, Bde unit COs and RSMs, and included the Bde Comd himself! Despite the fact that he is Late Para Regt, we were assured that he only wanted to have fun and not win, however secretly we all had our doubts.

The Mil Skills day took the form of an 8 mile course in CEFO, including wpns, with a number of stands on route. The competition was kick started with a team event, the asslt course, which tested even the fittest team members. Immediately upon completion we picked up our metal stretcher, complete with tank track casualty, which became our burden for the remaining 8 miles!

The rest of the stands combined tests of brain and brawn; these included a map and compass test, a G2 memory game and a Land Rover pull. The Land Rover pull was one of the latter stands and was the hardest because we had to drag the beast off road then up a hill! After we finally managed to finish with the Land Rover, the competition ended with a mile and half best effort run to the range and then a 300m sprint to the firing point for the falling plate shoot.

All in all it was a hard competition but thoroughly enjoyable. The team managed to finish a highly respectable 3rd place. This was surprising considering our only trg session together just happened to be the competition itself!

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

OC **Maj Anderton-Brown**
RSM **RSM(WO1) Coates**

216 Air Asslt Sig Sqn began deploying on Op HERRICK IV at the end February in preparation for an 8 month tour. The Sqn deployed in its primary role of supplying comd and life sp to the 16 Bde Main HQ in Lashkar Gah, while the rest of the Sqn deployed to the 4 corners of Helmand and Kandahar Provinces attached to various units to fulfil key roles in sp of the op.

Op HERRICK IV has been for many, an op tour like no other. The British Army as a whole having experienced some of the heaviest fighting since WW2, with many of our soldiers having been at the heart of some of the larger battles in Helmand Province in Sangin Valley, Musa Qal`ah, Now Zad and Kijaki.

In testimony to the soldiers of our Sqn, who have performed so admirably and without faltering once in Afghanistan, we have decided to part from the normal format of reporting for *The Wire*

and to let the soldiers themselves tell you about life in 216 Sig Sqn.

ESTONIAN REAR LINK DETACHMENT - *by LCpl Telford*

For a few weeks in July/August, I deployed with the Estonian Pl as the Rear Link Det (RLD) to the southern town of Garmsir to sp the Estonians in clearing the town of Taliban insurgents. Travelling in the back of the Estonian APC was always an experience, one of which ended up with me throwing up all over myself due to downing a bottle of boiling bottled water.
The language barrier caused many a humorous moment especially when we stopped and had time to chill out; they did not appreciate my British sense of humour and sarcasm. I was impressed with their skills and drills, especially their 'no-nonsense' attitude towards their task. We were constantly surrounded by fighting between Taliban and the Afghan National Police (ANP) and twice found ourselves on the receiving end of Small Arms and RPG fire, which resulted in 3 Estonians being wounded from RPGs being used in the 'Air-burst' role. However it did not seem to affect their performance or enthusiasm to take on the enemy. I was fortunate enough to experience Close Air Sp being brought in on enemy positions. It was a great opportunity to get out of camp and to apply my trade under immense pressure. I was living out my bergen, using my Bowman HF man pack and TACSAT both of which I had learned to use out here without any previous trg. It has been an incredible experience that I will never ever forget."

PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM - *by Sig Shyrane*

Being a driver/lineman, I never thought I would get the opportunity to serve in the Provincial Reconstruction Team, but in early February 22 of us from 216 were packed off for pre-deployment trg with 21 Air Asslt Gibraltar Bty, RA. Arriving in Afghanistan with our new skills and newly forged friendships we began the hard work of establishing ourselves in Lashkar Gah. At first I was nervous as it was my first tour in the Army but as we started patrolling on the ground in Lashkar Gah city our nerves soon faded away and we started gelling as a multiple. Our job was to provide Force Protection as well as providing the security to enable aid and reconstruction work. We soon found the locals coming up to thank us; you could not help notice the huge smiles on the faces of the kids, which proved to us just how important and worthwhile our work here in Afghanistan is. One of my most memorable moments on this op, which I will remember as long as I live, was our first 'contact' in Garmsir. I was at first worried at how I would react, but within split seconds I was concentrating on doing my best for the lads around me. We were taking loads of RPGs and heavy machine gun fire, but the guys were focused and took the fight to the Taliban aggressively, **Sig Guyton**, our intrepid female, hammering it down with the .50 cal. The morale was through the roof on returning to camp; fortunately we did not lose anyone or have anyone hurt. My experience in Afghanistan has been a memorable one. I will not forget working with the Gunners and the brilliant time we had in the PRT.

3 PARA RLD, COMBAT OUT POST ROBINSON
- by LCpl 'Asda' Summerfield

In June, I deployed with **Sigs Perkins** and **Mazzone** with **Lt Hollingshead's** 12 Pl D Coy 2 RGR as a RLD to Sangin, to secure a Pl house. We flew from Camp Bastion to COP Robinson and then deployed into Sangin town to secure the ANP station. We stayed there for a few days before we were pulled out back to COP Robinson due to a high threat state. We continued to carry out patrolling tasks from the base over the next couple of weeks with the aim of establishing contact with the locals and to try identifying the Taliban threat. It was a brilliant opportunity and excellent experience to get out on the ground, patrolling in the inf role alongside the Gurkhas and demonstrate that 216 could also step up and take on an inf role as well as making sure that the comms side of things were also professionally squared away. I will remember Op HERRICK IV for the unique experience of living and working shoulder to shoulder with the Gurkhas, but also the way in which we all pulled together when things were really becoming tricky. Over the 2 months our skills were tested almost daily by the Taliban and not once did we give an inch.

3 PARA RLD CAMP BASTION - *by Cpl, Woodward*

It was a Friday morning in Bastion and I had just been told the bad news that I was going to stag on in Bastion for a month before I could go back to Gereshk. Then a stroke of luck and news came through that I was to deploy with 10 Pl RGR to Nowzad as the RLD. I was off to replace **Cpl Steel** who had been with B Coy 3 Para with **LCpl Cook** and **LCpl Armstrong**. After just finishing learning the ropes, a 'Deliberate Op' went in to Nowzad town, which consisted of the Gurkhas, A Coy and the Patrols Pl. We were going to stay on the roof of the HQ in the compound and relay all the important info back to Camp Bastion. As it happened we were working flat out, relaying every movement, as all 3 call signs made contact. There were no British casualties, but the ANP suffered one WIA and he was rushed in to the compound for urgent med attention by **Capt Thava,** the doc. Unfortunately I got roped in – wrong place at the wrong time, which turned out to be a real experience. Things soon calmed down for a few weeks and we managed to get into a bit of a routine. This meant an opportunity to enjoy some delicious Gurkha goat curry. After a few weeks **LCpls Cook** and **Armstrong** were relieved by **LCpl Rankin** and **Sig Whiltshire**. Then a week later it was my turn to be relieved and back to Gereshk I went. It was an experience of a life time, both working with the Gurkha lads, enjoying their friendship and curries and most of all doing the job for real!

PATHFINDER PLATOON RLD - *by Sig Barrett*

The RLD left 216 a month early in order integrate with the Pathfinder lads as well as to get all the eqpt ready. We were kept busy with build up trg prior to the op including comms, med and OPTAG trg. We deployed on a 2 week ex and ran through scenarios we would most likely encounter over in Afghanistan.

We deployed to Afghanistan with the Pathfinder Pl on 10 March. The Det started with an intense trg package in Kandahar including range packages with the Pathfinder Pl wpn systems, which included GPMG, Claymore mines, Minimi and 51mm mortar. We got stuck into learning SOPS, and got introduced to the new comms systems that we would be using for the duration of the tour. **Sgt 'Chin' Clayton** assisted with these lessons, as he was already familiar with these systems. The learning curve was steep as it was our first tour for the majority us. The shift pattern was quite exhausting with only 2 people, doing the lovely 12 hours on 12 hours off.

I moved to Gereshk for 3 months after R&R in the UK, probably the best 3 weeks of my life! COP Price is a small but well constructed camp, with a gym and well air-conditioned rooms. I have attended more range days with the Pl down here, which is always a really good experience. It has definitely been a really good tour and I have learnt so much; I can't wait for the next one!

DANISH RLD MUSA QAL`AH - *by LCpl 'Flames' Sloan*

On 21 August, myself and **Sig 'Rooney' Griffiths** set out from Camp Bastion as part of the Danish 1st Recce Sqn bound for COP Gryphon, a patrol house in the district centre of Musa Qal`ah. We were deployed as a relief in place for the UK Pathfinder Pl. Our job was to provide the Danes with a TACSAT link back to HQ Helmand Task Force at KAF as well as providing a ground to air link for the Danish JTACs. It was no surprise when we were told that a group of 30 Taliban were planning to ambush us on route. Lucky for us they weren't aware that we knew and we managed to avoid the ambush; the JTAC managing to call in Close Air Sp. When we finally arrived at the outskirts of Musa Qal`ah, there was yet another ambush waiting for us. We were engaged with heavy machine gun fire, RPG and to top it off, the Taliban had blocked the road with barrels. We then moved into the desert and after 5 days we pushed back into town and into the Pl House. We were attacked daily with everything in the Taliban arsenal from RPG, Chinese rockets, snipers, mortars, heavy machine guns, small arms and their favourite and probably the worst, the recoilless rifle. This piece of kit makes an awesome noise when it's incoming, loud enough to bring even the most hardened of AB warriors into the foetal position (excluding me of course). The patrol house itself is made up of mud and steel girders. There were some very nice Afghan rugs on the floor inside but these were full of fleas and were promptly burnt. There had been windows but these were removed by a 500lb bomb blast that landed nearby. We shared the compound with an abundance of rats and mice, who never seemed to take any notice of the constant fighting or us. The Danes are a top bunch of blokes and share a similar sense of humour to us, which made the days go a lot quicker as we taught them the art of exchanging banter. I will never forget Op HERRICK IV and I see myself growing old on my sandbag, swinging the lantern and talking about my time in Musa Qal`ah.

19 LIGHT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

OC **Maj T Downes**
RSM **WO1(RSM) S Fidler**

This has been another hectic period for the Sqn, putting the final touches to its TELIC deployment with 19 Lt Bde. Long days and the occasional weekend work has not entirely extinguished the sense of fun from the unit, as evinced by Alpha Tp's 'Sprogs on Bogs' night, organised by **LCpl Westbury** and **Sig Waters**. Thankfully no images survived the hedonism, which rendered the entire Tp combat ineffective for some hrs. Bravo Tp were less careful to cover their tracks, and the prelude to their night out is displayed below. Initially following a more civilised template, the pre-tour Sqn party, organised by **Cpl Robert Cecil Brown** on 12 October was also a great success. The chefs excelled, and sporadic heckling by the irrepressible spouses, **Kelly Rose** and **Claire Porter** failed to drown out the speeches. After that, much chest-poking fun was had by all.

Public Order training for Alpha Troop

SQUADRON CASCADE AND OPTAG CONFIRMATORY TRAINING - *by Capt Paul Whillis*

After a summer spent on inspections and Bde exs, September saw the Sqn's focus switch to undergoing some quality mil trg. Co-ordinated by **SSgt Clarke**, the 3 op Tps, Tigris, Euphrates and JSUB, underwent a wide range of activities, including Public Order (PO) – instructed by **Cpl Lash** and **LCpl Westbury**, Judgemental Marksmanship – with **WO1(RSM) Fidler**), Veh anti-ambush drills, VP and VA checks – with **Capt Whillis** and Detention Procedures – with **Sgt Venni**. Inf TTPs improved massively during this package, which had the added advantage of being hugely enjoyable and rather noisy.

Having trained all summer at foot patrolling, reactions to contact and sect battle drills, it was a hugely beneficial exercise to mount up in Snatch Rovers and go through mobile drills. **LCpl Donaldson** demonstrated how not to remove his hands from a closing Snatch door, whilst **Cpl Raw** dislocated several fingers during the PO drills trying to beat out flames. Serendipitously, an Army photographer, **Cpl Ian Forsyth** RLC**,** was on hand for A Troop's PO trg and shot some iconic images. Men on fire are always impressive to portray, and **Cpl Forsyth** did the unit proud. His images show **LCpl Dixon**, **Sig 'Captain' Scarlett**, **Cpl Raw**, **Sig Fisher**, **Sig Thayne**, **Sig Wood** and **Sig Rushworth** in various attitudes of discomfort. **Sig Wood** blazed for almost 10 mins before agreeing to be extinguished. Those present were unanimous in considering this a 'Good Effort'.

A toasty Sig Wood

OPTAG CONFIRMATORY TRAINING AT STANTA 5 – 8 OCTOBER - *by Sig Thompson*

The Sqn deployed 4 multiples on OPTAG confirmatory trg immediately after the cascade package, heading to STANTA with 150 Provo Coy RMP. We arrived at Bodney Camp on 6 October, expecting a weekend full of minor aggro and rioting from the 'insurgents'. The first day however was far from that. We went through a range of trg stands, designed to refresh our skills and drills and prepare us for the rest of the ex.

We were split into the multiples that we stayed in for the rest of the ex. The refresher stands consisted of mobile contact, helicopter drill, IED recognition and cultural and language stands.

Standing silent while the RMPs requested to knock off at midnight on Saturday (a drivers' hours concern apparently) and demands for the Civil Population to go easy in the PO serials, in case someone got hurt, 209 got stuck in and shone.

The ex focussed on actions-on IEDs and shoots, reactions to IDF, strike and arrest ops, Mobile and Eagle VCPs, VP and VA drills, together with the usual hugging and coffee drinking sessions with local Sheikhs and Mullahs. The MT proved particularly

impressive, disdaining the carriage of helmets and body armour for the entire ex. The OPTAG staff, whilst recognising that the MT practically runs the G2 picture and is more than competent to decide its own 'posture', recommended that this eqpt should be taken to Iraq.

We wait to see if the lads take this on board. When the coaches to convey us back to Catterick failed to arrive on the final Sunday, some uncharitable souls suggested that they had been re-tasked on an Ops Room Fun Day Out.

Their place was taken by 3 decrepit minibuses that the exercising troops were told they would have to self-drive back to camp. Inside, we jumped up and down with glee at this news, although outwardly this emotion may not have been fully evident.

We were however heartened by the OC's announcement of selection for promotion to LCpl of **Sigs Bellwood**, **Dott**, **Fisher**, **Fleming**, **Flintoft**, **Hawke**, **McArthur**, **McGrath**, **Rushworth**, **Sawyer**, **Thomas**, **Thompson**, **Walsh**, and **Cfn Byng**, **Dyball**, **McCarton** and **Mitchell** – well deserved recognition of another year of hard work and screwing the nut for the Sqn.

Cngratulations must also go to **Sig Canning**, a Sqn member from 2003 and now on his Ammo Tech course. As a whole, I think as a Sqn we are now much more prepared to deploy on TELIC 9 and that we could handle a real-time situation when it occurs.

209 SIGNAL SQUADRON FUND RAISING EVENT
–by Sig Neilson

On the Saturday 22 July 2006, 8 soldiers from 209 Sig Sqn based in Catterick Garrison, managed to raise nearly £800 to help pay for eqpt needed by the Darlington Memorial Hospital's Emergency Department. After several letters to various large supermarkets, Morrisons Supermarket, based at Morton Park in Darlington, kindly offered us a place to conduct our fund raising. So on a warm summer's day, 8 soldiers, led by the **SSgt 'Cass' Cassidy**, headed for the front doors of Morrisons armed with nothing but their uniform, 4 orange collection buckets and your typical soldier's banter. Throughout the day the lads worked in teams of 2, and owing to their cheerful badinage and the generosity of the people of Darlington, the 4 hours of bucket rattling and one-liners managed to amass a fantastic collection of £780. **Matron Barbara Mennim**, who works in the A&E department, has thanked the Unit and informed us that the money will be used to buy new Baby Resuscitation Eqpt for the A&E Dept.

A very big thank you must first go to Morrisons. Without such an ideal place to conduct our collection, the impressive total wouldn't have been possible. Secondly, a very big thank you must also go to the other lads who happily gave up their own time to make this happen; **Cpls 'Jack' Frost** and **Randell-Eyre**, **LCpl Rob McGuire**, **Cfms Kev Dyball** and **Matt Milbourne**, and **Sigs Kev Neilson** and **'Charlie' Charles**.

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

OC **Maj FE Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1RSM) Yates**

With the end of Op TELIC 8 in sight, the Sqn have had to split their attention between maintaining sp to current ops as well as planning our handover to 19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and our smooth recovery back to Germany, on top of working through the Bowman isation plans for 2007. It is fair to say that the pace of life has not reduced with time.

The political and security situation in Iraq is constantly changing, with transfer to Iraqi control of 2 of the 4 MND(SE) provinces, the repositioning of our forces in Maysaan Province, and the enduring Op SINBAD in Basra. It has been quite a privilege to serve here at such a historic time. Irrespective of how the security situation is played in the news, there is progress in Iraq and a large number of soldiers from the Sqn have played their part. We continue to attach around 30 soldiers to various BG locations and the next challenge we face is in extracting them, to fall in line with our own recovery plans.

The programme for 2007 is falling nicely into place, with plenty of AT, sport and Bowman conversion, which culminates in a spot of sightseeing over Salisbury Plain in the form of the final Operational Field Trial. With the amount of Bowman experience we are bringing back with us, we are actively looking forward to becoming properly Bowman ised, so long as it doesn't get in the way of our recuperation plans too much.

NEWS FROM THE OPERATIONS ROOM
- by WO2(YofS) Marc Dunbavand

Recent events have seen the Ops Room fluctuate between states of quiet, yet confident panic, to a sleepy backwater of comms tranquillity. The past month has seen a surge in strike ops, which have required a fine balance to be struck between the requirements to achieve comms in a not particularly permissive environment, at the same time as fighting a battle with an enemy that has chosen the ground. Sqn Ops has proven itself capable of constructing comms plans to meet the intimate needs of our BGs outside of Multi-National Force bases, as well as deploying Strategic assets to enable force elements to communicate "inside the wire".

The Sqn has supported these ops at the same time as maintaining and improving all of the other tasks expected of a Bde Sig Sqn, which is providing intimate sp to one 2-Star HQ and two 1-Star HQs. This is no mean achievement in itself.

