

# THE Wire



April 2016

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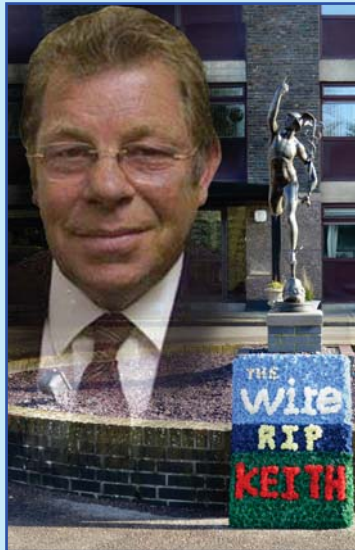
*The Magazine of The Royal Corps of Signals*



## Major Keith Pritchard



2<sup>nd</sup> July 1955 – 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2016



It is with great sadness that this edition of The Wire is being produced without the keen eye and expert hand of **Major (Retd) Keith Pritchard**, The Wire Editor, who passed away suddenly in January. Ironically, the February edition of The Wire was completed by **Keith** late in the afternoon of 20<sup>th</sup> January as he was due to attend a medical appointment the next day. Even during his last hours, he gave instructions that The Wire was to be out on time and it was for that reason that production was not delayed.

**Keith Pritchard** was born and educated in Hereford before attending the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst and was commissioned into the Corps in 1974. One of his early achievements in life was that of being a proficient rugby player and it did not take long before he was playing both County Schoolboy and Army Junior level representative rugby. It came as no surprise that his first tour as a junior officer was with 7<sup>th</sup> Sig Regt where he also represented the Corps at the age of 19. **Keith** was proud to be a somewhat rebellious young officer and time on the rugby pitch was interspersed with time in the Duty Officers' Bunk making amends. He was keen to point out that this pretty much set the pattern for the early years of his career.

A short tour at Shrivenham saw the step up to him playing Army level rugby, and this continued throughout tours with 8 Sig Regt, 3 Armd Div Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt.

**Keith** joked that his lack of technical ability was well recognized by the Postings Branch and he was set on the route of a number of Grade 3 and Grade 2 Weapons Staff appointments in MoD, the RSS and HQLF interspersed with tours in Northern Ireland, Bosnia, both UN and NATO, Kosovo and Sierra Leone. A 3-year tour followed in Saudi Arabia with the SANGCOM team prior to returning to DE&S, with a tour of Iraq in the middle, before finishing his career at HQ DCCIS/HQ RSS.

Having played rugby throughout his career, playing his final Corps match at the age of 40, **Keith** decided it was time to retire and take up a more leisurely pastime, which translated itself into skydiving, which unsurprisingly he discovered he was also very good at, until he was finally bitten by the golf bug. **Keith** was the lynch pin of Blandford Garrison Golf Society and throughout his time he enabled golf to be played by all soldiers either transiting through or stationed in Blandford Garrison. He also played a major role in Corps Golf where since 2009 he organised and managed the Spring and Autumn Golf Corps Championships. Despite being a keen and talented golfer he would have loved to have taken part in these competitions however he selflessly stood aside to undertake the organising. He was appointed as the Club Captain of Ashley Wood Golf Club, which was another of his defining achievements and this also stood to develop the relationship between the military and the civilian community. His sense of humour shone through in all he undertook and never more so in his sense of dress when attending golf meetings. His trademark coloured trousers became his forte and he imbued this sense of style on his reluctant fellow team mates.

**Keith** took over the role of Editor of The Wire in April 2010 where he transformed the publication into that we see today. It was clear to all those who knew and worked with **Keith** that The Wire was his passion and this was amply demonstrated by his approach to the very end. Having given 42 years Service to the Corps, we his Corps Family, friends and colleagues are all the better for having had **Keith** in our lives. We thank him for his Service, friendship and loyalty to the end – *Certa Cito*.





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# The Wire



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### FRONT COVER

Cpl Dean Smith, 11 Sig Regt pushing through the 15km Classic at the Corps Championships.



### BACK COVER

A member of 299 (SC) Sig Sqn enjoying the view whilst on Exercise Snow Lynx.



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# NEWS FROM BLANDFORD



## ROYAL SIGNALS BAND



by LCpl Frowen

Following the announcement of FAM2020, the Corps of Army Music has undergone some major changes. The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals is one of the military bands that has been affected in a big way. It was decided that CAMus would strengthen its specialist musical capabilities with the formation of brass bands, contemporary musical ensembles and a string orchestra. Military bands have been providing ceremonial and marching music for hundreds of years and have traditionally always been wind bands. The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals was chosen to reform as one of the three new brass bands. The band were also relocated from Blandford, Dorset to RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton. Only two members of the former Signals Band were posted to our new location, the rest were posted as required to various bands across the UK.

Due to the change of instrumentation required to form a brass band, the Signals Band reformed with only ten members. A brass band includes instruments that wind bands don't, so the Signals Band had to begin targeted recruiting in areas that it had not previously explored. We needed to aim our recruiting towards musicians with a brass band background and that could perform to a high standard due to the variety of engagements that we are tasked to do. Over the past twelve months we have held many open days for potential recruits, visited schools and local universities including specialist music colleges in the West Midlands area. We

have participated in brass band festivals, concerts, and had recruiting stands at contests and the response has been fantastic. We have already doubled in strength and have recruits in training and awaiting auditions. We are currently only four musicians away from returning to marching capability (24 players required) but 12 away from full operating capability.



We regularly join forces with other reservist and regular bands so we can provide concerts and marching bands if and when required. The majority of our work until we reach maximum manning time is also spent performing as smaller ensembles supporting Regimental dinner nights and functions.

*Musician Matthew Taylor working with our recruiting team at the British Open Brass Band Championships at the Symphony Hall in Birmingham*

We do remain extremely busy but one of our highlights was performing on the BBC for Songs of Praise.



*The 10-piece ensemble after performing at the Royal Star and Garter home in Solihull under the baton of Bandmaster David Hatton*





## Songs of Praise - by Sgt Roberts

On 9 November 2014 The Band of the Royal Corps of Signals Brass Quintet were tasked to perform throughout a live broadcast of BBC 1's 'Songs of Praise' for Remembrance Sunday. This particular year was very poignant as it marks the centenary of the First World War and other conflicts past and present. The Brass Quintet travelled from their location at RAF Cosford down to All Saints Garrison Church (Aldershot) the day before the live performance to rehearse. As you can imagine, this rehearsal day was very long and patience was required to set up all the filming crew and musical balance.

From a musical point of view, the Brass Quintet needed to work hard with the Garrison church organist so we could play as one and in tune. Also performing was Britain's leading musical star Michael Ball, it was a fantastic experience performing with him.

On the Sunday, once a few musical adjustments took place and the church became full, the show was ready to be filmed live at 5pm. Once the congregation had been seated, the atmosphere was electric and the Brass Quintet felt an amazing buzz. After the Quintet had packed up and got on the road back to sunny Shropshire the sense of privilege and honour was felt amongst the musicians as they were able to be part of such a significant remembrance service. 'The centenary of the start of the First World War'. We Will Remember Them.



*One of the brass quintets providing support at the British Embassy, Tunisia*

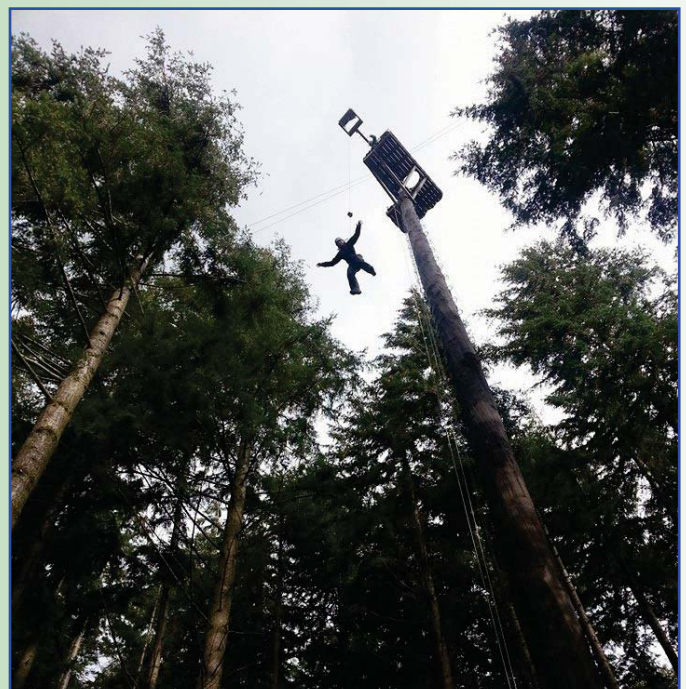
Our engagement portfolio includes charity events, dinner nights, Armed Forces Day, concerts, pre and halftime football match entertainment, Remembrance Parades and musical workshops. We have also travelled all over the world including three trips to Gibraltar to support the Queens Birthday Parade and the Keys Ceremony, with further support later this year. We have also provided musical support to the British Embassy in Algeria and Tunisia. Members of the band have been chosen to represent CAMus on Short Term Training Teams (STTT's) last year to South Africa, Botswana, Lebanon and in March this year Musician James Howard will be joining a team in Jordan.

The Band has also enjoyed several Adventurous Training weeks which allow all members to reconnect and practice their non-speciality skills through healthy competition and leadership tasks. Here is an insight into one of our first AT trips:

## Exercise DRAGON RAMBLER - by Sgt Roberts

Ex Dragon Rambler was predominantly a hill walking exercise in the mountains of Snowdonia. We elicited the help of **LCpl Evatt Gibson** from the Band of the Blues and Royals, who is Mountain Leader Trained (MLT) and along with myself, an SML, we tackled several of Snowdonia's highest peaks, including The Glyders, the iconic summit of Tryfan, and Moel Siabod.

Our week culminated at 'Tree Top Adventure', a high ropes course. Tree Top Adventure boasts a 31m free fall power fan plummet, and the highest swing in Europe. The free fall simulator involved scaling a 100ft tree, up to a jump platform. Once at the top, each volunteer was attached to the power fan cable and encouraged to jump off the platform, initially plummeting like a stone before the power fan slows down your descent just above ground level to a graceful touch down. The five person 'Sky Ride' swing was a little less arduous, as the machinery cranks you up to 80ft into the tree canopy, before one lucky participant initiates the groups' drop by pulling a cord, leaving the riders swinging high above the visitor centre for about five minutes. We would recommend 'Tree Tops' to any units who are on AT in Snowdonia in the future, it was the highlight of the week for most members of the Band. Ex Dragon Rambler was a great chance for a unit full of new faces to get to know each other. We were all pushed out of our comfort zones at some point during the week."



*Sgt Laura Windley free falling from a height of 106ft on AT*





Another highlight last year for the band members was to be involved in a Force Development Day here at RAF Cosford.

**Force Development Day** - by Musician Tom Uttley

On September 2014 The Band of The Royal Corps of Signals were treated to a rare experience on our Force Development Day. One of the perks of being based at RAF Cosford is that we are here with the Cosford Flying Club, who very kindly agreed to take us flying for the day.

The day was planned in order for our new unit to bond and get a feel for our new base and the people who we would be working with. On arriving at the airfield we were introduced to our instructors, they got straight into baffling our brains with a lesson on aircraft instruments, controls, weather forecasts and conditions. We were also told a few horror stories about pilots that misread the weather forecast and were never seen again, which you can imagine made a few of us a little nervous. We were introduced to the Piper PA28 aircraft that we would be flying in, our instructors showed us how to do our visual safety checks on the outside of the aircraft and how to do a full cockpit check.

Then came the flight. Myself and **Sgt Martin Roberts** were in the first group. He called shot-gun so I found myself in the rear without the gear. Our instructor took us through the procedure for communicating with Air Traffic Control before taking off and guided us through the take off routine. After we had been in the air a while, **Sgt Roberts** was given control of the aircraft which was actually quite scary for me, although he was pretty good for a novice. We flew over Ironbridge Gorge and even flew over band members houses in Donnington. After a quick photo opportunity we turned back to get ready to come into land.

Once back on the ground **Sgt Roberts** had a go at taxiing the aircraft along the runway. I personally think he should stick to taxiing horses on Horse Guards Parade, as he was previously a member of the Household Cavalry. The experience was fantastic, **Sgt Laura Windley** needed to be given a booster seat so she could see out of the cockpit and our previous Director of Music was reported to have kissed the ground after landing!



*Musician Tom Uttley giving a 'Thumbs Up' during Force Development Day*

The next 12 months will be crucial for the band trying to recruit the players needed to fill the vacancies that we have in order to reach Full Operating Capability. We have come so far in such a short space of time and 2016 is already proving to be another fantastic year for the Band of the Royal Corps of Signals. We have lots of exciting engagements throughout 2016 including performances in Gibraltar, Cyprus, Belfast, at venues across the UK and at venues closer to home such as a concert at Dudley Town Hall and Ironbridge.



*The Band took part in a memorial service at the Hall of Memory in Birmingham to commemorate Victoria Cross recipients from The First World War*

We would like to thank everyone for their support to the Band so far and look forward to increasing our footprint in the West Midlands as we work closely with 11SigX under the 'Bands to Brigade' initiative. For information on how your Corps Band can support you please do not hesitate to contact our Director of Music, **Capt Shane O'Neill** who will advise on all musical and capability matters. We look forward to seeing you all at one of our many performances throughout the year!



*Our Director of music Capt O'Neill conducting the Band at Birmingham Airport whilst fundraising for the Poppy Appeal*







## BLANDFORD GARRISON SUPPORT UNIT



CO Lt Col Sean Keilty MBE  
GSM WO1 S Wedge

### Exercise WESTMINSTER VISIT - Cpl Dipendra, Engineering Support Troop

Still dazed from a very early October morning start, 15 members of BGSU embarked on a two day visit to London, on an exercise designed to enlighten the troops about the military and political history of the UK. Ex WESTMINSTER VISIT was planned to visit the Imperial War Museum, Tower of London and finishing with a tour of the Houses of Parliament, whilst managing to visit and experience the local and traditional sights and scenes of tourist London.

The first destination was the Imperial War Museum, which (founded in 1917) presented an ideal opportunity for a group photo, in which everyone seemed fairly sprightly considering their early start!

The museum gave the exercising troops an opportunity to reflect upon all military conflicts, and appreciate how the military has developed to get us to where we are today. With the exhibits showing the history of the British Empire, both world wars and the recent conflicts, many personnel could reflect on their own experiences.

After a morning in the museum and a quick lunch at Grand Union, we moved on to the Tower of London for a tour given by the Yeoman Warden, who gave a humorous account of the life and times of the Tower and what it stands for. After the tour, we were able to visit the Crown Jewels. These were exquisite, albeit very different close up when compared with the pictures.



Imperial War Museum

The second day of the exercise started with a visit to Buckingham Palace and watching the famous Changing of the Guard. The infectious excitement of the crowd meant that we couldn't help but be in awe of the routine and impressed by the professionalism.

In order to get the most from the exercise the tour moved onto Westminster Abbey, one of the most famous religious landmarks in the UK, as well as the place of the Royal Coronation, Royal Weddings, and the burial site for many significant people throughout British history, including the Unknown British Warrior. Even without knowing about the historical significance, the tour of the magnificent gothic church enlightened the troops about the interesting facts and feats of engineering behind the famous landmark.

The final part of the exercise led personnel to the Houses of Parliament, where we had a tour by a very enthusiastic and highly knowledgeable tour guide. Able to answer all questions, she was able to talk us through the architecture of the building, its history and gave us a brief on current day politics, in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.



The Houses of Parliament

photo opportunity, giving us the chance to capture Sgt 'Frankie' Ndegwa's final "deployment" in the military, although he was outshone slightly by Sig Henry's stunning bowtie!

Ex WESTMINSTER VISIT was a really enjoyable venture, which provided an excellent opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the landmarks and times that are key throughout the history of the governance of Britain. It enabled us to take time to understand the history, and see how this has influenced modern day life and politics within the military.



# NEWS FROM TRAINING



## 11th (ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS) SIGNAL REGIMENT BLANDFORD



CO Lt Col S Short  
RSM WO1 (RSM) R Savage

### 2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

OC Maj L Kelly  
SSM WO2 (SSM) B Sherwin

### Exercise FROSTY TIGER VIII

**Week One-** by Sig Shaw, Rhino Troop

Ex FROSTY TIGER VIII saw members of 11 Sig Regt travel to Austria in order to gain their Skiing Foundation qualification. The group contained a variety of different levels of skiers, ranging from novices to very experienced. The journey saw us travel through several countries within Europe, including France, Belgium, Holland and Germany until finally arriving in Austria to the town of Neustift im Stubaital. After arriving on Sunday we had time to make ourselves comfortable and catch up on some much needed sleep at our new home for the week, a rural hotel that was located on the side of the valley overlooking the town below. Later on in the day we travelled down the valley into the local ski hire facility to collect the equipment for the week and other admin such as ski passes. Once this was finished we then had the rest of the day to ourselves and most explored the local area or got some much needed rest.



*The Town of Neustift complete with plenty of snow, hooray!*

Monday marked our introduction to skiing and we were broken down into groups, based on experience, in which we were instructed for the duration of the week. Our first insight into skiing started with a lesson on the equipment, shortly followed by basic skiing. We learnt how to plough, stop, turn and perform basic manoeuvres, which turned out to be quite humorous, as no-one in the group was as stable as we had initially hoped. After we had finished skiing for the day at Stubaier Glacier, some of us decided to explore the local town (and its numerous bars), the highlight of which was the Dorf Pub. They had a pair of clogs attached to the ceiling which we had to strap ourselves into, upside-down, as we attempted to drink some of the local tippel. Safe to say it was a 'unique' experience.

Come Tuesday we continued our training, polishing the skills already learnt and beginning to progress onto even more advanced manoeuvres. In the evening we travelled to the local city of Innsbruck, where we explored the sights and were welcomed by the local's hospitality.



*A pirate ship made of snow!*

Towards the middle of our week in Austria, the skiing had advanced to steeper terrain, which really tested our new found skills. Much to our surprise it went a lot better than we had expected, and the confidence level within the group had soared, although we were all ready for bed by the time we got back, well, most of us...

Thursday, our group started to develop even more. It was surprising at the time that we could successfully traverse down slopes that we had originally thought were not possible. The steeper terrain brought more comical moments, such as a variety of amateur gymnastics performed by **Sig Bennett** falling down the slope. The thin mountain air may have muddled a few people's heads, with one particular funny incident where **Sgt 'Disco Di' Mark** picked up the wrong set of kit and **Sig Csollak** was left at the top of the mountain, trying to find his now absent skis. Later in the day we arranged to go sledging near the hotel; however, we were unfortunate because the weather conditions did not permit us to do so as there wasn't enough snow.



*Our group on the slopes*





As the week came to a close, we reached our last day. This was extremely fun as many of us were allowed to practice in full what we had learnt on the slopes of Stubai Glacier. Sadly, we had to finish earlier than usual in order to return kit and prepare to begin our travels back to Blandford Camp on Saturday at 0200hrs.

Overall, this experience really opened our eyes to not just the skiing, but the opportunities that the British Army's AT scheme can provide; what a week away from Blandford can do for morale! The members of our group came away with a Skiing Foundation Level 1 qualification, opening new doors to progress our skiing further. The trip itself could not have been what it was without the management and preparation of the organising staff, the AT instructors, and all others involved in the admin process required for the Exercise.



*On top of the Glacier*

**Week 2- by Sig Wood, Rhino Troop**

Ex FROSTY TIGER VIII, 11 Sig Regt's 2 week expedition to the snowy Austrian mountains, gave over 40 members of the Regiment the opportunity to gain a Skiing Foundation 1 qualification. The Week One skiers reached a top speed of 60.5mph and a max altitude of 3207m.

Alas, the conditions for the second week did not allow us to match these stats, which of course had nothing to do with our skiing abilities. After a teeth grinding 21 hour journey the group arrived in Austria on the 30<sup>th</sup> Jan. The drive up included numerous McDonalds pit stops at motorway service stations. Eventually, arriving safely in a very snowy Neustift Austria, we were greeted with a friendly welcome from our host for the week, **Howie**; who served us up a fantastic homemade chicken pie dinner. We then departed to the local Intersport to get sized up and kitted out ready for our weeks skiing adventure, we certainly had all the gear and no idea.

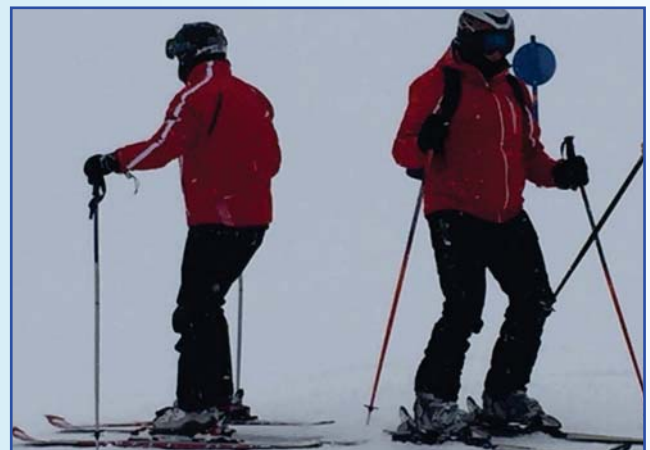


*Selfie 199 on route to Austria!*

After an early Monday morning start spent tripping over ski boots and hunting for misplaced poles, we set out in our convoy of minibuses along the scenic roads of Austria to the bottom of the gondola, all set and ready to conquer those daunting slopes on the glacier. For the beginners amongst us the day was spent mastering the basics including side stepping, ploughing and most importantly how to stay standing on your skis. For the intermediate skiers in the group we spent the day refreshing our skills and practicing numerous turns, accompanied by lots of falls and a face plant resulting in a bloody nose for **LCpl Jack '80's one piece ski suit' Menzies**. All in all, day 1 was a great start to what turned out to be an excellent week of skiing. At the end of the ski day **Capt 'better at Nordic than Alpine skiing' Crompton, SIO Geddes, Cpl Dan Sutcliffe** and I, decided to ditch our Alpine skis in pursuit of a 12km Nordic ski back to Neustift. While we were skating through slushy ice puddles the rest of our group were travelling back in the heated mini buses greeted back at the hotel by **Col Fensom** and a stack of ribs from **Howie**.

A very sunny second day was spent learning how to perfect the plough for the beginner group taught by their instructor **Capt 'Mr Flamboyant ski wear of yellow and orange' Rowe**. On Wednesday morning, we woke up to a fresh covering of snow and a lot of cloud cover. Heading up on the gondolas, the carts were swaying vigorously in the high winds. The beginners spent the day testing their new found skills and trying their best to dismount the chair lifts without falling over, only some were successful in this mission. For those intermediate skiers, the day was dedicated to paired critique work; picking up faults was the easy part, correcting them seemed improbable in such poor visual conditions. The descent down from the mountain was a quiet one as all were tired from a hard day of skiing.

For most, confidence was oozing by Thursday morning, the beginners mastered the plough and the intermediates had ventured off piste into the thick snow causing numerous tumbles. Out on the slopes a speedy Austrian skier plummeted into **Col Fensom** and they both proceeded to roll intertwined for a few feet, skis unbound, poles flew but thankfully, no one was injured, less perhaps the pride of the Austrian for his poor slope conduct.



*Col Fensom cementing Anglo - Austrian Relationships post tumble*

On Thursday evening, we convoyed down into Neustift town centre where we enjoyed the cuisine in one of the local restaurants. After, at the Dorf pub, **Sgt Mike 'ski helmets do nothing for my hair' Culkin** showed off, by flexing his PTI muscles whilst single handedly mastering the hazardous bar game 'nails'.





The final day of skiing involved an early start, with us all eager faced and ready to get out onto the fresh snow. The morning was spent with the instructors polishing our skills and in the afternoon we were allowed to ski in groups of three, venturing out to the slopes. Poor admin resulted in **Sig Smith** losing both his phone and wallet on the slopes so his afternoon was spent using his limited German and pointing skills trying to find them, thankfully, he was successful.

After another tiring day, we descended early from the glacier in order to return our hire equipment advancing into Intersport with 30 plus sets of skis, poles boots and helmets, it was admin mayhem!



*Sig Wood and LCpl Roberts on top of the Glacier*

Our journey home was far quicker than our journey to Austria only, taking us 17 hours in total and as the minibus doors opened for the final time on Blandford soil, sleepy faces emerged into the crisp English air.

Ex FROSTY TIGER VIII turned out to be a tremendous week for all who attended, giving us an insight into both Alpine and Nordic skiing, with the skiers coming away with a Skiing Foundation level 1 qualification and some very conspicuous ski goggle tan lines.

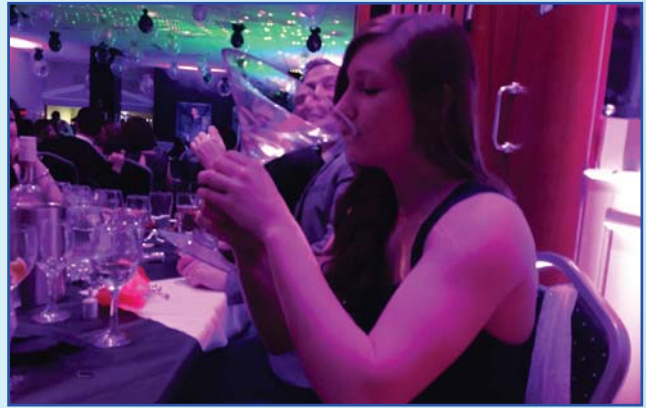
## 2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON

### Christmas Function - by Cpl Churchward, Iron Troop

The Christmas leave period is always a time for celebration, 17 Dec was no different for the Permanent Staff of 2 Sqn. The release of the film 'Spectre' resulted in this year being celebrated in James Bond style.

In keeping with the film, we deployed 'From Blandford With Love' on 'Her Majesty's Secret Service', and were greeted at the Queens Hotel with the standard complimentary Mimosa or in **SSgt 'Goldfinger' Stewart's** case several complimentary Mimosas. It wasn't long either before our very own **Cpl 'Pint Size' Beecham** was living up to his 'You Only Live Twice' motto and trying to impress groups of Bond Girls with an oversized Martini glass, but as usual he just bored 'The Living Daylight's'

out of them. The only thing more oversized than **Cpl Beecham's** glass was OC Beaufighter Troop, his Jaws costume and his 6-inch platform shoes. Nothing cries look at me more than a seven-foot man with a silver gum shield.



*Capt Lianne 'Solitaire' Robinson enjoying a 'small' Vesper Martini*

A fantastic welcome and start to the night was not let down by the food, a splendid meal was enjoyed by everyone. Some people clearly enjoyed the meal more than others, as **SSgt 'Oddjob' Weatherill** took it upon himself to ensure no plates were returned to the kitchen with food, despite a gratuitous amount of potatoes he will live 'To Die Another Day.'

The evening's entertainment kicked off with a dance display between none other than OC Beaufighter Troop and the Squadron OC **Maj 'Vesper' Kelly**, so impressive that it could have been rehearsed. Following James Bond's addiction to alcohol with our meet and greet drinks, the next part of the



*Capt Daz 'Blofeld' Edge with his appropriate cracker gift*

evening's entertainment was in line with his addiction to gambling as the night moved onto 'Casino Royale' with roulette and blackjack tables. A select few had a 'Goldeneye' for the roulette table but perhaps should be introduced to 'Dr No,' as they were able to accumulate a hefty pile of chips but were unable to keep hold of any, some people just don't know when to walk away.

Overall, the night proved to be a success and everyone (rather unusually) returned to Blandford with smiles on their faces. However, there is always that one group for whom 'The Night Is Not Enough,' and this was no exception. Therefore, led by **Sgt 'Scaramanga' Barley** with 'A View To A Kill' they stumbled into town and the rest of the story is not even 'For Your Eyes Only.'

I could finish by saying 'Tomorrow Never Dies,' but you'll have to confirm this with **Cpl Muchmore** and his 'Licence To Kill' during a hungover PT session the following morning.





### 3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Jacques-Grey**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C Deal**

#### Phase 2/3 Christmas party - by Cpl Wheatley, Lightning Troop

Kicking off the festive season, 3 (Harrogate) Sqn demonstrated their spirit with a Phase 2/3 Christmas party. The night kicked off with a glass of Buck's Fizz at the entrance, with the compulsory Tango for those not yet of age. The theme was Christmas fancy dress and the event rapidly filled up with three quarters attending as elves; these included a few suspect cross-dressing elves! Once through the door the mammoth task of queuing for the curry buffet began. While this was arguably worth the wait, many would consider it the longest queue ever witnessed in NATO.

The entertainment for the night started with a sterling performance by the CSE community. The star attraction was a comedian giving helpful advice on relationships! The raffle swiftly kicked off with prizes ranging from a 32 inch TV through to a drone and taking a Troop parade. Following this, a DJ played a set or two before closing promptly at midnight. After a meandering walk back to the accommodation, weary heads drifted off to sleep in anticipation for the following day's trade training with an inevitable hangover.

#### Exercise KOHIMA LINE - by Cpl Hardy

On a windy weekend in February a small team of Installation Technicians, primarily consisting of ITBR 15/001, travelled down to help the historic railway be reconstructed at Swanage. The history of 3 (Harrogate) Sqn helping out at Swanage Railway extends back over 30 years. In the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of the Sqn's commitment, the team deployed to help in preparation for the Railway to be connected onto the main



*Who you gonna call?*

bringing a more accessible route to the Jurassic coast. Over the years, various tasks have been performed for the reconstruction of the new station but it was this visit where we were able to prepare the line to have a new station built; fully equipped with fibre optic connectivity.

Phase One of our arduous mission was a two-day task. Day One started after an initial risk assessment brief from **Mr Frank Roberts**, Swanage Railways Projects co-ordinator,

covering everything from PPE to the obligatory wave to the passing trains. On the first day battling through the initial flood reports and harsh rain conditions we had made good progress, working hard digging up many historic relics and clearing the way for the new platform to be built on Phase 2.

**SSgt Clint Sherratt** headed up the military team with **Cpl Hardy** being the driving force behind organising the trip. Upon arriving on the site **LCpl Buley** got straight into the main labour of the task; **Cpl Hardy** showed willing to get dirty by making use of his little shovel and made several holes around the site, which he filled with logs, dirt and trees. The course split into sections with most of the students being taken away and educated in the ways of the railway. These tasks included giving the inside of the shelter a new coat of paint, moving old cabling and depositing scrap into a big skip. Once **SSgt Sherratt** got too wet to work it was decided it was time to down tools for the day and we sampled the local fish and chips down the sea front before heading back to camp for the day.



*The dream team hard at work*

On Day Two we decided to take a detour to make sure our throats had been well lubricated before we started to get dirty, but sadly the opening hours for our local popular coffee house had been misread. We were therefore forced to make do with a vending machine before making our way to the work site. The main effort of the day was to distribute the ash over the area ready for the tarmac to be put down for the new platform.