BOWMAN use continues to grow under the capable hand of **SSgt(YofS) Park** and his merry team. The Sqn has now proven itself more than capable of taking the instruction received during Bowman "Lite" conversion and developing the necessary skills to operate fully functional LAS platforms up to and including a Type 24 Frigate. Two deployments to *HMS Kent* have seen Sqn pers achieve secure voice on the first visit and the passage of data on the second, all through the use of the onboard Bowman eqpt. **WO2(FofS) Marcus Clarke** is rarely seen without his nose in ECI, OET or RiP paperwork.

Planning for the recovery of the Bde is well underway, with all members of Bde looking forward to returning to their various peacetime locations. Following the successful deployment of the Sqn to Op TELIC 8, we are all expecting the FofS to apply his magic wand and recover us in the same manner.

The Ops Team are looking forward with sadness to the impending loss of the Ops Officer, **Capt 'Victor' Taylor**, who will be leaving us soon to move down the corridor to become the new Sqn 2IC! The Team is looking forward however to the challenge of BOWMAN conversion with our new Ops Officer **Capt Wardle**.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSISTANCE - *by Sig Conrad Campbell*

It all started on a sunny morning at Basra Air Station (BAS). The first part of the journey was from BAS to Um Qasr South Port, in

On board *HMS Kent*

the southern region of our area in a Merlin helicopter. On landing we were met by **Sig 'Paddy' Adcock** who was the OSCA Node Det Comd at that location. We were shown round the camp and the facilities that were available, after which we started trying to get our lift to *HMS Kent*, by Iraqi navy boat. On finding out that we were not leaving until the next day, we made the most of the local amenities.

The next morning, after an early start, we made our way by boat to *HMS Kent* and were met by the LO. After a quick introduction and with beds allocated, we started the process of getting their Bowman platform to communicate with the Bde HQ at BAS. With much head scratching and hard work, we managed to achieve comms on one of the nets – a historic moment in Bowman and Corps history.

This was the first time a naval warship had achieved successful comms with a Bowman land platform on ops. The lucky person receiving the radio check was **LCpl Carla Holroyd**. When we had completed our task, and ensured the naval Bowman platform was fully functional, we met the ship's hierarchy.

They were very pleased that we had proven secure Bowman comms, and in true naval traditions we headed to the mess for a couple of well earned Pepsis! The entire trip was a great success, extremely challenging and enjoyable for all.

LIFE AS AN INFANTRYMAN - *by Sig Giles Newman*

Late one evening, I was asked by my Tp Sgt how long it would take me to pack kit for deployment into Basra City. With a surprised look and an answer he already knew, he sent me away to do just that. Before I knew it, I was on a Merlin helicopter flying to Basra Palace, where for the next 2 weeks I would be attached to the "Poachers", A Coy, 2 Royal Anglian.

The following evening I was briefed on the movements for that night. My role was to supply Man Pack Comms (Bowman HF and VHF) for the Coy Comd or 2IC, and to make sure the Warriors and Snatch vehs had good comms with each other and to the Ops Room. About 10 minutes before we deployed, I was given radios that needed to be filled, and as if I wasn't sweating enough under all that gear, I was now running around like a headless chicken getting the kit sorted. Finally with no more surprises we were ready to go.

At the first Vulnerable Point we all dismounted. As I stepped out of the Snatch, I think I found the largest and dirtiest puddle in Iraq to stand in. That was my welcome to a dark and daunting city. Life on the streets was full of activity. It was just before curfew with people rushing around the shops while others relaxed in cafes.

They did not seem troubled that we were there. We travelled around the city all night carrying out our set tasks. I was bumping around the back of the veh trying to hold on to my rifle and both radios, use them, and fill in the map with locations of every call sign on the ground; it was a very exhausting night.
Over the following 2 weeks, we deployed on the ground most nights with my role staying much the same and with fewer 10 minute surprises! With the ops we were supporting and the number of contacts with the enemy, maintaining comms proved to be a very busy, very tiring but very rewarding experience.

This was my first experience of working with a BG and I would happily do it again – even if the puddles are bigger! It was an experience that tested me both physically and mentally. I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it.

COMBINED OPERATING BASE, IRAQ - *by Maj Neil Fisher*

The formation of the new J4 world here in Basra has impacted on the formerly named unit 'JSUB' now being named, 'Combined Operating Base (COB)' This will see many changes in the next few months, with the COB growing from 2500 pers to over 4500 in the next 3 months.

The Unit continues to work hard providing for all. As time runs out for 20 Armd Bde in this theatre, we have started turning some of our attention to getting back to Germany for some well deserved leave, and look forward to 'Bowman isation' in the New Year!

A RECENT ARRIVAL'S THOUGHTS - *by LCpl 'Ash' Ashcroft*

Having only been at 200 Sig Sqn for 8 months, I have realised what an extremely professional unit it is. Coming on tour to Iraq with them on Op TELIC 8, has made me feel proud. I have seen changes both in the people and the country with the soldiers from 20 Armd Bde working their socks off helping to get this country back on its feet. As a Sp Tp, we are the front end of a long chain dealing with all the supplies, vehs and repair issues for our customers, who come to us for virtually everything and anything.

As you can probably imagine, we are an extremely busy Tp. However we would not have it any other way, as the days pass so much quicker if you are busy on tour. It is also fulfilling to watch our customers leave with a smile on their faces as we try to make everybody's life a little bit better.

In the MT, we have an extremely experienced Force Protection Multiple which provides intimate protection for convoys travelling around the Area of Operations. It is a tough job with long hrs out on the road, making sure everything runs smoothly. There is a white fleet vehicle side to the MT that is extremely busy because everybody wants to ride in style. The QM(T) side of Sp Tp has by no means an easier task; they are such a small dept looking after 2500 troops in the COB.

Everybody has to work hard and mix well as a team, making sure everyone's needs are met. If you can imagine some of the silly requests these guys get asked for, you would be able to fill a joke book. The dept has recently moved to a new location and it took 2 days to move everything and I can vouch for everybody, when I

say all the guys worked long hrs to achieve the move in that time. It was completed on time with everyone settling in to a new dept.

On a good note I would like to congratulate a couple of the lads who recently got their well deserved promotion; the beers are on you guys when we get back - **Cpl 'Westy' West** and **LCpl Chris Callaghan**. There has been a large turn around in pers in the Tp in the last month, far too many to mention. To make it easy, good bye and hello to you all.

ESSENTIAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT - *by Cpl Dave Clark*

OP TELIC 8 was a daunting prospect for the Radio Tech Workshops. The unit deployed to Iraq where the main comms eqpt was Bowman , but for a lucky few the only prior trg was a Bowman Lt Package. On arrival we had to become familiar and fully understand this new system with both assistance from the Bowman System Sp Team and self teaching. As each fault came, in our knowledge and experience widened. Throughout the tour there have been many changes. In the beginning, extra rear link dets were created to provide tech assistance to the various BGs within the Bde. This was an extremely responsible job for both operators and techs, who are there to give immediate comms advice, instruction and assistance. Their experiences ranged from instructing BGs on use of Bowman eqpt to participating in long range desert patrols.

The Cycle for Life Team

Assistance was also given in sp of various withdrawals and recovery of assets and pers, as the plans to allow Iraqi Security Forces to takeover control of key provinces in theatre. Many of the techs have thus spent more time travelling around many of the different camps and locations to complete their tasks than they have in the workshop. As we approach the end of our tour, much has been learnt with the regular Bowman faults which are now easily dealt with. It is time to look forward to the Bowman isation process on return to Germany, after some well earned leave. Meanwhile we prepare the workshops for hand over to 19 Lt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.

CYCLE FOR LIFE CHARITY EVENT - *by 2Lt James McClean*

We all gathered at the gym in Waterloo Lines Camp, Basra Air Station, at 2000hrs, fresh and keen. Little did we appreciate the gruelling ordeal that was to follow. We were to undertake a 24 hr exercise bike ride to raise money for the premature babies' ward in Bielefeld hospital. In shifts we rode the 2 bikes constantly throughout the whole period. Amazingly our morale remained high for the entire event, regardless of the mortar attack, aching muscles and lack of sleep; the latter was in part due to the many visitors and sp we received. In total we covered 1013km – that's the equivalent of cycling from Inverness to Paris, and raised over $3500 for the charity, a very exceptional endeavour indeed.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

LANYARD TROPHY COMPETITION

Standing at the start line at 0530hrs on a dark and pretty dismal morning in the Brecon Beacons, it was not without a little trepidation that both teams from the Sqn, appropriately kitted out in T-shirts bearing the inventive artwork of **Maj 'Steve' Harvey**, prepared to put 2 months of fairly intensive trg to the test in the 27th Lanyard Trophy Competition.

The past month and a half had been spent doing innumerable circuits of Thiepval Barracks, running up and down the much maligned 'Officers' Mess' hill and spending almost every Friday traipsing up to the highest points in the Mourne Mountains. All the blood, sweat, tears and unavoidable good humoured digs at each other stood us in good stead in the week prior to the competition, which was spent adhering to the adage that time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted. The teams explored every possibility in terms of route selection and sometimes took the spirit of trail breaking a bit too far. **Cpl Connor** never found the elusive tree line he was looking for and **Cpl McFaul** regaled us with constant tales of how to be a gasket. There were also some rather curious fashion statements to be made whilst out in the hills, including **Cpl 'Ian' Allen** modelling the latest in waterproofs, a map case! In all seriousness however, the week was invaluable as it greatly aided in navigation on race day and eased the burden of having to route find.

The race itself began with the traditional mass start which quickly descended into not very organised chaos. The darkness and sheer number of teams all heading in the same direction made for some exceptionally confusing situations. We managed to come through it intact, despite the constant 'baby's heads' snipers managing to get almost everyone to fall over within the first couple of miles. Thankfully the darkness soon gave way to a rather murky dawn and the long slog to Checkpoint 5 got properly underway. Perversely daylight also heralded the start of some very heavy and constant rain. The male team managed to keep up a steady and sustainable pace, but the female team unfortunately had to drop a couple of members due to injuries.

By the beginning of the second half of the course, most people were beginning to find their second wind and took the interminably long transits between checkpoints in their stride, even though minor ailments to legs, knees or ankles were unavoidable. With hindsight it seems strange that so little stands out in memory with regards to that day, but one particularly joyous moment was when the precipitation from the heavens finally ceased to grace us with its damp and rather unpleasant presence. Checkpoint 8 was the milestone which meant that we were almost, but definitely not quite, at the end.

There was still a rather cheeky descent and climb to the next checkpoint and then the final and seemingly endless 6 mile push to the finish. No matter what anyone says, I am convinced that maps lie. The final 800m were truly the most mentally taxing of the entire course. But as with all things enjoyable, it was not long till we had the end in sight and formed ourselves up into extended line to cross the line in 14 hrs and 47 mins as only the third team out of 27 to complete with a full complement of members.

An enormous and heartfelt thank you must go to the admin teams who supported us in superb style and without which we would certainly have never made it all the way round. **Sgt 'Dad' Johnson'** and **SSgt 'Mandy' Eardley** team's unwavering dedication to making sure that we were as comfortable as they could make us on a 40 mile trudge, was a major factor in sustaining the moral and physical well being of the team members. No request was too great or any detail too small to be considered. The competition certainly succeeded in its aims of testing mental and physical stamina and navigation. The most satisfying aspect however, was the fact that we started and finished as a team and less a few blisters and cramps, all healthy and fit. While most people were rather adamant that they would never ever do another 'Lanyard', I am sure that there are a few like **WO2 'Phil' Stroudley**, who despite being twice as old as anyone else on the team is already planning next years trg schedule. Now if only we can find a few hills covered in tussocks of grass to run up and down!

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

MEDAL PRESENTATIONS FOR SOLDIERS DECORATED FOR SERVICE IN IRAQ

Thirty four members of 81 Sig Sqn based in Corsham were presented with their Iraq medals by the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, **Gen Sir Timothy Granville-Chapman KCB CBE ADC Gen** and the Chairman of BT, **Sir Christopher Bland**.

Sir Christopher congratulates WO2(SSM) John Collins

The soldiers were decorated in a private ceremony attended by their families at the Inns of Court in London on 6 September.

The Sqn is a specialist TA unit recruited from the telecoms industry; the majority from BT and Vodafone. During their tour in Basra, they were instrumental in rebuilding and maintaining a telecoms infrastructure within the Basra area.

The soldiers used their civilian skills to provide and maintain critical telecoms facilities for coalition forces, including copper and fibre networks. In addition they also provided a Quick Reaction Force which included security patrols and general peace keeping duties.

In this ceremony, their dedication and commitment to their work with the TA was officially recognised. **Sir Christopher** said, "I am very proud of all the BT men who have served in Iraq and delighted they returned safely. It was an honour to present them with their well-earned medals." In his address, **Gen Sir Timothy Granville-Chapman** talked of the important close relationship between industry and the Armed Forces.

VCDS shares a joke with Cpl Matt Holmes and Sig Ginge

VCDS and the Chairman of BT present medals to members of 81 Sig Sqn

JOINT SERVICE SIGNAL UNIT (CYPRUS)

CO **Lt Col CJ McIntosh**
RSM **WOI(RSM) LS Crossing**

AY NIK FETE 2006

The event began with the Band of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, sweating profusely as they entered the arena! There were over 30 stalls including local products, education information and food.

The All Island RAF Police Dog Trials final, the All Island Catering Competition (which was won by JSSU(CYP)!) and Tug of War competition were going on throughout the day. The live music tent provided entertainment for the crowds and saw the Unit's

newest band, 'The Tri Hards' perform admirably. The players were **Maj Jim Boyle** as front man, **Lt Dan Todd** on bass and **Flt Lt John Rees** on rhythm. To finish the day 'BARE FEAT' rocked the masses with it's new line up of **SAC Gaz Lintott** on vocals, **SSgt(FofS) Dave Cook** on bass and **SAC Ritchie** on drums. Not forgetting the search and rescue helicopter that joined us from 84 Sqn, the day finished a huge success and will remain one of the highlights of the JSSU(CYP) calendar.

COOMBER CUP INTER SQUADRON SPORTS COMPETITION

September saw the Phase 3 of the Coomber Cup Inter Squadron Sports Competition. Many pers from across the Sqns participated in the 3 events. First came the Triathlon; some individuals completed the entire race and each sqn submitted teams to complete a leg each. **Sqn Ldr Kev Rayner** won the individual event after a tight sprint finish. Despite his efforts 2 Sqn won this event but only by 2 mins.

Then after lunch, it was the Basketball and Tug of War competitions. The Basketball was clearly won by HQ Sqn with the help of the CO. The aggression displayed was admirable, bordering on crazy!

The Tug of War proved physically exhausting for all competitors. In temperatures exceeding 25 degrees the 3 sqns battled the 'ends' fiercely. **Maj Chris Hymas** was meticulous in his judging of the event!

Maj Chris Hymas briefs the competitors

There was no weight limit indicated and 2 Sqn took full advantage of this by ensuring the heaviest members of the Sqn participated! 1 and 2 Sqs worked tirelessly to beat HQ Sqn and despite 2 Sqn's weight advantage, HQ Sqn were victorious. The day ended with a superb BBQ and a few beers, hosted by the Gym staff.

At the end of Phase 3 of this competition, HQ Sqn are in the lead with 24 points, closely followed by 2 Sqn with 23 points. 1 Sqn are hot on their tails with 19 points. The Unit looks forward to the next phase of this popular competition.

1 SQUADRON

OC	**Sqn Ldr K Rayner**
SSM	**WO2 R Kidd**

1 Sqn bade a fond farewell to **Capt Hannah Frost**, who is off to complete an Italian language course, and welcomed **Capt Sally Green** to take the helm of Sqn 2IC. We also welcome **Sgt Bone**, **Cpl Phillips** and **LCpl Scriven**.

The Sqn has been extremely busy during the summer and everyone enjoyed the maximum leave period in August. Eight members of the Sqn were fortunate enough to enjoy a water sports day laid on by the Joint Services Water Sports Centre. Meanwhile **SSM 'Billy' Kidd** was frantically organising the Ay Nik Fete, so no time to chase wpn cleaning!

Nineteen pers from across the Sqn took part in Ex MOUFLON LEADER. A team building and leadership ex conducted in the cold, Troodos mountain range. The troops spent the first day under instruction improving their map reading skills, taught by **Sgt Tony Raby**.

Sgt Tony Raby teaches map reading skills

Meanwhile **Flt Lt John Rees** tested the leadership and teamwork of the sections by blindfolding them and sending them up the climbing wall in Episkopi gym. There were many 'disco legs' as individuals put their faith in their team mates!

The second day saw the sects let loose on the mountain to conduct a navigational ex with a few comd tasks thrown in. The teams were physically and mentally challenged throughout the

The blindfold climb - Cpl Wisky looks on!

day at the stands, which included the erection of a 9 x 9 tent blindfolded, a mine clearance stand and a vehicle push – uphill!

The Squadron now looks forward to Ex PURPLE ENDEAVOUR, the Unit SAAM and last but not least, Christmas!

Who said this was going to be easy?

2 SQUADRON

OC	**Lt Cdr N Bassett**
SSM	**WO2(SSM) D Holroyd**

- bySSgt(FoS) Cook

On 1 August 2006, the Unit Eng Sqn, was re-organised with the absorption of the majority of the Techie types from across the Unit. The Sqn exptends a warm 'welcome aboard' to all the pers from 1 Sqn Salt Lake Site, Ground Satellite Station in Episkopi and the guys and girls from the Trenchard site. The 'Technicians' Republic of Troodos' still remain part of Golf Sect, so total assimilation in some way off.

To mark this auspicious occasion, the Technical Maint Sect (TMS)(or is it Sqn now!) celebrated with a barbecue in the Riggers Compound. This provided the opportunity for the latest additions to the family to get to know each other, and perhaps quaff a few beers on the way!

Capably organised by Line Sect, our thanks go to **Cpl 'Johno' Johnson** and **Sig 'Chris' Mitton** for making the afternoon go with a swing and for hosting the families so well. A special mention must go to **Sig Carl Oldridge** who"Can't get a mention in *The Wire,* FofS, I haven't done anything yet!"