Even though the weather was grim, the work was hard and it was the weekend, the team of ITBR 15/001 enjoyed the experience of working in a different environment. They are looking forward to Phase 2 of the project and installing fibre optic cabling to the new platform.

### 4 (MILITARY TRAINING) SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Scott**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Easterby-Jackson**

#### My experience as a Military Training Instructor at 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn - by Cpl Nirmal

"You are not posted here, you are selected to be here." Four months on, the OC's words still resonate with me. It is an understatement to say that I received a baptism by fire in PNCO Trg team. I reported for duty on the morning of the Start-State 6 mile TAB followed by series of lessons. The pace of life at PNCO Trg team has proven to be a far cry from my days at field units, but is ultimately very rewarding. The four PNCO CLM courses and five BCCS courses that I have had the opportunity to instruct on in my first four months proves the relentless pace of life for us instructors.







1 and 2 Section showing the determination required to be a JNCO

My perception of military training has certainly changed in the short period of time that I have been in the Sqdn. It is far more than just teaching battle lessons and taking the course through numerous section attacks. It is said the best way to hone your own skills is by teaching, and rightly so, this has certainly been the case for me. The planning and preparation for the lessons in accordance with ISpecs and ASpecs, going through policy directives and training objectives have definitely helped me become a better instructor and more rounded field soldier. Moreover, the people around me, my colleagues and seniors from the PNCO team, as well as other teams (SCTT and JCTT) make a very good working environment. The team currently consists of **SSgt (SSI) Downer, Sgt (SI) Hall, Sgt (SI) Hazell, Cpl Rogers, Cpl Nirmal and Cpl Hellwig**. **Cpl Hellwig** was a latest addition to the team and brought with him a love of rivers and stalking unsuspecting students. No weapon has been safe in the harbour area since his arrival. **Cpl Rogers'** obsession with accurate timings and ammo has forced the team to maintain its punctuality with just a few exceptions for **Sgt Hazell!** It is fair to say that Lulworth Trg area has become our home from home.

The long days and late nights that come with the job of being a military training instructor at 4 Sqdn are made worthwhile seeing the standards of Royal Signals JNCO leaving this establishment. We look forward to coaching and mentoring the future Junior Commanders of the Royal Corps of Signals.

**My Journey to 4 Sqdn - by Sgt (SI) Chris McGuire, JCTT**

Having been highlighted as a potential instructor in 2013 and impressing the SMI, **WO2 Steve Kelly (Now WO1 (RSM) Kelly)** no end with my witty banter and flair, he was quick to offer me a job. Due to my operational commitments at 10SR in the guise of providing cables worldwide, I decided to delay for a year. Within 6 months of this, I quickly realised my mistake and engaged with the SMI and 2IC about arranging a posting to Junior Command Training Team (JCTT). After some initial engagement through my chain of command to APC Glasgow and direct comms between the SMI and myself the initial wheels were in motion. I applied for D&BS clearance (CRB) and after a period of 3 months I have to admit that I started to worry about what they knew! After phoning them daily over a two week period my clearance finally came through and my assignment order swiftly (and surely) followed.

After the drama of moving my family for the fifth time in 4 years, I was settled in and ready to start work. The first course I was to 'shadow', in line with Regimental policy, I was allocated the legend **Sgt Chris 'David Brent' Jones** as my mentor. The insight to the course procedure was invaluable and guided by Jonesy's experience and knowledge I quickly grasped what was required of me.

In November 2015 it was time for me to finally be allocated my own section and become a fully active member of the training team. The course was enjoyable from start to finish and I know that the next two years will be challenging and a defining period in my career.



3 Section sticking together, working together, preparing to tackle the next obstacle







*You could be next!*

I would encourage any SNCO who believes they have the correct attributes to engage with their CofC and look into a posting to 4 Mil. The job truly is 'the best I've ever had.' The process is simple, gain a recommend on JCLM or SCLM, place it on your Posting Preferences on JPA and inform your CofC and they will do the rest. You won't regret it!

#### 5 (MARESFIELD) SQUADRON

OC **Maj J Budding**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S Fox**

#### TCC 93 Update

Troop Commanders' Course 93 (TCC 93) continues in earnest and high spirits as they move into the next phase of their training. Having spent the last few months with Command Support Troop the course has covered a variety of topics and now moves forward with ever-swelling brains.

Various modules have been covered over this short period; planning an ICS deployment, Falcon networking, Electronic Warfare, Combat Net Radio and Satellite Communications. We

now look forward to our test phase including out deployment into the field on Ex FIRST GLANCE.

Planning an ICS deployment was the first in depth look at real communications that we have seen since our arrival and there was certainly an air of excitement. The module involved a number of extensive lessons on considerations for deployment of CIS assets based around the ITIL structure. Perhaps the first time the Troopies had been truly glad of their instruction in that regard.

During the Falcon module, the basic theory of trunk networking and the real world, as well as military applications of such technology were discussed. This then progressed into some theory work on frequency bands and modulation before being consolidated in an exercise in which we built a trunk network from the ground up; a hugely rewarding and educational week.

Electronic Warfare was, in overall opinion, the most challenging week to date. The sheer weight of knowledge conveyed initially proved daunting but this soon eased off and the week ended on a high note, with a capability brief on the impressive array of foreign EW. On to Combat Net Radio...

The first introduction to CNR was in the form of simulated COMBAT terminals and with the intricacies of staff work, morale took a dip. Nonetheless, at the end of the week, there was a definite sense of achievement. Having gone from initially looking at the program as a Cold War artefact to implementing it in various areas of battle space management was enlightening.

On the horizon for TCC 93 is a charity event, which will involve pulling a Land Rover around the three-mile loop of Blandford Camp, a good opportunity to see some young officers sweat, as well as further examinations that will no doubt produce the same result.

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# NEWS FROM FORMATIONS



## 1 SIGNAL BRIGADE



**Exercise TIGER SNOW SPEAR 30 Jan - 6 Feb 16**  
- by Sgt Ash O'Brien

On Saturday 30 Jan 16, members of HQ 1 (UK) Sig Bde plus a few augmentees from the wider Bde set off on the Bde annual skiing expedition. **Capt Richard Gilgar's** scheme of manoeuvre was to get the vast majority of the Bde HQ out to Argentiere, France to enable them to gain SF1 and SF2 qualifications and also gain some valued time away from a fast paced work environment. Thankfully we avoided the long drive out to the resort this year and the transition to Argentiere was completed without issue.

With the trip out behind us we moved into the UCPA hostel which provided very comfortable accommodation and excellent facilities to sustain us during our stay. After a solid nights sleep, everyone was raring to get on the slopes. The group moved as a whole to the nursery slopes at Le Tour so the Instructors **Maj David Lynch** (Lead Instructor) and **Capt Abigail Roberts** could do a basic assessment on the group and then split them into equal groups to complete either the SF1 or SF2 qualification. The groupings came as a bit of a surprise to some, especially **Capt Aaron Fairclough** (SF1) who was spinning all sorts of skiing dits prior to spending most of his time on his rear end during the first few days.

After the first day we saw some weary looking faces return to the UCPA hostel but luckily the friendly atmosphere and great food provided by the staff soon perked everyone up and gave an opportunity for everyone to tell a few stories of the day and relax over a drink and some light entertainment. This became the theme for the week with most people attending the entertainment in the bar. **Capt Gareth Jones** was testament to this when he showed that twerking was not just for 'the kids' after a few well deserved drinks in the bar (enough said!). The first few days went without much in the

way of big wipe-outs with much of the talk being about who was going to wear the 'Donkey of the Day' hi-vis vest endorsed by **Brig Nesmith**. There were many candidates on a daily basis with the majority of them being for poor 'chair lift discipline' (causing harm to yourself or others with the use of poles to block or disrupt another's exit from a chairlift) the worst case of this was displayed by **LCpl Julie Sutton** with no less than six incidents in one day, however I do believe **Brig Nesmith** also fell foul of this rule by taking down **Col Hill** in great style.

The next couple of days came with varying stories of crashes and falls, non more spectacular than when **WO2 Stephen Snowdon** had a complete wipeout whilst unselfishly filming the rest of the group on his helmet camera, this resulted in equipment and ski's everywhere! Luckily a ski pole and **WO2 Snowdon's** ego were the only thing seriously damaged that day.

On the last day the weather was fantastic which gave everyone a great opportunity to get photos of the amazing scenery that Argentiere provided. It also saw the culmination of the Ski Foundation 1 and 2 qualification that the groups had completed. Some of the group also took part in wearing fancy dress which provided great entertainment for all especially watching **Maj Barry Terry** going off piste in a very convincing Santa costume (not much time spent upright) this enabled the week to be rounded nicely and everyone came back uninjured (well sort of).

All in it is safe to say that everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed the week, improved their skiing and had a welcome break from a very busy Bde HQ. Thank you's go to the instructors for showing patience and providing a great atmosphere in which to learn and to **Capt Richard Gilgar** for organising the trip.



The SF1 group posing during a great days skiing



A great group photo in the fantastic scenery on offer from the French Alps







## 11 SIGNAL and WEST MIDLANDS BRIGADE



The Brigade HQ has undergone significant changes over the last two years as it took on the responsibility of being the Regional Point of Command (RPOC) for the West Midlands. From the flooding in Cumbria over Christmas to the Paris attacks, planning for national operations is at the forefront of everyone's minds. The HQ Staff have conducted a variety of call outs, short notice staff planning exercises, deployment exercises with regional Police forces all to ensure that the HQ is ready for this responsibility. A UK Operation within the West Midlands would see the Brigade HQ command units permanently based in the region. In April 2016, the HQ's planning and response for a UK operation will be assured by the Command and Staff Training (UK) (CAST(UK)) team. Leading to this exercise, the Joint Regional Liaison Officer (JRLO) and his team have been delivering ever more testing scenarios, adding to these other factors including rules of engagement and crash-scene management. These exercises have seen the plans team conducting estimates on subjects as diverse as drinking water deliveries and aircraft crashes while the operations team manage the incident from our dedicated UK Ops room.

Training and further preparations will continue in the run up to the arrival of the CAST(UK) team and representatives from the various West Midlands units' Military Liaison Teams, our higher HQs and the Local Resilience Forum. The exercise will deliver an intensive test based around a scenario of a high profile international event taking place in the West Midlands.

### HQ 2 SIGNAL GROUP - Operation SHAKU

CO **Col Joe Cooper**  
ACOS **Maj Graham Inglis**

During December 2015, 2 Sig Gp deployed assets on OpSHAKU, supporting the Environment Agency flood relief in the North West of England and Yorkshire. Before Christmas, the after-effects of Storm DESMOND persisted, a Command Support Team from 37 Sig Regt deployed to support 42 Infantry Brigade's Forward Operations Room in Penrith.

On Boxing Day, it became clear that further support would be required as Storm EVA hit the UK. 2 Sig Gp HQ activated as JFCIS(UK) and RHQ 37 Sig Regt as an ISOC. Two Incident Response Teams from 10 Sig Regt deployed to York to await further developments. The response teams were relieved by two CSTs from 37 Sig Regt which deployed to support military

LOs in GOLD HQ in Wakefield and SILVER HQ in York. A G6 liaison officer deployed from 37 Sig Regt to HQ 4 Inf Bde.

The Group remained on task until the New Year as Storm EVA gave way to Storm FRANK, with further assets on increased readiness in the North West as well as Yorkshire. 2 Sig Gp's Op SHAKU contribution was a textbook illustration of regular and reservist soldiers deploying to provide close ICS support to liaison officers and military headquarters deployed on a UK Operation.

### 7 SIGNAL GROUP – Improving our capabilities

CO **Col David Craft**  
ACOS **Maj Pete Stowell**

7 Sig Gp form part of HQ 11 Sig & WM Bde and in addition to commanding the five Multi-role Signal Regiments (MRSRs) it has also taken command of 15 Sig Regt (IS).

Bringing 15 Sig Regt (IS) into the fold is welcomed and will allow 7 Sig Gp to further integrate those elements delivering Level 3 support as well as bringing coherence to the development and exploitation of our current capabilities. Indeed, much of the recent Group activity has been focused on this area.

21 Sig Regt as our '1\* aligned regiment at readiness,' have the lead for capability exploitation particularly focused on enabling richer services at the brigade level. Most recently this has seen the regiment trial a number of small form-factor SATCOM terminals on behalf of ISS that could provide a vital link into a highly manoeuvrable HQ. They will continue this work through the summer and will lead to a number of demonstrations as part of Ex FLYING FALCON in July.

In a similar vein, but at a higher level, 3 (UK) Div Sig Regt is working hard on UK-French interoperability ahead of Ex GRIFFIN STRIKE. This politically high profile exercise will see French naval, ground and air forces working as part of a combined force that will exercise in and around the UK in April. The complexities at each level are significant, and hence a JFCIS commanded by Colonel Craft incorporating G6 staff for each service has been stood-up to ensure that this all comes together.

As you can imagine 15 Sig Regt (IS) will be intimately involved in all these activities – welcome on-board.

## Wanted

A recent audit of the archives of the Royal Signals Museum and the Wire Office revealed that a small number of back copies of The Wire are missing; the copies in question are as follows:

### All copies from 1948

If any reader has copies of these editions can they please contact the Head of Research **Martin Skipworth** on 01258 482683 or via [headofresearch@royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk](mailto:headofresearch@royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk)

The aim would be to facilitate either a short-term loan (whereby digital copies of the missing publications can be made) or a long-term loan/donation (which would allow the archives to be completed).



# NEWS FROM REGIMENTS



## 1st SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



CO Lt Col P R D Muir MBE  
RSM WO1 (RSM) J Scott

### Williams F1 Team Leadership and Management Event - by Capt Woolley

Over the period 19th - 20th Jan 16, 1 Sig Regt, assisted by the Army Recruiting Outreach Team (West Midlands) based in Stafford, hosted the Williams F1 race team for a leadership and management event. The event was organised by **Capt (Tfc Offr) 'Gaz' Woolley MBE** whose close friend **Mark 'Patts' Pattinson** is the Chief Mechanic at Williams F1. The key aim of the event was to expose and attract well motivated individuals to the opportunities available within the reserve forces. In addition, the event enabled members of 1 Sig Regt to understand the common leadership and management practices that are utilised within a performance sporting environment.

58 members of the Williams F1 race team arrived in Stafford on the evening of 19th Jan to a drinks reception and formal dinner night, organised by **Capt Dave Malortie**. The centre piece of the event was a Martini Williams F1 Car, driven during the 2015 season. In addition, OC Support Sqn, **Maj Jack Dempsey** had arranged for two distinguished guests to join us for the evening; In-Pensioners of the Royal Chelsea Hospital, **CSM James Lycett** and **Derek Layton**. They both added real flair to the evening and gave the Williams visitors an insight into life at the Royal Chelsea Hospital as well as comparison of what life was like during their military service.



*Parking in the Stafford Officers' Mess is tight... pictured during the evening reception were L-R, WO1(RSM) J Scott, Capt G Woolley MBE, Capt D Malortie, IP Derek Layton, Lt Col P Muir MBE (Commanding Officer), Jakob Andreason, CSM James Lycett, Rob Smedley and Maj A Dick*

On arrival, a number of briefings were conducted in order to develop a mutual understanding of the roles and leadership styles of both organisations. The Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Phil Muir MBE** led off with a brief on the role of the Royal Signals and exposed some of the key similarities between service in the high pressure, performance driven environment of F1 and the military. This brief was followed by an overview of the leadership code and associated behaviours by the RSM, **WO1 Jimmy Scott**.

The final brief of the evening saw **Mr Jakob Andreason**, the Chief Performance and Operations Engineer at Williams F1 delivering a brief on the role of the Williams team. It was clear from **Jakob's** brief that some of the issues experienced within the F1 environment are common to service in the military. Specifically, the long periods of absence from family, pressure to deliver against targets (albeit financial and not kinetic) and the requirement for unit cohesion and clear leadership across the force.

These were enlightening briefs allowing insight into a fascinating sport and the competitive and motivated individuals that work to keep the car on the track.

The briefs were followed by a fantastic meal within the Officers Mess at MOD Stafford and allowed the visiting team to experience dinner within a formal military setting. The entertainment included the Corps pipes and drums, followed by the usual name card banter. This provided opportunity for the Williams' Head of Vehicle Performance, **Rob Smedley**, to chip in and fine some of the Williams team for leaving their name cards to the mercy of their military hosts.

Mutual presentations were provided in the form of a bronze soldier statue from the Regiment and a Williams F1 rear wing from the race team to mark the event. A quick beer after dinner and the disciplined visitors departed, preparing for the command and leadership day that followed. The visitors from the Royal Chelsea Hospital ensured that the remaining Officers were entertained into the early hours.



*Best get that in the gift book!! The rear wing of a Williams F1 Car presented by Jakob Andreason)*

4 Site at MOD Stafford was the venue on 20th Jan. A crisp morning saw the arrival of the team at the site, where **Capt Brent Thorburn** and his outreach team quickly organised





them into pre-determined, cross department teams for the 'round robin' command task competition and insight into what the reserve forces has to offer. Once shifted into 8 equal teams and with a military team injected to add the pressure, the Williams visitors were fired up for action.

The round robin event saw each team compete in ten, 20 minute tasks all expertly delivered by the Outreach team. These included a blind folded mine field task, cheeky Trim Trail, a climbing wall challenge, Laser Clay shooting, an electric fence rescue task, 25m range, armoured vehicle guiding stand and a drop of battle PT to keep things lively. These were all designed to test the wit, strength, leadership qualities and cohesion of the teams.



*The Williams F1 formation jumping team rise to the challenge!!*



*The CO, 2IC and RSM note that it would take them twice as long even with a manual...the F1 Engineers making easy 'team work' of the 'build a bridge' task*



*Sgt Carter explains the similarities between the AFV436 and the F1 car!!!*



*Time for a Pit Stop? Chief Mechanic, Mark Pattinson takes the lead)*

**Bdr John Powell** led the Outreach team for the day and coordinated the command task leaders and ensured that the 'score board' was updated as the events progressed. It soon became apparent that the competitiveness of the visitors held no bounds and was not limited to the race track. It was also clear that their talents were not limited to mechanical engineering, with some of their efforts on the range putting the most experienced soldiers to shame.



*Sgt Dan Riches wishing he had a beard, whilst providing instruction on the 25m range*







*Targets Up....the laser clay pigeon shooting was getting competitive*

On completion of the event and following a wash up on what was achieved from the Outreach team, all of the visitors and instructors returned to the Officers' Mess for final photos with the F1 Car and the all-important prize giving.

The CO provided the closing remarks for the event, thanking the outreach team for their efforts and summarising all that had been achieved and experienced over the past 2 days. He was then able to award a prize for the best shot and subsequently the prize for the highest scoring team; a close drawn thing with only 10 points separating the top 3. The winning team, comprising of **Rob Smedley** (Fix we hear!!), **Dave Morgan**, **Michael Croft-White**, **Matt Bold**, **Chris Stafford**, **Chris Walker**, **Andy France**, **Martin Jones** and **Gareth Darke** took the trophy that will ensure a competitive nature remains between all of these individuals as they prepare for the 2016 race season



*Bragging rights for the next 12 months, let's hope that 2016 provides more trophies for the team*

A final coffee and the team departed for a banter fuelled bus ride back to Grove, having benefitted from the visit and provided a memorable experience for the Regiment.

**Mr Jakob Andreason**, Chief performance and operations engineer commented after the event:

“It was great to take our team out of their comfort zone, from dinner in the officers' mess through to the range of activities we undertook over the next 24 hours. It allowed us to bring the engineers, technicians, mechanics and all race operations personnel together to be challenged as a group, both physically and mentally, putting us into a new environment where we had to work together through a series of trials.

“It was incredible to see the structure of how the Army operates and communicates, as well as seeing the history and pride that they have as a unit. That sense of identity and being part of a team came shining through, and was inspiring for us all to see. It gave us the opportunity to learn how to better operate as a team ourselves, and to support each other to achieve our goals. The synergies became apparent between our two teams the more the challenges unfolded and it was a real privilege for us to have been part of this experience.”

This was a great opportunity for the Regiment to host the Williams F1 team and demonstrate to them what service in the forces has to offer. It was clear that there are common leadership and management processes adopted across the organisations and the event left a positive impression on both parties.

The Regiment looks forward to the next opportunity to attend an event with the Williams F1 team and wishes them all the very best for the 2016 season.

#### **Exercise ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER XIX** - by LCpl Gowlett

On Friday 13th Nov 15, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sig Regt Ski Team, comprising of 7 budding athletes departed Beacon Barracks for the Corps Alpine Ski Competition.

Upon arriving in location on Saturday night, a severe lack of snow was evident. The first day of training consisted of a morning team ski, followed by a 'ski off'. This then allowed for every individual to be professionally assessed and divided into ability groups. The next 3 weeks comprised of the skiers receiving instruction from army instructors and practicing a variety of techniques around the resort. The icy, snow-deficient race course managed to provide extensive training for all abilities; inspiring hope amongst the team in the lead up to the all-important race week.

Race week consisted of early mornings, cold days and delicious frozen bread rolls. The team managed to perform exceptionally well in each race with extra credit awarded to **LCpl Rob 'solid 10' Smith** and **LCpl Nick Woolley** who, prior to the camp, had only had 1 week of skiing experience. Overall, the team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the competition and took home plenty of silverware in a variety of categories. Pertinent to the success of the Regt, **Lt Jonny Gillespie** managed to claim a 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish.



*The team with their medals*





The next stage of the competition saw the 1 Sig Regt Ski Team set off for Serre Chevalier on the morning of 7Jan 16. Undaunted by a gruelling journey and lack of sleep, the team prepped their skis and hit the slopes for a few days training before racing commenced. The first day comprised of warm weather and torrential rain. In an attempt to raise morale, **LCpl Frank 'best skier on the mountain' Gowlett** cooked what was notably the finest spaghetti bolognese anyone has ever tasted. Ever! Throughout the week, the team skied consistently above their ranking but unfortunately finished the competition slightly short of Army qualification.

## 200 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj N Pryce-Jones**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) D Jackson**

Exercise **SPECULAR SHADOW** - by *LCpl Mann*



With the Man SVs loaded with the BFOT cam net and the bulldogs first paraded, 200 Sig Sqn were ready to move to Warminster to deploy on Ex SPECULAR SHADOW.

The 1X custom design for the deployment of our Bowman dismount systems provided us the opportunity to compare and contrast with our usual 20X set up. It incorporated a modern networking design into our older system, which allowed us to speed up deployment time and to reduce complexity without reducing capability.



After setting up the HQ, shift rotations were in full swing. With the biting cold and all of us fighting off frostbite, it wasn't uncommon for the night shift to turn into the 'Night's Watch,' building a great wall of kero heaters to fend off potential White Walkers most nights.

This exercise was an excellent and enjoyable learning experience. New ways of working and new challenges, as well as the further development of the cohesion of our troop really benefited the deployed elements of 200 Sig Sqn. We are now hoping for a break in the exercise pace to recover and consider all the lessons learnt over a very fast paced exercise period, in order to prepare for the challenges ahead in our training year.

A special mention needs to be given to the 1 Yorks RLC Chefs, who produced excellent food which kept morale high throughout the entire exercise.

## 201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Andrews**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R Horsburgh**

Exercise **MERCURY STAG** - by *LCpl Drummond*



*Sgt Riches explaining the 'Alpha Buck' competition*

In preparation for 201 Sig Sqn assuming the role of the VEG HQ as part of VJTF (L) later this year, it was time to start preparing the Sqn to reach the desired readiness state.

In order to complete this 201 Sig Sqn deployed on its second Ex MERCURY STAG since arriving in the UK. The exercise was a troop led CT1 training exercise whereby the Bowman troops within the Sqn completed a two week back to basics intense

Bowman education training package. This exercise consisted of two distinct training weeks; a week's theory phase that took place in barracks and a deployed exercise phase located at Swynnerton Training Area.



*Sig Omari and LCpl Goulding demonstrating their operating skills in the CP*

The in-barracks phase was made up of classroom based lessons including: voice procedure, fault reporting, convoy drills and A&P. The lessons were taught by Cpls from Delta and Foxtrot Troop, as well as representatives from the Sqn Ops team and the Regt MT. The lessons were designed to ensure that all CS Ops within the Sqn had





the required baseline knowledge, in order to deploy a Bowman Det. The week concluded with a 2 day IBCP and IBDP.

The second week consisted of a three day exercise during which, the seven deployed bowman detachments took part in a round robin of education stands including: Bowman education, A&P, site selection and det routine. Each stand was led by a Cpl who delivered their lessons and then assessed the set-up of each det.

Each det was then assessed on their attitude, skill and speed and the results were fed into an on-going competition to find the best det in the Sqn. After a successful 3 days, awards were given out for the best det set up and the best Det Comd amongst a number of other awards.

After a speedy but thorough turn around, both troops were ready to receive the final Tp Comd inspection for the exercise; just in time for a number of personnel to repack their kit to deploy on Ex STEEL SABRE with 1 ISR Bde.



*Sig Majasi facilitating LCpl Johnston's Landrover reversing practice*

## 211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj E Swift**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Davies**

### Exercise CULTURAL INDIA

In early November, **Sig Morgan** organised a troop development day to the National Memorial Arboretum designed to improve the cultural awareness within India Troop. The aims of the day were to raise awareness of those who had given the ultimate sacrifice for their country through previous wars and conflicts but also to improve the team cohesion within the Tp.

At the Arboretum, there were numerous inspirational monuments dedicated to the fallen from a variety of Corps and Regts. The Parachute Regt had a particularly interesting monument which showed a soldier dragging his parachute along the floor; but it was the Royal Corps of Signals statue of Jimmy (Mercury) standing tall and dedicated that was the most impressive. During the visit we discovered an interesting fact about the Memorial Chapel where we conducted a remembrance service. On one of the carvings within the Memorial Chapel, there is a small tribute to an artist's son. The image of the young boy playing with snails in a garden can be found in the carving and is supposed to serve as a reminder of the innocent who are affected by conflict.

After the Arboretum and following a team lunch we arrived at the go-karting centre in Lichfield. Things got very competitive when the 7 teams of 2 entered into an endurance race! The race was slippery and wet due to the rain, karts were flying into barriers and spinning out left, right and centre leading to a close race. The main straight was where most of the crashing took place both by accident and on purpose in an attempt to get around opponents. After excessive amounts of the show boating from the top teams the results were in. In first place and the narrow victors were team 3 with a total time of 59 mins 25 seconds, followed by team 4 with 59 mins 33 seconds (although **SSgt Marlborough** stills claims that he did win).

Overall the day was a huge success, it allowed the troop to let their hair down and relax after a busy period. It also gave new members of the troop a chance to get to know the people they work with.



*Ready to compete at the track*







## 2nd SIGNAL REGIMENT YORK



CO **Lt Col I R Hargreaves**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J B Stephenson**

Following its operational commitments year in 2015, 2 Sig Regt has transitioned to an 'Other Tasks' year supporting the high readiness Infantry Brigades under command of HQ 1 Division. In addition, the Regt will be supporting world-wide Defence Engagement tasks. We still have soldiers deployed in Nepal, the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe.

In recognition of the operational workload over the last 18 months, seven members of the Regiment earned military awards alongside the 2015 New Years Honours List:

**WO1 (RSM) John Stephenson** received the Meritorious Service Medal covering his last 20 years of service.

**Maj Paul Rose** received CGS's Commendation for his work introducing FALCON into Army service, including deployment to Sierra Leone during Op GRITROCK.

**Cpl James Kane** received CFA's Commendation for working at a level well above that expected for his rank whilst deployed in Sierra Leone.

**WO2 (SSM) Nige McDiarmid** received GOC FTC's Commendation for his leadership of his Squadron Rear Operations Group.

**Sgt Marc Del-Valle** received GOC FTC's Commendation for his Reserve recruiting efforts alongside 32 Signal Regiment.

**Cpl Gopal Gurung** received GOC FTC's Commendation for consistent excellence over multiple deployments in UK, Europe and the Far East.

**Cpl Pawan Rai** also received GOC FTC's Commendation for stepping up to cover several Squadron level roles whilst his YofS, FofS and FofS(IS) were deployed.

### SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj D Whitworth**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N McDiarmid**

#### Into the Unknown – BATUK - by Cpl O'Neill

So, after a slightly extended Christmas leave it was time to dig out 'The uniform' in hope that it would still fit after the festive period. After popping back into work for some last minute Jobs and clearance signatures, our journey to Kenya for 6 months had begun.

Huddling inside the tiny shelter outside the cookhouse at 0200 hrs in the morning, the rain trickled down a few worried and unsure faces as we all stood wondering if the duty driver was actually going to turn up. However, sure enough he was there right on time with his can of red bull and satnav. After throwing the luggage into the back (Just the one bag for **LCpl 'All I'll need is a pair of undies and some swimming**

**trunks' Cope**), we were bound for London for our morning flight to Nairobi, Kenya.

With a few first timers on board including **LCpl Williams**, there was super excitement in the air with the prospect of already qualifying for 1 days LSA - bless him!

It's not often we get the chance to fly with civilian airlines so we all made sure to make the most of the duty free, the airport breakfast and the standard Facebook selfie with an 'airport pint' (no matter what time of day it is). The flight itself was long and pretty straight forward and a self-amusing game of 'Spot the Squaddie pretending not to be a Squaddie' helped the time to pass reasonably quickly. We were greeted in Nairobi by **BATUK RSM** and his entourage before loading onto the bus to **BATUK rear** situated on **Kifaru Camp**.

After a reasonably good nights sleep under the mozzie nets at **BATUK rear**, we were treated to the 4 hour drive northwards up to **BATUK Main**. I am struggling to find the words to describe Kenyan driving standards but if I were to say 'Wacky Races vs mad Max III,' would that help?

With a comprehensive induction process at our new home in the CIS compound out of the way, it was time to hit the ground running. There was little time for sunbathing as the priority was to prepare the fleet of 84 Bowman FFR's, ready for the arrival of the first Battle Group inbound for Exercise 'ASCARI STORM'



*'First works parade anyone?'*

On the Sunday, we appeared to be on schedule with the vehicle maintenance so did manage to get the day off. Without hesitation everyone insisted on getting out and seeing some of the wildlife that Kenya has to offer. We had heard about a local animal orphanage that allowed you to get up close and personal with the animals including cheetahs. A short 'near-death experience' taxi ride later, myself and the team were hanging out with monkeys, ostriches and all sorts of other beautiful creatures. There was even chance to get a few selfies with the baby cheetahs! However, we were so tempted to leave **Sgt Hill** there after his finest impression of a monkey had us all in stitches.