Not only has the Sqn grown in numbers, the hierarchy have changed significantly with pers moving around the Tech Block.

The Sqn bade farewell to **Capt(TOT) Bob Vowles**, off to civvy street. We wish him, **Jenny** and the family all the best for the future. His presence, on the field of play and in the bar, will be missed by the Ay Nik Stags Rugby Club.

WO2(FofS) Martin Frangleton departed, with guitar, cricket pads, football, squash racquet in tow to 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. **Martin's** contribution to the sporting glory that the Unit has enjoyed will be difficult to replace.

To help confuse everybody **WOI(FofS) Colin Raynor** stands in as TOT, **SSgt(FofS) Cook** deserts the weekly kebab runs to Golf Sect, assuming the post of configuration manager. **WO2(FofS) Duncs Chamberlain**, newly arrived from Germany, assumes command of TMS.

The Sqn has the pleasure of celebrating the selection for promotion of members from the hardest working sect in the Unit, Line Sect (that's a matter of opinion, and yes they paid us to write this!): **LCpl Murv Wride** and **Sigs Mitton** and **Sear** – well done!

DCSA - CYPRUS COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

INFRASTRUCTURE AND HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON,

Sqn Comd	**Maj AS Johnson**
Unit SSM	**WO2(SSM) Crawford**

A NEW SQUADRON IS FORMED IN CYPRUS

"When the wind of change starts blowing, the fool builds a windbreak. The wise man builds a windmill".

Comms in Cyprus has recently gone through a period of change. First in 2004, 259 Sig Sqn and 12 SU amalgamated to form the Joint Cyprus Communications Unit (CCU) and this was followed by the move of CCU into the Defence Communications Services Agency (DCSA) resulting in the CCU becoming DCSA CCU in 2005. In 2006, the Head of DCSA Cyprus, **Wg Cdr Chris Gilbert** RAF (now replaced by **Wg Cdr Chris Featherstone**) stepped up to become CO DCSA CCU and the Unit was re-established under a 2 sqn ORBAT; a primarily RAF Service Ops Sqn under **Sqn Ldr John Green** RAF and a Royal Signals heavy HQ and Infrastructure Sqn under **Maj Adrian Johnson**.

To the uninitiated this may simply look like a return to the old days of 259 Sig Sqn and 12 SU but the 'jointery' in action still remains and is going strong! The Unit CO post is rotational, allowing both services to comd this unique blend of soldiers, airmen, civil servants, locally employed civilians and UK dependants. The Unit SSM, **WO2(SSM) Crawford** keeps everything running together and the Unit still fields good joint sports teams for on and off island events. He also runs joint PT, has a joint Charities Committee and runs a lively (and profitable) Unit bar.

The Sqn strength is 137 out of 140 established posts, 97 Army, 6 RAF and 34 Civilian posts. The Sqn Mission is to carry out the planning, co-ordination and execution of all on-island CIS projects that DCSA Cyprus are responsible for. Concurrently it is to maintain the current infrastructure, COERS radio system and Bowman Land static platforms on island in order to provide Comd BFC with robust high quality CIS enabling him to effect his comd.

ORGANISATION
The Sqn is organised into 5 Tps plus a HQ element.

HEADQUARTERS
The HQ element consists of the OC, **Maj Adrian Johnson**, the Unit Admin Officer, **Flt Lt Helen King** RAF and her admin staff, **SSgt Bevan (Chief Clerk)**, the Unit SSM **WO2 SSM Kev Crawford**, CDA headed up by **WO Roddy** and the Budget Manager, **Patricia Skingsley.**

PLANS AND PROJECTS
Plans and Projects is commanded by **Capt (TOT) Mark Paveley** and are responsible for the planning, co-ordination and execution of all on-island CIS projects that DCSA have input to. They act

as the focal point for all new projects that come on island. They also serve as the Sqn Ops Office.

QM DEPARTMENT

The QM Dept are responsible for the R&I of all DCSA Cyp stores, and the MT sect. **Capt Paul Williams** is the QM and currently wears a number of hats while we are gapped a Tp Comd post. The SQMS is **SSgt Botwright**.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Episkopi Tp is predominantly made up of Installation Techs. It is commanded by **Capt Paul Williams** and run day to day by **SSgt McLeish** and **SSgt(FofS) Ashman**; they are responsible for maint and installation of the site wiring within Episkopi Garrison. They also have a number of Royal Signals Ops, led by **Sgt Knox**, who are responsible for COERS, Bowman and support the Joint Ops Centre.

AKROTIRI TROOP

Akrotiri Tp is, once again, commanded by **Capt Paul Williams** and run on a day to day basis by **SSgt(FofS) Ferguson** and **SSgt D'Or**. The Tp is almost wholly made up of Installation Techs with one SNCO Sys Eng Tech. They are responsible for the maint and installation of the site wiring within Akrotiri Garrison.

DHEKELIA TROOP

Dhekelia Tp is commanded by **Lt Jim Boyden** and is the largest Tp. The Tp Comd has **SSgt(FofS) Gray** and **SSgt Stennett** to aid him in the smooth running of the Tp. The Tp is predominantly made up of Installation Techs but have two SETs and a civilian Networks administrator. They also have a small tactical radio cell with Radio Sys Ops. The Tp is responsible for the installation and maint of the site wiring within Dhekelia, Ayios Nikolaos and Nicosia. They are also responsible for responding to network faults and managing the COERS.

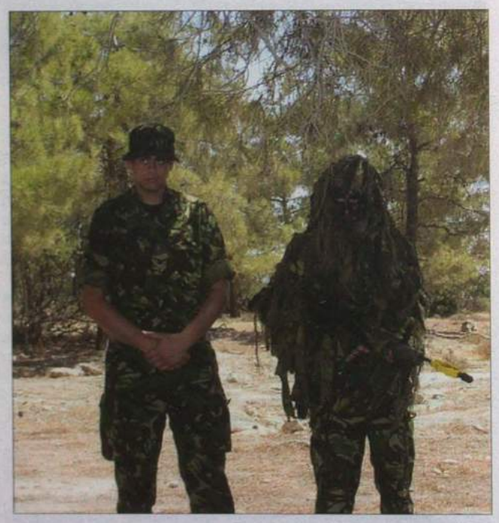
We welcome the new OC Sqn, **Maj Johnson,** his wife **Debra** and two children, who have arrived from BOWTAG (G) in Paderborn. We wish you all the best for a successful tour.

EXERCISE BABY GRIFFON

Over the period 22 and 23 August Infrastructure Sqn were asked by the local Air Training Corps at Akrotiri if we could provide a 24 hour FTX in order to give their cadets an insight into life in green. Not one to pass up the opportunity of recruiting more people into the Corps, **Lt Boyden** and **Cpl Keatley** put their heads together and came up with a package of lessons and battle exs designed to spark an interest in all things "Army". The day consisted of a round robin of lessons such as duties of a sentry, camouflage and concealment and an introduction to fire and manoeuvre, all of which were thoroughly enjoyed by the cadets. **Sig Jackson** in particular deserves a special mention for his camouflage demo. Having made a ghille suit out of an old NBC top, he the proceeded to lay hidden for several hours in the August sun, until the cadets found him. He is now several stone lighter.

As night fell a fighting patrol was launched and an ambush sprung on an unsuspecting enemy before an early night into routine as a dawn attack was planned on the nearby Paramali Village. Considering that the Air Cadets had never lived in the field before they put in a massive effort and thoroughly enjoyed the day, despite the heat. **Lt Boyden** travelled down to Akrotiri to present a special award to the cadet that had performed the best, **Cadet Miller.**

Lt Boyden presents Cadet Miller with his Best Cadet Award



Sig Jackson demonstrates how to camouflage properly

And for all those who thought they'd avoided a round in the bar, well done also to **SSgt D'Or**, **SSgt(SQMS) Botwright**, **Cpls Ramsden**, **Brown** and **Fu**, **Sigs Mills** and **Mercer** who all gave up their time to help and instruct.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt Paul Williams**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt McLeish**

Episkopi Tp has been extremely busy over the last few months, juggling the normal working day with the op requirement of Op HIGHBROW, the deployment of the Tactical Radio Cell in support of Ex SAFFRON SANDS and as a bonus a little bit of AT. Who says Cyprus is a sunshine posting with no work? The Tp would like to welcome **Capt Paul Williams** as Tp Comd. He is also the QM and Akrotiri Tp Comd, as well as the 10 or so other titles he has to his name. We also welcome the following: **Cpls 'Jona' Jones** and **Bob Wells**, **Sigs Jamie Kerr**, **Jamie Reynolds** and **Dylan Randall**. We also say goodbye to **Sgt Al Temple**, **Cpl Vincent**, who has left us for Civvy Street, **LCpl's Cracknell** and **Barrett** and **Sig Steve Hargreaves** who is on his Class One; after which he returns to CCU to clear before being posted.

And finally congratulations to **Cpl Chris Craven** on promotion to Sgt and a posting to RSS Blandford and **Cpl Keith Knox**, who is now the Tactical Radio Cell Sgt and will be the Assistant Bowman Systems Manager.

OPERATION HIGHBROW

It was a lazy Sunday afternoon, just like any other, I'd just fed the dog and the baby was sleeping. Then we heard that less than100 miles away, the Israeli Air Force were pounding the hell out of Beirut airport!

I thought to myself, we need to test the alternate comms centre! And fast! This could be the start of World War Three! After several hours of testing the purpose-built alternate comd with **Cpl Simpson** and **Sgt Temple**, we knew that we had done our Unit and Corps proud! We went to bed that night, safe in the knowledge that whoever moved in there would be getting a first rate comms suite.

Monday morning came, as they do, and I took the liberty of cancelling PT, knowing that we would require all hands to the pump to prepare for what was to come. Lucky for me that I did as the JOCC was in a flat spin.

Never in all my years had I seen such chaos. For some reason, our comms suite was not to be used and instead, they chose the old J2 corridor, which had been stripped bare of all comms infrastructure. This was a challenge that even **Sir Ranulph Fiennes** would have shirked from.

Then from the mist emerged a group of proud knights, waiting to do battle and put an end to the chaos. Who were these immaculately dressed warriors? They were Episkopi Tp, DCSA Cyprus! That's who.

Their battle ground was to be the old J2 corridor and all the perils it contained. They soldiered with heroism, rarely seen in this day and age, if they had been in the face of the enemy, I'm sure there would have been a couple of MCs awarded! They banded together like….well like a band of brothers, the teamwork was enough to put the Red Arrows to shame…

EXERCISE SAFFRON SANDS

The tactical radio cell was called upon to support 1RRF with their deployment to Jordan. This proved to be a difficult period for the radio cell with their commitments to Bowman Trg and the conversion of one of the Land Rovers FFR.

This was overcome by 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn supplying **LCpl Neil Bielby**, **Sigs Al Holmes** and **Steve Brown** who went out for the full duration of the ex. With Bowman on the go, the radio cell could only provide **LCpl Matt Sunderland** (Epi Tp) and **Sig Paul Nurse** (Dhk Tp) who went out for the first 5 weeks with **Sigs Paul Cross** and **Dave Stevens** who concentrated on the Bowman Advanced Signaller Systems course.

Once they had completed the course, the teams swapped roles. During the ex, they had to battle with the harsh environments, especially the sand storms that would hit the camp with no warning, Now we know why we have storm lashings on the tents.

The comms provided during the ex ranged from the Clansman on the FFRs, Cyprus Operational Emergency Radio System (COERS) radios and most importantly the rear link back to Cyprus provided over the world telephones.

Thank goodness I don't have to pick up the phone bill for this one! This proved to be the most taxing time trying to establish the links using the data interface with the Brents and laptops. But once all the bugs were ironed out, the system worked. A big thanks again to the 101 Bde lads who provided sp to us during Ex SAFFRON SANDS and hopefully we can rely on their sp again, if needed for next year's ex.

DHEKELIA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Jim Boyden**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Stennett**

AWARD OF DCSA SPECIAL BONUS

Mr Chris Florentzou is employed as the civilian storeman in Dhekelia Tp and was recently awarded a bonus of C£500 for his hard work. To us, he is the unsung hero of DCSA CCU in the Eastern Sovereign Base Area. Always working relentlessly in the background, he provides an excellent service and on every inspection carried out, the Stores has always been in an excellent state with all the accounts 100% correct. This was recently confirmed by the recent Unit Board of Officers where despite being very busy with op tasks, **Mr Florentzou** managed to have the Stores and MT accounts in an immaculate condition with no errors or mistakes. In addition, he has saved the Unit hundreds, if not thousands of pounds by recycling old parts and cable, an area which many other people would overlook. For this refreshingly proactive attitude he was awarded his cash bonus, which the Tp is very much looking forward to spending in the bar!

Mr Florentzou being presented with his C£500 cheque

AKROTIRI TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt PA Williams**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D'Or**

Akrotiri Tp has been extremely busy over the last few months; lots of people coming and going, projects, reorganisation of DCSA CCU and Op HIGHBROW. We would like to say farewell and good luck to **SSgt(FofS) Martin Ind**, **Sgt Chris Doick**, **LCpl John Young** and **Sig Gaz Stewart**.

A big farewell and thank you goes to **Avram Savva** who has been the store man at Akrotiri Tp for many years and has retired after 37 years service for British Forces Cyprus. We wish him all the best for retirement and the future. Warm welcomes go to **SSgt(FofS) Paddy Ferguson**, **Cpl Colin Simpson**, **LCpls Alex Davies** and **Jules Grieves**, and **Sigs Tom Gillbard** and **Ross Toshack**. No sooner had **Jules Grieves** got here, than he was sent to the Falklands. No doubt **Jules** and his mate are living in the gym, drinking plenty of protein shakes trying to get massive for when **Sgt Cooper** arrives. Congratulations go to **Cpl Peck Ramsden** and **LCpl Chris Loynes** who have both been selected for promotion in recent months.

OPERATION HIGHBROW

Op HIGHBROW was the op put in place for the evacuation of British Nationals from Lebanon during the crisis in July/August. RAF Akrotiri was the temporary holding area for all evacuees flying back to the UK.

The amount of air traffic coming through could have rivalled Heathrow Airport in these 2 weeks with French, US and British Forces all coming and going and the evacuees just going.

With everyone needing telephones and data capabilities, Akrotiri Tp hit the ground running, installing cables and circuits here there and everywhere to meet the demands of everyone involved. Typical days started at 0630hrs and were finishing no earlier than 2100hrs, weekends included.

Who said Cyprus was an easy posting? All in all, Op HIGHBROW was a huge success and Akrotiri Tp put in a huge amount of effort to ensure everyone had the comms they wanted. For the younger and less experienced guys it was a steep learning curve, working under immense pressure and time frames, which they all coped with extremely well.

DCSA CCU SUMMER BALL

The Elias Beach hotel was the venue for this year's unit summer treat, as selected by **SSgt Tony D'or** and **Cpl 'Peck' Ramsden**. Tpt was laid on for everyone and this ensured another fantastic attendance from our friends on the other side of the island. **Capt (TOT) Mark Paveley** definitely seemed to enjoy himself on his first appearance at a CCU function. The dancing established some concerns about the electrical integrity of the building, but maybe that's how things should be done.

Once again **Flt Lt Rushton** made a clean sweep on the raffle. **WO2(FofS) Gaz Clapham** was disappointed to see his caricature was remarkably life like. **WO2(SSM) Crawford** was seen burning the candle at both ends by arriving at a well known local nightspot just as junior ranks were calling it a day and making their way home. This man can party!

SPORT

ANGLING

ARMY ANGLING FEDERATION (COARSE) INTER CORP CHAMPIONSHIPS 2006

Across the Army 9 teams entered the Army Angling Federation (Coarse) (AAF(C)) Inter Corps Championship, which took place at Herronbrook fishery, Staffordshire on Monday 9 September. A team of 6 anglers from the Corps, previously selected from the Royal Signals Coarse Angling Championships in May, took to the banks.

The team this year included 2 relative novices, who either performed well at the Corps Championships or in their respective AAF(C) League over the past 12 months. Both anglers performed creditably, more so than one or two of the more established team members!

Lt Col Chas Dale did the honours and drew the team pegs and so the battle began. The venue had already proven to be a difficult nut to crack and it would be fair to say the team was none too confident.

However, at the half way stage it was clear that **Lt Col Dale** and **Sgt Ben Bentley** were putting more than their fair share of fish into their nets. **Sgt Lance Buckle** who was working like a Trojan was also well in the hunt.

At the whistle, and 6 hours after the start, word started to spread around the complex that **Sgt Bentley** had "sacked up" and would not only top his section for maximum points but win the match individually as well.

This proved to be the case. At the scales he had over 29 Kg of Chub safely in his keep net, no other angler even got close, it had been a magnificent debut performance for the Corps. **Lt Col Dale** had kept up the pace during the last couple of hours and despite a number of lost fish, he won his section. **Sgt Buckle** managed a creditable 2nd in section, weighing in around 19 Kilos of mainly small fish. The remainder of the team did just enough to stay in the hunt.

A tense 90 minutes passed before the results were known and it was all very close. The Corps amassed a score of 24 points, 2 points behind the Inf, but beating both the REME and RE on a section count back. Second place was an extremely satisfying result from what was regarded as a developing team.

The Team:
Lt Col Chas Dale - DISC
Capt Chris Kidd - 21 Sig Regt (AS)
SSgt Jimmy Frew - 35 Sig Regt (V)
Sgt Lance Buckle - 16 Sig Regt
Sgt Ben Bentley - RSIT
LCpl Chris Treweeks - 21 Sig Regt (AS)

The Royal Signals Team who won 2nd place in the Inter Corps Championships

EXERCISE HARZ CHALLENGE 2006

- by SSgt Mal Pavier, Royal Corp of Signals Biathlon Coach 16th Signal Regiment

Maj Adrian Scott	DISC SU OIC Ex
SSgt Mal Pavier	16 Sig Regt Chief Coach, Corp Biathlon Coach
Sgt Mark Blears	36 Sig Regt Coach/Admin NCO
Cpl K Connelly	RSS Coach/PTI
Lt Hugo Evans	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
2Lt Lora Champion	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
LCpl Lora Powell	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sig Tuite	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sig Owen Owen	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sig Sarah Dower	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt

It had been 8 months in the planning but the 3rd Ex HARZ CHALLENGE had come together with Regts from all over UK and Germany bidding for more places than there were spaces.