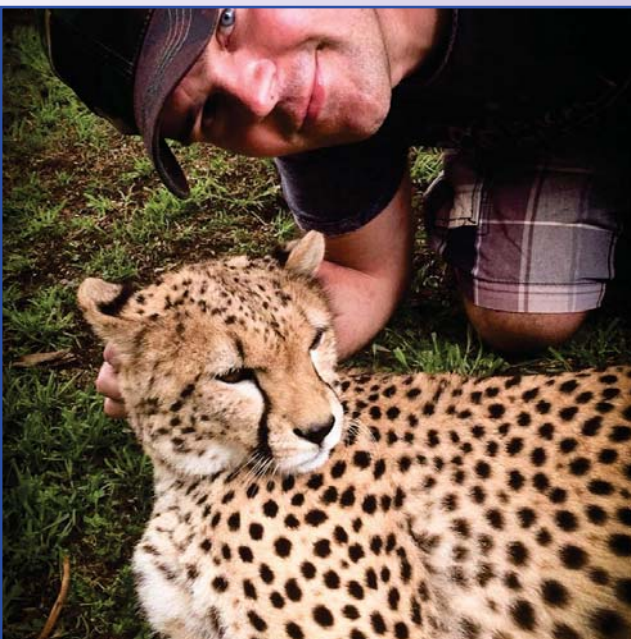




*Cheeky Monkey*

Since then we have been kept extremely busy overseeing the handover from BATUK to 2 RIFLES, handing over a modest 45 FFR's. The Boss, **Capt 'Cyrus' Karumba** seems to have a 'Work hard- Play hard' ethic so after 11 days of hard graft we are looking forward to a long weekend.

So far, Kenya seems to be a really beautiful place and we look forward to many more opportunities to visit the country.



## 219 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Ahsan**  
SSM **WO2 N Grainger**

**Exercise ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER** - by *Sig A Hatton, Sig S Shahi, Sig A Smyth*

The ski team set off from York on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> and after a 20 hour drive we arrived in Zell Am See, Austria. Unfortunately, it was not straight to bed for some much needed rest, but instead it was off to the hire shop to sort out equipment for the upcoming week which thankfully did not prove to be to much of a hassle.



*Sig Satkar getting to grips with his new environment*

Monday saw the first day up on the Kitzstienhorn glacier, with its reputation for severe cold conditions and high winds. Upon arrival though the conditions were not ideal as there had been little snow fall and quite high winds made the slopes quite icy in areas. For those who had skied before it was not too unpleasant, but for the beginners amongst us it was a real challenge. The group was placed amongst the ability groups from the advanced group right down to the newbies.

Week 1 saw the beginner group learning the basics of skiing such as how to traverse while wearing skis, hand position, ploughing and turning and gradually improving upon these skills as we went on, until most of the group no longer needed to plough and instead started to carve around the slopes. The week culminated with a ski off between all the beginner groups, giving us our first taste of slalom and opportunity to 'promote' within the groups. For the intermediate and advance groups it was a week of free skiing and then straight into gate training. The conditions and early season legs meant as people got back into the swing of things there were a few accidents, mainly resulting in little more than bruised egos. Unfortunately **Captain 'Crisp-legs' Banting** had a small fall, and, after getting up and shaking off it transpired to be a bit more serious than initially thought; a scan confirmed she fractured her knee, requiring a few days in hospital and an operation. The good news is she is recovering well but the bad news is she was unable to ski any more on this exped.

That weekend we decided to take a team trip to the nearby city of Salzburg and visited the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and the Christmas market; it was quite an experience.







*Some of the team enjoying the view*

With week 2 came a much needed fresh dump of snow so it was time for some powder skiing. It soon became apparent that no matter how determined a skier may be, racing skis combined with some questionable powder technique equal a buried skier! Quality 'faceplants' and 'ski de-kits' were on the cards for the snow badgers. After it settled down it was time to get back on with some gate training which the entire team took to well. Pub Quiz night on Thursday seemed to be the best bet for a victory for 2SR, however our local knowledge left something to be desired as we couldn't figure out where Ludwig van Beethoven was from!

This weekend's cultural trip was to Munich and another experience of a genuine Christmas market and our exploits were assisted by **Sig Kevin 'Kev' Wright**; being a second timer in Munich he became our official tour guide.

Week 3 saw the whole camp move to the Schmidt, this was exciting as it was a change of scenery and a change in slopes so we could put into practice what we had done over the last 2 weeks. In the afternoon the whole group had a ski off to see what group we would be in for the last week of training. The biggest change saw **Sig Adam Hatton** 'promoted' up several groups. Then it was back to gate training for the rest of the week. Wednesday saw a return to the Kitzsteinhorn and more gate training to prepare for the Seeding GS in preparation for Race Week.



*2Lt Yaxley leading the way*

With Race week upon us it was time to don the Lycra, wax the skis and set some times. With Individual GS, Team GS, Individual Slalom and Team Slalom, the week was going to be quite full on. By the end of each day everyone was pretty tired and cold. We had some good results with **2Lt Yaxley** finishing 4<sup>th</sup> overall and **Lt Dale** inside the top 20 most of the time. The beginners all beat their initial seeds and overall it

was a good set of results for the Regt. The last day of race week saw a fun dual slalom competition and prize giving.

To conclude, the trip was a great success with some good performances both in terms of result and in improvement of those who had only just started to ski 4 weeks earlier. Hopefully next year will provide an opportunity for them to return and hopefully push for some of the prizes.

## 246 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC        **Maj P Whillis**  
SSM      **WO2 Gopal Krishna Saru**

### **An attached Officers perspective – by 2Lt Eversleigh**

Upon completion of my Commissioning Course and gaining my first 'pip' I have been fortunate to be sent on attachment to 246 Gurkha Sig Sqn for 6 weeks to learn about what life is 'really' like in the Corps before I return to Blandford for the Troop Commanders Course.

After a long drive I finally arrived at Imphal Barracks in York on the evening of Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> Jan, eager to start my attachment with 246 Queens Gurkha Sig Sqn at 2 Sig Regt. I was met by my 'guide' for the next 6 weeks, **Lt Lee Kuizinas** and next day I had a quick orientation brief of the camp and then some CO's PT, which was good fun. The afternoon was filled with briefs and the opportunity to sit in on the squadron weekly O Group and see how the Sqn was being managed and what was on the forecast. It was also an opportunity to get to grips with the various personalities within the Sqn and begin to understand how it all works. The rest of the week was a series of briefs from around the Regt; of particular note to me was the brief from the regimental ops team as it highlighted how busy the Regt was, with its various commitments around the world and the impact that the pace of life may have on my future troop.

My second week was kicked off by a visit to Bramcote for the Corps Colonels visit to HQ Queens Gurkha Signals. It was a good chance to get to see what the other QGS Sqns were up to and experience another fantastic Gurkha curry. The journey back from Bramcote was punctuated by a series of interesting, engaging and topical conversations on current events in both the middle east and Nepal started by questions from **SSM 246, WO2 Gopal**.



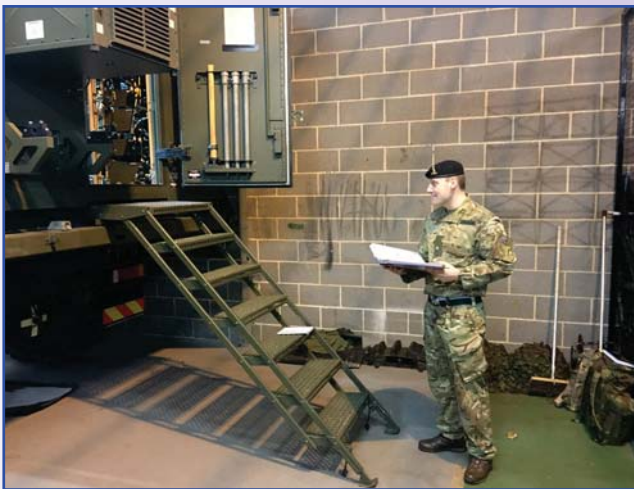
*Members of 246GSS during the visit to RHQ QGS*





I have also been involved in the organising of Race the Sun 2016, which is looking like it is going to be a fantastic event. It has been a real insight to see the amount of planning and consideration that goes into an event that has been running for years; I am definitely going to participate in this event in the future. I have also been fortunate to receive an excellent cultural brief from **LCpl Hom** who described the regions of Nepal and explained the current situation there. He also detailed the cultural makeup of the country and some of the many cultural celebrations that the Gurkhas celebrate.

**Lt Kuizinas** has also given me an insight into being a Troop Commander; from ensuring the troops were completing the right courses (prior to their deployment to the Falklands) to organising and taking part in a LCpl grading board as well as maintaining the busy schedule of FALCON vehicle inspections. I have not been 'working' all the time though and have enjoyed a number of social events in York city with members of the mess. I also travelled to Leeds UOTC for a recruiting event with **2Lt Marchant**, which despite limited recruiting supplies turned out to be a good event, and was followed by a night out in Leeds.



*FALCON det inspections*

Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with 246 and 2 Sig Regt; I would be delighted to work with QGS in the future. The ethic of working hard and enjoying themselves during their time off make them a pleasure to work with.

**246 GSS Development day: Imperial war museum & Old Trafford stadium, Manchester - by LCpl Gaurav**

Organised by **LCpl Gaurav**, 246 Sqn set off to Manchester to visit the Imperial War Museum and Manchester United Football Club Museum and also give an opportunity to members of the Sqn to deliver short briefs on relevant subjects throughout the day. The following articles detail some of the activities that took part during the day.

**Imperial War Museum - by Sig Tree**

Arriving bright and early, we were met by a Museum guide who talked us through what the tour was going to entail. Before the guide took us into the museum and gave us the chance to explore, **Cpls Kiran and Milan** and **LCpl Deephanh** delivered some short briefs to set the day into context. The Guide then took over and began showing us around, informing us in his opening brief that the Museum was designed by the same person who designed the Ground Zero

Monument in New York City and also showed us an artillery gun that fired the first shell of WW1. The layout of the Museum is in chronological order to follow the various conflicts, from WW1 through to present day, and offered a number of media to connect the visitor with the conflict; videos, presentations and display pieces really brought the conflicts to life and also offered a poignant reminder of the sacrifices of those that have gone before us. After 3 hours in the museum and then lunch **LCpl Gaurav** corralled us all together and we moved to Old Trafford, which is actually in Salford, to begin the next phase of the day.

**Manchester United Museum - by Cpl Santanu**

Most (not all) of the Sqn were really looking forward to visit the 'Theatre of Dreams.' On arrival we were met by a tour guide and he took us through to get some security passes, however **Sig Tree** managed to get locked outside as he was too busy looking at the impressive stadium. The tour started in the trophy room, **Cpl Robin** though was less than impressed with their apparent lack of European Cup trophies compared to other English clubs, and then walked around each stand; one of which holds over 25,000 people. Later we walked down to pitch side and then the manager's dugout. Unfortunately, we could not have a quick game of football on the pitch as it is carefully managed and policed! The tour concluded with us going through the home dressing room and then outside to the Munich Air Disaster memorial where **Sig Satkar** delivered a moving presentation about the disaster.



*246 GSS at Old Trafford*

**Munich Air Disaster memorial** –One of Manchester United Football Club's legends once famously said "You can change your religion, you can change your politics, you can even change your wife, but never, never can you change your football club." I believe in this statement and have grown up supporting Manchester United because of its rich history and footballing culture, its success and the production of young talents from its youth organisation. One of the most significant events in the club's history was the Munich Air Disaster which happened on the 6th of February 1958. I was deserving enough as club supporter to give a short verbal presentation to 246 GSS about the series of events which led to the Munich Air Disaster. The disaster happened when a British European Airways flight crashed on its third attempt to take off from a slush-covered runway at Munich Airport, Germany. The team was travelling from a European Cup match in Belgrade, Yugoslavia(now Serbia) against Red Star Belgrade. The flight had to stop in Munich to refuel because a non-stop flight from Belgrade to Manchester was out of the aircraft's fuel range. With the bad weather taking its toll, the







third attempt to take off resulted in the aircraft hitting slush on the runway which ploughed through a fence and eventually crashed into a house. On the plane was the Manchester United football team, nicknamed the “Busby Babes”, along with supporters, journalists and flight crews. 23 people died with 21 surviving. At that time Manchester United were trying to become the third club to win three successive English league titles and had just advanced into their second successive European Cup semi-final with hopes of winning it. They were a brilliant young team on the verge of greatness. After my short presentation, I showed the squadron a few places in Old Trafford which signified the importance of the Munich Air Disaster such as the Munich Tunnel, Munich Clock Tower and the plaque of the players who were killed in the air disaster. The squadron now has a better understanding of the disaster and the significance of it in the history of Manchester United FC.



*Sig Satkar presenting about the Munich Air Disaster*



### 3rd (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISION SIGNAL REGIMENT BULFORD



CO      Lt Col A J Smith  
RSM     WO1 (RSM) M Stowell

**Exercise KIWI SOLDIER 2016 - by Capt Richard Carr**

The morning after Regimental dinner nights usually consist of lower than average work levels and multiple caffeine fixes; not so for the 60 members of the 3(UK)DSR annual battle camp advance party who deployed to ‘sunny’ STANTA in Norfolk! With a weekend spent setting up the ranges, administration and accommodation for the main body of the regt arriving on the Sunday, even the famously cheery and optimistic **SSgt (SQMS) Andy Ghosh** might have allowed himself the occasional frown. This was, however, tempered by one or two social visits into Thetford to stock up morale by consuming flaming hot curry and ice cold lagers, not at all a terrible way to spend an evening on exercise!

With the arrival of the main body it was all hands to the pumps and right on time firing began at 0900hrs on the Monday morning. The aim of the first week of the exercise was to transition the regt from the very basics of ACMT through to LFTT live firing ranges at section level with live grenade. There were other high value ranges on offer for the lads and ladies of 3 Sig Regt to enjoy, including ICQB lanes and pair and fire team ranges with simulated battle noise and FF and OHF GPMG systems banging away nicely. All very exciting and with the extremely cold, but dry, weather in Thetford everyone was very keen to keep warm going up and down the ranges as much as they could! Despite the freezing conditions there was almost a potential heat injury as **Lt Gaz ‘Frank’ Lockwood** had to remain in the range hut all week operating the target sensors with only two radiators, unfortunately, set to maximum.



*Cpl Galyer operating the SARTS system that controls pop up targets on the ICQB range*



*Group shot of section following an exhausting run up the fire team attack range*

Throughout the week the regt turned over 60,000 5.56 rounds and 30,000 7.62 rounds into brass and disposed of 304 live grenades, with many firers throwing half a dozen grenades during the week, more than most have thrown in their career. Alas **2Lt Andy Boyce** could only look on in





dismay as he threw the only blind of the exercise, although some say that the throw was so shocking that the grenade actually refused to operate. All in all an excellent range week with tough mental and physical exertion required from not only the range staff and firers but the supporting staff too. The whole piece was co-ordinated exceptionally well by **SSgt (Trg Wng SSI) Craig Bate** who delivered an outstanding range package alongside his many RCOs.



*Frosty morning starts in Thetford*

With the successful completion of the 6 day range package it was now time for the second week of the exercise, and for something completely different. **SSgt Alex Clarke** put on a real treat for the 3 Sig Regt guys and girls in Bramley Training Area. The 3(UK)DSR 'Survivor Series' exercise began in earnest after a short coach journey to Hampshire. Following an overnight stay and briefs in the area maintenance building, otherwise known as the building used by the Scrap Heap Challenge TV Show, there followed a full day of round robin style stands. The stands covered everything from fire building, water survival and gathering skills, to shelter building and live food preparation. Judging from the smiles and the enjoyment everyone had killing, plucking and preparing their chickens it was safe to say that the Bear Grylls phase of the exercise had captured everyone's attention. After a full day of briefs the guys and girls separated into their sections and made their own survival shelters for the evening.



*Live food preparation stand*



*Cpl James 'Jimmy' Falconer getting past second base with his chicken*

With the wet weather now thoroughly closing in on us the main effort for the night was keeping the fire alight, and subsequently the morale high. All the guys managed to perfect their shelters, with some even managing to keep two fires running; **Sig Graham Smart** winning the award for the most trees sacrificed in the name of warmth over that 18 hour period! Come the morning it was now the next, most sneaky-peeky stage of the exercise.



*LCpl Buckley with his shelter*

All sections received confirmatory briefs from **WO2 (MTWO) Brian Saxon** and **SSgt Clarke** before their early morning departure. The teams had to avoid contact with the hunter force led by **WO2 (SSM) Kerry Mills** and the rest of 202 Sig Sqn. The hunter force were at this stage deployed into a conventional harbour area and conducting recce patrols in search of the 3(UK)DSR survivalists! The survivalists were given a scenario and over the next 24-36 hours they were to visit a number of 'Agents' played by select characters from around the Regt, all in disguise of course, and they had to conquer whatever challenges were laid on to be given rewards. The rewards were usually food based as by this stage it was a case of eat what you catch... unless you managed to bump into the **Padre, Capt Graeme McConville**, and convince him you deserved some stickies!







*Maj Jim Watt (OC Sp Sqn) and Maj Rachel Limbrey (OC 228 Sig Sqn) in their disguises*

With the cold of night moving in again, the survivalists were forced to seek shelter in some of the many improvised shelters throughout the training area, with many deploying the penguin technique of warmth sharing. Come the next morning the guys and girls were now thoroughly chin-strapped; fatigue and the weather had taken their toll on them. Following a dawn assault by the hunter force on a suspected enemy position the rest of the survivalists were now able to recover back to EXCON for a thoroughly well deserved bacon and egg breakfast and pat on the back for their efforts. Following a no expense spared TCV recovery to Bulford there was an incredible smoker laid on by **Sgt Chris Pollock** and the rest of his team of chefs with food and drink aplenty. The Commanding Officer addressed his troops and awarded the prizes; 'Best Field Firer' was awarded to **Sig Keates**, 'Best Soldier' was awarded to **LCpl Brunton** and 'Best Survivalist' was awarded to **Sig Sinclair**. Finally CO 3(UK)DSR had the honour of awarding **Sig Kayhan** with a promotion to LCpl for his performance throughout the exercise. Thoroughly demonstrating all the qualities of leadership and consistently setting the right standards expected of a Junior NCO. Sig, now **LCpl Kayhan** was awarded his promotion in front of the entire regt with an outstanding look of surprise and bewilderment plastered on his face. Overall a thoroughly enjoyable exercise delivered with imagination and enthusiasm from all staff and valued by all who attended.

**Exercise ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER / EX PIPEDOWN**  
- by Lt Zoe Andrew

On Friday 13 Nov 15, ten personnel from across the regt departed Bulford and headed towards Zell Am See, Austria for the annual Royal Signals Corps Alpine training and race camp, Ex ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER. After an 18 hour drive we finally arrived and spent the next couple of days preparing kit before training started on the Monday morning. With over half the team having never been on snow before it was going to be a busy and challenging four week exercise ahead.

The week didn't get off to the best start and by Tuesday afternoon the regt already had its first (and thankfully only) victim bedded down and fairly comfortable in a hospital bed. Luckily for **Lt Andrew** it wasn't a skiing related injury and after a couple of days in the hospital and a slight scare for the regt I was back on my feet and out on the slopes. During my absence the whole team had made good progress and even the novice skiers were beginning to look like pros, if not at skiing at least at falling over.



*The team looking confident*

The second and third weeks of camp saw everyone take to race training, in some fairly bad conditions. With most of us not expecting to experience rain at 3000m there were some long, dark days on the glacier and alpine skiing was certainly not the picture of sunshine and happiness you see on the posters. However, by the end of week three the conditions had improved and after a couple of days of snowfall, we were no longer skiing on ice and fake snow. This allowed us to get underway with the racing, starting with the GS seeding race, the team performed well with three of the teams experienced skiers seeding in the top 30 and the rest dotted around the middle third and vitally all getting a recorded run for the seeding.

The final weekend in Austria saw the Austrians celebrate Krampus. Krampus is a half goat, half devil horned figure, who during the Christmas season punishes children who have misbehaved. The festival held in Zell Am See sees local men dressed as Krampus parade through the town allowing pictures to be taken, once this is complete they are released and run from the main town square beating the spectators with birch branches. Thankfully everyone made it to race week without injury, either skiing or from Krampus.

Race week was cold but dry and conditions were clear for racing. The week started with the GS followed by Slalom with both team and individual races. After some good seeding results, it wasn't long before the more experienced racers started moving up the places, with **LCpl 'Chris' Cross** breaking his way into the top 15. By the end of the week even the novice skiers were beginning to get the hang of this racing and were successfully completing their races, with little fear the speed they carried also saw them move up the results list. Due to excellent racing conditions for the duration of the week, racing was complete on Thursday this allowed for Friday to be a fun mixed team dual slalom race before heading on the slopes a bit earlier in preparation for the prize giving.







*Race Week!*

LCpl Cross finished in the top 15 and picked up 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the junior category and both LCpl Leith and Sig Kendall finished inside the top 25 in a strongly fought competition. LCpl Cross was also selected as part of the Corps Development team and on the Saturday morning whilst the rest of us headed back to the UK, he headed off to France to partake in the Infantry training camp.

After a quick couple of days back in the office and some Christmas leave it was time to head back out on the slopes, with a slightly smaller team, this time to Les Contamines, France for the Divisional Championships. Arriving a couple of days before the racing started allowed us to settle into our accommodation and prepare our skis. On the Sunday racing started with the GS seeding race and with a fairly novice team the starting order was fairly random, however after a fantastic seeding run Sig Kendall moved up approx 40 places. After a couple of days racing everyone had begun to get their legs back in, the whole team were producing some consistent race times and beginning to move up the seeding, in some difficult conditions and down some testing courses.

A week into the competition and it was time to start the downhill training, thankfully the snow cover had improved and this allowed the downhill to commence. Very poor weather conditions meant that a lot of the next three days were spent in the café at the bottom of the slope willing the cloud to clear and the visibility to improve to allow racing to start. During the downhill training the team had a visit from the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Smith, who despite having not been on the snow in over a year got clipped straight into a set of racing skis and came flying around the mountain with the team, with only one minor slip up towards the end of his visit. Eventually the cloud cleared and the sun came out for the final day of racing the Super G, a completion from all members of the team in this event meant the regt had a consistent and injury free championships, Lt Andrew also managed to secure the female novice championship. Although none of the members qualified for the Army Championships, from a relatively novice team some great skiing was displayed and some talent certainly found for next year.



**Exercise ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER / Ex PIPEDOWN**  
- by Lt Dom Hedouin

The team got off to a good start at the initial meeting where the first question posed was “who has skied before?” to which about half the team were able to say that they had. How hard can Nordic skiing be...

The first people to deploy from the regt were Maj ‘Rus-dog’ Moody and Cpl ‘Crazy Trev’ Nelson, who had the unenviable job of getting from Bulford to Trysil in Norway, via Lillehammer to pick up enough skis, poles and servicing equipment to get a squadron on the snow, twice. Time was a luxury and with only two drivers for the 1400-mile journey.

Next out of the door was the main body, headed up by Lt ‘Dom’ Hedouin, this mirrored the advance party’s journey but at the steady speed of 67mph. Combined with passenger seats that faced each other, the journey was an intimate one, lots of staring at each other and uncomfortable silences over the two-day journey. Thankfully, the other half of the team was able to enjoy the relative luxury of a 4x4 HILUX, although only two people were able to drive it for the journey as LCpl ‘Tom’ Cunningham simply refused to give over the keys!

After the extended journey to Trysil (although not as long as 11 Sig Regt – but that’s another story), the team arrived to take over the comfortable apartments and get some sleep before Day 1 of Nordic skiing lessons.

Day 1 was interesting... for those who had been on skis before suddenly having two planks of wood strapped to your feet wasn’t so bad, for those who hadn’t would find the learning curve a bit steeper. With plenty of falls for everyone and interesting ‘trust’ exercises, the team was able to at least get to the point where they could shuffle across the snow, though they had no idea of how they would cover 15km in races to come.

The remainder of the week was almost entirely confined to classic skiing training, which for those who don’t know, is like running on skis in two small lanes called ‘loipes.’ The skis are as tall as you are and for some, like Sig ‘Jap Bar’ Franko, the best way of getting around is not to use your legs and just rely on poles and massive upper body strength.

The first injury on the camp goes to LCpl ‘I’m an NCO’ Davis, who was unfortunate to gash his leg open in the first week, leaving him pretty much stuck to the apartment for the majority of the following two. Unperturbed, he made the most of his time in Norway becoming the team chef.







*LCpl Davis, the resident chef*

During the second week the camp began skating, which is very similar to being on ice skates, but the skates are over 1.5m long. This makes tripping over yourself incredibly easy, but it can also lead to being able to move faster over shorter distances. Skating is the technique used for the biathlon races, which are generally shorter but involve range shooting and penalty laps for any targets missed.

Time on the ranges was a mixed bag, with some like **LCpl "Tash from the Falklands" Clarke** taking it in his stride and proving to be the best shot in the team, to others managing more 50/50 results. Thankfully, the expertise of the coaches meant that everyone would be able to hit the target at least once per race!



*Sig Thomson waxing skis*

After a third week of training and little snow the fourth was to be race week. There were three races, a 12km classic race, a 7.5km biathlon race and a 20km patrol race. With snow still a premium, finding enough of the slope to allow 80 racers to go around a loop was a bit of a struggle, but it was managed. One thing that was more of an issue, however, was the cold. For the two individual races, the temperatures dropped to -16 degrees, frost nip became an issue when racing in only lycra!

The first race was the 12km Classic, which began with a mass-start. Mass starting is chaotic, people and skis everywhere as people try and get away from each other and find their stride. Falls were plentiful which had an effect on the placing's for the team. Thankfully, no skis or poles were snapped during the race! Results for the team were promising, with **Cpl Nelson** coming in 16th, **LCpl Cunningham** 18th, **Sig Thommo** 19th and

**Sig Franks** coming in 24th in the Corps. In the girl's race, **Sig Williams** did well to come 4th. The cold did affect the team, with **Sigs Franks** and **Benson** having to spend time in the sauna just to thaw out!

The second race was the 7.5km biathlon. The weather was just as cold and dry. Thankfully, the resort was able to get some artificial snow pushed out onto the track which improved conditions. Top results from the race went to **Sig Thomson** who came 16th in the Corps, **Cpl Nelson** 17th, **LCpl Cunningham** 18th and **Sig Douglas** 19th. **Sig Williams** again came 4th in the ladies Corps race.



*Sig Williams on the biathlon race*

The next day was an admin day, which therefore meant eat, sleep and recover from the previous races - unless you were selected for the Military Patrol Race. In which case you then had to pack a daysack with 10kgs and prepare yourself for a 20km race. The lucky individuals selected were **Lt Hedouin**, **LCpls Clarke** and **Cunningham**, and **Sig Douglas**. The patrol race was the key reason why Nordic skiing is so well backed in the army, with the emphasis being placed on endurance, marksmanship, map reading and command tasks.

A special note goes to **Padre McConville** who came out to see what all of the fuss was about, and try it for himself. It turns out that it is much harder than it looks, as he took a serious fall on his first day on skis and dislocated his shoulder. Even so, he still managed to get it seen to in time to get some shooting on the range!

The patrol race was a bit of a beast. The route wasn't something that the team were expecting. Instead of going across country on tracks and slopes, they were tasked to climb to the top of one of the alpine slopes, followed by a very emotional descent down a ski-lift, with no warm kit on. Tempers were lost, skis and insults were thrown around the mountain and bums froze stuck to the chair-lift, but team 'Distinctly Average' completed the race, coming in 5th out of 10 teams and with that, the Corps camp was over.

The return journey back to camp was a long one, once again thanks to the max speed of 67mph and the enormous distance needed to travel. With an early depart from Trysil, and an even earlier depart from Kolding, the team managed to get back to Bulford in one piece, and all managed to get away in good time to enjoy some Christmas Leave and well-earned rest before deploying back out for Phase Two.

The team returned to camp on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January, less **Cpl Nelson** and **Sigs Swain** and **Benson**, but now having gained **Sig "Do You Know I Play Football?" White**. The journey to Obertilliach, location of the Corps refresher camp, was a long one, but thankfully more comfortable as the old van had been replaced with a nice new shiny one.



## Exercise PIPEDOWN

This was it, the culmination of 6 weeks out of the garages and initially the team thought they had a good chance of competing well. This was short lived when they saw just how high the standard of competitors was. The number of GB level athletes was surprising, and the number of experienced skiers was also high. In comparison, the Corps Camp was a largely novice event, whilst PIPEDOWN was roughly 60 per cent experienced. While this left the team feeling out-done, they none-the-less made the most of it, and set out to do their best in their races and to have fun at the same time.

The first race was the 15km Classic Individual, which due to the lack of snow, became the 15km upper body work out. With little to no stick to be had and a route that constituted 5 laps of a small loop, the team did their best and top racer was **LCpl Cunningham** who came 77<sup>th</sup> out of 170 competitors. Close behind him was **Sig White** who came 79<sup>th</sup>.

The next day came the 4x5km Classic Relay, and the team was made up of **LCpl Clarke** and **Sigs Franks, Thomson** and **White**. The race did not go so well, thanks to one of the team losing count of the number of the laps even though he only had to do two. Because of this the team came 28<sup>th</sup> out of 30 regtl teams.

With the Classic section of the competition complete, the team had some time to recover and prepare for the Biathlon section. The races would mirror the ones seen in the Classic; there was a 10km Biathlon Sprint and a 4x7.5km relay race.



*Team 'Distinctly average'*

The final race of the competition was the Military Patrol Race, and after the mountain climb in Norway, the team was nervous. Selected to represent the Regiment was **Lt Hedouin, LCpl Clarke** and **Sigs Thomson** and **White**. The race was interesting, from short rock climbs, to tennis ball (sorry grenade) throwing, from a blind run around a small track to a stretcher run, the race was much different than what was experienced in Norway. The team did well, coming in a highly respectable 16<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to this strong result, the team was able to climb up a place or two to finish overall 24<sup>th</sup> out of 32 teams.

The team met up with the Alpine Team and the CO to enjoy a steak dinner with a twist. If the team could finish their 700 gram steak plus all of their trimmings, they would be invited back again for another, free of cost. Needless to say, the team didn't struggle at all, but for some unexplained reason, the restaurant wasn't open on Mondays!

With the competitions done, the team returned back to camp in good order and were able to enjoy some down time before being released back to the squadrons. Many thanks go out to everyone who attended, even if it was only for Norway.

Top competitor in the team was undeniably **LCpl Cunningham**, with his high level of fitness and strong shooting ability; he was a strong asset and came 92<sup>nd</sup> out of 185 male competitors. Hardest worker has to go to **Sig Thomson**, who took part in every race and proved to be consistent by coming overall 114<sup>th</sup>.

The competition was a great experience for all, and hopefully enough appetites have been whetted to bring back more experienced skiers for next season!

## Dashain 2015 - by SSgt (FofS) Indra Limbu

As in every religion and faith groups, people around the world celebrate various festivals throughout the year. In the Nepalese calendar, Dashain is a major festival for the Gurkhas which is celebrated with much rejoice, full of colour and in a time honoured tradition. Every year family and friends make time on their busy calendar to reunite and celebrate this special occasion.