This was the 3rd ex I had organised with **Maj Scott** on behalf of the Director UKSC(G) Sports Board, **Col (Retd) Harrison** and chairman Army Nordic Skiing, **Col MacIntosh**. A Biathlon summer trg camp would be run from the AT lodge in the Harz Mountains to teach basic Biathlon Skills to Novice skiers for the forthcoming winter season. After the last few years, I have been determined to pass on the knowledge I have amassed which has brought me to the top circles of the sport nationally. This Olympic sport, that has deep military roots, has been my passion for over 16 years and in an effort to groom new talent and raise the standard of the grass roots teams, Ex HARZ CHALLENGE came into being. But the question is how can you train for skiing when there is no snow? The answer is quite easy. We just use a much shorter ski with wheels; roller skis. Shooting is also much easier to teach in the summer than under the arctic conditions we have to face in Norway and Sweden in December.

I managed to amass a star-studded coaching team, consisting of the National Senior Team Coach, **Sgt Jas Sklennor**, **Cpl Kate Connelly**, an aspirant GB athlete, **Sgt Mark Blears**, a seasoned Corp Skier and **Capt Smudge Smith**, the event organiser for Ex SPARTAN HIKE, the UKLF Nordic Skiing Championships

So the stage was set, even if the weather wouldn't play and 20 soldiers assembled for the first of the two 5-day courses being run from the Torfhaus lodge. After the midday meal came the initial briefs, then it was down to the range for range orders and to be shown how to set the place up and get sized up to the rifles. This is a long drawn out process, as the rifles can be adjusted in many different ways to fit a variety of physical frames. That night after tea was the first of many evening lectures.

Day 1 started with mobility at 0630hrs with **Cpl Connelly**, and then breakfast. Next on the agenda was Wpn Trg followed by some shooting. After dinner it was time for roller-skiing, and it was soon obvious who had spent their childhood on blades and who hadn't. After more lectures in the evening, some tired teddy bears went to bed early.

The next 3 days followed the same routine with mobility, ranges, roller-skiing and lectures. Everyone soon got into the swing of things and some flashes of brilliance were seen occasionally. The highlight of the week was the eqpt lecture presented by LAUFZONE Endurance Sports, with our resident male model, **LCpl Crawford**, 7 Tpt Regt RLC. The first course finished with a Biathlon running race; a mass start with 2 shoots, prone and stand. This demonstrated the experience of **Capt Tony Piper**, 4 Regt RA who won the race in a shiny new ski hat from RMA Sports UK.

Change over day on the Saturday saw Course 1 clean up and depart and the next batch of aspiring athletes arrive. This was when the Corps arrived in force with the male and female Nordic team from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt. Once they were all in situ, it was the same procedure as the week before.

Unfortunately, the weather started to turn worse and the program had to be amended accordingly. One morning the group did mobility on the balcony while **Cpl Connelly**, our PTI, took the lesson getting very wet. The rain saw to it that not as much range work was covered as the week before but the Course 2 finished off with a roller-ski race down by the Oker Stausee. This saw **Sig Owen** storm through into 1st place; 2nd was **Sig Tuite**. Fastest female was **Pte Doherty**, 1 CS Med Regt followed hotly by **Sig Dower**.

All in all, it had been a success with 40 students taken through this basic course. The building blocks had been clearly laid for the winter season. Only time and some hard racing early next year will tell if we have any potential Olympians in the making. All I can say now is; "Bring on the snow!"

ARMY LADIES TUG-OF-WAR

TOUGHGUY 30 JULY 2006
- by Cpl Kerry Hopkinson 7 AB HQ & Sig Sqn (207)

On 30 July, 10 members of the Army Ladies Tug-of-War team made their way to Wolverhampton to take part in the *Toughguy* Competition. The main aim was to improve the team's cohesion in anticipation for the Tug-of-War World Championships in Holland in September.

What I didn't realize when I said yes to doing it was that it involved 8 country miles, which amounted to 10 miles of hill sprints, high diving boards and water obstacles and about a million scramble nets to climb.

The crowds were huge as we made our way to the start, surrounded by some very fit looking people; we were all nervous. It didn't help that the coach **Cpl Sam Martin** decided it would be a good idea if we carried one of our Tug-of-War ropes round with us. This started off weighing about 25kg, once it had been dragged through 10 miles of mud and obstacles, it felt more like 55kg.

The rope came over every obstacle with us and no other team carried a burden as far, maybe that should have told us something. **LCpl Gemma Peskett** set a good pace until the hill sprints, where we all took turns on the rope. Soon we were into the water course, deep holes of mud we swam through followed by 30ft crawls through narrow tunnels. **Cpl Kate Connelly** took charge of the rope on the high obstacles, beating most of the team over on her own. When it came to walking the plank there were a few wobbly legs looking over the 5m drop but **Cpl Sam Martin** took a brave jump followed by **LCpl Lisa Melderis.**

So far it had taken us 3 hours and we still had the second lap to go. The rope slowed our pace but we were determined to get it round now we had come this far. **LBdr Cally Johnson** and **Cpl**

Army Ladies Tug-of-War Squad 2006 after Toughguy with the rope

Kate Hopkinson pushed out for another set of tunnel crawls but uphill this time, followed by **Cpl Kerry Hopkinson**, who was nearly spewing at this point from swallowing contaminated water. **Maj Wendy Findlay** spent her birthday on *Toughguy* but we promised she would have a birthday drink later. The last few miles were painful and tiring but the team's anchor **Cpl Zoe Lomas** kept us all going and we passed through the finishing line in a respectable 3rd place out of the girls' teams. Everyone finished the course – including the rope!

A special mention goes to **LCpl Peskett** for the most pathetically landed jump and **Cpl Martin** for her unique greeting to the camera crew and thanks to **Helga** for getting us all there. It was a hard course but some of the sights were the funniest things I've seen in ages. Well done girls!

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ASSEN, HOLLAND
- by Cpl Ange Fewster

After competing at various competitions throughout the outdoor season including The National Championships, the Army Ladies Tug-of-War Team met for the final and most prestigious competition of the year – The World Championships.

The team started trg knowing that at this level it wasn't going to be easy. However, after the first weigh-in, we realised how hard it was actually going to be when the 520kg team weighed in at 544kg!

It started with 2 weeks trg in Aldershot and concluded with the World Championships, hosted this year by The Netherlands.

The trg schedule consisted of an hour and half fat burning run every morning (where our coach, **Sgt Sam Martin** would turn it into a 'Log Spotting' trip) followed by an hour and half rope trg on the Gantry before lunch. After digesting a whole lettuce leaf at lunch, it was back on the rope for a further 2 hrs, varying between the Gantry, Live ends, The Bungee, Sandbag work and Tyre pulls (I'd hate to see the size of the vehicle those tyres were stolen from!).

After dinner our PTI, **Cpl Kate Connelly**, would take us for circuits or a gym session.

The memorable moments were going to Bedford to train with the England Ladies Team and when our Team Captain arrived back from OPTAG. **Cpl Kim Roberts** was hard to miss when 'taking the strain', her 'YYEEAHH' could be heard in China! On the last day of trg, the week ended on a real high. The current record for the Army girls was lifting the Gantry with 11 weights in it. The 520kg team equalled the record and the 560kg team broke it by lifting 12 weights to the top and 13 half way up before our arms were ripped from the sockets and our quadriceps exploded!

HOLLAND

After a slightly longer than necessary drive to Holland (one word boys – Map!), the 520kg Team weighed in at 6am the following morning. All the hard work had paid off the girls were bang on weight.

They got off to a great start in the Open Competition, winning their first pull by taking both ends from the Canadian champions. The team surprised everyone finishing 4th out of 10 teams in our group and coming 7th overall out of 19 teams – the highest position any Army 520kg team has ever managed. The Ladies 560kg competition was the following morning. We lost our first 2 ends in possibly the hardest pull of the day against the Lithuanian national side despite bags of fight. **Cpl Jenny Ingram**, who was first reserve, ran around putting Deep Heat on everyone's backs to ease their aches and pains.

This was not because she didn't want to pull, but because she was too frightened to tell the Coach she had forgotten her kit! The competition ended with the 560kg team finishing 5th out of 9 teams in our group and 8th overall out of 15 teams; another very commendable result for a light team!

The Squad has taken a big hit this year due to op commitments and injuries and as a result the Army Ladies Squad has been the most inexperienced this season since its formation in 2002 and our team was the most novice at the Championships. This did not stop us and our Coach.

We gained praise from numerous National Coaches and finished in a more than respectable position; doing the Army, our Coach and ourselves proud. The Army Ladies have also been invited to train with some of the England Male Teams and the Belgium National Side.

The week ended with the obligatory trip to Amsterdam for the day, with our Coach setting the standard for that morning by waking us up to "Pairs Fire & Manoeuvre!" The team enjoyed acquainting themselves with Amsterdam's numerous bars and shops. **Gnr Calli Johnson** managed to rip her trousers after some excessive pole dancing and a certain body piercing came out and rolled across the dance floor!

Finally the Army Squad would like to thank the following individuals: **Lt Col Davies** (APTC) for his continued support this season, **Maj Rumford** (Sec of Royal Signals Games Club) for providing financial support for Royal Signals personnel, **Sgt Sam Martin** and **WO2 Kev Shelton** RA for coaching the squad and for all their hard work and effort they both put in to organise this trip.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MERCURY CHALLENGE

Capt Rachel Thompson and SSgt(FofS) Jim Healy after their underwater efforts – the photo shows the relief and exhaustion in their faces!

THE *ADVENTURE* CONTINUES

After encountering and overcoming the Bay of Biscay, the intense heat of the Equator in a steel yacht, and the huge swell in the South Atlantic to name but a few, yacht *Adventure* is heading East towards Australia. After 3 months and over 8,000 nautical miles, Mercury Challenge is on course and currently facing the immense challenges set to Crew 4 by the Indian Ocean. Yacht *Adventure* is on course for Perth, where she will be met by the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race team who will undergo a rigorous month trg from Perth to Sydney.

During Leg 3 of Mercury Challenge from Rio De Janeiro to Cape Town, it was not all plain sailing, and gales tested the crew to their physical limits and a lack of wind tested the crew to their mental limits, as nights were spent wallowing in the South Atlantic swell. If everything went to plan and there were no challenges, then it wouldn't be adventure training, and the 14 crew onboard *Adventure* were certainly challenged during their 19 days at sea. A small crew error, where a knot was not tied correctly, led to a foresail sheet getting wrapped firmly around the propeller and the yacht losing the use of the engine.

After a long night with no wind, no engine power and the nearest land (the tiny island of Tristan Da Cunha over 200 nautical miles away) the Skipper and Mates decided that the only option was to try to free the propeller whilst at sea. Strangely enough, two volunteers in the form of **Capt Rachel Thompson** and **SSgt(FofS) Jim Healy** donned drysuits and helmets and entered the dark, cold South Atlantic water. After over an hour of diving under the 40 tonne yacht with a hacksaw (the helmets were vital!), the pair began to emerge victorious with pieces of the sheet, and finally after 1¾ hrs, the propeller was free and the agony of being at the mercy of the swell was history.

All the crew of yacht *Adventure* have returned to their units positive about their experiences and the sense of teamwork achieved after spending a month on a 67ft yacht with the same 14 people, and nowhere to escape, is immense. Without teamwork, the yacht cannot sail and the whole crew must work together effectively to ensure the safe and successful execution of Mercury Challenge. When 14 people from different backgrounds; from professional teachers to accountants; from computer programmers to physiotherapists; from soldiers to senior officers who have just come back from ops; and from all ages between 17 and 55 are pushed together to achieve a challenging aim, their personal development is immeasurable.

In every port *Adventure* has visited, she has drawn immense attention and boosted the prestige and reputation of the Royal Signals. As you read this, *Adventure* is pounding through the Indian Ocean and with each day, the crew are faced with new challenges which will develop them for their daily work within the Corps. Follow the progress of Mercury Challenge on www.mercurychallenge.mod.uk

CORPS WINTER TENNIS LEAGUE DATES

I have just been sent the following dates for the Inter Corps Winter Tennis League.

Can you please insert the following for the next Wire in its Sports page. Thank you.

17 Jan - R SIGNALS v REME B
24 Jan - R SIGNALS v INF
07 Mar - R SIGNALS v RE
14 Mar - R SIGNALS v AMS

R Rumford

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal
President: The Master of Signals
Chairman: Brig NF Wood

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: Lt Col(Retd) CP Conlon
Assistant General Secretary: Maj(Retd) IN Grieg
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J Cornick
Membership Secretary: Mr PJ Cuckow

NOTES FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S DESK

Branch news. **Eric Le Quesne** has hand over as Secretary of the Guernsey Branch to **Keith Austin**. **Keith** can be contact at; Le Petit Axce, Grand Marais, Vale, Guernsey, CI, GY3 5DT. The "249 Sig Sqn (FARELF) Group" is now affiliated to the RSA. Anyone who served in that unit is welcome to contact the Secretary to find out more; **Graham Jolly**, 5 Glover Rd, Willesborough, Ashford, Kent TN24 0RZ. Tel: 01233 637792. E-mail; graham.jolly@ntlworld.com.

Their website is; www.249signalsquadron.co.uk/ **Pam Morgan** has taken over her late husband **Colin's** role as Almoner for the Air Formation Signals Assn.
Syd Wilson is the new Chairman of the 1960s 16 Sig Regt Reunion Club and can be contacted on; 01423 506475

Central Committee. **Donald Crisp** of the East Kent Branch has been appointed Representative for RSA Area 4. For interest, the other Reps on the committee are:

Area 1: **Barry Moody** (Scarborough Branch)
Area 2: **Maj Brian Ivison** (Chester Branch)
Area 3: **Lt Col Bill White MBE** (Peterborough Branch)
Area 5: **Maj Bob McLaren** (Dorset Branch)

New Life Members. The following members have been enrolled since the last *WIRE*:

Rank/Name	Service	Branch/Unit
Cpl Martin Phipps	2000-date	
Sgt Paul Meredith	1984-06	
Cpl John Shepherd	1959-70	
LCpl Peter Mackintosh	1962-71	
Capt Pete Hodson	1981-06	
SSgt Adrian Tindall	1972-95	
Sig Peter Mickleburgh	1960-62	
Sig John Leach	1978-85	
Cpl Ernest Vass	1951-63	
LCpl John Sherwin	1997-03	
LCpl Albert Redwood	1942-46	
Sgt Steve Baldwin	1972-82	
Sig Neville Gascoigne	1954-56	East Kent Branch
Sig Les Parker	1970-76	
Lt Col Paddy Crowley	1969-06	
Capt Robert Vowles	1983-06	
Maj Mark Hanby	1988-06	
LCpl Michael Gunn	1949-54	
Sgt Robert Cottingham	1978-87	Glasgow Branch
Sgt Royston Bignell	1946-75	Chelsea Hospital
SSgt Ben Cooley	1979-95	
Sgt Willie Young	1974-94	
Sig Alastair Macrae	1971-77	
Sgt Des Lang	1992-date	CCU, Cyprus
Sig Stephen Davison	1970-73	
Sig Edd Lee	1997-03	
WO1 Sandy Mclean	1963-02	
Cpl Eric Bergan	1983-89	
Cpl David Whittaker	1966-89	
Cpl Chris Downes	1989-98	
Cpl Ben Bennett	1964-76	
Cpl Simon Smart	1981-94	
Sig Karl Sheppard	1980-83	
Cpl Mark Eaton	1989-95	
Cpl Fiona Shortis	1985-96	
Cpl Wayne Miller	1995-02	
Sig James Ingram	1944-48	Air Fmn Sigs Assn
Cpl Reg Nash	1938-46	
LCpl Barry Davis	1951-55	Malta/Libya Comd OCA
Capt Hannah Owen	1997-06	
LCpl Gary Cuss	1978-89	
Cpl Iain Duncan	1980-date	Comsec Monitoring Team(UK)
LCpl Martin(Taff) Barron	1988-98	
Sgt Derek Fisher	1944-48	
LCpl Allan O'Hare	1980-93	
Dvr Derek Lilly	1942-47	
LCpl Eric(Bill) Handy	1945-48	
Cpl Peter Paterson	1987-98	
Capt Gordon Davies	1964-76	
Sig Peter Molloy	1990-94	
Sig Herman James	1946-48	
Sig Gordon Jones	1949-51	
Cpl Stan Dye	1951-53	Norfolk Branch
Sig Jonathan Ractliffe	1965-73	
WO1 Ian Hugill	1974-98	
LCpl Neil Penny	1980-89	
Cpl Stephen Wheatley	1980-90	
SSgt Phillip Dixon	1972-94	
LCpl Malcolm Burgess	1960-62	
Dvr John Hobson	1941-46	Glossop Dist Sigs OCA
Cpl Nigel Green	1996-date	
SSgt Alan Langford	1951-76	Sheffield Branch
Sgt Roy Hadfield	1950-76	Sheffield Branch
Sgt Stuart Henderson	1998-date	Aberdeen
Sig Lyn Henderson	2003-date	Aberdeen
Sig Chris Flockhart	2005-date	Aberdeen
Sig Philip Jackson	1999-date	
LCpl Jay Craine	1987-93	
Cpl Ryan Crank	1999-06	
WO2 David Laverie	1981-05	
WO1 Eddie Kikas	1983-06	Cambridge Branch
Sgt Karen Ellams	1983-05	
WO2 Dave Cameron	1982-93	
Cpl Tony Fahey	1978-87	
Lt Sarah Drescher	2003-06	
LCpl Jake Wade	1960-66	
Sig Roy Tromans(Ward)	1956-58	
Cpl Stuart Gilson	1979-89	
Sig Sandi Jennings	1992-96	
Hugh(Shug) Ireland	1959-79	
Sgt Sid Davison	1963-83	
LCpl Craig Crockart	1979-92	

DONATIONS

Certa Cito Lodge	£30.00
Dorset Branch RSA	£91.00
Hull Branch RSA	£10.00
Malta/Libya Egypt Comd OCA	£50.00
From the will of **Maj Gen MS Hancock CB MBE**	£1,000.00
Maj RH Blizard	£310.00
Mr RA Lockett in memory of his wife **Beryl**	£100.00
RSA in Scotland	£300.00
David Muir	£38.00
R Waldron	£10.00
From the will of **Brig Geoffrey Proudman CBE**	£5,000.00
Reading Branch RSA	£170.00
Donations in memory of **Col RS (Steve) King**	£225
Maj (Retd) A Leitch in memory of **Capt Brian Overland**	£20.00
Maj JD Heard in memory of **Maj Dai Rees**	£20.00
Essex Yeomanry Assn	£20.00
Maj John Stroud in memoryof **Dai Rees**	£30.00
Mr J Riley	£15.00
Mr DJ Wellsted	£10.00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Our September event, a visit to Hampton Court Palace on a fine day, could not have been better. A jovial party left Aldershot by coach not too early on a Sunday morning, arriving at Hampton Court in time for a mid morning tour. Stepping into the 17th Century, we were greeted by a charming lady who, from her attire and graceful deportment was obviously a lady of the Court, and close to the King one would not wonder. Having toured the royal apartments of two dynasties, it was time for lunch, taken cafeteria style as opposed to the extensive and impressive catering arrangements we visited that afternoon. There were rooms for storage and preparation and kitchens which had included even an ice cellar in the neighbouring Home Park. Food for thought indeed, in this enlightened age. The visit allowed time for a tour of the garden and it was a joy to see the grounds open to the public, being enjoyed by many families picnicing in the park and on the grassy river bank. This certainly was a visit to be highly recommended.