Within HQ Tidworth, Netheravon and Bulford Garrison, the Gurkhas, Ex Gurkhas (i.e. transferees), British Nationals (Overseas) of Nepalese origin and 2nd Generation Nepalese are dispersed around and serving under different units and cap badges i.e. R SIGNALS, REME, Mercians, Engineers and many more. With this in mind, **Maj Ganeshbahadur Gurung**, QM 3 (UK) Division Sig Regt (3DSR) suggested that Dashain 2015 should be organised collectively in Bulford and led by members from 3 DSR. This helped to bring all soldiers and their families together in one place and celebrate together as one single family. Key personalities from the garrison units and Nepalese civilians residing around the garrison were also invited.



*Children in traditional Nepalese attire*



*LCpl OM and his team serving traditional food*





The event was delivered with a minimum resource on the 10th October 2015. A small group of committee members worked hard behind the scenes to meet high expectations under the direction of **WO1 (FofS) Pratap Ghale**. The catering team consisting of just three chefs prepared an exquisite Gurkha curry for more than 300 attendees. Also, the dance team

consisting of family members and professional dancers kept the audience entertained with their brilliant performances throughout the night. Overall, it was a huge success and one to be long remembered. I am hopeful that this will carry on into the future as events such as this will help us retain our rich culture and tradition.



## 10th SIGNAL REGIMENT CORSHAM



CO **Lt Col B J Fitch OBE**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J Attwell**

### 241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC(Des) **Capt Ben Edworthy**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) MC Beckett**

#### **BATUS** - by *SSgt Taletawa*

2015 was a chaotic year spent away from home and family. I had just finished a 3 year posting in Nicosia, Cyprus and found myself on a temporary posting to BATUS. I was excited, though at the same time worried about moving back to the UK before leaving the family in Bicester and flying off to Canada; however, it was an opportunity not to be missed.

I was posted to the targetry section as SQMS /troop staff. The section dealt with targetry for the 4 annual exercises (PRAIRIE STORMS 1-4) run on BATUS and targets ranged from figure 11's to tank targets. The targetry section is headed by the Royal Engineers and staffed by civilians and temporary multi cap-badged personnel. I had a troop to train, admin and deploy in 3 weeks on arrival. The task was made harder by the fact that no one handed over to me, but the continuity staff were always ready to help and direct various components of the work needed to prepare for the exercises. The meticulous planning and preparations were so well organised that all of us temporary staff were always informed of the day to day tasks.

The targetry preparations required the troops sit in on a 3 day course as the systems were electronically controlled and due to the immense size of the training area (size of Wales) the troops needed sound knowledge of the Mechs as it was a case of DIY(tools supplied) when there was a breakdown of kit. On the last day of the course depending on their marks they were allocated ranges. The Mechs then had to be taken and placed in pre-scouted sites and built up ready for action. The targetry figures had to be loaded onto the right Mechs to correspond to the range scenarios. The tight schedules with early mornings and late nights, coupled with driving around the training area before, during and after live firing, is an experience not forgotten easily.

Of course it's not all work as the adventure training packages on offer are some of the best. This ranges from sky diving, rock climbing, horse riding, glacier walking, canoeing and kayaking. The opportunities were available throughout the exercise season and some found themselves going more than once.

I have learnt a lot from this deployment: especially operating in a multi cap-badged environment and working similar to an

operational deployment, training with live rounds. Seeing the various components of the exercise working together, from the exercising troops movement coordinated by the ops and safety staff - through to the scenarios coordinated by the RCO's and range controllers - one has to stand back and marvel at the planning and coordination work that has taken years through trial and error to be one of the best training packages on offer.

I would recommend the posting to any budding SNCO's who want a challenge to their normal working life to help train Combat platforms and Infantry and their support elements, and gain wider understanding of defence capability.

#### **Falklands Deployment** - by *Sig Georgia Routledge*

On the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015 I deployed to the Falkland Islands for a 6 month tour to be a part of the Cable Maintenance Installation Section (CMIS). The section was run by the capable **Sgt Cracknell** and **SSgt Malcolm Osbourne**.

During our time in the Falklands we had free time to take part in extra-curricular activities for CMIS. **A/LCpl Christopher Blackburn** took it upon himself to organise a CMIS visit to Pebble Island to see the various wildlife, which was unique to the Islands and a superb experience. I also took part in a leadership and development course for 5 days in the local town of Stanley (Falklands).

We took part in various activities on camp such as BFSAI Tri-service Crossfit Games where myself and **LCpl Allsopp** made it to the Army team; it was a huge event held in London Gym.

**LCpl Allsopp** made an amazing effort by deadlifting 140KG, beating NAVY and RAF female personnel which gave us a great advantage and we placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the BFSAI Tri-service Cross fit games.

CMIS was without a doubt the hardest worked section in ISS, with **Cpl Brown** leading the jobs in the section. We were also tasked with some work that had come up in the Ascension Islands that was to be run by **Cpl Bates**. **Cpl Bates** and I travelled to Ascension to install a new internet feed and to maintain the current systems. We also took time to enjoy the unique sights of the Ascension.

All in all, my time in the Falklands was extremely enjoyable and a time to consolidate my trade skills. It was an opportunity to work on live circuits both installing and fault finding. This valuable deployment has given me and my peers a new found confidence to work unsupervised on more complex tasks. The Falklands gives you so many opportunities to further your trade knowledge and life experience; I would recommend it to anyone.



## 225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj O Finnie**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J Barratt**

### Detachment to BATUS, 2015 - by LCpl Ashmore

Easter bank holiday 2015 and I was heading out to a cold Canada. I worked as part of a 6 man team which broke down into three pairs, whose primary aim was to maintain and trouble-shoot the Target Engagement System (TES) on the vehicles and weapons. A little side job my call sign had also been tasked with was safety staff for the OpFor; this was early starts and long days but made life a lot more interesting especially when it poured down! Bogged in with Maj Page (OA) flying above laughing at how many vehicles we were still yet to locate as we fight mud and ditch to survive the rattlesnakes' slippery grasp. He truly had the easy life up there. The plan was simple with TES – fit it, fix it, take it back in and clean it, but this also came with a lot of explaining and maintaining.

I worked through all 4 PRAIRIE STORM exercises. On the third prairie leading into the fourth, the OC was going through a Hand Over Take Over period and during this rewarded numerous call signs for their work. During this time myself and fellow colleague **LCpl Newby** (also Royal Signals) managed to earn ourselves a Commander's Coin. LCpl Newby had stepped up as part of his pair due to his commander being ill (he'd ran out of moustache wax – Cpl Vella AAC – Prairie Tash Master 76D) and took charge, I managed to get TES onto every rifle in every PS Ex without fault and in the best speed because I also had to help out with the team to get the vehicles complete too.



It wasn't all work though, and I was able to escape to Trails End camp for some well needed AT -Ex Ghost Run, a canoe expedition experience on both lake and river. The first day was spent getting to grips with the boat and how it worked from the front to the back. I soon realised the front was the place for me - you sunbathed until the rapids and even then I still managed to do very little to affect the boat. I liked swimming - what can I say? The second day was super-hot and when we got to Ghost Lake it was bustling, so the falling out and splashing around as per the day before was much less! We moved onto the river, and the experience got more and more serious. We were packed with barrels full of clothes and food with the plan of covering around 35k distance for the day, experiencing as much of the river as possible. We achieved this, although it was eventful!

By far the best part of this experience was in British Columbia, on the River Kootnay. Day one was a stroll to get to a scenic view, looking out from the cliffs onto waterfalls and blue skies. Day two was when we met our first major rapids and I remember myself and **Cpl Gray** spending a lot of the day in the

water (again!) Moving into our final day, we knew we were going to pass through a gorge called "squaddie surprise" and I would be lying if I said it didn't surprise me. We managed to lose a barrel of kit, a paddle and the waterfall we were passing through I decided to pass it for a further 500m at least, through no choice of my own unfortunately. I was now in full panic mode due to a life and death experience. The lights flashed before my eyes and all that business, that's for sure.

My time in BATUS was great and I strongly advise anyone of any rank presented with the opportunity to work in Canada to take it. The work is long and hard at times, but the opportunities given to you outside of work, and the free time you may have on your hands, makes it a great experience. AT was just one of many things I got to see there: Vegas, Calgary, Edmonton, Banff.



*Canoeing on the Kootnay River*

### Squadron Christmas Function - Cpl Ryans

225 Sig Sqn held the annual Christmas function on wed 9<sup>th</sup> Dec, in the very prestigious Titanic Quarter Belfast. The idea to hold it in such an esteemed venue seemed like a brilliant idea at first, however, organising an external function in Northern Ireland has its challenges.

The committee, headed up by **Sgt Butcher** and consisting of **Cpl Macdonald, Cpl Ryans, LCpl Horsham and LCpl Silver**, set about organising what was to be a fantastic function.

After managing to convince the SSM to release the funds, we then set about organising the entertainment. **Cpl Ryan's** used his many contacts and managed to convince the band 'Just Adam' to play all evening for us - to the annoyance of his manager who saw the pound signs fall away from his eyes at such a busy period.

On the night the sqn arrived at the venue to be met by a red carpet and doorman to take them to the Bridge where they enjoyed an arrival drink. This was followed by **Cpl Booth** who kindly volunteered to take the sqn photograph on the world famous Titanic staircase. Once the photo and the arrivals brief were out the way we got the call for dinner which was in the form of a 3 course a la carte meal followed up later in the evening by a Nacho Buffet.

After the meal the sqn enjoyed a complimentary drinks package which was basically an hour's free bar which all guests took advantage of to the disbelief of the Titanic staff. The prize draw was the one of the highlights of the evening with some fantastic prizes up for grabs. The top prize going to **Cpl Gale** - Justin Bieber's brand new album! The Trade Training Wing can now work later hours with ease using **SSgt (Yofs) Kibble's** new all singing, all dancing coffee machine. All in all a fantastic evening enjoyed throughout.





## Inter-Corps Swimming and Water Polo Competition

- by Cpl Booth

The Inter Services Swimming and Water polo is an ideal time to get all the Corps swimmers and water polo players playing and training. Before moving on to the competition the Corps hold a training week.

Players are selected from the Royal Signals Inter Units Competition. The Competition is a fierce event where different units from within the Corps can enter a team or individuals and can get in a chance to win some medals and be selected for the Corps team. The Inter Units is mostly a replica of the Inter Corps, so the coaches can watch people play water polo and swim in their chosen events.

The training week is not only about swimming drills, it's also the starting block of building some team ethos and team bonding. On arrival at the training week all swimmers and water polo players were time trialled over all strokes and different distances. Once the time trials were over, the training was passed over to the Corps head coach, who wasted no time in putting us through our paces in the build-up. The training was split between three different standards so all abilities could gain something from the training. In the middle of the week a Royal Corps of Physical Training Instructor came down to give a brief on nutrition, training out of the pool and how to maintain our bodies after training.

On the Wednesday **SSgt Peart** sourced a game of water polo against Oxford. This was the ideal chance for the players to put into practise everything they had been taught and give the team a good run out before the competition itself. Oxford may have won the game but the Corps players never gave up and took a lot of experience away from it.

After all the training and hard effort everyone had put in to the training the Corps team were announced. 10<sup>th</sup> Sig Regt managed to get five people selected for the water polo and four of them selected for individual swimming events.

The second week saw everyone move from Gamecock barracks down to Aldershot St Omer Barracks for the competition itself.



The men's water polo came up against a strong Royal Engineers team who beat them and then drew against the Royal Armoured Corps to be knocked out of the water polo competition at an early stage. The men's water polo team went on to beat both the Intelligence Corps and AGC. The women's water polo team were very strong and placed third overall.

The men's swimming had put in a lot of hard effort during training at Gamecock Barracks. All the hard work paid off

once they entered the water against all the other swimmers. The men's team went on to smash the competition and win overall. The female team put in some hard work and dug deep in the pool to come up second against the AMS.

## 243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj E Ballard**  
SSM **WO2 P Brown**

### Exercise TIGER PISTE - by LCpl M Clifford

Ex TIGER PISTE is a Regtl Level 3 skiing trip to Val d'Isere, France. Our Gatwick departure was slightly delayed due to ice on the runway, but ground staff swung into action and we were soon on our way.

We landed at Grenoble and continued our journey by coach up through the mountains to the resort. It snowed heavily all the way and as we got closer to the resort it seemed to glow like a winter wonderland. After checking into the Ski Lodge the hot food and comfortable bunk beds were a welcome break from the Haribo sweets and cramped seating on our transport.

The first day of our skiing adventure began with safety briefs, the issue of ski wear and most importantly our ski passes. With the admin complete, we were soon on our way to the slopes for the first of many lessons. It was immediately apparent that not everyone was steady on their skis and by the close of the day there were some sore body parts. Notwithstanding the frustrations involved when learning a new skill, everyone kept their sense of humour.

Before the second full day had gained any momentum, we witnessed the birth of a character which would stay with us for the rest of the trip; **Sig Daniel 'Wrecking Ball' Evans** was a regular source of amusement to our instructor and the group. He was like a heat-seeking missile, always managing to wipe out someone nearby, then apologising whilst using them as a brake to slow himself down. Over the course of the day, the first of the basic skills, snow plough and plough turns were mastered to varying degrees in preparation for more difficult disciplines.



*LCpl Pretty leading the group in a turns exercise*





It wasn't long before we had the chance to employ our new abilities moving from the nursery slopes to the 'green' runs further up the mountains of Val d'Isere. This didn't prove too much of a challenge for most, but **Sig Evans** clearly found it to be an uphill struggle and **LCpl George Horsham** got a taste of France's finest snow on numerous occasions. After a well earned lunch at one of Val d'Isere's best ski lodges we stretched our new skills, tackling most of the green slopes. After several falls, better known as 'cream ins' and an impromptu visit off piste by myself, the day's skiing came to a successful close. The evening's après ski was a welcome rest from the slopes; the UCPA hostel laid on an evening of entertainment with a live band and party games, including tug of war.



*LCpl 'NoPro' Howarth, LCpl Among and LCpl Pretty resting*

Thursday soon came around and the rest of the group had progressed onto the blue and red runs; bigger, faster and steeper which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. The advanced group had upped the ante further still by progressing to the black slopes where **Sgt John 'Tomba la Bomba' Connor** showed a clean set of heels to all his peers. The last day culminated with testing and a final free ski. **LCpl Roscoe** and **Cpl Pye** rejoined the group in order to gain their Ski Foundation 1(SF1) qualification, which our star novice **LCpl Jake Morris** had deftly completed the previous day. The more advanced of the novice disciplines, traversing slopes and plough parallel turns to reciprocate were assessed to confirm our competence.



*A picture of contentment*

The majority of the group came away SF1 qualified; even the 'Wrecking Ball' did us proud. From there it was back to the UCPA for debrief with Bibi, who had been our instructor for the week. He supplied some local fruit wine and congratulated us all on a successful week. From there it was a quick tidy up and heads down ready for the long trip back. Overall, the expedition proved to be an excellent challenge and a great experience; which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

## 251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Darke**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N Cansfield**

### Foreign and Commonwealth Office Visit - by SSgt Wood

Members of 251 Sig Sqn once again deployed to London, only this time for a tour of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The FCO is responsible for safeguarding the UK's national security, increasing prosperity by promoting exports and investment, and supporting British nationals around the world through consular services.

So after a traffic free drive into London we rendezvoused with **WO2 (YofS) Beerling** at Wellington Barracks and then walked to the FCO where we met our tour guides, Alma and Tara, and cleared through security.



Alma and Tara were very knowledgeable and provided an insightful guide into the elaborate workings of the building with its architecture in the Italianate style with a number of allegorical figures on the exterior.

All in all a good day was had by all. We finished the day off with a quick pub lunch before our drive back to Aldershot.





## Exercise MERCURY GLACIER - by Sig Willis

On 14<sup>th</sup> November nine enthusiastic members of 251 Sig Sqn departed St. Omer Barracks for Zell am See, Austria to take part in the nineteenth iteration of the four week R SIGNALS training camp. The overall aim of the exercise was to prepare those more accomplished skiers for participation in the Divisional and Tri-Service competitions. That said, the culmination of this training was down hill racing between the various Units in the final week and was not without a competitive edge.

Within our team were varying skiing abilities, ranging from those that had never stood on a pair of skis (including myself) to the “veterans” of this exercise such as our team captain **Lt Sam Hodgson**, **Sgt Jamie Hatch** and the young(ish) pretender **Sig Stu Hobbins**.



The majority of the four weeks were spent on the Kitzsteinhorn glacier outside the neighbouring town of Kaprun, with the skiers being broken down into groups, dependent on their abilities. Having not had any snowfall for a number of weeks prior to our arrival, the first week seemed less like skiing and more like ice skating, particularly for the novices. However this did not deter some from learning rather more quickly than others, as was the case with **Sig Jordan “Daring” Edwards** (despite the number of times he fell and continued to fall throughout the exercise).

Following a substantial downfall of snow after the first week there was a marked improvement from almost everyone taking part, but particularly the novices, who even got to have a taste of the slalom and giant slalom events they would be taking part in on the final week.



Not all of the exercise was spent “thrashing” ourselves on the slopes, as the teams were left to their own devices on the weekends. With **SSgt (YofS) Matt Bradley** ever leading the way when it came to the social side of things we took the opportunity to take in some of the local culture, visiting the Hohensalzburg Fortress overlooking the city of Salzburg and the annual Krampus festival in Kaprun, which was an experience to say the least!



When race week arrived, despite having one of the more inexperienced teams, the sqn put in a gallant effort, with notable individual performances from **Capt Jo French** and **Sig Josh “Les” Dawson**. But as always it was the taking part that counts.

Despite the horrendous fourteen hour drive back, this certainly wasn't the worst way to take us up to Christmas leave.

## 251 Signal Squadron CO's Cup Cross Country - by LCpl White

On Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January, 6 members of 251 Sig Sqn flew to Northern Ireland to take part in the annual CO's Cup Cross Country race. The team consisted of **Sgt Cunningham**, **LCpl Pretty**, **LCpl Gomes**, **LCpl Wright**, **LCpl White** and **Sig Daobry**. All regular cross country runners for the Sqn, we were a quietly confident, fit and strong team. Having won the competition for the last 2 years in a row, there was a lot of pressure to bring the cup home again.

Our 3 day adventure started in Heathrow, where **Sig “wears maroon jumper anywhere” Daobry** spotted Lewis Hamilton and decided to chase after him like a man possessed to try and get a photo with him. He was denied. As if we weren't star struck enough by this point, we even shared the flight to Belfast with TV actor James Nesbitt. At this point **Sgt Cunningham** decided to tell us she was scared of flying. Naturally we tried our best to make the flight as uncomfortable and terrifying as possible for her.

After a relatively smooth flight we landed at Belfast City, got picked up and made our way to our accommodation. Race day quickly arrived and the conditions were less than desirable; cold, wet and windy. When we found out that the route was the same as last year, morale quickly sank. We remembered just how horrible this course was; basically 1 continuous hill rep for 45 minutes, which we described in great detail to **LCpl Gomes**.

The female race was 4 miles long (2 laps around) and the males, 6 miles (3 laps). After the first lap I quickly found myself wondering if all the eating and drinking over Christmas was really worth it (it was!) 45 minutes later we had all





finished in respectable times with **Sig Daobry** coming in first for the Sqn, followed by **LCpl Pretty**, **LCpl Wright**, myself and **LCpl Gomes**. We were all muddy, wet and ready to make the journey back to the homeland.

We paraded in the gym for the prize giving. **Sig Daobry** was awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Male and **Sgt Cunningham** won 1<sup>st</sup> Place Female. Overall we came second out of all the sqns that took part but unfortunately would not be bringing the trophy home this year.

#### **Exercise MERCURY NORDIC GLACIER** - by LCpl Atkins

A long time ago, in a garage far, far away, 251 Sig Sqn received an unexpected phone call from a certain **Lt Nathaniel Ayling** from 241 Sig Sqn, offering a month of Nordic Skiing to a handful of soldiers if they so choose to enrol on the adventure, three of which did. Before they knew it, **Lt Nathaniel Ayling**, **Cpl Matthew Spain**, **LCpl Daniel Atkins** and **Sig Jamie Lubbock** set off on their 1500 mile journey to Trysil, Norway. A team comprised of complete beginners, not knowing what they were walking into finally arrived 2 days later, after what one can only describe as 'the journey from hell.' Nonetheless, after settling into their cabin, which turned out to be rather pleasant, **Lt Nathaniel Ayling** stepped up and prepared dinner for the team, for a very hungry **Cpl Matthew Spain** in particular. Upon finishing, the team turned in and got a well deserved night's sleep, anxious about what the following day would entail.

After being issued kit it was time to start skiing - a little easier said than done. However, the camp had spared no expense and hired true professionals in the sport from both the local area and further afield, some of which brought Olympic experience with them. Everyone soon learnt the basics and approached learning the more niche fields of the sport with enthusiasm and eagerness. It was at this point the camp was split into different groups depending on experience and talent. As a rule of thumb, newcomers were placed into groups three and four, and this was where we resided for the remainder of the camp.

Unlike conventional skiing, or at least what most people associate with as skiing, Nordic Skiing is what can only be referred to as a 'fit mans sport'. You would hear another skier or instructor mention how after the camp was finished having worked at such an altitude would mean we would be remarkably fitter than when we first arrived. Personally, I think it was more down to the fact that every single day, as long as weather permitted, the camp exposed the trainees to as much 'ski time' as possible. By this I mean two skis a day, a Classic ski in the morning, a Skate ski in the evening and some shooting practice on the range in between. However, this did not affect the team's morale, as throughout the camp the 10 Sig Regt team were known as 'The Morale Team,' a name which stuck for the entire month.

As fast paced and busy as the camp was, it also offered opportunity to see Trysil, during the day and night and it would have been rude to not visit the local taverns for a taste of Norwegian 'after ski.' Unfortunately, due to the time of the year that the camp was held, the resort wasn't actually open for alpine skiers. This didn't dishearten **Cpl Matthew Spain**, **LCpl Daniel Atkins** or **Sig Jaime Lubbock** however and they still dressed up and headed out to see what Trysil had to offer, and as expected, it didn't disappoint. It appeared that even with the slopes closed, the fire of 'after ski' was still very much alight.

Due to the physical nature of the sport, and pure distance the teams were covering, in some cases it exceeded 15kms in a single session, a lot of calories and energy were burnt. Fortunately, **Lt Nathaniel Ayling** and **Sig Jaime Lubbock** came to the team's rescue, feeding the furnace for the entirety of the camp, and doing so in a manner of which would put professional chefs to shame. With a little imagination and the aid of some most welcome CILOR, the chefs managed to rustle up all kinds of treats. The instructors also enjoyed the cuisine on the nights when we hosted them, most notably one pie prepared by **Lt Ayling** took the prize.



As the camp entered its final week, and everyone had had enough time to get to grips with the art that is Nordic skiing, it was finally time to add a competitive component to the sport; it was time to race. Eager and ready, the races started, the first of which was a skate ski. The 10 Sig Regt team did not disappoint, most notably with **Sig Jaime Lubbock** placing 7th, giving the team a strong starting position on the leader board.

A day's rest was followed by a 12km classic ski, conveniently placed on a day with temperatures colder than -15 degrees celsius, causing some skiers difficulty in performing to their usual standard.



A Biathlon using the skate technique followed after another day's rest. Again, due to the team's performance, we placed in a respectable position.

Last but certainly not least, the final race: a 27 km patrol race using the classic technique that also required the team to carry 40 kgs divided between the 4 racers, not including





personal water. On top of all of this, the race included command tasks implemented at certain points, the most challenging being a stretcher carry which was cruelly placed just after ascending what **LCpl Daniel Atkins** described as 'Mount Doom.' 7 hours later, and a tactical 'lion bar pit stop'



by **Cpl Matthew Spain**, the team had finally finished what can only be described as an emotional and physically demanding month. To the team's delight an early night was had, concluding 10 Sig Regt's Nordic adventure... until next year anyway.



## 14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE) HAVERFORDWEST



CO **Lt Col Stoter**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Robinson**

### 223 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Francis INT CORPS**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Wellstead**

#### Exercise WYVERNS ASSAULT - LCpl Banks

During the period 18 – 22 Jan 16, 223 Sig Sqn deployed on Ex WYVERNS ASSAULT to Sennybridge training area, Brecon. This exercise was designed to take the sqn back to basics and remind us of the fundamentals of soldiering. The aim was one of developing leadership, improving self reliance in the field, building personal robustness and developing confidence in leadership roles.

The sqn departed from Cawdor barracks early in the morning of the 18th Jan for the journey to Brecon. The timing of this exercise allowed the sqn to sample the excellent weather on offer in Brecon around this time of year. Following our arrival, **WO2 (SSM) Wellstead** led the Sqn on our insertion tab to the harbour area, explaining on the way the importance of route selection and spacings when moving across ground. The first phase of the exercise was centred on teaching basic soldiering skills including lessons on occupying a harbour area, fire control orders, cam and concealment, harbour



223 Sig Sqn on patrol

routine and judging distance. Soon after arrival in the harbour area, section commanders and 2ICs were assigned and the 'digging in' phase began with some having more success than others, notably **LCpl Stuart 'Chins' Barr** who quickly had to learn to become a contortionist in order to sleep among the mess of roots which occupied his shell scrape.

Whilst the troops were undertaking these tasks **LCpl Alex 'Small' Webb** was introducing the back end of his Man SV to the Drover's Arms and followed this with managing to get the truck stuck in the woods requiring rescue by **Sig Johnny 'Bingers' Ingram**. During this phase **WO2 (SSM) Wellstead** and **Captain Cook** delivered detailed lessons and demonstrations on conducting section attacks, focusing on command leadership skills and formulating an appropriate plan of action. Following the learning phase, the tactical phase began and whilst most of the sqn settled into harbour routine with relative ease, **LCpl Ian 'Baggage' Smith** decided to do several laps of the harbour area on return to his shell scrape from stag. This turned out to be somewhat of a swan

song for him as he was removed from the exercise the next morning due to an illness which obviously played havoc with his navigation skills.

The final day of the exercise began with 3 section lead by **Cpl Colin 'Neon Blue' McCabe** leading the sqn on a patrol to the bergen cache in order to prepare for the final section attacks. One of the highlights of this patrol was **LCpl Sam 'Gonzo' Shears** leaning tower of admin that caused him to face plant on arrival.







*LCpl Hooley ignoring the SSM's advice and getting bogged in!*

The exercise culminated in a series of complex rolling section attacks over challenging terrain putting into practice all the lessons learned throughout the week and giving the section commanders an opportunity to implement leadership skills built on over the duration of the exercise. Overall the exercise was a success allowing the sqn to get back to basics and return to the fundamental skills required to function efficiently in adverse field conditions. All of this sets the sqn in good stead for further exercises to follow throughout this year.

## 226 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Watson**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) O'Reilly**

### Exercise TROJAN TRAINER - LCpl Pearson

In the last week of November, 640 Troop visited their American cousins from 66 Military Intelligence Battalion, Charlie Company based in Wiesbaden, Germany as part of Ex TROJAN TRAINER, the bi-annual joint training on the highside detachment that both units operate. The journey from the most Western part of Wales was uneventful, until France where we hit traffic. About two hours and 2 miles later, after possibly the worst game of eye spy ever between the two cars via the walkie-talkies, all cars were filtered off the motorway. That's when we saw the Gendarmerie, toolled up, checking cars in the aftermath of the Paris attacks the week before. We finally arrived at our destination after an 18 hour journey.



*640 Tp and their American counterparts*

The next morning after a welcome greeting and schedule for the week from Warrant Officer Kopas and a catch up with those we have met before, both parties headed off site to the location of the American detachment. The training over the next few days mainly consisted of an introduction to the

setup for the newer members of both troops, and complex data signals analysis techniques under the watchful eyes of more experienced individuals. This resulted in **LCpl Gomez**, of our intelligence corps brethren, and **Sgt Aprea**, a new addition to the troop, having confused looks on their faces.

The beauty of this exercise was that it coincided with two main events in the calendar for America and Germany: Thanksgiving and Christmas markets, to the excitement of some of the guys. So on Thanksgiving Thursday, **Cpl Davis** and **LCpl Turnbull**, on the invitation of an American friend, went for a family dinner. The rest of the troop visited the cookhouse, where the Tp OC was serving Thanksgiving dinner to the American troops, in a similar tradition as at British Army Regiments for Christmas dinner.



*R&R in Cologne*

The training phase was interjected, over the American long weekend, with a battlefield study day of Cologne and an R&R day where we went on a long winter walk via the obligatory Christmas market. The exercise concluded with a further training phase and visit to the American Dagger complex, before 66MI Coy hosted 640 Tp in an indoor paintballing competition. After a busy training year, the exercise was well appreciated; all in all, everyone is looking forward to next year's visit.

## 237 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Fogarty**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Peake**

### Exercise PRAIRIE STORM 4 - LCpl Marsh

In October 2015, 237 Sig Sqn deployed on Ex PRAIRIE STORM 4 as part of the Household Cavalry Battlegroup. The intent was to provide EW support during both the live fire and TES phase of the exercise.

Upon arrival in Canada, it became quite apparent to us that the Spartan vehicles that we were deploying with would be rather different to the GS land rovers that we usually work with day to day back in sunny Brawdy. Only the vehicle commanders and drivers really had any idea how to maintain





the vehicles as they had done the required courses. The other four crew members had to concentrate on making sure the EW and Bowman equipment in the back of the Spartan was in and working as comms between the vehicles was essential. Whilst most of the operators were in the 'dust bowl' working on the vehicles some of the lads got away on Adventure training; it was 7 days long, in and around the town of Banff. There was various activities in the package including mountain biking, hill walking etc. This turned out to be a really good experience for some of the guys, even **LCpl 'Fast Air' Letley** almost plucked up the courage to jump out of a plane before it was cancelled.

After the 7-10 days preparation in the dust bowl we deployed on the ground as a 4 sensor baseline with the SGC deploying with BG main. For the first couple of days all 4 sensors were deployed with B Sqn, this included surveillance troop, the snipers and an attached element of Desert Hawk (DH3), provided by the Royal Artillery. We practiced moving around the battlefield with the HCR as we had never done anything like this before. In the second half of the week we were deployed to a location with DH3 to provide indicators and warning for B Sqn whilst they moved around the battlefield attacking enemy position, a real insight to future capability.

The second week of the exercise quickly came around; the sensors were split up between different sqns, Sensor one and four with B Sqn, Sensor two with C Sqn and Sensor three with D Sqn. This was to show them how we could provide indicators and warning for them and so they could enlighten us on how to move around the battlefield quickly and efficiently.

Just before the final phase of the exercise started, **LCpl Challenger**, who was expecting his second child was sent back to the UK after his wife gave birth (convenient timing!) For the TES phase of the exercise each Sensor was again deployed with a different squadron and each vehicle was fitted with the TES kit. We again provided indicators and warnings for each of the sqns, this time against live enemy targets. Starting with little attacks against small packets of enemy Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFV), progressing to a final attack on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the exercise.

The exercise finally came to an end, and after a very long and rigid inspection of the vehicles we were finally free! A few of us managed to see the delights of the local culture in Medicine Hat, as well as completing a bit of shopping! Overall it was a great experience which enlightened all of the soldiers of how we may be used in the future.

## 245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Hodges**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Craven**

### Oman STTT - by Lt Lumby

In early December, 14 Sig Regt (EW) sent a four man Short Term Training Team (STTT) to Oman to continue training and developing the Omani EW capability. This team consisted of **Lt Lumby**, **SSgt (Yofs(EW)) Cardall**, **Sgt Newton** and **Cpl Blythe**. The training was delivered in two phases, a two week long electronic warfare fundamentals course, delivered to a new class of 10 students, and a week long intelligence fundamentals course delivered to the 10 new students alongside the 20 students taught on the previous STTT in January.



*The STTT and their Omani students*

**Lt Lumby**, **Yofs(EW) Cardall** and **Sgt Newton** delivered the first lessons with the usual energy and vigour, only occasionally greeted by confused faces due to the language barrier. At these points, with a swift turn to the left and a helpless look at our resident linguist, **Cpl Blythe** mustered his best Omani accent and reiterated the concepts in Arabic. The follow up intelligence course was well received and opened the Omani's eyes to how important their capability was in the modern battlefield.



*Sgt Newton and Cpl Blyth instructing*

After the final week of the course it was time for the biannual international five a side football match. Again, the Omanis were on home soil and had been training in the baking heat but that didn't dampen the STTT(+1)'s spirit as they played their hearts out to a resounding 6-2 defeat. Star player goes to **Cpl Blythe** for showing the ability to creatively swear in two different languages.

### Exercise DRAGON'S PISTE - LCpl Smithers

What better way to start the New Year off than a week of AT, no less in the magnificent French Alps! For many, myself included, Ex DRAGON'S PISTE offered the chance to ski for the first time and earn the SF1 qualification. Volunteers from across the Regiment set off on a near 24 hour coach journey on a Friday afternoon. For those unfamiliar with the location of 14 Sig Regt (EW), a cursory look at the map will demonstrate the formidable distance of Brawdy to our first port of call, Dover. The ferry crossing was then followed up by a traverse of France to the South Eastern Savoie region.







*A sunny day in Val Thorens*

Upon arrival in the resort of Val Thorens, nestled up at 2300m above sea level, we were astounded by the pristine peaks set against the sunshine, which remained with us all week. The perfect visibility, mild temperatures and good powder snow allowed us to take full advantage of most of the 68 marked pistes available. In the novice group we were soon progressing beyond the foundation green slopes and tackling more challenging blues and even a number of daunting reds.

Under the watchful eye of the experienced instructors we honed skills, such as parallel turns, as well as receiving theory lessons on safety principles and avalanches over a well earned hot chocolate at a local mountain chalet.

#### SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj Wilford**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) O'Connor**

#### March and Shoot - LCpl Pepper

Thursday 19th November 2015 or as 14 Sig Regt (EW) Support Sqn knew it 'doomsday!' The yearly Regimental march and shoot competition was upon us and Support Squadron, or should I say the Regt MT, were ready to explore the luscious countryside of Brecon!

The morning started with the prestigious Sodexo breakfast prepared by Brawdy's very own 'milky bar kid'! Fuelled up and weighed in (which consisted of some very bad jokes cracked

by **WO2 (INFAD) Pallas**) we were sent to the starting line as the 3rd team to start. At the start line **Cpl 'Staff' Cash** and **Sgt 'PMA' Sproggis** took over and gave us a very worrying warm up which consisted of chasing the guy in front whilst doing the Macarena. Setting off with a pace that can only be described as sprinting, we soon covered the first mile in a time of 8 minutes 20 seconds, which when read out loud put a sweaty smile on everyone's faces.

Just over 4 miles, or half way according to the PTI who was guiding us through the Beacons, came upon us faster than most expected and it gave us a second wind of positive mental attitude (**Sgt Sproggis's** favourite saying). Although **Pte 'not just a Chef' Greens** and I singing of 'forever blowing bubbles' didn't go down too well with **Capt 'push the pace' McMullan** the spirits were still high.

Mile 7, the dreaded hill! Rumours had been circling before the event that there was a hill that made people feel sick to look at and now at mile 7 we had to face it! A never ending peak of blind climbing corners and slippery loose undergrowth made this hill live up to all that the rumours made it out to be. "A mile left" was called by the PTI which then meant **Sgt Sproggis's** knee gave up and **Pte 'I've done Cambrian patrol' Green** decides to have a break down!! Motivation came from all angles and then the worst thing possible happens.... **Captain McMullan** decides to slip back into the RSM mode, bellowing orders and being the intimidating man he was to help change the minds of the two suffering team members.

Although for the last 400m you could see the finish line this didn't help and the pace had almost turned into a snails pace with everyone suffering from the sickening previous hill! However, the finish line came and the call for all round defence was shouted so we could prep for the ranges.

The range shoot was a static defence shoot which was a first for some members of the team and the rounds started going down. That could not be said for the targets though, which seem to be up and hold instead of falling when hit! The shoot finished, the excuses started to flow, mainly from myself due to my poor admin.

At the end of what had been a long and testing day and, despite not knowing our final placing in the competition, spirits were high and everyone was happy that the event was over, well at least for another year!



## 21st SIGNAL REGIMENT COLERNE



#### 204 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Chamberlain**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stowell**

#### Inter-unit Hockey Championships - by Cpl Damien Farrar, Rhine Troop

The Regtl Hockey team was entered into the first inter-unit championships of the year which was held at Aldershot. Five members of 204 Sig Sqn were in the team, one of which, **Cpl John Dickson**, was making his debut. The championships



*Sig Baillie and his high spirits*

got off to a bit of a non-start really as our first opponents, Exeter UOTC, failed to show... giving us a 3-0 walkover. Our next 4 games produced few talking points as we succumbed to a humbling defeat at the hands of a very strong team from 11 (RSS) Sig Regt.

Heading into our last game against Army HQ we remained positive and enthusiastic despite going a goal down from the push back. Not the best start, however, our game sprung to life as **LCpl Rich 'I've pulled my Hammy' King** produced a wonder goal





from nowhere. With his back to goal just inside the 'D' he noticed the goalkeeper off his line, he lifted the ball over his head high into the air and it dropped just under the crossbar. The umpire gave the goal however, the second umpire wanted to review the goal. After a short conversation about whether **LCpl Rich King** was in the area or not the umpires decided the goal should stand. Cue delirious celebrations and high fives all round. The other members of the Sqn were **LCpl Dominic Elmeih** who usually plays in goal but preferred an outfield role down the right wing and **Sig Robert Baillie** who kept our spirits high with his unrelenting energy and antics.

**Go Karting** - by *LCpl Adrian Smith, Messina Troop*

On the 8 Oct 15 Messina Troop departed to M4 Karting for their troop day out. The aim of the day was to boost troop morale and bonding with the new members of the troop. We were split down into two groups for the first two races, and then further broken down into slower and faster groups. We then both drove round for 30 laps, each team having spin outs and crashes. We had to check later that **Cpl Luke Jepson** actually owned a driving licence, as it certainly wasn't apparent on the day.



M4 Karting is the perfect place for a troop day out, letting us show some competitiveness and to boost team cohesion. Everyone got involved with the competition and wanted that first place spot. Overall **LCpl Scott Morgan** came first out of both teams, with runners up **Cpl Phillip Pacey & LCpl Dominic Elmeih**. **Sig Elmeih** is one of the new members of the troop so it was good to see him getting stuck in with the troop competition! **SSgt Jason Shone** won our own little troop competition, with a lucky prize to whoever got the fastest lap.

It was a much needed day out of the garages, something fun and exciting was just what the doctor ordered. Spirits were high for everyone – no matter who came last or first the team morale was high. We finished the day off with a few drinks down in Bath, reflecting on how good the day was, and what we achieved as a group.

**Squash** - by *LCpl Nicholas Horsley, Rhine Troop*

On Wednesday 20 Jan 16, we arrived at the Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre to start the Inter-Army Squash Championship. From the start one could feel the competitive atmosphere of the championship, and it was quite daunting as this was my first time playing in such a top quality tournament. I was glad to find out I wasn't the only novice at the competition, even discovering that there was a whole part of the tournament dedicated to new players. Thus, I was entered in the Novice Open and Plate along with the main championship games with my fellow soldiers from 21 Sig Regt.

Having discovered who my opponents were for the next few games I immediately went about finding these players to introduce myself. It was a great opportunity to meet other soldiers and officers from across the armed forces, I definitely came away with new friends.

During the first day of games I was beaten several times by far more experienced players, but the atmosphere still remained jovial as I was getting tips on and off the court by the same players who had recently eliminated me from the main competition. Having now realised the calibre of squash players I prepared myself for the Novice tournament.



*LCpl Stewart flailing around the court like a flamingo*

On the second day, the competition was in full swing with several people already knocked out of the tournament. I started the Novice Plate with a win against one of own team mates from 21 Sig Regt (hopefully we are still friends) but after the elation of winning my first game it went quickly downhill again with being knocked out of the Novice Open competition in short order. I struggled along the Novice Plate with a lucky No Show from one of my opponents. I was still in the competition.

The third and final day saw a winding down of the competition but not on the courts as the Army's best squash players battled it out in fierce games which were a pleasure to watch. By this stage I had advanced to the 4th round of the Novice Plate with a little skill and a lot of luck. My match opponent was a **SSgt Jobson** from the REME, and after winning the first set on the court I was full of hope of having a chance of qualifying to the quarter finals. But this changed quickly as I was despatched with skill, the game ended in a defeat of 3-1. So came an end to my involvement in the Army Squash Tournament, and even though I hadn't performed as well as I had hoped I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and can't wait till the next event.

**215 SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj J Hooker**  
SSM **WO2 J Davis**

Since the last set of wire notes, 215 Sig Sqn has managed to get a well earned break at Christmas in before assuming readiness on 04 Jan 16. Now, with attention firmly focused on the Sqn's ability to deploy and maintain itself at readiness, we will continue to prove ourselves over the year. This started days after returning from leave with Ex SPECULAR, the test exercise for 1 Armd Inf Bde proving itself to be ready. With that out of the way, the build up to TRACTABLE is due to start in earnest in Feb 16, before another break for Easter.



**Exercise SPECULAR** - by Lance Corporal Payne, Sabre Troop

The Sqn had Christmas leave to look forward to prior to deploying on Ex SPECULAR. Before the exercise, we conducted maintenance on the Bulldogs which, after long hard hours, the troops managed to get fit for deployment. This involved many late nights and hard graft across the board, with many thanks to the LAD for putting in some short notice hard work to support the Sqn. After Christmas leave it was straight back into the deep end with packing the trucks with the HQ kit, including generators, DRASH, Bowman equipment, printers, etc – the list is never ending!



*The quagmire that is the HQ*

On 06 Jan 16, the Sqn deployed to CAST(S), Warminster, in support of 1 Armd Inf Bde. The main lead for the exercise was the mighty Sabre Tp. We conducted a Bulldog (BDs) road move from Azimghur Barracks and remarkably all BDs deployed made it to CAST(S) without any breakdowns – a notable achievement in itself! Once in location, the set up of the HQ began – first task - offloading the equipment from the trucks, which was where the fun started. Unfortunately, the ground was not suitable for the trucks (understatement) and the vehicles got bogged in! During recovery of said trucks, two somewhat angry LE YORKS officers turned up to chew out the Troop Staff Sergeant, which he took quite well all things considered. The next problem we faced was the prevailing wind. During set up **Sig Luke Eastwood** was tasked with going around the DRASH and fixing extra pegging points. The wind worked faster than **Sig Luke Eastwood**, though, and we then spent a good half hour trying to remove one DRASH tent off the roof of another. Finally, the HQ was fully established and the Staff Working Environment (SWE)



*SNCOs earning their pay*

was ready for action. During the night, however, the weather worsened. On inspection in the morning the HQ looked like the Northern Flood Plain, under a good 7 inches or more of water. The whole troop worked in shifts trying to mop the water out of the HQ. This was working quite well until **LCpl Natasha Goodwin** decide to drop a full mop bucket of water back in the HQ and the process had to be started all over again. Finally, by Monday 11 Jan 16 the HQ was at FOC and the staff began their exercise cycle, with the

Troop carrying out vehicle maintenance, service desk duties and general floor walking.

This exercise was the final tick in the box for 1 Armd Inf Bde for our high readiness year, and therefore important that it went well. As the exercise continued the Brigade met their timelines and passed the exercise, which meant that the Brigade can deploy at anytime throughout our high readiness year. As this was a static exercise the Troop were not over-stretched in terms of movement, so there was an opportunity for a small number of the Troop to celebrate **Sig Lewis “kit bag” Tregaskis’** 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday, taking in the local ambiance of Warminster town.

Before we knew it the exercise was approaching ENDEX and the Troop hierarchy and the OC were planning our road move back to Azimghur barracks. However, when driving back, the weather was freezing – especially when you are a driver or commander of an open top armoured vehicle! But, we all got back safely and the B fleet was waiting for Caspian Troop (read: technician troop!) which meant the Troop waited until 0100 hours for the knock off parade. The following day we conducted a full turn around and an OC’s Inspection, which the sqn passed, and then we were finally stood down. The sqn look forward to their high readiness year and also future exercises and the distant promise of further leave and Adventurous Training.

**220 SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj R Plested**  
SSM **WO2 N Dinsdale**

**Exercise CHURCHILL’S CHALLENGE** - by LCpl Ann Muir

On Monday 25 January, **SSgt Nick Beckett** led nine of us to the delightful area of Salisbury plain on Exercise CHURCHILL’S CHALLENGE.

We were there as CivPop to assist the Officer Cadets as they worked through their basic training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. We were accommodated at Imber Village, an old village on the Plain filled with empty houses that are predominately used for urban training and building clearances. Given that all the houses are old and empty, the bitter and miserable weather didn’t take long to get to us and so we turned into DIY experts in minutes. We were given rolls of hessian (which turned out to be a life saver), and covered all the windows and doors to try and keep some of the typical British weather out. Also to make our accommodation a little more homely for the week we went and bought stick on lights for the walls - 2 boxes for £3, eat your heart out 'DIY SOS'!

Throughout the week **SSgt Beckett** had evening briefs in order to give us details and timings for the scenarios we were involved in. Our first scenario was all of us playing as local villagers; allowing the troops to come and gather intel off of us and accommodate us as best they can. Next was mine and **Cpl Emma Thomas’s** scenario, where we were detailed to go to Upton Scudamore FOB, and play as local farmers that had found a mortar shell in our crops. The Directing Staff SSM wanted to see how the troops reacted to unexploded ordinance (UXO) being bought to the FOB, and so the cadets were to interview us and gather as much information as they could.

On Saturday 30 January, the troops had their final scenario. We were up at 0630 and in position as local disgruntled





villagers, angry at the fact our “town” was being overrun by military personnel and that there been a Taliban presence in the area. We were told by the DS to slowly escalate our anger over the 45 minute scenario. This ended with **SSgt Beckett** being arrested for genuinely trying to communicate with the DS over an Airwave radio that was mistaken for suspicious activity. **Sig Dale Riddick** was on his own mission of trying to ‘cock’ as many weapons as he could from the exercising troops, to prove the point that they were not protecting their weapons correctly. One of the DS didn’t take too kindly to this and so forcibly told him to stop! The scenario escalated into a full-blown riot against defending officer cadets. It was so realistic that poor **LCpl James Morgan** took a boot to the chest from an over excited officer cadet who had taken his role too seriously!



*Our opponents in riot training*

Overall it was a good week and the Cadets learned a lot. It was a good experience for us all as well, and allowed us to see an exercise of this nature run from the non-exercising side and see what training our junior officers receive.

**Corps Nordic Skiing Championships** - by *LCpl Laura Gill, Pristina Troop*

The Corps restarted their Nordic Skiing programme with a Corps championships held in Trysil, Norway from 21 Nov – 19 Dec, and 21 Sigs deployed a team of 8 soldiers to learn the sport and compete. On the Thursday we left Colerne for the long drive to Norway. We got to Dover in plenty of time only to be delayed due to the paperwork required to carry weapons and ammunition across Europe. Because of the refugee crisis at the ports the customs checks were more careful and security was tighter than normal, so turning up with weapons was a bit of a surprise for them. We eventually got away, and all went well until we got to Germany and got pulled over again by some overly keen German police for another hour of documents checks. We clearly had all the luck on that journey. We made it to the ferry port with minutes to spare, and boarded the overnight “party ferry” from Kiel to Oslo, Norway. After a short drive around Norway, we arrived at our final destination which was the town of Trysil. The girls had an apartment shared with the other Corps females, and the boys were accommodated in their own apartment. Both of these were really nice and were equipped with their own saunas which were well used by the end of the trip.

The first week was a slow start as everyone had to be issued with their own skis, and get used to the feel of running on snow with skis on your feet. It is a very strange sensation, and takes a lot of concentration at the start. We also had a lesson on the alpine slopes to get used to going uphill on the skis which is a very unnatural thing to do, and watched enviously

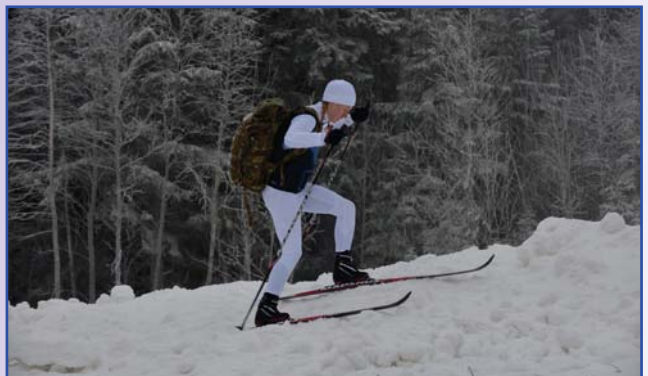
all the people gliding down the slopes we were trying to climb. A lot of people spent most the time on their bums, as the technique can be challenging to learn!

The second week was just waxing, waxing and more waxing as we all became very used to putting on and taking wax off our skis to clean them. A dirty job but it had to be done, and the better you wax the quicker you go. We also learned how to glide which is easier said than done especially when you are a bit off balance. I think the thing that most people will take away from the trip is the bruises they got from falling over.



*The boys team*

Week three was time for the practice competitions and doing a lot more range work. We spent a lot of cold hours stood on the range that week trying to get to grips with the .22 rifles. The biathlon was the most tricky part of Nordic skiing as we had to do a lap for every shot we missed, but for most people this was every shot, and in the cold weather people were struggling to count. This made the whole thing a bit of an experience that most people would like to forget, at least until they’ve got better at shooting!



*LCpl Gill navigating the terrain*

The final week was memorable, especially for the weather! As the week went on the weather got colder and it hit a freezing -14 degrees on the first race day! The patrol race was the hardest race at 25km with 10kg on everyone’s back, with challenges along the way. The teams of four looked very fetching in full white lycra and matching hat. A race that should have only taken 4 hours ended up taking 7 hours. A long cold 7 hours. The ladies tried to forget this by having laughing fits at almost anything. We may have been delirious. All in all it was an experience in which everyone learned something, and although it was hard I think most people would do it again.





**Exercise SPECULAR** - by *Cpl Laxman Rai and LCpl Vose, Shaibah Troop*

Over the course of 2015 21 Sig Regt prepared for Operational Readiness and proved its capability to provide and maintain communications in an operational environment. This training continued into 2016 with Ex SPECULAR. As part of the deployment process a few members of 220 Sig Sqn were attached to 215 Sig Sqn. The exercise was held in Warminster CAST(S) from 6 January to 21 January 2016. We were tasked to provide Falcon backbone for the Magpie services which enabled 1 AI Bde to conduct training for HICON / LOCON structure, and enable the staff with user facilities and accounts. This allowed the staff users to use applications such as Lync, SharePoint and Outlook. The PACEX for this exercise started was conducted before Christmas leave. We deployed Falcon and Magpie and tested them for serviceability, then packed them away ready to deploy on Ex Specular on 6 Jan 2016.

On 6 Jan we deployed to Warminster to build the headquarters under the supervision of **Sgt Gurung** who was tasked with overseeing the exercise, and as always the great British weather was waiting for us. Thankfully the engineers swiftly laid the platforms before all of the exercising troops got bogged down. Once unloaded, we set about establishing the link from Magpie to Innsworth using Falcon as a bearer.

This was the first exercise using BT Flex for several soldiers, and the training from **Cpl Laxman Rai** helped give a greater understanding of its capabilities and how it plays a crucial role in maintaining communications with Innsworth. Things started really kicking off as soon as the first staff officers started arriving at the location. A few minor glitches were observed during the initial phase but the Falcon Support Team (**Cpl Laxman Rai, LCpl Blaine Vose and LCpl Laura Gill**) managed to sort it out without any issue. During that period when everything was quiet, we gave lessons to the team on various equipment and fault finding. This got everyone in the team involved, and meant they were not just staring at the screen 24/7 to monitor the bandwidth taken by Magpie detachment, they were also learning about the equipment used throughout the exercise. As a morale booster, we had field kitchen, which provided us with necessary daily required nutrients. **Sig Dominic Lowndes** later joined the team and assisted further with monitoring of the network.

We provided data as well as voice services to 80 plus clients during the exercise without any major incident with a single Magpie detachment, a couple of SGAUs, BIPGW and perfect plan by the Ops team. It was a good opportunity for the Class 3 CS Engrs to develop their trade knowledge and complete their 3-2 Workbooks. Overall it was a great achievement which shows a well-structured plan and the perfect team can achieve a lot.



## 22nd SIGNAL REGIMENT STAFFORD



CO **Lt Col A Fawcett**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D Seymour**

### 222 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj S Macpherson**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J Roberts**

### CIVPOP MTMC Lydd Camp - by *Lt Jack Clarke*

Always eager to provide the Tp an opportunity for a change of scenery, I volunteered India Tp to take the lead on a RAAT task which required the Sqn to provide CIVPOP support. I walked into the crew room expecting uncontrollable roars of applause bearing such exciting news, however, surprisingly the news that I had secured the Tp a week away from the garages wasn't actually met with any level on enthusiasm.

Nonetheless, I was still optimistic that I could convince the Tp that this was good news, and thus made all the necessary preparations for the week ahead. We departed Beacon Barracks on the pretence that we would be supporting our fellow Corpsmen 299 Sig Sqn on their PDT. However, upon arriving at Lydd Camp (known as the Gem of the South East) there were an overwhelming number of individuals in maroon type berets, and even some wearing khaki berets with bobbles and plooms attached. Clearly a cruel trick had been played on us and in fact we were there as target practice for the infantry during their public order training.

On day one we were only required to throw baton rounds and provide verbal abuse towards the exercising troops. This, coupled with a midday finish finally increased the Tp's enthusiasm, **Sig Clark** even exclaimed 'This is the best week

ever!' Laughing nervously I was aware of his naivety, day two would be a game changer...

We were now expected to increase the intensity and physically engage with the shield wall. Although members of the troop regularly sported 'Rocky Balboa-esque' grey tracksuits I was still dubious of their fighting credentials. However, like a proud father I watched as my children repeatedly ran headfirst into the shield wall leaving infantrymen in their wake. I watched in awe as a group of usually quiet, highly technical soldiers displayed great levels of controlled verbal and physical aggression.



*Sig Chris 'World's Worst Tattoo' Nevitt & Co charging the shield wall*





As IC CIVPOP I conveniently found myself towards the rear helping to orchestrate the various serials. In a place of relative safety it was a shock when I was the victim of friendly fire, receiving a baton round to the back of the head as a result of a wayward throw from (ironically) a member of the AMS.



*Lt Jack 'Two Haircuts Left' Clarke after his blue on blue*

The travelling party fortunately headed north bearing only superficial injuries. Despite what could be described as a physically exhausting few days the Tp did enjoy their time away from the garages, although I'm not sure they'll be in a rush to head back to the Gem of the South East in a hurry.

### 248 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj B Price**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) L Rana**

**December 2015** - by Lt Jake Chapman

Having returned from the Baltics, 248 GSS could afford to relax a bit whilst waiting for the kit to return on the ISOs and Christmas time was the perfect opportunity to do this. The first order of business, however, was the impending CO's cup competitions.

First up was the military skills competition. The Sqn got off to an explosive start by dominating the OFT race under **Maj Ben "I don't need an extra 30 seconds" Price's** hands-on leadership. The shooting team followed suit, sweeping to victory despite a gallant resistance from 217. A further victory in the orienteering pushed the Sqn into a dominant lead, which was reinforced from enthusiastic efforts at the assault course and the patrolling competition to leave the Sqn with a commanding victory.

Christmas week and the CO's rugby competition beckoned. The prospect of an inter-sqn rugby competition was a rather daunting one, given the absence of experienced players within 248. Under the firm command of **Lt Jake "I see dead people" Chapman** a training session was conducted and the chosen few were brought up to speed on ideas such as tackling and running. The day of the competition swiftly arrived and the gladiators of 248 went out first against 252, followed by 222, 217 and finally Support. History doesn't record the ultimate result of any of these games, however 248's team was without a doubt the most supported, with the team surprising all comers with their persistence and ability to learn as the tournament progressed. Special mention goes to **LCpl Prabin** and **Cpl Chin** who powered their way through to the try line.



*LCpl Prabin shimmies past the helpless defence*

With rugby finished, the Sqn could then make the final push towards a well earned Christmas break.

**Tihar** - by LCpl Sanam

Tihar is one of the major festivals celebrated for five days in Nepal. It is also known as Diwali or Bhai tika. It is the festival of lights where Laxmi, the goddess of wealth is worshipped along with crow, dog, cow and finally brothers. During these five days, people go from one house to another playing Deusi and Bhailo. They sing special Deusi songs and they get money or home made treats in return. The other part of this festival is gambling. Gambling is only allowed during this festival so many people take the opportunity to indulge. Most of the games are card based, along with dice and tripasa.

Whilst spending two months in Lithuania on Ex ARCADE FUSION 15, 248 GSS got the opportunity to mark the day of Tihar, after returning from the Baltics we had the opportunity to celebrate both the festival and our return with our families.

On the 12 Dec 15, all of the Stafford based Gurkha community gathered for a Tihar celebration. CO Saheb kicked off the event with the first roll of the Tripasa. There were several games being played, including tripasa, dice and card games. There were delicious Nepalese foods prepared by Gurkha ladies. Later all the ladies played Bhailo and collected some funds. The gambling went on until 2200 hours which was the cut off time. Everyone enjoyed the night (although some enjoyed it more than others!)

It was a quality night especially after coming from a long overseas exercise. Everyone got time to gather around and have some relaxation. A special thanks goes to **SSgt Damber** for organising such a memorable event.

### 252 (HONG KONG) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj C Raynor**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) B McClean**

**Quickest Demotion in History** - by 2Lt Duncan MacLachlan

My arrival into the sqn was marked by an interesting turn of events, I happened to turn up on the day of the sqn charity rank swap which had been put in place pre-Christmas. I arrived at SHQ and immediately got told to turn around by **SSgt Greenlee** and that "no matter what happens Sir, just go with it." So to this end, my first parade with the Sqn and the SSM **WO2 McLean** called me forward to have my rank swapped with **Sig Watson**. What did this mean for me? Well within the first 20 minutes of me arriving in post, I had been officially demoted to a Signaller, I stand by that this is the quickest demotion of a 2Lt in the history of the British Army.

The day itself was a bit of a whirlwind with myself now on the service desk, shadowing **Sig Carr** on jobs around PHQ with her furiously working on computers and me asking bone questions about IT.



The day was marked by frequent visits from the 'SSM' (**LCpl Harris**) ensuring all matters of discipline and dress standards were adhered to (even if he didn't quite know how to properly wield his pace stick). As well as this, the new and improved Sqn 21C (**Sgt Ireland**) and his quieter than normal dog (of the stuffed variety) patrolled the Sqn lines making sure all troops morale and G1 issues were in check. I don't think I have ever seen a Sqn 21C avoid a day of emails and spreadsheets quite like Sgt Capt Ireland. You come to the impression that he had fallen short of his duties as Sqn 21C and had got on the wrong side of the LE OC **Maj Raynor** (TOT) due to the distinct lacking of one of his teeth.

Sgt Ireland profoundly claimed that there was nothing awry and it was just coincidental that the OC's knuckles were down to the bone.

The remainder of the day went surprisingly smoothly, which is definitely a tribute to the skills and competencies of those in their new position rather than a statement of how easily replaceable the senior management of 252 Sig Sqn are! The day was a huge success with over £400 raised for the Sqn Christmas function which was a thoroughly good affair for all the lads and lasses of 252 (Hong Kong) Signal Squadron and a grand way to end the year.



## 30th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRAMCOTE



CO **Lt Col M Fayers**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M Witham**

### 244 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AIR SUPPORT)

OC **Capt MB Goodman**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) DJ Seymour**

#### Exercise RED WARRIOR - Sig Burrows

Ex RED WARRIOR was another testing field exercise designed by **WO2 (SSM) Seymour** to act as both a post-Christmas leave wake-up and as a leaving gift for the sqn prior to his moving on to pastures new in the near future.

On 11 Jan 16, 244 Sig Sqn (AS) started their 'pre-deployment' training in preparation for deployment on Exercise Red Warrior the very next day. The training, led by **Cpl Duckworth**, was a chance to remind us all of the field skills we had previously learnt, but for most, had not used for some time. The day was a nice refresher and gave us the chance to meet and get to work in our sections. By the end of the training day and the conclusion of **Lt Murphy's** orders that evening, everybody was keen and ready to go.

From the moment we arrived at Sennybridge Training Area the following morning, the weather conditions reminded us all of the harsh realities of life in the Brecon Beacons. Strong, bitter winds coupled with hail offered an unwanted, yet, refreshing wake up after a long warm coach trip.

We set off on patrol, in the hunt for our harbour area. Once there, we were able to establish harbour routine straight away; with priority one the making of a nice hot brew. It is, after all, about good admin! We were tasked by the Section Commanders and 21Cs with our own individual jobs and made a model pit under the direction of **Cpl Attwood** who, having just completed Junior CLM, was all over it. After orders the first night of wet/dry drills started – the biggest challenge being removing yourself from the warm embrace of a cosy sleeping bag and getting dressed into wet clothes ready for a cold shift on stag.