A little later in the month a large party of members and friends attended the "Music on Fire" evening at the RMA Sandhurst. It was fortunate that it was a fine night, which is a requisite for this, as it is staged in the open. The military bands are accommodated in a transparent dome, there is a continual firework display and an audience of thousands are seated on the surrounding grass, dining in the dark among their camp chairs, cold cuts, strawberries, wine bottles, torches and – would you believe that at least two parties had brought candelabra! There

The Aldershot Group

was a pictorial display on the imposing facade of the College accompanying each musical performance and fireworks provided the appropriate atmosphere. The parking and despatch of hundreds of motor cars was handled with great efficiency and precision by the Academy, as one would expect at such a seat of excellence.

Sadly, with the sudden death of **Ian Ronald**, we have lost a stalwart. **Lt Col Ian Ronald OBE** was one of the original members of this branch, having retired in Aldershot after more than 30 years commissioned service in the Corps. He was at Dunkirk and served for much of the war in India where he and **Nanette** were married when she was a serving sister in the QAIMNS. He was devoted to the welfare of others. Our deep sympathy is extended to **Nanette** and to their son and daughter. We shall miss **Ian** very much. We hope we still shall have **Nanette's** company on social occasions.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Chairman **Mr John Ballantyne**
Secretary **Maj Gen JMW Badcock CB MBE DL**

The August social event occurred during the Kent monsoon season but **Gen John** with his past experience of similar precipitation in Ceylon, before it became something else, raised his finger to the clouds, announced a forthcoming dry spell 'on the day' and Lo! It was Dry!

John Ballantyne, having constructed wooden gee-gees with reins and bogey wheels, together with sets of jockey's silks, acted as Starter, Commentator and general Clerk of the Course, while the Committee men donned the silks and the Lady Members ran the tote. A great success which must surely be repeated!

September saw 28 members cross the Channel on board the *Pride of Kent* ferry, occupying the Club Lounge where they were royally entertained and waited upon.

A sumptuous lunch followed in the lavish surroundings of the Langan Restaurant and then, armed with selections of goodies from the duty free shop, our amphibious members arrived back at their cars parked in **Gen John's** paddock and were on their way home by 1800hrs – replete!

Sadly, despite all this frivolity and jollity, we had to say goodbye to a most popular friend and Member. **David Geary's** funeral was held on 18 September in Margate and was attended by our Hon Sec and other committee members and **David's** family and friends. His passing after a relatively short illness came as a shock and great surprise to so many of us. As a pleasant and happier postscript to the sad occasion of **David's** funeral, the

service was conducted by the **Rev Neville Gascoigne**. After close questioning by **Gen John**, it transpired that he had served his National Service as a technician in 12 Wireless Squadron in Gaz, Austria in 1954-56. **Neville** was recruited on the spot into the Branch thereby becoming our very own ex-officio padre. We are indeed blessed.

George Overton has broken his femur, **David Haseltine** has had a heart malfunction and **Gordon Alexander** remains wheelchair bound but safely in the capable hands of his wife, **Jenny**. All have been visited by our Welfare Member, not that he was instrumental in bringing an improvement in their conditions, but it helped.

We have enjoyed a visit to Guines in France to enjoy wine and a medieval ceremony but a description of this outing must await the next edition of *The Wire*. The complications of transportation, monies, cancellations at the last moment and other assorted matters have delayed the report by the Hon Treasurer, the Hon Sec and the Chairman, all of whom are still lying down in a darkened room – but more next time.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Chairman **Maj (Rtd) Paul Burton**
Secretary **Alan Turner**

We have been a bit apprehensive over the last few months with the proposed departure of Royal Signals from Ilford and replacement with a Royal Engineers TA unit. However, we are delighted to learn that this decision has now been reversed and that Ilford will remain a Royal Signals site.

Our Vice Chairman, **Barry Greenwood**, has been making what is now his annual pilgrimage to Yorkshire and a chance to visit the old Corps HQ at Helles Barracks in Catterick Garrison. Barry always lays flowers by the tree which was adopted by the East London Branch many years ago and where the ashes of our old Standard Bearer, **Fred Backhouse** were laid.

We were pleased recently to have received an invitation from West London RSA to join them in their Church Parade at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Six members, including Chairman, **Paul Burton** and his wife **Iris** made the trip across London early on Sunday 3rd September and after the service they chatted over a Curry Lunch.

It is worth mentioning here, that apart from co-operating with other RSA branches, we do try and maintain links with other local associations and in particular **Barry Greenwood** has for a long time kept us in very close contact with the local REME association. We also have close links with the Essex Regt Association. Amongst others, **John** and **Brenda Eggleton** deserve special mention for their work in this aspect and this has been recognised by them being made Honorary Members of the 4th Bn, Essex Regt, Old Comrades Association.

Our most recent social event, the annual Supper Dance, was held this year on 7 October at Ilford TA Centre. Around 80 of our members and friends gathered and we danced to the music and singing of **Denny Austin** and were well fed by **Shirley Anderson** who this year gave us sausages and mash. **Anita Keen** along with her husband **Neill**, does most of the organisation that makes these events happen and this event went like clockwork as usual, despite the fact that 3 month old **Sophie**, their newly arrived daughter, also had to be looked after and fed. The evening finished with the Standard being paraded by **Barry Greenwood** in the traditional manner.

We always welcome more members and encourage any potential members living in East London, South and East Essex area to join us. We are aiming to be inclusive and would welcome, as Associate Members, serving or ex-service men and women from other Arms, Regts and Corps. Our meetings are held in the Sgts' Mess of 36(E) Sig Regt (V), Gordon Road, Ilford at 8pm on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

GLASGOW BRANCH

Chairman **Joe Keegan**
Secretary **Ivana Muir**

There are no meetings in July but several members attended a meeting with the in-patients at Erskine Hospital taking a variety of gifts for them. I discovered that there were 5 ex-members of the Corps in residence; only one was available to meet us, **James Higgins**.

At the August meeting, chaired by our new Chairman, **Joe Keegan**, arrangements were completed for the Drumhead Service to be held on September 2nd at Jardine Street. **Joe** is also Vice Chairman of the Glasgow Branch of The Royal British Legion Scotland (RBLS), who celebrated their 80th Anniversary Dinner on Saturday 26 August 2006. Several of our members attended the function as members of the Legion Branch.

On Friday, Branch members were invited to attend a cabaret in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess of 32 Sig Regt. This gave me the opportunity to hand a shield with the Insignia of Combined Operations to the Mess PMC, **WO2(SSM) Karen McVey**, to add to the array of shields over the bar. There had not been one with the insignia of Combined Operations. This was the insignia under which I served from 1943 to 1947 in the Corps in Ships Sigs Secs, aboard three HM RN Comms Ships, and finally in 218 Combined Operations HQ on Madh Island near Bombay, India.

On Saturday 2 September, the Glasgow Branch held a Drumhead Service to Commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the founding of the Royal Signals Association Glasgow Branch.

The service conducted by the **Rev David Anderson**, Church of Scotland, Innellan, and Chaplain to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders ACF.

The Lesson was read by the Branch President, **Colonel AS Petrie TD OSt.J JP**. The Branch Secretary **Ivana Muir** read the Glasgow Branch Roll of Honour. The collection taken during the service was for the benefit of Erskine Hospital. The members, relatives and friends were welcomed by **WO2 McVey** and members of 32 Sig Regt, who had arranged the ceremony with the cooperation of the Branch Committee, by kind permission of the CO of 32 Sig Regt, **Lt Col RGH Sutherland TD**.

There were several Standards from other Associations and the Royal British Legion Glasgow and Western Area Branches. The RBLS Standard Bearers display team, including **Bill MacNamara**, the Branch Standard Bearer who paraded the Glasgow Branch Standard, showed their individual skills in handling their Standards in the car park. There was also a display by the Pipes and Drums of the Central Scotland Band.

After the displays a lunch was served, with a choice of a cold buffet or beef or chicken curries, followed by a variety of sweets and coffee, prepared by 32 Sig Regt's Chefs, **Cpls Debbie Carruthers** and **Christine MacCormack**. After watching the demonstrations outside in the cold wind, most opted for the curry. In his message after lunch, the Branch President, **Col Petrie** thanked **Lt Col Sutherland** and all ranks for their logistical help and support, the RBLS and Associations' Standard Bearers and the congregation for their generosity to the collection during the service.

The WOs' and Sgts' Mess bar was then opened for business. I am sure that the Branch members and their guests attending, would want to congratulate all those involved in producing an excellent and most enjoyable occasion.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Chairman **Mr J Reilly**
Hon Sec **WO2(YofS) I Wolfe**

It is almost a monthly occurrence, but unfortunately I have to report the demise of another of our Members. Sadly **JD (Jim) Anderson** passed away on 23 July after a fall, from which he did not recover. **Jim** served in the Royal Engineers before later joining Royal Signals where he served in many theatres, including Dunkirk. He was a long time Member of the Northern Ireland Branch and was awarded Honour Member after 25 years as Branch Treasurer. The sympathy of the Officers and Members of the Branch goes to his Wife **Bernie**. A more detailed obituary can be seen elsewhere in this issue.

The Blandford Re-Union is over once again for another year much to the relief I am sure of **Peter Cuckow** who puts so much work into it. The Northern Ireland party of 7 (**Andy Leishman** was unwell and unable to make it at the last minute) travelled once again by air as arranged by Branch Re-Union Organiser **Carole Cameron**. **John** and **Heather Loveday** again joined the party at Blandford. Our England resident members **George Cook** and **Bill Ogden** were unable to make it this year. This was a special year for the Branch as our new Branch Standard and 50 year pennant were dedicated at the reunion along with the new Standard of Preston/Blackburn Branch. The NI Standard was carried on parade and for the dedication by Branch Chairman, **Jim Reilly**. The Northern Ireland party were easily recognised on parade by their berets with distinctive hackles as shown on some photos on RSA/HQ web site. Branch members were sorry to learn that **Maj Gen Boyle** has decided to relinquish the post of National Chairman but nevertheless were delighted to be able to attend his retirement presentation at Blandford. NI Branch Members extend their good wishes to **Gen** and **Mrs Boyle** and wish them many years of happy retirement

As always we issue an invitation to all serving and ex members of Royal Signals, Regular or TAVR and indeed ex ATS/WRAC who were attached to Royal Signals, 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**

Our last report began with congratulations to branch member **Lt Col Hugh Robertson QVRM TD**, and now we offer our congratulations to him again, on his promotion to Colonel. Well done **Hugh**. Our delegation to Edinburgh for the Military Tattoo, as spectators not participants, has returned home safely with tales of what an excellent time they had north of the border. What we see on the television obviously gives us only a glimpse of what a superb spectacle the Tattoo is. The outing was organised by our social secretary **Thelma Wakefield**. Our thanks go to her for her efforts, even the weather was good.

At the end of September, the Branch enjoyed its 36th Annual Reunion Dinner. It was held once again at Sonning Golf Club, and nearly 100 Branch members, guests and visitors were present. The flowers, arranged by **Pauline** and **Thelma**, and the candelabra on each table enhanced an excellent meal. In a nearby setting were arrayed the Branch Standard, the standards of neighbouring Branches whose representatives joined us for the dinner, and the Standard Bearers Cup which has returned to us for another year. Our chief guests were **Gen Tony** and **Mrs Boyle**, and **Maj Simon Walker TD**, who has recently relinquished command of 94 (BY) Sig Sqn, our local Signals unit. Both addressed the gathering after dinner, with interesting reports on past and current events in the Corps. **Major Walker** spoke particularly about the success of 94 Sqn and its contribution to current overseas ops. During the course of the evening, **Gen Boyle** presented 50-Year Badges and certificates to 2 branch stalwarts, **Mr Jimmy Husband**, and **Maj (Retd) Ben Bolt**. Congratulations to both of them.

Col Paddy Verdon, before proposing the toast to the Guests, took the opportunity to refer to the work of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, in which he has a special interest. In particular he referred to our support for a wartime Gurkha signaller whose only means of support is the pension provided by Reading Branch. This is an indefinite commitment that is well supported by Branch members. As this report is being written, the Remembrance and Christmas events are looming. Planning is well in hand, and will be reported on in the next edition of *The Wire*. It's hard to believe we are half way through October, with the warm sunshine we are experiencing here in the South.

If you need any more information on the branch, details can be found on http://.army.mod.uk/royalsignals/rsa/reading/index.htm or phone our Membership Secretary, **Alan Foot**, on 0118 926 1952.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Our attendance at morning service at the Chapel of the Royal Military Hospital, Chelsea has become a major event of our calendar. Since its inauguration by **Cliff Wood** a number of years ago, it has been attended not only by other branches of our own Association but by others, of special mention V Corps Signals Association, survivors of the war time Corps. It had been rather a shock with **Cliff"s** initial enquiry many years ago to be told that we were given permission to attend, with the proviso that we paraded with the In-Pensioners for inspection by the Governor, prior to the service, marching in to a drumbeat to the Chapel door. However, we think we have carried this out with dignity throughout the years. It is with interest that we see **Lady Thatcher** enter her seat on most occasions of our visit. This was a Sunday on which the Branch is honoured by a dedication to us and the inclusion of the Corps collect in the service. We were happy to be joined by the Sheffield Branch at the end of their annual visit to London, also by **Stuart** and **Ginty Reid** of the Aldershot Branch, who are London residents. After the service we were welcomed to the In-Pensioners' Club, where after our initial refreshment we enjoyed a good curry lunch. We thank the Royal Hospital for their hospitality.

WINCHESTER BRANCH

Chairman **Mrs Margaret Gillings**
Secretary **Mr Garry Gillings**

Saturday 15th July was a beautiful summer's day. That was good planning, as our President**, Lt Col Gerry Corden** and his wife **Anne**, had invited the Branch to a barbecue lunch in their garden!

About 36 members and families came, and there was enough room for the tables to be set under the shade of some birch trees. A bar tent and a "galley", staffed by friends and relations, were kept busy in providing for the inner needs of the guests. The latter provided their own entertainment with their chatter; it all made for a very pleasant afternoon.

The Branch was honoured to welcome some important guests. When **Gerry** was commanding 11 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, in

Germany 1969 71, he had two 2ICs: **Colin Brown** and then **Sam Cowan**. It was a great thrill that they and their wives attended our barbecue.

The photo shows **Gerry** with the Master of Signals and **Brig Brown**.

YORK BRANCH

Chairman **Mr A Spray**
Secretary **Hazel Spray**

We regret to report the recent death of member **Norman Haigh** at the age of 85. **Norman** enlisted in the Corps in 1939 and served mainly in the Middle East area of operations. This took him to North Africa, Lebanon and the Greek island of Medalena. **Norman** collected his demob suit and accessories (together with a reserve commitment) in 1947, returning to his employment with British Rail. However this was to be a relative short period of time as **Norman** was recalled to the colours 'to do his bit' on the outbreak of the Korean War. Demobbed again and back in 'Civvie Street', **Norman** continued his links with the Corps by joining the York Branch of the Association. He 'volunteered' for the duties of standard bearer, a position which he carried out most diligently. His commitment to veterans' associations also prompted him to take on the same duties with the Korean Veterans and Dunkirk Veterans, with whom he was an associate member.

Branch members attended the funeral service in strength and offered condolences to **Norman's** wife **Joan** and family. In appreciation of **Norman's** membership the Branch Standard was present on parade during the service. **Norman** will be sadly missed by the Branch for his humour and creative input at Branch meetings.

We were once again invited to join 2 Sig Regt on parade in York, when they exercised their Freedom of the City on Saturday 23 September. A pleasant morning greeted our small contingent who had volunteered to attend this occasion. Other invited contingents present were HQ Coy 4th Bn Yorkshire Regt and B Coy York Army Cadets. The parade, headed by the Heavy Cavalry and Cambrai Band from Catterick Garrison, marched through York with "drums beating, flags flying and bayonets fixed" to the delight and applause of the crowds visiting the city. The salute was taken at the Mansion House by the Lord Mayor, **Cllr Janet Hopton MBE**. When dismissed, our stalwarts made their way to a local hostelry for a well earned 'wet'

AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Dr David Vickers**
Secretary **Mr Dennis Egan**

COLIN VAUGHAN MORGAN

The voice of **Colin Vaughan Morgan**, our silvertongued Welsh orator, is stilled. The parish church of St Elli, Llanelli, was packed to capacity for his funeral service. His coffin, draped with the AFSA Flag, had been placed in the church overnight and **Arthur Thomas**, bearing the Standard of the South Staffordshire Branch of the RSA, led the officiating priests and mourners into the church the following morning. As well as **Arthur**, **David** and **Janet Vickers**, **Dennis Egan**, **Chris** and **Marion Collier** and **Roland** and **Pamela Jones** of the AFSA had travelled long distances to attend.