The next day we started our attack serials. **Cpl Parr** was the point man for 2 Section and, after a small hiccup with geographical orientation, he applied DDCRAPs and we were back heading the right way. **Sig Flynn's** skills were slick from the start; it was clear he took his green side seriously and had not forgotten the skills acquired in phase one. Later that night

we conducted a Recce patrol which was successful in locating the 'enemy.' One small cause of laughter was **Cpl Murray** falling over on the icy terrain. My laughter was cut short however; as I too quickly fell foul of the icy conditions.

Another night in an icy wet shell-scrape was filled with thoughts of spending the next night in a barn. After a quick move, we arrived at Farm 4 to be greeted with healthy portions of hot food. The regt's chefs had also deployed and the field kitchen provided us with a morale boosting meal. The remainder of the day was spent in preparation for the platoon attack due to take place the following morning. All the preparation was managed under a steely eyed **Sgt Bruin**.

Unfortunately, the elements were against us and heavy snow overnight resulted in **WO2 Seymour** having to cut short the final attack. Having spent the week building up for this attack everyone was disappointed that it did not go ahead. The battle camp was a test of individual and team administration skills in cold and wet weather conditions. The Sections remained strong, carrying out all the necessary actions to ultimately form a combat effective Platoon. Despite the trying conditions, everyone can look back on shared experiences with the knowledge that they can sustain themselves in Brecon in January. It was never meant to be an easy experience and ahead of a busy year of supporting JHC, we are now confident that we can sustain ourselves in the field.

### 250 GURKHA SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj TJC Walton**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Indra**

250 Gurkha Sig Sqn had been busy throughout 2015, maintaining its high tempo with a considerable exercise bill in the final months of the year. A particular highlight was an extensive deployment on Ex JOINT HORIZON in St Mawgan. On the highest priority exercise for that year, the Sqn simultaneously and successfully provided ICS to EXCON, supporting multiple Component Commands. Support to the Vanguard Field Hospital (VFH) also continued with trials of a new CBR system on Ex JORVIK LOOK. The exercise involved testing the VFH personnel under a range of CBR conditions, including a period of lockdown, a very interesting experience for the Sqn staff! Most notably for the year perhaps, 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn was heavily involved in the wide range of events commemorating 200 years of Gurkha service to the Crown. Amongst other charitable events, this included a period of Public Duties, participation in the G200 Chelsea





Pageant, a special G200 Ex TRAILWALKER and even an attempt on the summit of Mount Everest for two intrepid sqn members.

Starting 2016 with a bang, the Sqn began Ex SWAN CONNECTION, an exercise that would see 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn take on its new commitment: provision of the 1\* Joint Force Logistic Component (JFLogC) HQ. A significant new 'at readiness' capability, this commitment saw the handover of the Air Assault Task Force ICS Detachment to 244 Sig Sqn (AS). Following the exercise, the Sqn will have a number of months to build and develop the HQ prior to its inaugural deployment on Ex JOINT VENTURE in Jun 16. Until then, a number of exercises will ensure the Sqn maintains its CT1 and 2 level training, including Ex PLATINUM KHUKURI and of course the next iterations of Ex STONEY RUN and Ex TRAILWALKER.

### Exercise JOINT HORIZON 15

Ex JOINT HORIZON is a tri-service level exercise, which is conducted every year in RAF St Mawgan, Newquay. It is one of the largest scale of HQ exercise in the Defence Exercise Programme. On this exercise, the primary role for 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn was to provide the UK Secret, UK Restricted and NATO Secret services to the EXCON staff. We were working alongside the civilian communications equipment as well. The actual exercise lasted only a week but we were deployed to the location 3 weeks prior to the date. The advance party were deployed on 9 Nov 15 to carry out the initial communications establishment and the main body arrived a week later.

The first phase was the build phase. The reason for being deployed 3 weeks prior to the date was to establish the comms and prepare all the necessary work area for the staff. These were all done by the "floorwalker" team from our sqn, the RLS team and the civilian contractor (Hamilton). Since we, 250 GSS, had a reputation for conducting the exercise extremely well, we had to make sure everything had to be flawless!

After the long hard work and effort, the day of the main phase arrived. As our early preparation was at a very high standard, the staff and our team did not face any major issues throughout the duration of the exercise. Also, various cross training programs were conducted so as to provide the overview of different comms systems. The exercise went extremely well as it was expected to. Everybody praised us for our astoundingly good performance and we were all very satisfied for what we achieved.



Service Desk personnel providing service during Ex JOINT HORIZON

### 256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj I Kirk**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Wildman**

#### Exercise SWAN CONNECTION - by Cpl Palin

Ex SWAN CONNECTION is to focus on the re-rolling of 30<sup>th</sup> Sig Regt in which we as a Regt have been directed to provide support to the Standing Joint Task Force Headquarters (SJTFHQ) and Joint Force Logistics Command (JFLOGC). These tasks will be in addition to the regt's standing tasks of supporting Joint Helicopter Command (JHC), Air Assault Task Force (AATF), the Vanguard Field Hospital (VFH), Early Entry Headquarters (EEHQ), 2 NATO points of presence and the Regiment Operational Liaison Reconnaissance Teams (OLRT). 256 Sig Sqn will be involved in the movement of Staff Working Environment (SWE) and Information Communication Systems (ICS) between the other sqns. This will progress to the setting up of the new Initial Operating Capability (IOC) of the 200 manned SJTFHQ, which will then eventually increase to a 280 manned headquarters.

Breaking this down, 256 Sig Sqn will be uplifting Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTFHQ) from a 120 to a 200 manned SJTFHQ. We have then to sign over all of our JFLOGC assets, complete with all ECUs to 250 Gurkha SigSqn and also all EEHQ assets complete with ECUs to 258 Sig Sqn.

This will take about two months to complete including a full regtl muster to consolidate all of the work. We can then, as a sqn, move into our own Collective Training 1 (CT1) exercise phase. During this time we still have many personnel away on courses to enable us to still be as deployable as possible and trained to the highest of standards.

From an Ops side we are still providing all information up to Regimental Headquarters (RHQ) in reference to holdings of equipment. Concurrently, we are generating Force Element Tables (FET) for the new SJTFHQ, supporting the FET Commander, **Lt Jack Ambrose**, and the Complex Cpl, **Cpl Lee McNamee**, with the consolidation of lists of equipment needed to deliver the SJTFHQ. In addition to this we are still planning and arranging all exercises and training while all this goes on in the background.

In conclusion, 256 Sig Sqn are in a very busy phase of the year but once complete we can focus on our own training for our new tasking of supporting SJTFHQ.

### 258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj P Hodgkinson**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Wood**

#### Exercise ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER XIX - by Lt Parsons

The team set off from Gamecock Barracks at about 1800 on 13 Nov 15. In classic English style, it was raining. We set off in our luxury Ford Transit combi-van for our mammoth 24 hour journey to Zell am See.

We arrived in the late afternoon and quickly sorted ourselves out. The accommodation we were to stay in was fantastic, with a huge amount of facilities to keep all entertained throughout the evenings. This included indoor football, which was especially popular.



The mountains had clearly not had a huge amount of snow before our arrival and it was warm and bright in the valley. The snow had clung to the very tops of the surrounding mountains and this was not brilliant news for the availability of runs on the glacier. Although this was the case, we were all looking forward to the training.

The glacier had not had a great amount of snow and a lot of the runs were pretty icy. It was still brilliant being on the mountain and I was looking forward to 4 weeks training. After the 'ski-off' on day one, where everyone's ability was assessed, I was placed into a group of average ability and I was lucky enough to have **SSgt Phil Dransfield** as an instructor. I quickly learned some priceless mottos to use whilst skiing. These included sayings such as 'a good skier is always doing something,' 'be confident' and 'enjoy it and trust the skis.' I felt that I learned more in the first 3 days than I had done in the previous year. We managed to practice a lot of drills as our instructor was insistent on staying on the mountain for as long as possible and using the time as effectively as possible. Everyone's ability was improving rapidly, which was really good to see.



*Ready to go*

The weather during the days was, on-the-whole, quite sunny and the visibility was very good. The good weather and a decent snowfall meant that the other ski runs became available on the Schmidt; the new runs were a welcome relief as all wanted to try skiing a new slope. I had never got the chance to ski the Schmidt before as unfortunately there had not been enough snow. The runs here were far less steep than up on the Kitzsteinhorn and it was a brilliant place to practice drills and fine tune (in theory) our technique. Unfortunately, after only 2 days of being on the Schmit the weather changed and a lot of the snow became slushy. As a result we would have to move back onto the Kitzsteinhorn and its freezing cold weather.



*Sig Doyle getting his GS on*

On one of the final weekends it was the Austrian Krampus festival. This is where local males dress as Krampus (monsters) and scare the local children. The Krampus have whips or bundles of twigs to beat the back of your legs if they find you out and about in the streets. **Sig Matt Johnstone** got the worst beating out of the group, after tempting fate one evening (having only had a couple of beers) by saying that he could fearlessly take on the Krampus. The procession takes place in the early evening and the entire Krampus walk a route through Zell am See followed by St Nicholas, making sure they do not get too carried away. After the procession (usually when the families go home) it becomes somewhat of an 'open season,' where if you are caught by Krampus going between the bars you will get a quick whip.



*Krampus Ready*

Race week soon came and everyone became a lot more serious. Previous friendships turned into bitter rivalries with everyone wanting to set the fastest times. Luckily the weather was outstanding for the most part and we had some fresh snow each morning, which made the conditions fantastic to race on. With race week came the inevitable view of lycra which some people enjoyed wearing far too much. It also meant being able to wear the brand new helmets which had been bought for the regt. I felt my race week went reasonably well and I was pleased with my overall place, having only started skiing the year before and especially as I had managed to ruin a run with a decent fall. Overall, as a Regiment, 30<sup>th</sup> Sig Regt had a respectable overall result placing 6<sup>th</sup> out of 15 teams. Considering the little race experience skiers had beforehand this was a great result.

Overall the Corps Race Camp was a fantastic experience and something I would love to do again. I would urge anyone who is interested in skiing to speak to their regt's OIC Skiing and look to get on the camp next year. My skiing has improved massively and is now something that I wish to carry on with every year. As a Regt we would like to say thank you to the organisers of the camp for putting on such a good 4 weeks.







*Lt Parsons on the slalom course*

## SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj M Eastman**  
 SSM **WO2 (SSM) P Munslow**

### Christmas Zumba - by Cpl Jukes

Sp Sqn held a Christmas Zumba class on 10 Dec 15. It set the Sqn off for a great Christmas week, raising morale across the Sqn. As it was in fancy dress the Sqn noticed a number of star turn outs which became somewhat questionable. For example **SSgt Gibson** and his OAP cheerleading garment revealed a lot more than expected! This was a very entertaining activity with lots of physical dynamics which the Sqn did not anticipate. Indeed, as this was set up by PTI **Cpl Jukes** the personnel in Sp Sqn would not expect anything less from a member of the gym staff.

The session, which was supposed to last only 45 minutes, lasted over an hour as the civilian Zumba instructor became too excited towards the end and proved his physical prowess against the guys and girls of the Squadron. This led to some of the physically fitter soldiers being shocked and challenged.

Although it was not the standard PT session it was certainly an enjoyable one and if anyone asked me about Zumba I would say 'Don't knock it until you've tried it.'

### Support Squadron Christmas Function - by SSgt Bawden

It seems that every year the Christmas festivities start earlier and 2015 was no different. As an LAD we had our Christmas function and St Eligius' day on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> December respectively. With management, Mess and Regimental functions still to go, it seemed like just another hurdle before the inevitable detox required after a return from leave.

After a few very last minute minor changes (date, location, food, entertainment etc.) it was decided to go for a Casino/ Las Vegas theme, but of course festive jumpers were always welcome. A local firm were hired to transform the Hub Diner and put on a disco and karaoke as well as the "gambling" tables. As with every event it is only as fun as the people attending and they did not disappoint; the MT department were leading the field of dance with their own Beyoncé style moves to every song put on, whilst SE Tp and the Chefs fought it out to be crowned the karaoke champions 2015. With volume and perseverance taking priority over tone and rhythm it was a pleasure when the night ended with the DJ set. As for the Casino element, I have never seen so much enthusiasm to try and win monopoly money. Lads were talking tactics and thriving on the pressure like their lives depended on it.

A big thank you goes out to all that attended and who made the night enjoyable. We are already looking forward to next year!



## 32nd SIGNAL REGIMENT GLASGOW



CO **Lt Col J R Knight MBE**  
 RSM **WO1 (RSM) J Blowes**

### Exercise NORTHERN GEO ADVENTURE - by Sig Jamie Davies

After a long day's travel, 18 members of 32<sup>nd</sup> Sig Regt arrived in Austria from their respective locations of Scotland and Northern Ireland via Liverpool Airport. The first priority upon landing was to travel to Sankt Jakob and sort out the hire of the ski equipment in preparation for a full day's skiing the following day. The hotel we stayed in was good, with welcoming hot showers from the cold snowfall outside. The food was pretty good too. So much for the January 'diet' after Christmas; apparently you need to carb up on the slopes.

On day one we hit the slopes of Sankt Jakob to find our ski legs and ease everybody into the first day of skiing, hitting a few red and blue runs. For most, it has been a year since they had last skied. It turned out to be an eventful first day losing two members of the group due to injury; it was adventurous training after all. The second day began by hearing Queen's

'Another One Bites The Dust', this would be our group theme song over the course of the week, especially after losing two people already! No one wanted to be next. We travelled to new slopes, Stein Platte, where the resort is situated within the bowl of the picturesque Alpine landscape. At this stage the group was split into non-skiers and those with some experience, gaining Ski Foundation Level one (SF1) and SF2 respectively. Having had a good day on the slopes tackling numerous red and blue routes, it was time to experience the après-ski. After dinner, we had the option to go tobogganing. A tractor dragged us up the mountain (it's not a hill) with periodic 'street lamps' to help guide you to the bottom. I was glad I couldn't see the view. Tobogganing is not as safe as skiing - great fun though!

On our third day skiing we travelled back to Stein Platte and had the opportunity to ski into Bavaria as the resort is situated right on the border. Lunch was Currywurst mit pommes, with hot chocolate! After lunch, we were given a lesson on edging the skis on the wider slopes available to improve our speed and turning, essentially it was our first exposure to ski race training as 32 Sig Regt aims to have a





Regt Ski Team under the direction of our SPSI **SSgt Mark Lane**. Whenever the group stopped there was the familiar tune of ‘another one bites the dust’ being sang as the last man skied in after falling over.

On day four we tackled the steep red slopes in the morning, the afternoon saw the group take on the first black run from the very top of the mountain, hitting the moguls off the top lip and skiing extremely steep slopes all the way to the bottom. This was labelled as ‘Milk Tray Man Training’. Despite being terrified you had to have confidence in your skiing ability to ski down the near vertical slopes.

Day 5 and we experienced new slopes at St Johann as well as the SF1 and SF2 groups teaming up. This was to see what they had been up to all week, as well as a bit of unit bonding. We tackled some much longer runs to build up the thighs for ski racing - from top to bottom of the mountain. It was great fun and we surprised ourselves by how much we had learnt. The following day having returned to the Stein Platte, we had a free day of skiing to tackle any slopes we pleased. Needless to say, we took on all the black runs we could as our confidence was booming, whilst trying out some slalom training alongside one of the races that was on that day.

We are very much looking forward to Ex SNOW LION, to see how good we really are in the Slalom Racing Event in Aviemore when we get back. Our thanks go to **Sgt Claire Norton** and **LCpl Si Wheeler** for organising this. See you next year.



32 Sig Regt on the slopes

#### 40 (NORTH IRISH HORSE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Stevenson**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) L Gamble**

#### Exercise NORTHERN CONVENTION - by Sig Jukes

After a quick military swim test at Lisburn Garrison swimming pool on the evening of Friday 15 Jan 16, 40 Sig Sqn set off for a weekend of adventure training at Ballykinler Training Centre at the foot of the Mourne Mountains near Newcastle in County Down. On Saturday we spent the day rock climbing at Thiepval Barracks in the state of the art ‘igloo’ gymnasium. I have been rock climbing a few times in the past but never played rugby while hanging off the wall. Also I’ve never had to climb to the top (yes I made it to the top finally) of the wall to retrieve a Kit Kat, eat it, replace it and then climb down. It’s safe to say my forearms were on fire after that but probably not as much as **LCpl Daz Brown** and **Sig Curtis McMaster**, who were rock climbing in boxing gloves while blindfolded!



Sig Budden passing the ball

Sunday saw the party move to Castlewelan Country Park to do a spot of wet bouldering at Bloody Bridge. With the freezing cold weather we have here in Northern Ireland, and the fact we were going to be climbing up a river, I knew it was going to be a cold, wet day. What I didn’t know was how challenging and enjoyable this experience would be. The treacherous climb up the river saw us all working together as a team, to get everyone to the top in one piece. After a few slips here and there, yes I was one of the first to fall in up to my neck, we all made it to the top where we stopped off at a small rock pool for some ‘fun’, jumping off rocks into the freezing cold river.

I have only recently joined 40 (NIH) Sig Sqn as a Reservist, after serving 7 years in the R SIGNALS as a regular, followed by a 5 year break in service. A challenging and enjoyable AT package was the best way to get to know my new colleagues and to get back into the swing of things. I think it’s safe to say everyone had a fantastic weekend away. A big thank you to **SSgt Tony Muers** and **SSgt Ian** (don’t put my name in the wire) **Robson** for a well organised weekend of adventure training. I’m already looking forward to the next one.



40 Sig Sqn upstream

#### 51 (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj H Lawrie**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) D Mackenzie**

#### Exercise NORTHERN DRIVE

Over the weekend of 15 – 17 Jan 16 the Sqn conducted a driver training exercise, which included drivers licence checks, road and cross country driving, recovery, maintenance and vehicle turnaround procedures. After a good breakfast, drivers were allocated to their vehicles and given the route cards produced





by **Cpl Peter Sinclair** and **Sgt Mark Kelly**. The route was from Edinburgh to Cambusbaron training area near Stirling – via Dumbarton.

The route provided gave the drivers and co-drivers the chance to enhance their convoy and military driving skills and to provide some experience and insight for the Sqn personnel who have yet to attend the GS course. On the Saturday morning, although extremely cold, it stayed dry until mid-afternoon when the weather turned to heavy snow, thus causing some issues with the combi vans getting in and out of the training area. After a quick brief to all personnel **Sgt Stephen Barrie** conducted a lesson on towing in case any vehicles became stranded while navigating around the course. Lunch was provided by container meal brought out by **SSgt Janette McGinlay** and provided by our Chefs back in Edinburgh.

The weather rapidly deteriorated with more heavy snow thus giving the drivers even more experience under the guidance of the GS Instructors, **Sgt Stephen Barrie** and **Cpl Peter Sinclair** aided by **SSgt Al Forbes**, and **Sgt Gary McRobbie**, with **Sgt Mark Kelly** looking after the admin area.

With the training proceeding very well and enjoyed by all, the return journey did not go as planned, as the weather became continually worse the combi vans were unable to negotiate the route back to the main road network, therefore the towing lesson became more important. **SSgt Al Forbes** conducted the necessary practical recovery lesson using the Land Rovers and the MANN SV truck to tow the white fleet out.

On return to Edinburgh ARC on Saturday evening the vehicles were parked up in an orderly fashion ready for the activities to be conducted on the Sunday, with a hearty evening meal in our stomachs the Sqn personnel were entertained with a quiz organised and conducted by **Cpl Peter Sinclair** with **SSgt Janette McGinlay** keeping note of the score. On Sunday morning and into the mid-afternoon, with the sun shining the troops had a very busy day; **Sgt Stephen Barrie** and **Sgt Gary McRobbie** conducting component parts and the changing of a wheel lesson, **Cpl Peter Sinclair** conducting driver conversions on the Penman trailer and on the MAN SV Falcon Platform, with the help from **Cpl Nicholls** and **LCpl Adrian Manning** who took charge of the vehicle wash down. Overall this was a very well organised and attended weekend with all enjoying the varying conditions throughout.

### Edinburgh College Visit

On Thursday morning at 0900 hrs a group of 11 students on the Edinburgh College Army Preparation Course, and their lecturer **Mr Gary Sumner** descended on the Reserve Centre for a morning of education and fun. This event takes place twice a year, with each course run by **Gary** to educate students, and train them up to join the Regular Army. As part of the course they visit a number of Reserve centres to allow them to see the range of opportunities available to them. It also provided the Sqn the chance of showing them that if they are not 100% sure about leaving home there is an alternative. They cover a range of activities, a briefing on the Army Reserve and 51 (Scottish) Sig Sqn given by the PSAO, **Capt Iain Affleck**; they then moved on to weapon stripping and assembly (blindfolded). After this they were split into 3 groups and gained an introduction into some of our equipment, these being FALCON (**Sgt Karl Dean**), REEBOK (**Sgt Ross Hunter**) and BOWMAN (**LCpl Dean Bird**).

The weapon handling lesson, given by **Sgt Karl Dean**, one of the recruiting support team from our paired Regiment (2 Sig Regt) was enjoyed by all, and the other briefings proved to be very informative. This type of event is designed to provide information to the students, and we obviously did something right as the following day one of the students came in for a visit with **LCpl Angie Garton** to see about joining the Sqn.

### 52 (LOWLAND) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC        **Maj R McCartney**  
SSM      **WO2 (SSM) S Parke**

The beginning of 2016 was a busy time for 52 Sp Sqn with a number of events taking place. With Falcon playing a bigger part in the Regt the Sqn Officers and Senior NCOs participated in Regtl training and new Bowman detachments have continued to increase the ICS capability of the 'suuport' Sqn. On 19 January all of the hard work taking place in the Sqn was rewarded with some of our soldiers receiving Commanding Officer's commendations.

The Corps Colonel, **Col S G Hutchinson MBE ADC** visited 32<sup>nd</sup> Sig Regt at Mercury Barracks, Glasgow and as part of his visit the Col presented three worthy recipients from 52 Sp Sqn the Commanding Officer's Certificate of Commendation. At the discretion of the CO the certificate is presented to those in recognition of their exceptional contribution and efforts in support of the Regt. **SSgt Steve Tinney** was commended for excelling in his role as the Regtl Catering Warrant Officer. He has shown incredible commitment in supporting not only regimental activities but also those additional social and external undertakings. He selflessly takes on added responsibility in order to ensure the Regt is able to maintain our training and assurance obligations.

**Cpl Debbie Holmes** was commended for providing a valued and exceptionally high quality catering service and **LCpl Lloyd Martin** was also commended for his role as a Sqn Recruiter; his high standards have directly impacted on the Sqn's ever-increasing numbers. **LCpl Martin** is also a member of the Regt's Operational Shooting Team, which is another area where **LCpl Martin** demonstrates his dedication and commitment. A special mention was made of **LCpl Martin** having gained the AR50 medal.

The evening ended with an excellent buffet and an opportunity for the Corps Colonel to meet members of 52 Sp Sqn. Special thanks must be given to the chefs, who as always did a fantastic job.



**LCpl Martin, Cpl Holmes and SSgt Tinney** receiving commendations





## 37th SIGNAL REGIMENT REDDITCH



CO **Lt Col T J Downes**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Morrison**

This has been an interesting and busy period for the Regt as we provided support to Op Shaku (Flooding), completed BOWMAN refresher training and various other Sqn level events. Op Shaku saw members of the Regt deploy a number of CSTs to the Lake District and York areas over the Christmas period; providing vital communications assets to Gold Command rooms in support of the C2 effort, fighting the floods. On the Adventure Training and sporting front, the Regt has been busy with various skiing exercises and competitions, and the Football Team have progressed to the ¼ finals of the Army Reserve Cup.

Congratulations go to **Capt Nav Muhammad** who was awarded the MBE in the New Years Honours list, for his extensive work in the BAME environment; **Capt Barnard (ROSO)**, **WO2 Reynolds (ROSWO)** and **Diane Cohen (RHQ AO)** who all received GOC FTC Commendations for outstanding contributions in their areas of work; presentations for the Voluntary Reserve Service Medal (VRSM) for 10 years dedicated service go to **Sgt Matt Weston** and **Cpl Stu Rowell**. Congratulations again to **Sgt Matt Weston** who was awarded the Chacksfield Trophy for the best Reserve contribution to the Regt in the last year, which was a fitting reward alongside his VRSM. Well done to all.

### Regt Alpine Ski Team by - SSgt Hopkinson

The Regtl Alpine Ski team made it back safely from Austria after a successful two weeks training in Dec 15. Despite a lack of belief in our own ability, we did actually make the medal podium for the following:

Giant Slalom	Slalom	Combined
Female 2 <sup>nd</sup> <b>Sgt Pinnock</b>	Female 2 <sup>nd</sup> <b>Sgt Pinnock</b>	Female 2 <sup>nd</sup> <b>Sgt Pinnock</b>
Female 3 <sup>rd</sup> <b>Capt Hennis</b>		Female 3 <sup>rd</sup> <b>Capt Hennis</b>



Regt Ski Team on the Piste

**Sig Densmore** from 33 Sig Sqn received a special mention during prize giving for his excellent progression. He started the two weeks as a complete novice having only had 2hrs training in the snow dome. With only 3 days instruction he put himself in the start gates, skiing a GS course on an icy red slope. With courage and hard work he had achieved in a few days, what some had not even mastered with the full 4 weeks training. By end of race week he had moved up 10 places from bottom seed to finish in 81<sup>st</sup> place. Despite being pushed hard in training he never complained, picking himself up after each fall and trying again with renewed determination. His positive attitude both to the training and racing was commented on by all and he was hailed as an example of what can be achieved with the right mind set by **Brig Carmichael**.

### 54 (QOWWY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj D Dewfall**  
SSM **SSgt P Hall**

Although Christmas is a fading memory, Sp Sqn personnel have photographs to help them recall a superb Masquerade themed Christmas Party that was organised in the main by **LCpl Rebecca Abrahams**. The drill hall was transformed and guests had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Sp Sqn also hosted the Regtl day workers at a Christmas lunch, which gave an opportunity for personnel from all of our locations to meet colleagues who in the previous 12 months had only perhaps interacted with them via email or on the phone. The food was of course first rate; the **RCWO, WO2 Paul Holland** and his team never fail to impress us.

Perhaps the highlight of this period was the presentation of the Voluntary Reserve Service Medal to **Sgt Matt Weston**. The author of his citation faced a real challenge to fit the text on a single sheet of A4 because of the sheer volume of activities that he has been involved with during the last 10 years; I know the margins were increased and the font was reduced to make it fit! **Sgt Weston** was also presented with the 'Chacksfield Trophy' for his superb performance in 2014 / 15. **Sgt Weston** is now posted to 254 (SGIS) Sig Sqn and we thank him for the tremendous impact that he has made on the Sqn during his time with us and we wish him all the very best for the future.



Sgt Matt Weston receiving the Chacksfield Trophy from the Commanding Officer





We deployed the Sqn on Ex Sqn Trot 3, organised by **Sgt Weston**, which provided a challenging and enjoyable weekend to all those who took part. **LCpl Simon Hathaway** provided a very well organised and effective MOD 5 weekend which enabled several of our operators to come a lot closer to achieving CS Op Class 3 status.

Our medical department continues to go from strength to strength; **LCpl Matt Brown** did remarkably well to pass the regular army Class 1 CMT course and **LCpl Roy Jones** passed the army reserve Class 1 course - very well done to you both. The cold weather has slowed our sporting prowess, apart from the skiers of course, who you will read about in a neighbouring article.

#### **Exercise DRAGON SORBET 9-16 JAN 2016 - A Young Reserve Soldiers View - by LCpl Hathaway**

I have taken part in Ex Dragon Sorbet which is the regtl skiing exercise in Austria. I have served for 9 years in the army reserves and I haven't been able to afford it before. Thanks to the contributions from WM RFCA towards the Exercise, I only had to pay a deposit of £150. When you have two kids, you don't often get these opportunities, but this made the trip affordable and thanks to going on this ski trip, I have come out of this with my SF1. Not only have I really enjoyed my week away, I have learnt a hell of a lot thanks to the brilliant instructors. It has really improved my confidence in general and will definitely help me to be a better soldier. It has been a brilliant week and I am looking forward to next year, with the aim of completing my SF2. Thank you to all.

#### **33 (LANCASHIRE) SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj A Bowdler**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jolliffe**

#### **Exercise Alpine Mercury Glacier - by Sig Densmore**

Ex Alpine Mercury Glacier (AMG) XIX is the annual R SIGNALS Alpine Ski Training Camp and Championships held in Kaprun, Austria over the period 14<sup>th</sup> November – 12<sup>th</sup> December 15. **Sig Densmore** of 33 Sig Sqn (Liverpool) who attended the camp for the two weeks, from the 28th of November to the 12th of December, had this to say:

"I decided to attend Ex Mercury Glacier after a day's skiing session in an indoor ski slope in Manchester as part of our ski adventure training. I had really enjoyed it, so I wanted the opportunity to learn properly.

We joined the camp in week three of four, so my first week was one on one tuition as I had so little skiing experience and the novice groups were already further ahead of me. With three great instructors I progressed very quickly; which I was really pleased with and by the end of the first week I could parallel turn. I had even managed one black run, albeit with a fall or two, but had managed to do red runs no problem. The second week was race week, which was what everyone had been training for. We were all seeded and I was 91<sup>st</sup> out of 91 racers, which meant I was last out of the gates. First up was giant slalom (GS) which we did for two days.

When my turn came I stood in the gates and was really nervous. Everyone was cheering me on though so I just shot out of the gate and managed to get down the course without falling over or missing any of the gates! I was made up to do so well and after the four runs over two days I was moved up

to seed 85. Next was slalom which is different as the gates are much closer together than giant slalom, making the course much faster and your turns tighter. I still managed to get through my runs with no problem and get good times, which I was happy with.



*Sig Densmore looking relaxed on his first run*

After one week's training and being completely new to racing, I managed to finish in the low 70's which I was buzzing with. We had an awards night on the Friday night which was a nice ending to the week. I was shocked to receive a special award because the instructors were so impressed at how far I had come in such short amount of time. The award was something I just wasn't expecting, so just topped off what was a great two week camp for me. Two members of my team won awards which was great for them and for the Regt. **Sgt Ash Pinnock** gaining 2nd in Slalom, Giant Slalom and combination. **Capt Sandy Hennis** took third in Giant Slalom and combination. I will definitely be going on the training camp again in 2016 and hope to attend the 4 weeks this time. I can't say anything else other than just go for it. Whether you're like me with little experience or a racing pro, the instructors will progress your skiing. Just go and do it, it's an amazing place and you will have a great time. I could not recommend it highly enough!!! "

#### **48 (CITY OF BIRMINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON**

OC **Maj S Cherry**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Fowler**

#### **48 Sig Sqn Christmas Function at Birmingham City FC**

On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December the Sqn celebrated Christmas in style at the Jasper Carrot Suite at St Andrews, home of Birmingham City FC. This made a change from the usual function which is normally hosted at SHQ, and I think everyone was grateful to **Capt John Berry** (PSAO) for arranging this, as it meant no cleaning up to do the next day! The day was spent in the Sqn completing equipment care tasks and general admin, before Sqn members, past and present gathered at Golden Hillock ARC for a couple of pre-dinner drinks. A minibus shuttle service, kindly provided by **SQMS SSgt Andy Acton** then took them to St Andrews football ground. A few people made their own way, including **LCpl Pete Wong**, who decided to cycle and get changed out of his cycling gear in the gents within St Andrews; with guests from other functions being greeted by an admin-bomb of clothes as they walked into the toilet! Upon arrival, Sqn members and their guests were greeted with a champagne reception before moving into the Jasper Carrot Suite (overlooking the pitch) for a three course meal.



The OC (**Maj Steve Cherry**) did his annual speech, where the Sqn were informed of the sad news that **LCpl Johnson** was in hospital, however, the generosity and family spirit of the Sqn shined through, with both **LCpl Stewart 'Troop Sergeant-Major' Bailey** and **LCpl Adam Cowie** donating their winnings from the money tree to **LCpl Johnson's** family to help support them at this difficult time. Following on from the speeches there was a disco with **LCpl Kayleigh Stokes**, **LCpl Willets** and **Sig Halcrow** leading the way on the dance floor, before **SSgt Andy Acton** provided transport back to SHQ. The next day was the Sqn family day, including a military Santa's grotto for the children, in other words a converted 12x12 tent!!! By all accounts this too was an excellent day, with plenty of snacks provided by the chefs and the children enjoying meeting Santa and his elves and credit should go to **LCpl Kayleigh Stokes** for organising the day.

## 50 (N) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj N R Coatsworth MBE**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ross**

A successful end to last year has led to 50 Sig Sqn returning to the fold in 2016 with renewed vigour. Just as well, for we face challenging times ahead. The impending re-subordination from 37 to 32 Sig Regt has refocused sqn members as we prepare to switch recruiting focus in terms of our AOR, adjust some of our training requirements and of course begin our individual language conversion courses. I am confident however that strong leadership and our excellent team spirit, underpinned by hard work and accurate administration by the PSAO and his team, will ensure the process flows smoothly to a successful conclusion.

### Exercise TEES TROT 3 - by WO2 (SSM) Ross

Over the weekend of 8-10 Jan, 50 Sig Sqn deployed to DST Leconfield for a chance to practise their BOWMAN skills on the Dismounted Land Rover Based Training Suite. Battling ice cold conditions and high winds, the troops arrived safely on Friday evening and the following morning enjoyed a hearty breakfast before commencing training.

The Junior Ranks were grouped together and taken away by the DST staff to the training suite where they were met by our very own **LCpl 'Bruce' Forsyth**, **Cpl 'Das' Carmichael** and the **Nicholls Brothers**. Once inside the soldiers were split into pairs and allocated a detachment. Throughout the day, crews were led through scenarios and drills, testing what some already knew and reminding others what they may have forgotten – and all in the comfort of a warm garage environment.



*Signaller Duchemin and LCpl Freer getting to grips with BOWMAN*

The Seniors and Officers meanwhile were whisked off to a separate classroom for a Combat 'refresher / introduction' day which culminated in a map marking and chat room messaging exercise. Needless to say an element of fun was introduced into the proceedings with **Sgt 'Stu' Jones** persistently initiating contact reports and one or two others misbehaving to the point that they ended up stood in the corner of the room with pointy hats on their heads.

Fortunately all were on best behaviour when the sqn's Honorary Colonel, **Brig (Retired) D Hargreaves** came to visit us. The Brig spent a good few hours meeting soldiers, touring the facilities and generally enjoying being back in the environment before enjoying a spot of lunch and leaving us for his next appointment.

On the Saturday evening, members of the Sqn ventured into Beverley for the traditional "cultural visit" and were impressed with the selection of stimulating and attention-grabbing sites on offer. At one point **Sgt 'Smudge' Smith** came over all nostalgic, commenting that he had very fond memories of Beverley; a town that had not changed much since he completed driver training in 1948 (this date may be slightly inaccurate). One thing is for sure, there did seem to be a lot of Smiths in the telephone directory. On Sunday morning the Juniors conducted a confirmatory exercise on the BOWMAN training suite whilst the Seniors and Officers tackled an MS grading board and received some instruction on written Orders. So ended the first of what we hope will be many visits to DST Leconfield. All agreed it had been an excellent weekend's training and look forward to visiting again when it eventually stops raining.....

### Regimental Football - SSgt Graham

An eagerly awaited 2<sup>nd</sup> round Army Reserve Cup fixture was played at Lilleshall National Centre of Sporting Excellence on Sat 12th Dec 15. 4 Mercian Regt hosted 37<sup>th</sup> Sig Regt in what turned out to be a great night for the Signals. A high tempo encounter played in torrential rain, witnessed 37 Sig Regt comprehensively defeat 4 Mercians by 8 goals to 3.

Playing together for the first time this season, our boys produced a style of free-flowing football that their rivals struggled to contain and the superb standard of the pitch meant that we were able to employ our passing game to full effect. Fielding a team full of experience, including one or two individuals who have played at Army representative level also helped.

**SSgt Graham**, **Cpl Bates**, **Cpl Seerey**, **LCpl Rolands** (Captain) and **LCpl Freer** all found the net and helped ensure the Signal Unit's safe passage into the ¼ Finals. It was the overall team performance that was most impressive however. It may have taken over 4 hours to drive to this most prestigious ground, but the experience and result made it all worthwhile. Roll on the ¼ final against Oxford UOTC.

37<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment Army Reserve Cup Squad;

- SSgt Graham
- SSgt Myers
- Cpl Bates
- Cpl Bainbridge
- Cpl Beesley-Wood
- Cpl Rowland
- Cpl Seerey
- LCpl Forsyth
- LCpl Freer
- LCpl Fountain
- LCpl Hatheway
- Sig Carpenter
- Sig Dorain
- Pte Walker





## 64 SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj McHenry**  
SSM **WO2(SSM) Howes**

**Parish Notes** -- by WO2 (SSM) Howes

Well the old year ended and the new one began in a way I suspect we will see for the rest of 2016... busy.

The sqn put its assets out on the ground in support of Op Shaku (Flooding) and in appreciation of their efforts, the crews were awarded a CO's Coin. Two of the recipients were presented theirs by the Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire, **Mr Andrew Coombe DL FCA**, as he visited us on our first training weekend of 2016 in early January. Ex Global Trot 3 saw the Sqn enhancing its Bowman skills under the eagle eyes of **WO2 Kev Tharby**. It included such delights as improvised antennas and tuning into an evangelical radio station broadcasting on HF from the USA! It was overlaid with a bit of Morse Code for good measure, that would keep any of you legacy RTGs out there happy.



*Cpl Stu Rowell receives his VRSM from the Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire*

In addition to the CO's Coins, the Lord Lieutenant also awarded **Cpl Stu Rowell** with his Volunteer Reserve Service Medal. Congratulations to him and keep up the good work in the future.

**Exercise GLOBAL INFRA 2, 11-13 Dec 2015** - by Cpl McMullan (RAMC)

This weekend was held at Beckingham Training Camp, Lincolnshire and we shared the location with other units including the Army Cadet Force attending their last training weekend before Christmas.

**Saturday 12th December:** The day started out well with classroom based lessons after breakfast including "How to manage Detachment folders properly" organised by **SSgt Dave Williams**. I found this very informative as being cap badged RAMC, it's not something I would come across very often unless I were to be deployed out with a Det. I now know what IMI's are for and where and when they should be carried out. The morning was then broken up by a bit of "fun" PT that was run by **Cpl Dwayne Brown**; which actually did turn out to be quite enjoyable! It comprised of a "Twelve

days of Christmas" circuit and a little run out of camp that was cut short due to time constraints (having to get showered and changed before lunch).

After lunch we were back in the classroom for some lessons from **Cpl Andy Priest** on how to fill out vehicle paperwork correctly; including the dreaded forms for after an accident involving an MOD vehicle. He also took us all outside to demonstrate how to use the correct equipment (I'm having a blonde moment and can't think of the name for it) for getting large/heavy items on and off the MAN truck.

By 1700hrs we were ready for our evening meal, which was a pleasant Christmas dinner served to us by the Officers and Seniors; all looking very festive in their Christmas Jumpers! The evening's entertainment was provided by **LCpl Ben Dunker** and consisted of a game show type quiz, which I think was supposed to be a version of "Never Mind the Buzzcocks," but was entertaining all the same. There was also a Karaoke and disco later provided by **Pte Ball (RLC)**. All-in-all it was a great evening for those of us who were there to remember it .

**Sunday 13th December:** The morning saw us all back in the classroom, refreshed after an extra half hour lay in before reveille. **SSgt Paul Ingram** and **LCpl Graham Casey** provided a lesson on Fire Safety and how to use fire extinguishers correctly. To ensure our full attention the morning was broken up with lots of brew breaks to aid our caffeine intake. Finally, we all cleaned/cleared our accommodation, offered our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to each other and said our farewells. We then departed for our ARC, with the now familiar brown bag of lunchtime treats!

**Operation Shaku, 27<sup>th</sup> December 2015 – 31 December 2015**  
- by SSgt Hallewell

Whilst the majority of people in the country were celebrating the festive period, a large area of it were fighting to keep their head above water... literally. To that end, 64 Sig Sqn stepped into the breach and deployed two CST's and 6 soldiers to support the ever increasing military effort to hold back the flood waters. Initial deployment found CST64A deploying to Imphal Barracks, York, to be greeted by what can only be described as organised chaos; troops and resources all over the place, including the ubiquitous CH47 Chinook lifting pumps and stores in support of the emergency services fighting to get the Foss Barrier operational. As soon as we had made our presence known we were deployed to support The Light Dragoons in the Wakefield area, whilst CST64B remained in York to support 2 York's.



*SSgt Dave Hallewell during Op Shaku*





Dii Laptops and VTC communications were all that was required by The Light Dragoons as Gold Command in Wakefield more than comfortably supported the military effort in the area. The main effort over the 4 day period was to preserve the integrity of the utility services, primarily gas and electric supplies. Both The Light Dragoons and The Royal Lancers worked 24/7 in a fantastic joint effort with the civilian services, which was widely reported on the national news. Royal Engineer recce teams were deployed to



*Sig Daniel Storey receives his CO's Coin in recognition of his efforts during Op Shaku*

establish the condition of various bridges around the Calder Valley and a field kitchen was established in Leeds to feed the deployed troops.

All in all a great joint effort by those involved, especially considering the time of year. After the visit of a number of Senior Staff Officers, the support was withdrawn at 1400hrs New Year's eve, leaving plenty of time for the 6 members of 64 Sqn to return to their families in time to celebrate the New Year. A job well done.



## 39th SIGNAL REGIMENT BRISTOL



CO **Lt Col N C Bruce**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S Tomblin**

### 43 (WESSEX AND CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj R Nixon**  
A/SSM **SSgt I Stott**

#### Bath Harmony Weekend - by Sgt Downs

After a year's hard work, it was only fitting that troops were rewarded with the Bath Harmony Weekend in the winddown to Christmas. After lots of hair pulling, the weekend was put together to contain some great activities to include 93 SP Sqn and the help of the Regtl Padre. For the Saturday we were split into groups and given different tasks. My group consisted of the troop commanders, the 'wise men' of 93 Sp Sqn's Officers and Seniors and **Padre Stone** travelled to Avondown Care Home in Bath to conduct a Carol Service for the home's residents. The Padre had put together one of the best Carol Services I had attended and after a little practise of cats corner we were unleashed into the care home for a very enthusiastic carol service. Despite the lack of tone, this was enjoyed by all residents and ourselves and we finished off with a very Bristolian "12 Days of Christmas" with **Capt Topps**



*Warmed up and ready to entertain*

and **2Lt's Griffiths and Sharp** leading the way. Thanks must go to the Padre for a great chance to bring some Christmas cheer to the home; some of the residents even begged us to let some of the 93 Warrant Officer's stay.

The second group were re-visiting familiar ground at Arnos Vale Cemetary. We had previously developed projects at Arnos Vale and wanted to continue our support. This gave us a chance to show ourselves to the public and bolster our Op FORTIFY efforts. The team were broken down and work quickly commenced around the site. **Cpl Sellers** and **LCpl Beard** had the exceptionally hard task of dressing up and entertaining the mass of children visiting Santa's Grotto. Most of the paths in Arnos Vale had become overgrown and a lot of these had to be cleared so that the public could enjoy the war graves that exist here or to simply come and pay their respects. One of the achievements of the day was a path that we were asked to build as there were areas that had become completely inaccessible. I have it on good authority that the steps are still there despite all the heavy rain and the Cemetary are very grateful for the work we carried out and for far exceeding all their demands.



*The Army Reserve's version of 'DIY SOS'!*





As usual it would not be a weekend if we were not rewarded for all the efforts of the day, so teams were asked to put on a series of skits, with the winner taking all. Needless to say the bigger characters of the Sqn bore the brunt of the comedy but rose above it enough to reward the winning team with their prize. A big 'thank you' must go to the Chef for working his spoons off and to all who attended and helped on the weekend; it certainly reminded us that hardwork pays off!

#### Exercise WESSEX FROLIC 1 - by Capt M Crilly

It was a good start to the training year for those members of 43 (Wessex and City and County of Bristol) Sig Sqn deploying on the comms ex phase of Ex FROLIC 1 along with members of 53 (Wales & Western) Sig Sqn. The exercise was a low level skills training weekend which simulated a Bowman TACCIS deployment, running concurrently to the recruiting activities being undertaken by other members of both sqns. Due to some inevitable skills fade it was a bit of a slow start on the PACEX, but after a bit of practice the training kicked in and we were ready to get out into the training area at Caerwent. We soon managed to establish comms and simulated remoting the equipment in one of the many disused buildings that litter the area. After a successful day meeting all the Training Objectives laid down by Brigade, we settled down into our evening routines. The next morning we reveilled at 0600hrs ready for another day's military training in the form of our annual AFT. It was decided to take the photos at the start of 6 and 8 mile tabs, despite assurances that there would no difference in the demeanour of the participants at the end; however, both photos were far from complimentary so neither will be published! Most of the Sqn were able to pass the 6 mile route and many also continued the extra 2 miles to complete the regular 8 miles. AFT completed, we returned to Bath ARC where we completed the reconstitution of the Sqn and weapon cleaning before dismissal. Overall the weekend was an enjoyable and informative experience and a good start to what looks like being a very busy 2016.

#### Comd JFC Commendation - by Maj R Nixon



Capt Crilly receives his award from General Sir Richard Barrons KCB CBE ADC

In early January, the Regt was delighted to hear that **Capt Martin Crilly**, Second in Command of 43 Sig Sqn in Bath had been awarded a Joint Forces Command Team Commendation in the 2016 New Year's Honours List. This was for the work completed by the ISS UK Ops Team in support of the Commonwealth Games, NATO Summit and INVICTUS games from 1 Feb 14 to 30 Sep 14. The Command JFC Commendation is a 4\* Commendation and was presented by **General Sir Richard Barrons KCB CBE ADC** at an Awards Ceremony on 5 Feb 16.

The ISS UK ops team was formed initially to coordinate ISS support to the Commonwealth Games but it's remit was rapidly expanded to include the NATO Summit and INVICTUS Games. All three activities shared common challenges: uncertain requirements, tight timelines, media interest, intense security and limited access to the venues. Undeterred by these challenges, the team of Regular personnel, Army Reserves and contracted personnel fused seamlessly together to attack each problem with determination, innovation and attention to detail. They became the vanguard of ICS planning and activity for UK operations in 2014. The UK Operations team demonstrated the highest standards of team work, initiative, technical skill and drive. They set an example to all ranks, demonstrating what can be achieved through mission command, with the right mix of professional people and through harnessing the skillsets of Regulars, Reserves and contractors.

#### 53 (WALES AND WESTERN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj G Smith**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Knock**

#### Royal Signals Cross Country Championships

On Wednesday 11 Feb 2016 the Royal Signals Cross Country Championships took place at MOD Stafford on a cold, wet and windy day. The race was started by **Brig Steve Vickery**.

As per the norm the race started with an incline to get out of camp onto the area and we soon realised it was going to be a very boggy route having to watch every step making sure we did not lose our footing. If only we had to endure Sandy Hill once, but the organisers thought they would make us go back around and do two loops of the hill (massive thanks). After two laps of the field it was onto the home straight, down the hill we started the race on and all the way to the finish line.

Despite having very few personnel to draw upon, the Regt enjoyed some fantastic results, culminating in the Regt winning the Minor Unit prize! Individual highlights included **SSgt Jennings** and **SSgt Cooke** placing 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> respectively and being selected for the Corps team. Congratulations to both!

#### 93 (NORTH SOMERSET YEOMANRY) SUPPORT SQUADRON

OC **Maj A Morris**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Vise**

#### Community Engagements

The Sqn has been involved in two community engagements since the last edition of The Wire. Firstly, the Operations **Maj, Carl Budding**, asked if we could host the Royal British Legion Bristol and Somerset Poppy Launch on Friday 23 October 2015. "It will only consist of a couple of horses and a





carriage,” said the OM. So quite foolishly our resident PSAO, **Capt Terry Morrissey** agreed.

On investigation it turned out to be a bit bigger than the OM initially suggested: yes, there were a couple of horses (Belgium Black Friesians) with a carriage, however, they were accompanied by riders from the 16<sup>th</sup> Lancers Re-enactment Group and escorted by mounted Police from Bristol dressed in full ceremonial uniform. In addition, another four support vehicles and two press vans made up the party.

However not to be phased **Capt Morrissey** invited them into the Army Reserve Centre for a welcome stop over and invited them in for a cup of tea and a bucket of water for the horses. He then arranged for all the permanent staff to give them a small military send off as the procession headed towards Whiteladies Road and then HMS Flying Fox in the centre of Bristol.



*Only a 'few' horses*



*Refuelled and back on the road*

The second request came from a former member of the Manchester Regt which, in its earlier form, was the 63<sup>rd</sup> of Foot. In Horfield Parish Church, **Mr Alastair Cowan** from Bath had found a previously unknown marble memorial plaque to the commanding officer of the 63<sup>rd</sup> who was killed in the Crimean War at Inkerman.

**Mr Cowan** requested assistance from the Sqn with cleaning the plaque to enable a photograph of the inscription to be taken. **Maj Andy Morris**, OC 93 Sp Sqn, was delighted to help and, with the assistance of **Capt Dave Curry** and **Capt Terry Morrissey**, set about locating the plaque, seeking the

necessary permission from the local vicar and arranging a time for all to be present to carry out the task.

The date was set for Saturday 5 Dec 15, everyone met at the Church where with the help of **SSgt Olly Neeve**, we set about cleaning the plaque to enable **Mr Cowan** to take a significant photograph of the plaque and record the inscription. Afterwards we all retired to Horfield Army Reserve Centre Officers' Mess for a well-deserved drink where a delighted **Mr Cowan** presented the Officer Commanding with a Manchester Regt Plaque.



*A delighted Mr Cowan*

#### **Exercise LYNX FROLIC 1 (Recruit Training) - Sgt Pocklington**

All recruits that were taking part in Ex LYNX FROLIC 1 assembled at Horfield Army Reserve Centre on the Friday evening. Recruits travelled to Bristol from 94 Sig Sqn in Windsor and 53 Sig Sqn in Cardiff. The evening was spent reminding and revising MATT 3 and preparing their kit for the practical training that took place on the Saturday. All recruits were enthusiastic and were looking forward to deploying to Caerwent Training Area on a very cold Saturday morning in January. The aim of the training was to consolidate on theoretical elements of MATT 3 and put it into practice. **Cpl 'Ian' Bailey** RAMC was the lead instructor in the conduct of the Battle Lesson with the assistance of **Sgt 'Kerri' Hill** who ensured the casualties were as realistic as possible.



*Why is it always the AGC SPS who get shot?!*





During the Battle Lesson all recruits, irrespective of previous knowledge got stuck in, be that by securing the area or getting involved in the triage and treatment of casualties. **WO2 'Butch' Butcher** should be congratulated and nominated for an Oscar for his performance as a casualty suffering from shock. He ensured the training was made as realistic as possible by creating his own vomit from crushed up cashew nuts; this, in particular, surprised a couple of the recruits. On the Saturday evening the recruits returned to Bristol and after a quick shower and turn round of kit they went out to a local curry house to bond and discuss in detail this enjoyable training event. The weekend finished on the Sunday with weapon training.

#### 94 (BERKSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Paul Ukpai**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Anderson**

#### And so 2015 draws to a close...

2015 has been a very busy year for 94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn, with our 'main effort' being Op FORTIFY and expanding our reach across Camberley, Aldershot and Reading. Recognition has to go to **WO2 Chapman** and **Cpl Brownlees** who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to recruit the next generation of Berkshire Yeomanry! They have raised our profile within the local areas and managed to procure new recruiting materials to really drive the message. Our recruiting pipeline continues to grow, feeding trained soldiers into the Sqn. Good effort indeed.

With 2015 coming to a close the Sqn conducted its last training weekend, Ex Winter Harmony. This was also an ideal time to crack some of the outstanding MATTs and have a final Christmas function. 2000hrs Friday evening the weekend started, with the Sqn preparing kit, packing vehicles and issuing weapons. By 2100hrs the Sqn headed out of the gates to Knook camp.

After breakfast bright and early, the Sqn was split into 3 groups, briefed on the day's activities and given a number of grid references from which to navigate to complete various tasks and stands thought the day. **Sgt Anderson**, who recently passed the RMQ qualification, ran the ranges supported by **WO2 Dean**. Winds of up to 40mph tested what everybody knew and ensured that all personnel fully applied the marksmanship principles! Concurrently, but in far less blustery conditions, **SSgt Sterry** conducted MATT 5 written in the back of the mini buses! And then came the rain...



*Clear, ease springs!*

**Sgt Grace** and **Cpl Payne** ran a very impressive MATT 9 CEO (previously known as C-IED) stand, preparing many different examples of dummy IED devices. After the classroom based lessons, it was time for the practical lessons including the '5 & 20' rule – well done to the **2IC Capt Saunders** who managed to accurately demonstrate the rule without getting blown up. Next was testing how observant we were, which was much harder than we realised.

Just before tea, **Sgt Anderson** conducted MATT 3 BCDT, whilst **Cpl Payne** and **Sgt Grace** car-jacked the PSAO's car for the MATT 10 practical, much to his surprise.

Behind the scenes, the SPSI and SQMS had been busy preparing the bar area with Christmas decorations and laying the tables in preparation for the Christmas dinner night. The SSM and WOs sat on the top table with the soldiers' seats on the legs, whilst the officers served a traditional Christmas meal. With weapons cleaned and soldiers showered, we retired to the bar to enjoy a few drinks and MATT 7 and MATT 8. Our compliments must go to the chef for providing a wonderful and well-presented meal. The evening was rounded off by a very strange 'celebrity naming' game, which I believe is still in play...

Sunday morning bright and early, it was time for **Sgt Grace** and **Cpl Mays** favorite wake-up call – the AFT – which started with a cheeky little hill to get the party started.



*I believe I can fly, I believe I can touch the sky...*

On Sunday afternoon, the OC briefed and thanked the Sqn for an excellent training year. However, before mounting transport to head home it was MATT 3 practical. Armed with maps, compasses and Christmas questions, we navigated across the training area collecting answers to confirm we had reached the required checkpoints. A fantastic and enjoyable weekend, off the back of a lot of hard work. And that's why we do what we do!

#### Carols by Candlelight

On the final Tues night training evening of the year, the Sqn put on a 'Carols by Candlelight' service, hosted by our own **Padre Scott**. Music supplied by the Band of the Household Cavalry, who share the Army Reserve Centre: a fantastic treat! The evening was a sensation and it was great to welcome back previous members of the Squadron; **Brig Verey**, **Brig Robertson**, **Col Connelly**, **Col Kendall** along with 80 other sqn members and family.







*The band of the Household Cavalry*

Readings were read by **Brig Verey, Brig Robertson, Capt Saunders, Capt Samways, Lt MacInnes, Sgt Anderson and Sig Cuddy**, followed by drinks and nibbles in the bar. A big thank you to the PSAO, **Capt Paul Samways** and his wife, Anne, for supplying and preparing the buffet and mulled wine. With everybody in the Christmas mood, it was time to lock everything down and look forward to the start of 2016.

#### **A new year, a new start... and it's cold.**

94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Sig Sqn kicked off the new year, traditionally known as Ex COLD START, with a communications exercise over Copehill Down Training Area. This was the first exercise for our new Officer Commanding, **Maj Paul Ukpai**, who was particularly impressed with the robustness of the Sqn and their determination to deliver capability, despite the freezing conditions! **Sig Riglar** also recently joined 94 Signal Squadron and had this to say about his first exercise with his new unit:

“Late evening on Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, the Sqn rolled out the gates, in convoy, heading for the only place in England that has all four seasons in one day: Copehill Down Village, SPTA. Even with the forecast ‘arctic’ conditions, the turnout was good with three detachments deployed. Copehill Down training facility was built in 1988 to resemble a Bavarian village, providing a training environment for Cold War and Northern Ireland operations. The facility has been expanded to include a shanty town and compound walls to provide an additional training environment for the operational theatres of Iraq and Afghanistan.

For the duration of the weekend, the Sqn was based within the simulated FOB. Even with the addition of kerosene heaters the temperature inside the buildings was very cold. Saturday’s routine was to test communication systems within the FOB and then to deploy to various locations on Salisbury Plan. This went smoothly with all locations quickly erecting masts, getting into routine and transmitting exercise radio traffic.

At 1800 hours, radio orders communicated that the detachments were to return to the FOB as 1 Royal Tank Regt were approaching to attack Copehill Down with three Challenger 2 tanks! For several hours the drone of the approaching tanks was heard across the village as the Sqn completed its tasks. After some time the tanks entered the village, ensuring that everyone knew they were there... subtle they were not! In spite of some very grumpy det commanders spirits remained high.

Sunday began with rain, comms, rain and then more comms ... roll on February, where we expect comms, snow and more comms. Bring it on: we’re tough enough and ready to communicate!”

#### **Hails and farewells**

As we step further into 2016, we say thank you to three outstanding Berkshire Yeoman who hang up their ‘Jimmy’ and head for retirement; **Capt Samways, WO2 Dean & Sgt Hearn** who between them have given over 100 years of military service. **Capt Samways** started his career in the Coldstream Guards in 1972, with the final 10 years of his service as the PSAO at 94 Sig Sqn, serving four different OC’s. **WO2 Dean**, a keen and regular face around the Sqn, was awarded the Lord Lieutenant Certificate for outstanding contribution to the Reserve Forces last year and will be very much missed. **Sgt Hearn** has paraded at the Sqn for 40 years and will be missed

as well. A huge thank you, to you and your families, for all your service and commitment over the years. We still expect to see you at dinners! Rest assured they will be dined out in style - photos to follow in the next edition of The Wire.



*Welcome to the Reserves SSgt Welsh*

We also welcome two new soldiers: **SSgt Welsh** who brings a wealth of experience having recently left the regular Army joining our Sqn Ops Team. No stranger to the reserves, **SSgt Welsh** previously served as the SPSI at 31 Sig Regt. **SSgt Welsh** will also be supporting Op FORTIFY, helping to recruit the next generation of the big BY.

Finally **Sig Sharma**, joins the ranks and is currently preparing for his Phase 1 training. Good luck!



*Capt Curry welcomes Sig Sharma to the Squadron*







## 71st (CITY OF LONDON) YEOMANRY SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH



CO **Lt Col HJ Scott MBE**  
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P Robertson**

### Visit of the Corps Colonel - by WO1 (RSM) P Robertson

On Tues 12 Jan 16 the Regt hosted the Corps Colonel, accompanied by the Corps Command Sergeant Major, Corps Adjutant and Corps FofS. The evening was broken into two phases: a Regtl visit providing an overview of the Reserves with particular focus on the issues relevant to 71 Y Sig Regt, followed by the presentation of medals, clasps and awards by the Corps Col to members of the Regt.

Following the presentation, to get a better view of some of the differing challenges facing Regulars and Reserves, the Corps Colonel's group split to their corresponding appointments to further discuss the topics. It was interesting to highlight differing challenges faced in an Army Reserve unit and the points taken away from this were very positive.

On completion of the discussion groups, everyone made their way to the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess to begin with the medal, clasp and awards ceremony. The Corps Colonel had kindly agreed to present so many medals to the deserving Reservists who volunteer to dedicate their free



*The Corps Comd Sgt Maj and RSM conduct the question and answering session within the RSM's office*



*The medal, clasp and awards recipients*

time to Army Reserve service. It is very satisfying when the achievements and commitment of the Regiment's personnel is recognised. This year saw a total of ten Reserve personnel being awarded a range of medals including the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal, the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal and commendations for exceptional contributions. It was also gratifying that a number of peoples' families were present to see the service of their wives and husbands being marked in such a fitting way. A great evening was had by all.

### 68 (INNS OF COURT & CITY YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC **Maj Trelivon**  
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Cullumbine**  
SPSI **SSgt Smith**

### Christmas 2015 - by Sig Vickers

With everything feeling festive in the last Sqn weekend before Christmas, apart from the weather, the Sqn started early at 0800hrs on Saturday morning with a PFA taken by **Sig Vickers**. A few passes and fails had been given out, but by this time everyone was warmed up (relatively, given the weather) and ready to go for the days training ahead. It started off with a normal fun and exciting classroom lecture given by **SSgt Brown**, which further added to the knowledge of the job as signallers and soldiers. After a short tea and coffee break it was in the fields of Chingford, Essex for day and night navigation tests.

With the long and extensive bad weather that had occurred during the week, the fields were muddy and boggy, and coupled with the cold north wind, paperwork went everywhere! This deterred no one, and with everyone well wrapped up (from head to toe) the day navigation commenced. Despite the bad weather of continuous bombardment of rain, causing a few to get confused along the way, everyone soldiered on and completed the exercise. Then came the night navigation exercise, and by far the most

interesting part of the weekend. Not only did this exercise test individual's map reading skills in the dark, it also tested the ability to not stumble and fall into wet, muddy ditches. Luckily there were no face first falls into the mud!

The final part of the evening, which everyone was now waiting for, was the Christmas party which couldn't have come sooner at this point. Everyone hurried to shower and change just to get warm ready for the festivities to begin. The Christmas dinner took off to a flying start with **Sgt Warren** wearing his best penguin outfit and **SSgt Stabler** and **Sgt Jules** sporting their very colourful chefs aprons. The evening of fun included many games, one of which was a plank competition seeing which side could last the longest.

The night and evening as a whole was a success, after which everyone went on a well-deserved break for Christmas. After the festive season was over, everyone has come back with continued enthusiasm ready to take on the challenge of 2016.