Very bravely, **Pamela Morgan**, read the commendation she had written to her husband. At the graveside **Dennis** spoke the exhortation 'At the going down of the sun...' and a bugler sounded Last Post, in **Pamela's** words, 'exquisitely', reminding her of the many times she and **Colin** had heard the Last Post sounded at the Menin Gate.

Elsewhere you will read of **Colin's** very full life as a mountaineer, motorcyclist, General Secretary of the Llanelli YMCA, founder member of the local Talking Newspaper, member of the Llanelli Historical Society and lover of classical music. But **Colin** was also a founder member of the 12th, 15th and 18th Air Formation Signal Regiments' Association when it was formed in 1992. He and Pam served first as Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor and later as Association Almoners. **Colin** and **Pamela** were a team, a very strong team, and for her efforts and wholehearted support, **Pamela** was made an Honour Member of the Royal Signals Association in 1998. She will continue to serve on the AFSA Committee as Almoner.

Colin had a way with words: he could ask people to do things in a way that made it totally churlish to refuse. He, in turn, was frequently prevailed upon to thank members and pay them tribute for their efforts, and this he did with his own characteristic style and charm. He will be sadly missed and our thoughts and prayers are with **Pamela** and with their daughters **Kim** and **Claire** and their families at this sad time.

REUNION 2007

Reunion 2007 will again be held at the Corus Hotel, Solihull, over the weekend 11/13 May. An outing on Saturday morning is planned and at some time during the weekend our Association Standard will be dedicated.

19 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

President **Col CJ Gilbert**
Chairman **Lt Col PF Soward**
Secretary **Mr JW Home**

On Friday, September 8th, the advance party started to arrive at the Warwick Hilton Hotel after lunch and after the 'meeting and greeting', enjoyed an informal evening meal together in the Britisserie Restaurant. Those who wished were then able to watch the DVD of the 2005 RSA Reunion at Blandford and the SOinC's latest 'History of the Royal Corps of Signals'.

The following morning 23 members with their companions made their way to Warwick Castle on a visit masterminded by **John** and **Joyce Home**. Here they explored the buildings and watched Birds of Prey, Archery, Sword Fighting and other demonstrations whilst other members explored Warwick town During this time, the Main Party had arrived and were busy renewing old acquaintances in the Caffe Cino. Recently acquired Association Christmas cards were on sale and **Maureen Soward** used her well-honed marketing skills to reduce the number that she had to take home with her.

Association President, **Colonel Colin Gilbert**, welcomed members to the 14th Reunion and Chairman, **Pat Soward,** read the names of 11 members who had died since our last reunion. After dinner, the AGM was as always, kept short. Committee members were re-elected and the statement of accounts accepted.

Committee members met for a quick 'washup' the following morning. It was confirmed that Reunion 2007 will again be held at the Warwick Hilton and that **John** and **Joyce Home** should investigate the possibility and costs of a trip by steam train to a town, where the ladies may engage in a spot of 'retail therapy'.

Rumour has it that the reconnaissance visit was too successfull and cost **John** dearly!

Christmas Cards are for sale for £4.00 (10 per Pk) inclusive of P&P. Contact **Pat Soward** 01258 860647.

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON ASSOCIATION (SAM)

SEEKS THE HELP OF THE CORPS PAST AND PRESENT

260 Sig Sqn (SAM) Royal Signals Association are trying to trace over 200 ex-soldiers who served with 260 Sig Sqn (SAM), 654 Sig Tp (SAM) and 655 Sig Tp (SAM) in the period 1965 – 1977.

Next year will be the 30th Anniversary of the disbanding of the Sqn in 1977. Plans for a special reunion in April 2007 to mark this occasion are already in hand and we are seeking the help of RSA Branch Secretaries and members of the Corps past and present to assist us in our quest to trace the whereabouts of our former comrades.

Our Branch of the RSA, which was formed in June 1998, has a mailing list currently of about 200 members and our objective is to trace a further 60 in time for our reunion. We believe that all former members of the Sqn will have completed their service with the Colours but it may be that sons and daughters of these servicemen may be serving in the Corps now.

It is also believed that some former members of the Sqn and Sig Tps may be members of the RSA but not aware of the existence of our Association. This is why we are asking other Branch Secretaries if they would be kind enough to send out details of our Association to all their members.

260 Sig Sqn (SAM) was formed at Horseshoe Barracks, Shoebury on the 1st April 1968 and formed part of 36 Hy AD Regt RA providing comms for the Thunderbird II Surface to Air Missile system.

The Regt moved to Dortmund, Germany in 1971 to provide AD cover for BAOR during the Cold War. During it's short life the Sqn provided manpower to assist several RA units which were under strength to meet their Northern Ireland commitment to Op Banner and on 2 occasions the Sqn carried out full tours in NI in a purely 'Infantry Role' and were highly commended for this.

Since April 2001, our Association has been hard at work promoting our activities on the Internet and we have gained the support of *Soldier Magazine*, 'The Magazine of the British Army' as well as many local newspapers across the country. Nevertheless, we feel that the best support for our project lies at the heart of our extended family, the Royal Corps of Signals.

Our 30th Anniversary Reunion will be held on the weekend of 20 – 22 April 2007 at the Hotel Drees , Dortmund, Germany. Partners are most welcome. For further details contact: **Geoff Scott**, 2 Waverly Road, Elland, West Yorkshire**,** HX5 0NL.

Tel 01422373075 or
Email: berylandgeoff@alfiesworld.freeserve.co.uk Or visit our website at http://www.260sigsqnsam.abelgratis.co.uk Are you ready to come back and join us?

BEVERLEY EX BOYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman **Mick Teague**
Secretary **Tony Hull**

The 8th Annual Reunion of the Beverley Ex-Boys Association took place over the weekend of 6/7 October 2006 at the Ramada Hotel, Willerby, Hull. This is near Beverley so that members could re-visit the birthplace of 6 (Boys) Trg Regt. Fifty of our members arrived on the Friday afternoon and that evening everyone trooped down to The Ketch pub for a very nice dinner. Two of our members, **Ken** and **Doreen Rennie**, had come all the way from Australia to be with us over the weekend. On the Saturday **John** and **Nina Hill** took **Shammy Craig** to the Eden Camp, which is apparently well worth a visit. Other people went into Beverley for a look round their old haunts.

Visitors from Australia, Ken and Doreen Rennie

Beryl Hull, Tony Hull, Rt Revd Richard Frith and John Beasley

The Reunion Dinner was held on Saturday evening and was attended by 111 guests. The **Rt Revd Richard Frith**, Bishop of Hull, was the Guest of Honour and he made a humorous and very good speech and after dinner he spent some time talking to the guests. Several of the Ex-Boys were confirmed, whilst they were stationed at Beverley between 1950 and 1955, by the then Bishop of Hull or Bishop of York and were given a New Testament signed by the Bishop. A raffle was held which made £335 for the funds and we are indebted to **Mary Wardle** and **Gillian Broadbent** for selling the tickets. The son of **Geoff Coatsworth**, **Maj Neil Coatsworth,** who is a serving member of the Corps, attended with his wife **Debbie**, and a good time appeared to be had by the whole family. From the complimentary comments we have received, it would seem that everyone had a very enjoyable time.

We are still gaining new members and we would like to welcome **Terry Stacey** and **Vic Osmand** to the ranks of BEBA.

LAST POST

Name and Rank	*Served* Years	*Died* Date
Anderson - WO2 JD Anderson	*Served* 1950/66	*Died* 23/07/06
Bennett - Sig D Bennett	*Served* 1949/51	*Died* Aug/06

Bradshaw - LCpl DG Bradshaw	*Served* 1937/46 *Died* 25/08/06
Bullock - Sig RC Bullock	*Served* 1941/45 *Died* 30/07/06
D'Alquen - Cpl RSE D'Alquen	*Served* 1954/64 *Died* 22/08/06
Davies - SSgt AG Davies	*Served* 1967/89 *Died* May/06
Geary - Lt DM Geary	*Served* 1945/49 *Died* 09/08/06
Grimshaw - Sig D Grimshaw	*Served* 1945/48 *Died* 02/09/06
Hartzig - Sig LJ Hartzig	*Served* 1946/48 *Died* Aug/06
Hayter - SSgt HJ Hayter	*Served* 1930/54 *Died* 07/09/06
Heap - Capt C Heap	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* 11/09/06
Henn-Collins - Lt Col CA Henn-Collins	*Served* 1935/52 *Died* 08/08/06
Hodson - Sig J Hodson	*Served* 1940/46 *Died* Sep/06
Johnston - Lt Col JB Johnston	*Served* 1941/67 *Died* 30/09/06
Kilminster - Maj CE Kilminster	*Served* 1944/59 *Died* Sep/06
Knight - Maj LF Knight	*Served* 1938/77 *Died* 09/08/06
Lewis - LCpl A Lewis	*Served* 1939/45 *Died* 02/09/06
Littlechild - Cpl JK Littlechild	*Served* 1946/57 *Died* Nov/04
Lody - Cpl J Lody	*Served* 1956/71 *Died* 23/07/06
Marsland - Sgt DJ Marsland	*Served* 1939/46 *Died* 29/07/06
Martin - Cpl AJ Martin	*Served* 1943/47 *Died* 23/06/06
McGiveron - ?? JP McGiveron	*Served* 1930/46 *Died* Oct/06
Miller - SSgt S Miller	*Served* 1942/65 *Died* 10/01/06
Morgan - Sig CV Morgan	*Served* 1943/47 *Died* 19/09/06
Reeder - Sig PP Reeder	*Served* 1996/98 *Died* 05/09/06
Rees - Maj DF Rees	*Served* 1942/83 *Died* 05/10/06
Ronald - Lt Col TI Ronald	*Served* 1939/72 *Died* 06/09/06
Rooks - Maj RE Rooks	*Served* 1935/57 *Died* 02/08/06
Shorter - LCpl D Shorter	*Served* 1949/57 *Died* 23/09/06
Thompson - Cpl M Thompson	*Served* 1963/72 *Died* 01/07/06
Wallace - Lt Col WG Wallace	*Served* 1953/92 *Died* 19/08/06

OBITUARIES

KILMINSTER – **Maj (Retd) Charles E Kilminster** died in September 2006

Charles was born in 1912 and therefore had witnessed many changes in both the Army as a whole and the Corps in particular over the course of the troubled 20th Century. He joined his County Regt in 1933 and saw service in Singapore, China, and India. He transferred to the North Staffordshire Regt at the outbreak of war and served in Burma, before being recommended for officer training in 1942.

He was commissioned into the Royal Signals in 1944. He subsequently returned to the UK and was posted to the Suez Canal Zone during the crisis in 1951 – 54, where his duties took him all over Jordan, Iraq, Aden and Cyprus. He returned to Catterick, the home of the Corps, and in 1956 moved to 3rd Trg Regt in Sabraon Barracks in Lincoln. **Charles** retired from the Regular Army in 1959 and took up the post as the Regular Forces Employment Officer for Lincolnshire for a further 19 years until 1978. During his service, he was a keen sportsman and particularly enjoyed playing hockey and tennis. in his retirement, he and his wife **Cynthia** spent long and happy days with his only son **Charles** junior. **Charles** had many interests and was a life member of our Association.

In the later years **Charles** and **Cynthia** considered their second home to be Portsmouth, where his son had settled with his wife **Janet** and their two daughters, **Joanna** and **Hannah**. They had many happy times there and he had seen and supported at first hand his granddaughters as they grew into fine young ladies. Sadly it was on his most recent visit that he took ill and passed away. The blessing was that he was surrounded by the family he loved and who loved him .

His son said of him: "Charles has been liked and respected by all who knew him and with whom he shared his life in whatever context. His personal standards of courage and integrity, underpinned by an innate sense of fairness and humility, have remained with unfailing grace throughout his life. He was a kind and gentle man, always strong on actions but never long on words. He will be missed for what he gave to others for so long."

Our sympathy goes to his wife **Cynthia**, his son **Charles**, daughter in law **Janet** and granddaughters, **Joanna** and **Hannah**. We Will Remember Him.

HETHERINGTON – **LCpl Jonathan Peter Hetherington** died on 27 August 2006

LCpl Jonathan Hetherington was born on the 20 June 1984 in Salisbury and raised in South Wales. He enlisted into the Royal Signals on 1 September 2000 and attended the Army Technical Foundation College, Harrogate, before going on to complete his trg as a Radio Systems Op at the Royal School of Signals, Blandford, Dorset. He was then posted to 249 Sig Sqn (AMFL), Bulford and then on to 102 Log Bde Sig Sqn, Germany, in January 2003. It was from there that he deployed on Op TELIC 1, serving in Kuwait and Iraq, and to the Falkland Islands. In February 2006, he was posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW) and was selected for deployment on Op HERRICK 4 in Afghanistan. **LCpl Hetherington** was an extremely conscientious, well-respected and popular JNCO whose excellent trade skills and keen sense of fun ensured that he was always in great demand.

Lt Col Steve Vickery, his CO, said: "**LCpl Jon Hetherington** had only been in Afghanistan for a short time; in this period his commitment to his profession was first class and he stood out as a young man of stature and great enthusiasm.

He was a very bright junior non commissioned officer who had integrated extremely well into Regimental life since his arrival in February of this year. At all times his love of soldiering and great work ethic was very apparent and he also proved a very able sportsman. As such an engaging character, he was selected to join the very important Regimental Recruiting Team prior to his deployment to Afghanistan in support of the 3 Para BG. He will be fondly remembered for his amiable nature and engaging sense of humour and without doubt a very promising military career lay ahead."

Jon was an outstanding soldier, trusted comrade and valued friend; his loss will be greatly felt by all who served with him. Naturally, our thoughts are with his family during this sad and difficult time."

Anderson – **WO2 JD (Jim) Anderson** – died 23 July 2006.

Northern Ireland Branch are once again mourning the loss of yet another long time stalwart Member, **Jim Anderson** who died aged 88. **Jim** was buried on Wednesday 25 July 2006 in his home town of Portstewart, Co. Londonderry. **Jim** enlisted in the Royal Engineers in 1940 until demob in 1946. After being on Class Z reserve for 4 years he enlisted in Royal Signals in 1950, serving until 1966. During those years, he served in many theatres including NW Europe, MELF, BAOR, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and finally as WO2/PSI with 107 Ind Inf Bde Sigs (TA) in Victoria Barracks in Belfast. There he settled with his wife **Bernie**. His campaign medals included 39-45 Star, France/Germany Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 39-45, UN Service Medal with Korean clasp and the LS & GC Medal.

Apart from being a Life Member of the Royal Engineers Association, **Jim** held various Offices in the Ulster Branch of the Dunkirk Veterans Association, including Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman and Vice President and had the unfortunate job of supervising the demise of the Branch. While serving in Belfast, he joined the Northern Ireland Branch of the RSA and later became Branch Treasurer, a post held for a record 25 years. As the Auditor for those 25 years, I can say that his books were always meticulous and a joy to audit. On retirement he was awarded RSA Honour Membership. While residing in his home town of Morpeth, Northumberland, where his brother still lives, **Jim** was instrumental in forming the Morpeth Harriers. He was an active participant in the sport until he joined Royal Signals and his eventual posting to Northern Ireland. It was here that he met and married **Bernie** with whom he made his home in Belfast.

On his retirement a few years ago, he moved to the seaside town of Portstewart, Co. Londonderry. Although he had some health problems, he never complained and was progressing well until a recent fall from which he did not recover. The Branch Members are indebted to **Jim** for his dedication over the years and will very much miss him and want to convey their sincere sympathy to **Bernie**.

MORGAN – **Colin Vaughan Morgan** died on 19 September 2006

The Tribute delivered by his wife, **Pamela**, at his funeral serves as a complete obituary for a special man: "**Colin** was an exceptional, unique, gifted, talented and muchloved person,
whom I was privileged to have as my husband for 52 years and whom my daughters, **Kim** and **Claire** and his young granddaughters adored. He had a warmth and magnetic personality that drew people to him, because of his tremendous sense of humour, his extensive knowledge, good nature, great initiative and willingness to help in any situation.

He was a wonderful friend to so many as is obvious today, since so many of you are present. He was happy and proud to be a founding member of the Air Formation Signals Association, among whom he had many friends, some of whom I am delighted to say and grateful have come to represent and pay tribute to him today.

He was a fascinating person because he lived such a full, varied and adventurous life. He served in Normandy and Europe as a Despatch Rider, attached to the RAF, with the Royal Corps of Signals from 1943 to 1945, then was posted for 2 years to Egypt, where he became one of the stars of the now famous "BarNone Armed Services Motor Cycle Club" – a talent he later took with him to motor cycle scrambles, trials and sand racing at Pendine gaining more than 50 trophies over the years.

Widening his interests he took up serious photography and through dedication became a respected National Exhibitor and a photographic judge in great demand.

Always a lover of the outdoors and hillwalking, his ambition took him into the serious world of mountaineering during which time he scaled most of the highest peaks and Alpine passes in Europe with his dear friend and companion **Showell Styles,** a revered mountaineer and distinguished author of some 130 books, who used **Colin's** photographs to illustrate his works. He even dedicated a book to him, the only dedication he ever made. "To **Colin Vaughan Morgan**, good companion on these and other backpacking journeys."

For 20 years he was Secretary/Leader of the YMCA. When he started in 1970 it was struggling, almost on the point of closure, but over the years all the sporting sections developed and thrived under his leadership – inspiration and encouragement. He devoted himself to young people, initiating exchange visits with equivalent groups abroad long before twinning was ever thought of. He began the very successful Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme in the YMCA, culminating one year, when 5 of his students were presented with their Gold Awards at St James's Palace in London. He then took them on challenging adventure holidays to the mountains of Europe to further develop their skills and experience. He even started his own Mountaineering Club, which soon became very popular, with members making regular excursions into the hills every month.

His knowledge of singers and classical music was encyclopaedic and he once organised a highly successful and popular music quiz that involved every Women's Institute in Carmarthenshire.

Having travelled to so many fascinating places, and being a gifted speaker, he was always willing to share his experiences, and his pleasure through slide programmes with any organisation that asked him – in or out of town; Church groups, homes for the elderly, hospitals, geographic and photographic societies, U3As and even the hard of hearing. Only last year he gave 14 talks on the families who had lived in Llanelly House, to keep alive the interest generated by its success in the 'Restoration' TV series.

His service as Technical Director to the Llanelli Talking Newspaper for the Blind, which he literally saved from extinction, lasted almost 30 years during which time he set up and equipped a studio, personally established all the sound equipment, which he maintained, and enrolled both readers and technicians. This circulated to some 300 or more listeners. It was their local lifeline.

Colin lived life to the full – gaining achievements and adventures and always amid greatly valued friends and a devoted family. He loved the great outdoors, and whether in a tiny tent on top of a mountain or in small campervan, he was just as happy. There was nothing to which he aspired that he did not succeed and he would have no regrets so we must have none also.

Let us then celebrate his happy life. He has not left us. The memory of him will never leave us. He has merely gone on before us and with all my heart I thank God and **Colin** for the privilege of those 52 precious years.

RONALD - **Lt Col Thomas Ian Ronald OBE** died on 6th September 2006

A few hours before he died during the night of 6th September, **Ian Ronald** aged 86, attended a committee meeting of the NE Hampshire Branch of the Friends of the Gurkhas. This symbolised an extraordinarily active life of service to his country and, in latter years, dedicated to giving practical help to a wide spectrum of people in and out of the Forces.

He served in the Corps from 1939 to 1972 but before that he had learned to fly and had already been a Pilot Officer RAF and a Midshipman (Air) in the Royal Navy. At the start of WW2, Ian served with 2 Inf Div Sig Regt in the BEF and was evacuated through Dunkirk. He stayed with 2nd Div and soon found himself in the Far East, where he remained until 1950. In that period, he variously served with the Chindits in Burma and 34 Indian Corps Sig Regt in India, Malaya and Singapore, later travelling to Java and Sumatra where he was Mentioned in Dispatches. He ended this chapter of his life as Acting CO of 19 Air Formation Sig Regt in Singapore.

From 1952 his career followed a pattern more familiar to later generations, with tours in the UK and BAOR but always on the move, he also managed postings to NATO HQ in Paris and Brussels and to the British Army Staff in Ottawa. His background in comms security led him to appointments in Sigs 7 and MI 8 at the War Office. Those who worked with him at that time still speak in glowing terms of his professionalism, leadership and loyalty to his staff. In this period he was awarded the OBE of which he was very proud. His years of service with the colours ended in 1972 in Aldershot.

His subsequent life was hardly less eventful than his period in uniform. For 15 years he was general manager of the London Hostels Association which perhaps fuelled his passion for (in his own words) "enabling people to overcome their problems."

Certainly from 1987 he plunged into exceptionally active roles with SSAFA and local war pensions committees. He also served as chairman of the Aldershot and District Branch of the Dunkirk Veterans Association and became president of the Fleet, Crookham and District branch of the RBL, a position he occupied until his death.

Throughout, he was intensely loyal to Royal Signals. He was a life member of the Association, awarded his 50 year badge in 1997 and made an Honour Member in 2004 as a result of his outstanding services to the Aldershot branch.

In all his many endeavours he had the comfort and enduring support of **Nanette** whom he married in 1946 at Cawnpore in India when she was serving in the QAIMNS. The couple celebrated their diamond wedding in March this year. **Ian** was also greatly sustained by his faith, testimony to which was given at his funeral service in the Roman Catholic Cathedral Church in Aldershot Garrison.

Ian Ronald never talked much about his many exploits. Indeed, he made light of them, preferring always to bring out the lighter side in which he was helped by an irrepressible sense of humour. He liked nothing better than to regale the many committees he sat on with the latest funny thing that had happened to him. All who knew him will remember him as a gentleman of the old school and a true Christian soldier of upright military bearing, who had an immensely purposeful approach to all that he undertook.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Commandant Lynda Rose**,
Commanding Officer FANY (PRVC)

Dear Sirs

We noted your review (*The Wire* Oct 06) of the updated history of the FANY (the Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps) re-published in 2003, but were rather puzzled at your take on our present day role. It was a confusion of inaccurate data from about 25 years ago or more! Above all, it gave the impression of a very small number of girls, very occasionally playing at some vague ploy or other.

The Corps is a trained emergency response resource, prepared and on call for disasters in London. We have served the City of London Police in every major incident in the last 35 years, gaining corporate knowledge and experience of a wide range of emergencies.

In July 2005, members gave 800 voluntary hours of assistance to the City and to the Met Police (SB) in their response to terrorism. For 2 (NC) Signal Brigade and for London District DRT, we are on standby for roles within the Chelsea Ops Room, for Op SEQUESTER.

Following the events of 2005, building on known success, our teams have been enlisted for specific tasks at the Guildhall for the Corporation of London in any future incidents. Our assistance is sought by a variety of agencies and for a variety of undertakings. FANY provides security vetted personnel trained to work in teams and able to undertake roles rehearsed through constant training and exercise.

Moreover, because of their adaptability and flexible approach, FANYs successfully take on roles unrehearsed, in times of need or crisis. On the death of the Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone (our Royal Patron since 1933) we were delighted that HRH the Princess Royal became our Commandant-in-Chief. We have just celebrated her 25th year in that role. Recruitment is lively and *esprit de corps* never better.

2007 marks 100 years of service to the civil and military authorities in times of emergency. This was the cause for which the FANY was founded in 1907 and the cause which still drives us to-day.

Yours...

From: **Mrs Ann Monro** of Fyrish. 10 March Square, Chichester, West Sussex. PO19 5AN

I will be 85 this year and look back on the years with the Royal Corps of Signals as very happy ones. You recently published an article by a nephew of the one FANY that was rescued when the hospital ship was torpedoed nearing Colombo. Her name was **Gloria West**.

EAST AFRICA SIGNALS (FANY) 1939/45

I was in my last term at college when the 1939/45 war broke out. I wanted to join the WRNS but my parents were in the Colonial Service in Kenya, so I went to ask the Principal's advice. These were her very words: "My dear girl, one, you should be with your parents, two, there will be one less mouth to feed and three, there must be some decent girls to carry on the British race."

So in late January 1940, I flew out on the last flying boat to take civilian passengers stopping at Marseille, Corfu, Alexandria, Khartoum and Kisamu. Once in Nairobi with my parents, I decided to join the FANY, against my parents' wishes. So in June 1940 I joined. K158 was my number which shows how few of us there were at that time.

As there were no other women's services in Kenya, the FANY served in all three services. Almost immediately I was attached to the Royal Corps of Signals. I am not aware if Kenya had any Signallers, but in any event 50 regular soldiers were sent down from Pakistan, including **Maj Teddy** and **Maj White**.

We were attached to Force HQ Signals and I was in the despatch office on Shift B. Some of us become despatch riders. The girls had to wear extra wide leather belts to protect their delicate parts from the corrugated laterite roads. I was once caught by **Maj Teddy** practising on a motorbike when I should have been in the Signals Office. Three months later, I was transferred to Nanyuki at the foot of Mount Kenya. The signal office was in a forest. Nanyuki was the HQ of Advance Force HQ with the threat by Italians invading from Abyssinia.

There were about 20 of us FANYs and we were drilled every morning by a South African Sgt. By this time South Africa Forces was well as Rhodesian had come up to support the Kings African Rifles (KAR).

Every day FANYs drove up the 120 odd miles from Nairobi with despatches. Most of our communications were with the Northern Frontier District (NFD) to repel invaders. What I did not know then was that the 2 Bns we were signalling to were deliberate 'miss-information', as it was actually only 2 jeeps. Later I read that the Italians were influenced against invading because we were too strongly defended.

I loved my year in Nanyuki. I rote KAR horses up to Kenya. It was a farming area and had a club. Once a week we had to turn up to dance with the soldiers. They actually danced better that the officers!

After a year I went back to 3½ years in Nairobi, when we joined the Regulars on night duty. On the first day we did shifts from 8am to 2pm and from 8pm to 8am, and then we had the third day off. Those strong sweet cups of tea were very reviving. From there I went to Mombasa which was the HQ of the Eastern Fleet, and spent a year there before being sent to India. I met and married my husband there in July 1945. He had just returned from being with the Chindits, as a Royal Engineer in Burma.

Yours...

From: **Sgt E Lewis**, RSMCE SNCO

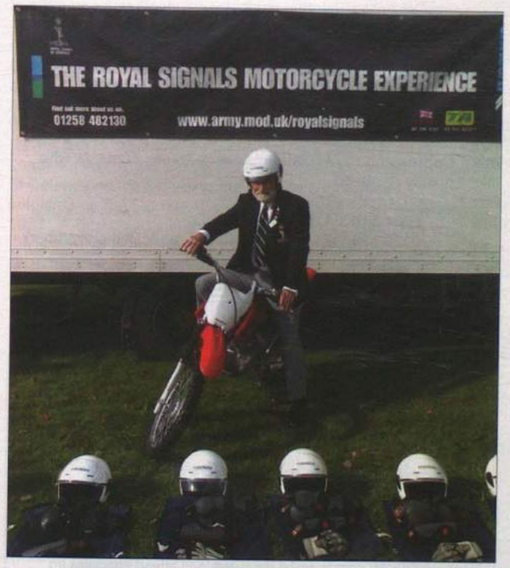
Sir,

Mr Ted Head is a very active member of the RSA, and I know both **Ted** and his Branch would like to see this article in the next edition. The story below just shows the link between Corps members both serving and ex, even with a 50 year gap!

On joining the ROYAL SIGNALS, intake 56/03, **Ted** was told he would not like being a DR, so was given a trade as a U/G lineman. So having being invited to visit us, **Sgt Ed Lewis**, achieved his first choice trade at a school in Essex in September, albeit 50 years late!

Each year before the RSA day show, **Ted** makes a point of visiting the White Helmets in the garages. But this year I went to the RSA day as an ex-White Helmet and met with **Ted** on a social level! Many pints later, we exchanged contact details and so when I was in Essex visiting schools, I jumped at the chance of contacting **Ted**. Dressed in his RSA blazer and tie, he visited the RSMCE and the children enjoyed his tales of National Service. One child asked him if it was anything like Bad Lads Army from TV, I think **Ted** is still laughing at that question now!'

Many thanks...



After 50 years, Ted Head of East London branch RSA has got his first choice trade

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From: **Jack (Larry) Park**.

Re: **Lt Col John A Rose** – dlied 14/07/05.

I was looking through the June issue of *the Wire* and noticed in the Last Post a good friend of mine **John Rose** had died. It did not have his service years included and I thought for a man who had served 41 years in our Corps, he was at least due for some mention. **John** (**Jack**) **Rose** went into the Lawrence School, Sanawar in India when he was 6 years old. After 7 years, the family returned to UK and he attended a grammar school in Tavistock, Devon.

In 1948, he joined Boys Service and went to the Army Apprentices College in Harrogate. On joining the Royal Signals, he served in various postings in BAOR. In 1966 he took over as RSM from **Sam Pemberby** at 12 Inf Bde, Osnabruck. He was posted to other places in Germany including 225 Sig Sqn and 16 Sig Regt as QM (Gen) and QM (Tech). He also served in RAF Bruggen as Capt OC Comms.

Later in his career he did 2 tours with the TA in Blandford and Liverpool. He was also with Bomb Disposal for a time. We lost touch for a long while, until in 2001 when he enrolled in the Association of Harrogate Apprentices of which I was a member. He was then living in Sherborne, Dorset.

We corresponded until I heard of his death at the age of 74. I would be obliged if you would give him this little write up as I'm sure he made quite a lot of friends during his service.

Yours...

From: **Ernie(Wiggy) Huntley**
mayhern@sympatico.ca

I am really amazed how you and your small staff are able to handle so much suggested input for entry in *The Wire*. I can only say 'Well done!' During my several visits to the Museum over the Reunion weekends and seeing pictures in *The Wire*, the complexity of some of the equipment being used astounds me.

When I qualified as an Operator Signals in 1937, reaching Gp E status (5 word per minute) was an achievement and when passing the Gp 1 level of 8 to 12 wpm, well that was something and we were given an extra 6 pence per day – WOW! We were also taught to use a flag to send Morse (not semaphore), the Aldis Lamp and the Heliograph (single and duplex). Most of us qualified at 8 wpm, but reading by sight and by ear is far more difficult and in most cases, we rarely used more than 8 wpm.

The Obituary on page 316 of the August issue brought back many memories which I had long put behind me. **Hank Baker** and I undertook our Trade Training together as did the late **Lt Col Tyrell Grey**. I had been impressed many years prior by a 'Ham' Operator whose call sign was G6QW (Bristol) and had the desire to try it for myself, so **Hank** who had similar ideas decided we would try to form a 'Ham' Club in the Camp. First we looked for a room to set up our operation. We were offered the use of a room in what was then the Scout Hut. The next step was a strong enough pole for the Antenna. The Line Section offered us a much used climbing pole with the promise to erect it for us. So far so good but then we met a bad snag; we needed to find the money for other equipment. The answer was to build it ourselves but that too would need cash, which neither of us had. Fourteen bob a week didn't go far after stoppages, and in my case 6 shillings and 3 pence went as an allowance to my mother. Then there were weekly haircuts, laundry and cleaning materials and I believe a small sum toward Corps Funds from which we all received a copy of *The Wire*, so there was very little left over. Perhaps we might splurge out on the odd bowl of rice at Sandy's on a Sunday. This all forced us to put that idea to rest. The interesting account of his further service was most enlightening because I'm sorry to say, we lost touch with each other as we were posted to different units and locations.

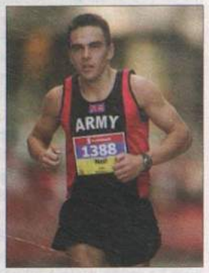
In 1958 while serving in the RCCS as an Instructor and Training NCO, I was summoned to OC 2 Sqn's Office where seated behind the desk was none other than **Tyrell Grey** (with the rank of Major) who had just joined us as an Exchange Officer. What a wonderful surprise, he had seen my name on the Sqn Roster. He was exceptionally liked by all for his fairness and approachability.

Yours...

From: **LCpl Neil Allen**, 251(UK Ops) Sig Sqn, 10 Sig Regt

Dear Sir,

Toronto Marathon - 24th September 2006



I decided to do the Toronto Marathon 6 months ago when an old friend, who had immigrated to Canada, asked me to be his best man. Having represented the Army in the London Marathon in 2005, I was looking to beat my personal best time of 2 hrs 52 mins, as well as to get through the elusive marathon wall with as little damage as possible. I completed the marathon in 2 hrs 48 mins beating my personal best, but also suffering another bout of hell in the last few miles. My overall position was 36th out of approximately 12,000 people - which has qualified me automatic entry in the Boston Marathon. I have said "Never Again" twice now, as most long distance runners do after a marathon - but maybe I will do just one more!"

Kind regards

From: **Keith Roberts** (Sgt) Royal Signals,
Burnbrae, Breasclete. Isle of Lewis

We had the East Roag War Memorial opening ceremony on Saturday 2 September 2006. East Roag covers 3 villages in the Scottish Western Isles including Garnyahine, Callanish and Breasclete. The idea for the memorial was first brought up in 2002, when it was realised that no one could remember commemorating the names of those who gave their lives in WW1 & WW2. After much work, the names of all of them, based by the croft they worked, were identified. Each croft donated a stone from old byres etc to help build the memorial.

The costs were well in excess of £10,000 and there was a shortfall in our funds raised. I put out a plea to old comrade Spec Ops asking for help. Twenty seven old comrades responded and contributed sums from 50p to £10.00 making just over £127 pounds. A great sum and I have had 2 further emails promising further help. The memorial is now complete and I would like to record my thanks to all the Spec Ops for their generosity in making contributions, mostly anonymously, and passing them to me to present to the East Roag Memorial Fund. May I use *The Wire* to get this message to all those who responded to my plea and who have helped in creating this new memorial.

Yours...

LOST COMMUNICATIONS

From: **Mrs Margaret MacMillan**. 9 Cedar Drive,
Glenrothes, KYI 5TL. (Tel: 01592 742545)

My husband, **Robert (Mac) MacMillan**, who was in the Royal Corps of Signals from 1971 – 1977(approx) sadly died on 31 August 2006 aged 52. As I met **Bob** after he finished with the Army, I'm not too sure about his army career and would like to find out more, so that I can tell his daughter and his grandchildren more about him.

He didn't like to talk much about what he did but he did serve in the Falklands, Northern Ireland and other countries. He talked about a friend called **Eddie Millar**, also from Scotland, who served with him and who I'd like to let know about **Bob's** death. I would like to let his own family know more about him, and would be very grateful any of your readers could put me in touch with someone who can help.

Thank you...

From: **Bernard Bush**

Bernard Bush is trying to organise a contact group for all who served in 229 Sig Sqn during the start of the Berlin Wall, 1960-63. **Bernard** has several names so far and if you are interested, please contact him at; Bernard.bush@tns-group.com or call him on 01767-650 711.

From: **Richard "Chippy" Carpenter**
(richie.carpenter@ntlworld.com)

Dear Sir

I hope you can help in tracing an old friend **Paul (Monty) Moore**. We served together 11 Sig Regt training recruits in 1992 – 1994. He was promoted to Sgt and posted to Krefeld as a Tech Storeman. He was married to **Angie** and had 2 children. He was a Corps hockey player. I am sure he must be out now. I would like very much to make contact again.
Grateful for any help from readers.

Many thanks...

REUNIONS

REUNION DINNER

A Reunion Dinner is to be held in the Headquarters Mess, Blandford Camp on Friday 16th March 2007 for Retired and Serving Officers and their Spouses who served in either:

7 Signal Regiment or 4 Division HQ & Signal Regiment in the years 1973 to 1976. All interested parties are invited to contact **Mike Collins** and to circulate this notice to any contacts who might qualify to attend
Email: m.j.p.collins@btinternet.com
Tel: 0034 610034705
01202 840375 or 07815165095 (after 2nd November)
Early responses would be appreciated

NOTICES

1 SIGNAL SQUADRON SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS

Learn a variety of new skills. Get job satisfaction. Regular travel to unusual destinations. Use specialist eqpt.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CAREER!

You will operate and ex in locations across the globe, with unparalleled responsibility and opportunity. Serving at the heart of all major ops, you will earn Special Comms pay as just part of a rewarding and career enhancing experience. After passing your selection course, you will work closely with senior comds whilst deployed, and attend specialist trg courses while in UK. A one week intensive assessment course for all operator trades will test your trade and leadership skills. If you are successful you will continue onto the Special Comms Course. Extensive trg on SC eqpt, procedures and the Sqn's role will culminate in an overseas ex, last year deploying to Bangkok, Tokyo and Singapore. And that's just the beginning.

If you are interested, read SOINC PD206, and submit a completed Annex E. Your YofS should give you further details, or contact us direct on:
Civ Phone: 01908 638517 Mil Phone: 94240 - 8517
Assessment Dates:
4 – 9 Feb 2007 1 – 6 Apr 2007
3 – 8 Jun 2007 29 Jul – 3 Aug 2007
SC Course Dates:
Oct 07 – Mar 08
Tired of the routine then why not stand out from the crowd.

HISTORY OF THE JUNIOR LEADERS REGIMENT ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS

- by Maj (Retd) C Fletcher Email: Clivef@Cytanet.com.cy

REGIMENTAL MOTTO

If there is anything more important than the will to succeed, it is that the will shall not falter. In April 1957, the Junior Leaders Regiment (JLR) Royal Corps of Signals was formed at Rawlinson Barracks, later renamed Denbury Camp, Newton Abbot, South Devon, England from the 6th (Boys) Trg Regt, Royal Corps of Signals, who relocated to Newton Abbot in September 1955. The history of Boys' units providing comms to the British Army can in fact be traced back to the late 19th Century, before the Royal Corps of Signals itself was formed in 1920. The Royal Corps of Engineers initially provided the Army with comms with their Telegraph Battalion, based at Brompton Barracks in Chatham, Kent. They were called the "Tele-boys" and there were about 10 of them at any one time paid 23 pence per week. At first they were seconded to the General Post Office to gain valuable practical experience. They became proficient in sending and reading Morse via telegraph lines. Telephone operator trg was carried out on 2 working exchanges at the School of Military Engineering, also at Chatham. There was no wireless trg as wireless sets were considered unreliable and had not made much headway. This continued until the Signals Service, Royal Engineers became the Royal Corps of Signals in 1920.

In 1920, the first Royal Signals Boys unit was called "K" Company and located at Maresfield in Sussex. In 1925/26 it moved to Catterick Camp in Yorkshire and was renamed "F" Company. At the outbreak of the WW2 in 1939, it was disbanded and not revived again until 1949 when it was renamed the Number 6 (Boys) Trg Regt, Royal Corps of Signals and located at Beverley in Yorkshire. In 1955, it moved to Newton Abbot in Devon and in 1957 it was renamed for the last time as the Junior Leaders Regt, Royal Corps of Signals. Due to changes in Ministry of Defence policy regarding the recruitment of Junior, or Boy soldiers into the Signals, it was formally disbanded on 10 August 1967. A Boy could join the Junior Leaders straight from school at the age of 15 years and graduate at 17½ years into adult service. Boys from Northern Ireland could join at 14, as the school this was the school leaving age in Northern Ireland at that time.

Joining the JLR provided a Boy with a unique and early opportunity to find his feet in the Regular Army and to develop his own character, personality and powers of leadership. On arrival at the camp a Boy was shown to his barrack room, issued with his bedding, uniforms and boots. He would then be issued with his AB 64 Part One and Two containing his army serial number, which had to remembered, and followed him throughout his army career. It is never ever forgotten. On joining, all Boys were ranked as Junior Leaders (JLs). A JL could progress right up the ranks to Junior RSM. At any time there could be some 500 to 600 JLs undergoing trg in any one year.

PAY & LEAVE

The basic pay on entry at 15 years of age was £2-9-0 a week. Even then, some of this money was compulsorily saved in a Post Office savings account for use on leave. JLs, like their adult counterparts also received Ration Allowance when on home leave. If a JL passed his First Class education exam and his Military Proficiency Standard B, his pay would rise to £4-7-6. On leaving the JLR to enter adult service his pay rose to £5-19-6 per week, if he had signed on for 6 year's regular service, or £7-7-0 for a 9-year engagement. Boys received 10 weeks leave a year and free travel warrants to home and indeed overseas destinations, if their parents were serving in the Armed Forces. The activities of the Royal Signals at that time were: To provide the nerve system of the British Army by provision of the means of command and control of the Army throughout the world. It operated and maintained vital communications, linking together Battalions, Brigades, Divisions, Corps and Armies in the Field. It also provided links from the Government and the War Office with all Armies and Formations throughout the Commonwealth and NATO countries. Members of the Royal Signals could be found operating and maintaining Radio and Radio Relay systems, Telephony and Line Systems: carrying urgent despatches by road and air and staffing vital Communications Centres, all over the world. The Corps would also be found working with all formations of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

The aims of the JLR were to: Further a JLs education and train young soldiers to become tradesmen and future SNCOs, WOs and Commissioned Officers in the Royal Corps of Signals. With the distinct advantages of being a JL, many later went on to fill the highest non-commissioned ranks as Foreman of Signals for the technical trades and Yeoman of Signals for the operating trades. Many Royal Signals RSMs would proudly boast of his JL background. Many JLs also went on to achieve high commissioned rank e.g., Lt Col in the Corps. Some JLs went on to serve as full members of, or on attachment to, other specialist units of the British Army such as the SAS, AB Units, SBS, Int Corps and the RM.

Those who trained in signals intelligence could later be found in the British Secret Service units such as MI5, MI6 and the Government Communications Headquarters, (GCHQ).

TRAINING

Trg in the JLR was in 3 parts:

1. EDUCATION.
To provide each JL with the opportunity to study for and pass what was then the Army Certificate of First Class Education, thus qualifying him to eventually achieve Warrant Officer and Commissioned rank. JLs could also study for GCE O levels.

2. MILITARY AND TRADE TRAINING.
Providing each JL his basic mil trg: teaching him the skills of Drill, Wpns Handling, shooting and PT.

Parade Ground Drill. JLs were taught Parade Ground Drill to an exceptionally high standard; a standard that marked them out as former JLs for the rest of their Army career. This very high standard of drill and turnout was immediately noticeable when JLs graduated from the JLR and joined their first regular army unit. Come the very first morning "works parade", a keen-eyed drill sergeant or sergeant major could immediately pick up a former JL: a wonderful compliment to the trg staff at the JLR.

Weapons. JLs were initially taught to shoot and drill with the Lee-Enfield bolt-action No.4 303 rifle: a wpn that had served the British Army, with modifications, since the First World War. In 1960 the Self Loading Rifle, (SLR), based on the Belgian FN rifle was introduced using the standard NATO 7.62mm ammunition. An indoor range in the camp for firing .22 small bore rifles allowed JLs to hone their shooting skills. As part of their inf trg, JLs were also taught to strip, load and fire the Bren lt machine gun.

Trade Training, JLs were also introduced to the main operating trades in the Royal Signals such as: Operating Military Radio Sets, mainly the No. 19 and C11 Sets and the JLR Amateur radio set. Morse Code. Sending & Receiving Typing and Teleprinter Operating on Creed No. 33 Teleprinters Communications Centre Operation (COMCEN) Field Telephony and Line Systems. Tele "J" & "F" Handsets. Don 8 and 10 cables. From 1964, driver trg was

introduced for JLs in their output year prior to attending Catterick for their Lineman and Electrician Driver trades. From September 1963, Trade Boards were held at Denbury and some JLs in their output term passed Radio Operator and COMCEN Operator at BIII level. From April 1966, this extended to Electrician Driver and Linesman BIII, which meant JLs on passing out of Denbury, could be posted directly to a Royal Signals Unit.

3. LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE TRAINING AND SPORTS. A special emphasis was given to leadership, so important for future SNCO's. Most outdoor trg was carried out on the rugged terrain of Dartmoor. Exs included, canoeing, sailing, rock climbing, map reading, cooking in the field and survival in arduous conditions. Many JLs attended tough military and civilian Outward Bound courses in the UK and abroad.

A wide variety of sporting activities were available and competitions with many other military and civilian youth organisations in the UK and abroad were encouraged. JLs could even take a parachute course. Leisure time could also include dinghy sailing. The Regt supported a very active Band, which also played at civilian functions.

ACCOMMODATION

This was Spartan. JLs were housed in barrack rooms each accommodating 12 to 14 boys. The barrack rooms were wooden with central heating. Barrack rooms had to be meticulously swept and cleaned every day, expect for Sundays, to meet the Junior NCOs exacting standards. Rooms were inspected every day and formal inspections by the Tp Officer once a week. Rooms not up to standard had to be cleaned again and re-inspected. Each barrack room had a three-foot centre lino that required "bumpering" with lashings of polish until it shone like glass.

MESSING

Food was plain but ample and provided in a central dining hall using a self service system, supervised by ACC personnel. The good old NAAFI and Church Army canteens supplemented Army rations.

CLOTHING

New recruits were issued with all their military necessities free of charge including sports clothes, with the exception of football boots. After their first term, JLs could wear 'approved' civilian clothes when off duty and out of camp.

BOOTS

The maintenance of a JLs' army boots took a considerable amount of their time. All JLs were issued with 2 pairs of boots; one for every day wear, commonly known as "working boots", and the other, "best boots" for formal parades. Bulling boots to a Guardsman's standard occupied most Boys' evenings as toecaps and heels gleamed in order to satisfy the Tp Sgts and SSM's demanding standards. Such phrases as "much more work needed on those boots" or, "I would cut my throat if I tried to shave in your toe caps", could be heard on most morning parades.

DISCIPLINE

The British Army is founded on discipline. The emphasis in the JLR was on self-discipline rather than rigidly imposed restrictions. Provided a JL conducted himself as expected of a soldier, army life presented no problems for him. However, miscreants were dealt with in the time-honoured British Army fashion e.g., 'Jankers', reporting in full kit to the gd comd for inspection during off-duty hours or even being locked in the Guardroom cells. The junior NCOs maintained much of the day-to-day discipline.

HOBBIES AND RECREATION

There were always a wide variety of hobbies and entertainment in off-duty hours, with a cinema showing cartoons and films some evenings. The NAAFI and Church Army provided canteens and recreation facilities and Amateur Radio provided JLs with a first introduction to Morse code and operating radio sets.

GRADUATION INTO ADULT SERVICE

The highlight of a JLs time in the JLR was his Graduation, or Passing Out parade, attended by family and friends. Boots had never been so shiny. Trouser and jacket sleeve creases could have sliced bacon. Hats with cunningly sliced peaks jammed firmly on the head and chinstraps polished like diamonds. This was a parade a JL would never forget. After that would come his posting to a trg unit or direct to a Royals Signals unit. Many went to Catterick in Yorkshire. A few were selected for officer trg and went to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Some, who had been talent-spotted, were interviewed with a view to changing their military career and completed their trg outside of the Royal Signals. On completion of their Regular British Army engagement, many ex-JLs were eagerly recruited by Commonwealth armed forces, notably Australia.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE REGIMENT

The main enduring legacy the JLR gave to the world and is still in existence today, is the Ten Tors Expedition. This is run each Whitsun between Ten Tors on Dartmoor. It was founded in 1959 as the JLR's own trg course and then opened up to other units; the first being in 1960 by the then CO of the JLR, **Lt Col LHM Gregory MBE**. Today, many teams both mil and civilian from all over the world attempt this demanding course. The JLR regularly entered teams for the annual Nijmegan Marches held in Holland. This is a very arduous march of 25 miles per day for 4 days. This march is sponsored and supported by major commercial companies, with the proceeds going to the World Health Organisation. In Easter 1960 the JLR entered both junior and senior teams in the first Devizes to Westminster canoe race covering some126 miles. On 12 May 1961, 240 JLs with the Pipes and Drums of the Royal Corps of Signals marched to Courtney Park. There they received a pipe banner and a sealed copy of a Resolution recognizing the close ties that existed between the town of Newton Abbot and the Junior Leaders Regiment, from the Chairman of the Urban District Council of Newton Abbot, **Clr HH Gribbon**. Finally, a note to readers and future researchers. Should you come across a mature gentleman standing tall and proud with very shiny shoes, he may well be an ex-Junior Leader of the Royal Corps of Signals.

COs AND RSMs OF THE JUNIOR LEADERS REGIMENT

Commanding Officers	Regimental Sergeant Majors
1955-1956 **Lt Col RA Connor**	1955-1958 **WO1 Thompson MBE**
1956-1959 **Lt Col RE Baker OBE**	1958-1960 **WO1 FJ Pavey**
1959-1962 **Lt Col LHM Gregory MBE**	1960-1961 **WO1 JR Latimer BEM**
1962-1964 **Lt Col A Holifield MC**	1961-1963 **WO1 SG Pavey**
1964-1967 **Lt Col DE Higgins MBE**	1963-1964 **WO1 D Haughey**
	1964-1965 **WO1 WT Leeson**
	1965-1967 **WO1 MBF Garland**

Acknowledgements and Further Information.

Special thanks to the following 3 Ex-Junior Leaders Web Sites for the use of material for the compilation of this Regimental History.

Tony Gask for the material on his Website:
http://www.denburydays.co.uk/index.php
John Thompson Owner of the Yahoo Site:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/denbury_boys
Steve Wright's Site: Denbury Junior Leaders:
http://www.denburyjuniorleaders.com

FALKLANDS 25

WIRE readers will realise that 2007 will mark the 25th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict, in which numerous members of the Corps took part and which claimed the lives of a number of Royal Signals officers and soldiers.

The Government intends to commemorate **Falklands 25** through a series of events, staged both in the Falkland Islands and the United Kingdom that will run from the anniversary of the liberation of the islands on Thursday 14 June to the following Sunday.

The exact format of these events is not yet known in detail, but they are likely to include commemorative services, acts of remembrance and formal dinners, which will be staged in both Stanley and London.

A national commemorative event will be held on Horse Guards Parade on the afternoon of 17 June and will consist of a parade, drumhead service and march past. More details of all these events will be published in *The WIRE* as soon as they are known.

The Corps intends to mark **Falklands 25** by dedicating the annual RSA weekend, held at Blandford on 30th June and 1st July next year, to the commemoration of our participation in the conflict.

More details about this event will be published in the next edition of *The WIRE*, but readers should note that the RSA weekend will have a particular emphasis upon the anniversary and that a march past of South Atlantic veterans, both serving and retired, will take place. It would be helpful if anyone wishing to take part in the march past could contact **Peter Cuckow** on 01258 482090 or by emailing rsa@royalsignals.mod.uk

FALKLANDS CAMPAIGN OF 1982

The photograph shows a memorial plaque to 8 members of the Corps who died in the Falklands campaign of 1982. the plaque is 65 cm wide by 50 cm high. The plaque has recently appeared in the Museum without any information about its background. Can any readers throw light on it?

Col(Retd) Cliff Walters, Museum Director 01258 482267.

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL REGULAR SERVING MEMBERS OF THE CORPS

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO CORPS FUNDS

In April 2007, the Joint Personnel Administration System (JPAS) will be introduced into the Army and this will bring a change to the way in which the subscriptions to Corps Funds by serving Regular members of the Corps will be collected under the One Day's Pay Scheme.

Currently your annual subscription is made in 4 deductions a year from your pay, after you have paid the Income Tax. As the Corps Fund is a registered charity we are able to claim back through the Gift Aid Scheme some of the Income Tax that you have paid. Each year we are able to claim back a total of £185,000 for Corps Funds.

With the advent of JPAS, and in line with government policy, the method of collecting subscriptions will change from Gift Aid to Payroll Giving. Under the Payroll Giving scheme, your subscription will be deducted from your pay, in monthly instalments over the year, before you pay Income Tax and you as an individual will benefit by having a reduced Income Tax liability. An example showing the difference between the 2 schemes is below. An additional feature of Payroll Giving is that there will be only 3 groups for which a percentage of a Day's Pay can be set; officers, WOs/SNCOs and JNCOs/Sigs. The good news is that on the change to Payroll Giving you will not be required to take any action to continue your subscription – the changeover will be automatic.

As the Corps will no longer be able to claim back any tax, there will be a significant reduction in the income to Corps Funds. As contributors will benefit from the reduced tax liability, one way of reducing this loss of income would be to raise the level of subscriptions, but only by an amount which ensures that you would not pay any more than you do under the current system. This is currently under study and the outcome will be promulgated through the chain of command and in future editions of *The Wire*.

Current System - Gift Aid		**New System with JPA - Payroll Giving**	
Cpl on Higher Pay Band Level 3	**£**	**Cpl on Higher Pay Band Level 3**	**£**
Daily rate of pay	74.13	Daily rate of pay	74.13
Net day's pay (Note 1)	68.53		
Subscription @ 100% of net day's pay	68.53	Subscription @ 100% of daily rate of pay	74.13
		But tax relief is given at source @ 22% tax which means that tax is not paid on the subscription which is worth	16.31
Cost to the Cpl is	**68.53**	**Therefore the cost to the Cpl is subscription minus tax relief which is**	**57.82**
Corps Fund Income			
Tax reclaimed by Corps (22/78 of subscription as set by HM Revenue & Customs)	19.33		
Income (subscription + tax reclaimed)	**87.86**	**Income from subscription**	**74.13**

Notes: 1 A net day's pay is the daily rate of pay from which is deducted a notional charge for food, accommodation and charge in lieu of council tax, assessed for every officer and soldier irrespective of marital status at the standard rates for single men appropriate to rank. This charge, in this example it is £5.60, is not deducted from pay but the subscription to Corps Funds is based on a percentage of the net day's pay. With JPA and payroll giving there is no net pay assessment and the subscription will be based on a percentage of the daily rate of pay.