### 31 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY AND PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

OC	<b>Maj Orr</b>
SSM	<b>WO2 (SSM) May</b>
SPSI	<b>SSgt Smiejkowski</b>
SPSI (Tech)	<b>SSgt Heath</b>

#### Officer Commanding Update

The last couple of months have seen a change around for more members of the Sqn. We waved goodbye to the outgoing OC **Maj Curtis-Rouse** and have said hello to our new OC **Maj Orr**. **Maj Curtis-Rouse** is going to take a break from the Army Reserve and concentrate on his civilian career for a while. **Maj Orr** is coming to us from manning in Blandford, and is no stranger to the personnel of the Sqn having previously served as the 2IC at 47 Sig Sqn (before it was merged into the current Sqn).

We must also pay tribute to **Sgt Bedwell** who, following a solid 38 year career in the Army Reserve, is finally retiring. He joined the Queen's Regt of the Territorial Army in 1978, which at the time was based in Horsham, where he was first and foremost an Infantryman. He was placed in the Signals Platoon, which is where he first gained his grounding in communications. By the time he was promoted to Cpl, The Queen's Regt had become the PWRR and he was heavily involved in the MT department.

**Sgt Bedwell** transferred over to the Royal Corps of Signals in 1999, and served with N Troop, which was part of 41 Sig Sqn. He soon became the subject matter expert on Clansman and before long was promoted to Sgt. He always maintained an interest in MT matters and became a Defence Driving Instructor. In his later years he was the Sqn SQMS (V) and was essential to the smooth running of the Sqn. We all wish him all the very best for the future and hope to see him at an Association event soon.

The Sqn held its Formation Parade in Jan 16, attended by the local Deputy Lieutenant, the Mayor of Uxbridge and the Corps Colonel (in his role as the Squadron's Honorary Colonel). Thankfully the weather held out; whilst cold, the sun shone and the event was marked appropriately. It was a chance for the Sqn to show off their flawless drill, expertly led by the OC **Maj Curtis-Rouse** who is a stickler for drill.

We have also had our first Sqn exercise of the year in Bramley training area, with a mix of CLM training, trade training and MATTs. All considered a very successful weekend despite the cold and wet weather. The CLM training was expertly delivered by 2Lt **Richard Roberts**, whilst the trade training was delivered by the newly arrived **Cpl Glass** who is a welcome addition to the Sqn.

#### Exercise MERCURY GLACIER - Corps Skiing - by LCpl Searle

It was 0500hrs and after a solid sleep **LCpl Searle** found himself sipping on a black coffee in the stereotypical highlander flask. It was his first time driving on the continent and he felt confident especially as his co-driver is a professional driver in his day-job! Embarking on something new, something arduous and definitely something they would remember, **Sgt Nielson**, **Sgt Osho**, **Sgt Nugent** and **LCpl Searle** took part in the annual Royal Signals Corps ski racing camp - Ex Alpine Mercury Glacier.

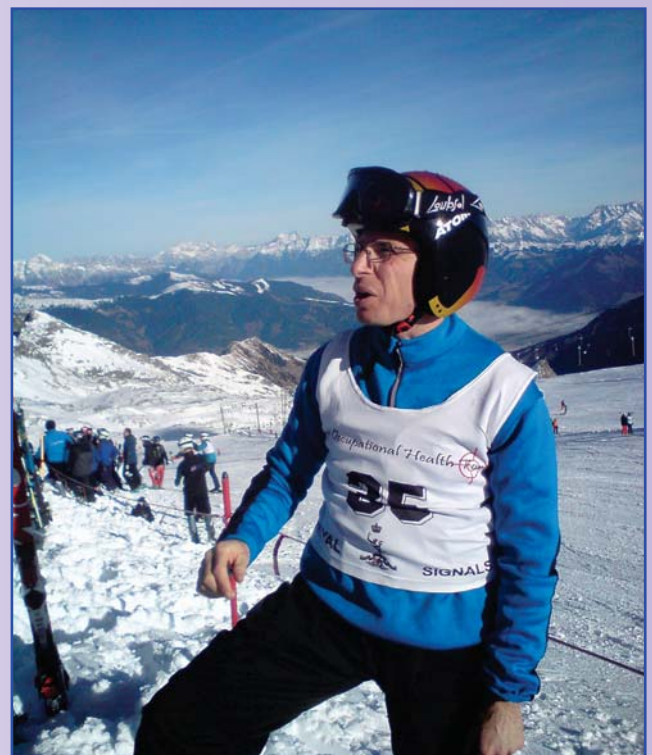
The camp focuses on developing individuals' core skiing skills and how to apply these into racing, specifically slalom and giant slalom. All abilities are welcome, even those who have never skied before. After the smoothest drive in history (with many thanks to a 12v kettle and **Sgt Nielson**) all arrived safely at Club Kitzsteinhorn, Zell Am See, Austria. A luxury hostel serving 3 meals a day, with an indoor climbing wall and a glamorous spa sauna area, who could ask for more!

The first day on the slopes was time to get the ski legs in, muscle memory had to be reignited and the brain had to conquer that fear factor again. The snow was perfect for getting the turns right; fluffy enough to have control but not so deep that it felt like being off piste. **Sgt Nugent** and **LCpl Searle** made it into the top group, with **Sgt Nielson** and **Sgt Osho** not far behind.

The next 4 days of training were intense; the instructors knew exactly which speeds everyone was capable of controlling safely. Long, medium, and short radius turns up on the edges - the group must have looked like the ESF ski schools in France: a long snaking train showering down the hill at over 50mph.

Race week arrived quickly and all were content with their seeding positions. The four events people took part in were giant slalom individual, giant slalom team, slalom individual and slalom team. Skis were serviced, boots were tightened, now all there was left to do was to carve down the red slope at your limits. The racing was slightly more relaxed compared to the week before; perhaps it was the old train hard, fight easy, mantra showing through!

**Sgt Nielson** managed to move from 86<sup>th</sup> to 54<sup>th</sup>, **LCpl Searle** finished in the 40's. **Sgt Nugent** made it into the elite reaching the 20's. Unfortunately, **Sgt Osho** took a tumble and won the wooden spoon. Two weeks had rushed by and despite Ex ALPINE MERCURY GLACIER being classified as sports; everyone had been on an adventure.



*Sgt Nugent ready for action*





## 36 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

### First joint Regular-Reserve PNCO CLM Course - by Sig Lowe

It was with no little trepidation that **Sig Lowe** travelled to York for the two week long PNCO CLM run by 2 Sig Regt, which was to be the first joint Regular/Reserve course. Firstly, being run in Nov/Dec it was only ever going to be cold, wet and miserable and secondly as a forty-something year old reservist on a course full of regulars he had concerns about keeping up with the younger and more practised whipper-snappers! The SPSI had spent a few hours giving **Sig Lowe** some helpful tips about kit and general military knowledge, so with a positive mind set there was nothing left to do but grit his teeth and knuckle down to it.

After paperwork had been handed in and the staff had introduced themselves it was straight out for a mile-and-a-half run where his suspicions were confirmed. The younger, fitter guys finished far, far ahead, but a confident pass and a personal best from **Sig Lowe** could not be complained about.

After a few opening lessons everyone departed to Otterburn Training Area, where they were based for the rest of the course. Upon disembarkation the course were greeted by rain but that didn't deter anyone. Theoretical lessons took up much of the first few days, which included welfare of subordinates, principles of leadership and equality and diversity before moving onto the more demanding lessons such as six section battle drills, commanding a fire team and supervising captured personnel. Lastly came the practical lessons after which people could start to put their learning into practice.

The final exercise, Ex BATTLE STRIPE, saw the weather wet and blustery so keeping an eye out for Non Freezing Cold Injuries (NFCI) was paramount, as well as carrying out the wet and dry drills! Whilst in the harbour area, in a remarkable coincidence **Sig Lowe** found that his basher buddy **Sig Pun** was the nephew of **Capt Pun**, the current Training Officer within his Sqn.

The next morning **Sig Lowe's** section had been depleted due to a number of NFCIs, the remaining members were then scattered amongst the other sections. One by one the three groups moved out into the rain to conduct a number of attacks, each member being given a chance to act as the Section 2IC. Each attack improved as the day went on and by the second all were fairly competent. Upon completion of the exercise, all returned to Otterburn camp to get a good shower and stay dry for more than 5 minutes. The course was enjoyed by all and a very successful integration of the Regulars and Reserves.

### Kiwi Trophy 2015 - by Sig Cordova

Arriving in Bulford the day before the competition, it was apparent there were nerves amongst some of the reservist competitors, especially after watching 3 Div Sig Regt personnel complete the event, slogging it out on a very wet and muddy day. They certainly looked like they would have rather been somewhere else that day. Suddenly reality struck and the walk in the park **Sig Cordova** was expecting was starting to seem like a distant memory.

Day 2 of the event came and **Sig Cordova** and his colleagues from 71st (City of London) Yeomanry Sig Regt had an early start, making their way to the armoury to collect personal

weapons before boarding the TCVs for the short journey to start point at the top of KIWI HILL. The team of five consisted of two reservists and three regular PSIs. **Sigs Cordova** and **Vigor** soon found out they were the only two reservists in the competition so it was nice to know they would have a top two finish in the reservist category!

**Sig Cordova** was soon off running and for the first four miles he was enjoying a day out of the office, but as the race went on the novelty started to wear off especially when he hit the first steep hill. He was now starting to feel like a self-proclaimed stereotypical reservist who feels out of his depth, especially when he was being overtaken more frequently than he hoped for. His determination saw him successfully reach the range at the fourteen mile point, where he had to hit the target with ten rounds at two hundred metres. Fortunately range preparation had been part of the training for the event and the SPSIs had delivered the team some excellent build-up training. **Sig Cordova** exceeded his own expectations, performing better than he expected. He then managed to shuffle his way back up Kiwi Hill and saw the finish line, which at that point felt like it was miles away!

It was a relief to all competitors to finally complete the course. The team later learned the fate of their fellow reservist competitor, **Sig Vigor**, who tripped and banged his head shortly after beginning the race. This forced him to pull out as he suffered a nasty cut above his brow. At least **Sig Cordova** can say he won the reservist category!

Thanks go to the SPSIs (**SSgt Allan** and **SSgt Ingoe**) who took time to coach everyone with their shooting and for getting the reservists involved in the event. **Sig Cordova** and **Sig Vigor** are looking forward to next year's competition now they know what to expect.

## 265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY (SHARPSHOOTERS))

### SUPPORT SQN

OC	<b>Maj Baker TD</b>
SSM	<b>SSgt (A/SSM) Haskell</b>
SPSI	<b>SSgt Donaldson MBE</b>

### Officer Commanding Update - By Maj Baker TD

A busy start to the year was inevitable; starting with an OC's command group to discuss the way forward over the next 3 months, followed by SJAR preparation and planning the next three Regtl and Sqn exercises: Ex SHARP TROT in January at the ARC Bexleyheath, Ex PHOENIX CANTER in Blandford, in February and Ex SHARP FROLIC in March in the local area.

Our first key Tuesday was planned to meet the Corps Colonel and his team from Blandford to present the Sqn's **CST** and **REEBOK** assets for their perusal. A medal presentation was planned for the whole Regt where a considerable amount of reservists received an array of medals, clasps and commendations.

### 265 Sp Sqn - End of Year Awards 2015

During Ex Sharp MATTs in Dec 15, members of the sqn were invited to attend the annual awards presentation by the OC and SSM. It was a chance for the hierarchy to get their heads together and agree who should receive these prestigious



awards. After hours of deliberation and serious arguments it was finally decided who was deserving of the awards:

- Best Soldier - **Sig Lovett**
- Best Tradesperson - **LCpl Markham**
- Best Recruit - **Sig Carrigan**
- Sqn Sgt Major Award - **Sig Lovett**

### Exercise SHARP TROT

Ex Sharp Trot was the first communications exercise of the year for the Sqn, based at CT1 level. It was designed to shake out the cobwebs gathered from a long Christmas break and re-discover the key skills learnt the previous year. The Ops Team had designed a cunning scenario involving flooding in the local area from the River Thames (which wasn't far from the truth).

The aim of the exercise was to deploy under the Sqn Ops team to various Army Reserve Centres in the local areas, setting up Communications Support Team and Bowman detachments. Detachments were given communications orders late Friday night to Recce local Army Reserve Centres, deploying independently on Saturday morning. One detachment set up the SHQ whilst the other deployed to the Catford area. This continued throughout the day and early evening before the detachments were retrieved back to the ARC for a final de-brief.

Sunday morning saw the exercise equipment turnaround and Squadron Commander's inspections. After a successful weekend the Sqn personnel were able to spend a relaxing Sunday evening before going back to their day job on Monday!



Members of the Sqn CST & Bowman detachments receiving orders from the OC

ICTTech

## Engineering Technician



The Institution of  
Engineering and Technology

## £ £ £

### Incorporated Engineer

## CEng

### Chartered Engineer

## IEng

# ?

### ICT Technician

## EngTech

# Have YOU claimed YOUR refund?

In December the MOD announced a new scheme by which serving members of the Royal Signals and Queen's Gurkha Signals who are Chartered Engineers (CEng), Incorporated Engineers (IEng), Engineering Technicians (EngTech) and ICT Technicians (ICTTech) can reclaim their annual professional membership and registration fees irrespective of the post that they currently occupy. The scheme also applies to similarly qualified members of the RE, the REME, the RLC and their RN and RAF counterparts.

Full details of the scheme are contained in 2015 DIN07-182 and any Royal Signals related queries should initially be directed to [rsignalshq-wld-c2@mod.uk](mailto:rsignalshq-wld-c2@mod.uk). The start date of the scheme has been backdated to 1 Apr 15 but claims must

be made during the financial year in question. It should be noted that the scheme only applies to engineering qualifications; it does not apply to CITP. Nor does the scheme apply to initial registration; these fees may already be reclaimed via Standard Learning Credits. The scheme shows the MOD's commitment to promoting a culture of engineering excellence across the Services and is recognition that a career in the Royal Signals is now regarded as a fully-fledged pathway to becoming a professional engineer.

**There has never been a better time to get professionally qualified and registered; if you haven't done so already, what are you waiting for?**





# NEWS FROM SQUADRONS/TROOPS



## BRUNEI SIGNAL TROOP



### AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO BRITISH FORCES BRUNEI FROM RHQ QG SIGNALS - by Cpl Nishan Gurung

Lt Col M J Fayers, since his appointment as Commander (Comd) QG SIGNALS paid an official visit to British Forces Brunei (BFB) over the period 25 – 28 Jan 16. He was accompanied by **Maj Tolbahadur Khamcha**, Gurkha Major (GM) QG SIGNALS and **WO1 Suresh Kumar Limbu**, RSM QG SIGNALS. This was the first visit to Brunei for the incumbent Comd and RSM. For **Maj Tolbahadur Khamcha**, it was back to familiar ground, who had two previous stints as Tech Sgt in 1998 and later as Troop OC, 2005 – 06. He also visited BFB in the capacity of GM last year.

The visit programme rolled off on Tuesday morning with a group photograph in front of 10th Billion Barrel monument



10<sup>th</sup> Billion Barrel Monument: Comd and GM Sahebs flanked by OC BST and RSM

with all QG SIGNALS personnel employed in various post in Brunei. Once back to Medicina lines after a short visit to BFBS studio, the visitors were provided with an overview of the Tp's wide range of responsibilities by OC BST, **Capt Nimbahadur Pun**, explaining the Tp's criticality in the BFB Sp Tps.

In the afternoon, the visitors were airlifted to Training Area C, where they witnessed the jungle survival skills demonstrated by NCOs of the Tp. A welcome function was hosted in the evening by the Tp, where the visitors interacted with Tp personnel and families. On Comd's speech, he emphasised the need to maintain cordial relationships with the rest of the Garrison and lauded the efforts of Tp personnel. GM urged the Tp to continue the good work in a professional manner and within the realms of the true ethos of the Bde of Gurkhas and the Armed Forces.

The following day, the Comd and GM had office calls with the Comd BFB, GM 1RGR and DCOS. The Tp was briefed about the Regiment update by GM in the afternoon followed by a string of MS and Formal Career Interviews. Also scheduled during the visit was a welcome messing by the Gurkha Officers Community of BFB in the evening.

On the final day, the visitors were taken for a hike in Sahabandar Park followed by lunch in The Empire Hotel. The visit was wrapped up by a short tour of the Royal Regalai museum and a boat trip around the world famous water village in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Notably, Comd's visit to BFB keeps with the long standing tradition of Regimental Comd generally visiting the scattered Sqns in the UK and Tps in Nepal and Brunei after taking up the appointment. To be the chosen one, to receive the first of his many visits across the globe after his appointment, there is no place for aloofness!

Jai QG SIGNALS



Jungle survival skills demonstrated by NCOs of the Brunei Signal Troop



# OTHER UNITS



## UK MOD SANGCOM PROJECT TEAM



### SANGCOM Winter Ball - by Peter West

Early December 2015 saw the SANGCOM Winter ball eloquently glide through the social calendar, with a black and white masqueraded ball serving as the theme. It was late summer when the group of myself, **WO1 Richy 'the one' Wilson**, **WO2 'marathon' Mick Sutton** and **WO2 Sam 'serious but sulky' Richards** stuck our heads above the parapet and volunteered to step into the breach of organising the winter ball. We also called upon a handful of the ever reliable team of wives to assist with the decorative aspects which alone we could never achieve to their high standards

The full-on hard work started three days before the evening took place, with a lot of hard graft going on between the eight of us, balancing work commitments and childcare, along with working around the annual SANGCOM vs Prime Contractor football grudge match. In the week running up to the event we had numerous guests added to the list bringing the total numbers to 150. These were made up of team members and their wives, translators, American OPM SANG team and sub-contractors from all around the world.

The evening kicked off at 1900hrs and on arrival individuals, couples and groups alike received a photo in the Christmas sleigh complete with reindeer and Christmas tree in the background. The guests then made their way downstairs to the underground function room where they were greeted by an ice sculpture in the shape of a mask and a choice of refreshments. Every event in Saudi Arabia is a cultural learning experience and this evening was no exception. Our Italian guests arrived wearing carnival fancy dress despite the evening being a black and white ball. Upon further investigation, we learnt that in Italian culture, a black and white ball translates to the Carnival of Venice.

course meal including BBQ steaks. The meal was finished off with coffee and Arabic sweets, some of which were only to the taste of the more experienced pallet.

The fun was maintained with many pictures taken at the tables and the photo booth area until 2200hrs when **WO2 'Marathon' Mick Sutton** began spinning the tombola for the money tree and dishing out prizes to the lucky winners. After that, it was time for the real fun to begin and the DJ opened the dance floor. The dancing continued unabated until 0200hrs but by this stage there were only a few 'die hards' left. After making sure that no stragglers were left inside, we locked up the venue and turned off the lights on what can only be described as a hugely successful evening. A big thank you to the entire organising committee for all the hard work and effort to make sure the evening was such fun.



SANGCOM Winter Ball Dance Off



SANGCOM Smiling Faces

Frivolities ensued at the bar area until 2000hrs at which point everyone had arrived. All were requested to take their seats and the obligatory health and safety speech was made along with a few thank you messages for making the evening happen, followed by **Brig Drew** adding few words of welcome. The caterers then delivered a scrumptious three



SANGCOM Winter Ball





**SANGCOM v GPT Annual Football Match** – by Maj (TOT) Mick O’Hara

After an extensive search of all the Riyadh compounds looking for an area with even a tuft of grass to play football on, a location for the inaugural SANGCOM v GPT was found. The call to arms from the SANGCOM team was met with great enthusiasm however it did reflect a veteran’s team with the average age of players being 30 something plus. Donning slightly snug football shirts the team marched onto the pitch to meet their opponents and do battle.

With the average temperature being on the warmer side (even in December) the decision was made to split the game into quarters to ensure everyone remained suitably hydrated. In the first quarter SANGCOM took the game to GPT and blitzed their defence with lightning fast strikes against an extremely slow defence. The score racked up in SANGCOM’s favour which turned out to be significant as the game wore on. By the end of the first quarter the score was 4-0 to SANGCOM. As the second quarter started the remainder of the GPT, in true prima donna style, began to arrive. With fresh younger legs that could actually play football GPT started closing the goal difference.

SANGCOM mounted a good defence against GPT ably controlled by **Dave Skingley**, **Steve Godbolt** and **WO1 (FofS) Richie Wilson**. The game became very interesting when **Scott Rayner** was repeatedly penalised for forgetting which sport he was playing and bear hugging GPT strikers to the ground. Some of the older players forgot their age, flaying their bodies about in a poor attempt at a slide tackle and with the sand base grass **Maj Mick O’Hara** lost most of the skin on his left leg. Picking up after the old slackers in the midfield was **WO2 (YofS) Mick Sutton** who ironically was one of the younger members of the team. The most versatile player of the night was **Capt Gloves Mitton** who started on the bench but subsequently played in every position (except goal) as everyone needed a breather.

For the remaining two quarters both teams struggled with their stamina and the game went backwards and forwards with many more goals scored and missed. Of significant note were the open (my grandmother would not have missed) goals missed by **Rob Bricker**. The fact that he scored as many as he missed didn’t stop everyone taking the mick out of his “shocker”. **Dave Appleyard** also managed to score a goal after spending most of the game setting them up rather than finishing them off himself. After a nail biting finish, the final score was 7-5 to SANGCOM. A great evening was had by all however the next day was extremely sore for most.



SANGCOM Football Post Match



SANGCOM Football Cup

**SANGCOM New Year Softball Competition**

- by Maj (TOT) Mick O’Hara

What better way to work off the Christmas dinner and Boxing Day ‘bubble and squeak’ than to have a SANGCOM Softball match, with more food of course. This family day out was organised by **Adam** and **Katy Taylor** with the intention of fun and maybe a little exercise (if you could hit the ball) and lots of competition fuelled testosterone.

**WO2 (YofS) Mick Sutton’s** children (**Harry** and **Grace**) were chosen to be Captains and asked to select their team. Once the teams were selected and competition assessed, the rivalries were ignited between the competitive dads and the chest beating commenced. The first bat went to **Grace’s** team who struggled to get a good score on the board. This was probably down to some show boating by **Richard Shea** that backfired on him and/or **Katy Taylor** “accidentally” running her own team mates out... .. twice. In the next innings it was **Harry’s** team to bat and out came the big hitter in the form of **Rob Bricker** who managed two home runs, an outstanding effort even though he said so himself. His countless victory laps were slow and emotional. There would have been more home runs had **WO2 (YofS) Mick Sutton** remembered to bring trainers instead of fashionable but impractical flip flops. **WO2 (FofS) Sam Richards** did not see much of the game as he went out on a technicality which he vehemently and passionately protested. Unfortunately for him the umpire’s (**Adam Taylor**) decision was final. **Harry’s** team racked up enough runs to easily beat their opponents and they opted to retire in order not to demoralise the losing team.



SANGCOM Softball Competition





In the second innings **Grace's** team had a boost with some good scores from the children in the team. This forced **Lt Col Jason Gray, Richard Shea** and the “mysteriously appeared out of nowhere” **Andy Forbes** from GPT to rally their game or be humiliated. Eventually they were all out and **Harry's** team took up the base for their second innings. Again the home runs came thick and fast. **WO2 (YofS) Mick Sutton** tried to change his game plan by getting his son to run for him instead but this failed at the first attempt due to the quick hands of **Kelly Sutton**.

The final score was 14-9 to **Harry Sutton's** team. A great way to start the SANGCOM New Year, fun was had by all and hopefully one or two waistlines benefited as well.



*SANGCOM Softball Competition*

#### **It's A Washout** - by WO2 (YofS) Sutton

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November saw a SANGCOM contingent, made up of both Military and Civil Servant team members, descend upon SALWA Garden Village compound, where BAE were hosting a charity event: 'It's A Washout' in order to raise funds for SSAFA.

Two members from BAE (**Howie Brittain** and **Richard Pickles**) and their wives (**Mel** and **Karen**) are taking part in Rally for Heroes 2016 raising money for SSAFA. Each car entered must pay all their own costs for the event and in addition raise £1,500 for SSAFA. The aim this year is to raise over £100,000 and we hoped SANGCOM would be able to help add a little to the overall pot.

The rules for the games were simple: teams not in fancy dress got a fine, teams 'caught' cheating got a fine, teams turning up late to a game got a fine, teams not running when crossing the running track got a fine. In essence, it was very hard to get away with not paying a fine of some sort. However, every penny (or halala) was going to charity, so getting fined on this occasion was forgivable.

SANGCOM were the only team outside BAE to participate and as such we were the 'outsiders' before the games even commenced. The team consisted of **Maj 'Shaun' Wilson, WO1 (FofS(1S)) 'Richie' Wilson, WO2 (YofS) 'Mick' Sutton, Nick Bradshaw** and **Andrew O'Callaghan**. The games which we had to participate in were vast and varied, ranging from 'Human Hungry Hippos' to 'Fairy Liquid Baseball'! For all the events, SANGCOM were paired against an American contingent from BAE (they did have a last minute withdrawal so in true British spirit we loaned them one of ours; **Chris Brand**) therefore, we were naturally more competitive than normal and not ashamed in getting a helping hand from the respective game judges in the form of small bribes... so I am glad to report that we did not lose against the Americans.

This was only the second year BAE have held this event and it was a huge success; BAE were great hosts and have invited us back next year where the event will hopefully be even bigger and better with more participants taking part. In total the event raised £2,132.26 and SANGCOM wish the Rally for Heroes 2016 team the very best of luck on their 'road trip'



*It's a Washout*



*Money Raised for SSAFA*

#### **The 9th SANGCOM Charity Half Marathon** - by Lt Col Stuart Gillespie

At the end of January the UK MOD SANGCOM Project Team organised the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Half Marathon event at Salwa Oasis Village Compound (BAE Systems housing compound). This year's event organising team included **Lt Col Stu Gillespie, Maj Mick O'Hara, Maj Robin Foster, Capt (Gloves) Mitton RE, WO2 (FofS) Sam Richards, Rob Bricker** and **Helen Drew**, amongst others.

The extremely successful event saw over 250 runners complete either the half marathon or the 4km fun run event. More importantly was the amount raised which this year saw over GBP 23,000 pledged from our various supporting organisations and companies. This year's event was won by **Hamad Ozubi** in a record time of 1hr:19mins:41secs. This is the third year in a row that a Saudi National has won the event. As well as the top trophies and medals the various other prizes included; training shoes, iPad, return flights to Dubai, meals for two at restaurants etc., all kindly donated for our event.

Numerous personnel ran the event in fancy dress, with particular mentions going to **Maj Mick O'Hara** and **Capt Graeme Campbell** (as well as **Rob Bricker** and **Adam (DNF) Taylor** for their Jamaican bobsleigh team. **Ellie Watts** (former





team member) won the best fancy dress for completing the whole event dressed as a camel – great effort!  
 A huge thanks also goes to all the other team members who helped run the event on the day, without which we would not be able to support our chosen charity of the Disabled Children’s Association of Riyadh. The table below shows those team members who completed the full half marathon event. Congratulations go to **Capt Dan Thompson (AGC(ETS))** and **Emma Gillespie** for being the first male and female team members to complete the event. We look forward to another successful charity event next year. The team results were as follows:

Overall Position	Time	First Name	Last Name
9	01:39:20	Dan	Thompson
16	01:44:43	Sam	Richards
29	01:53:07	Richard	Shea
30	01:53:58	Robin	Foster
34	01:56:50	Rotimi	Akinsiku
37	01:57:32	Martin	Thompson
71	02:12:01	Emma	Gillespie
90	02:20:57	Jim	Healey
94	02:22:38	Mick	O’Hara
95	02:22:45	Dave	Skingley
98	02:26:16	Hannah	Bricker
99	02:26:16	Jacqueline	McArthur
106	02:33:46	Ellie	Watts
107	02:34:13	Chris	Carmichael
108	02:34:13	Helen	Drew
109	02:35:40	Stephen	Johnstone
110	02:35:40	Suzanne	Chandler
115	02:39:32	Eve	McArthur
116	02:40:10	Rob	Bricker
117	02:41:52	Steve	Powell
118	02:42:12	Graeme	Campbell



### 40 (U) Signal Regiment (V)



Did you serve in 40 (U) Signal Regiment (V)?

Regimental reunion at Clonaver Park TAC in East Belfast on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Commencing at 1930Hrs. The format for the night will be a BBQ and social evening. Cost TBC.

This is the first Regimental reunion since the disbandment of 40 in 2010 therefore it should be an excellent night. Great food and good craic.

Help swell the numbers, contact Ian Wolfe at the following email address:

[Reunion40SR2016@outlook.com](mailto:Reunion40SR2016@outlook.com)





# 1<sup>ST</sup> NATO SIGNAL BATTALION



CO **Lt Col Andreas Kubitz (DEU Army)**  
RSM **WO1 Steve Base (CAN Army)**

## Nepalese Charity Dinner Night, Germany - by Cpl Navin Gurung

On 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015 a major earthquake with a richter scale of 7.8 struck Nepal and shook the whole country. There were nearly 9,000 deaths and more than 23,000 injured. It left the people of Nepal deeply scarred emotionally, physically and economically. Many countries spread across the globe have been helping since day one of the disaster. Also, all the Nepalese people living abroad have been contributing towards helping the victims of the earthquake.

**Cpl Pritam Shrestha** and **Cpl Navin Gurung** are the only Nepalese soldiers based at 1<sup>st</sup> NATO Signal Battalion in Wesel, Germany. Both of them and their families also thought of raising funds for the Earthquake victims. The community managed to raise €170.06 on the Open day in the Wesel barracks. They came up with a plan of doing a Nepalese Curry Night Charity for M&S Coy and the Brit Community in Wesel to raise money for the earthquake victims while at the same time giving the community a taste of the Nepalese cuisine.

The planning and preparation took a long time. As there is a very limited welfare community centre here in Wesel, the decision was made to use the car park spaces alongside the married quarters. Buffet sets from the Namaste Cafe Restaurant in Wesel were borrowed and the supply section from camp helped us with food containers, tables and benches.



*Chefs of the day*

Buffet style starters were served. On offer were Momos (dumplings), Aloo Dam (spicy potatoes), vegetarian spring rolls and prawn crackers for the starters. At approximately 2000, the main course was served in a buffet style in which we had Nepalese pork curry, plain basmati rice, vegetable curry, salads and poppadoms. For dessert, they made mixed fruit salads with yoghurt. There was also a raffle draw as a part of entertainment as well as raising more money for the funds. **Mrs Rina Gurung** and **Mrs Ruchi Shrestha** came up with the idea of lucky seven for the raffle draw. There were seven top prizes and three consolation ones. All the prizes were handed out by **Gp Capt Steve Richards (RAF)**. The raffle draw event helped us to raise more money for the charity. Finally, the event was concluded with a thank you speech and the presentation of khatas (Nepalese scarfs) to **Mr Yagya Raj Subedi** and **Mrs Seema Subedi** (the owners of Namaste Cafe Restaurant) by **Maj Jim Lyons**.



*Cpl Rushton busy running the bar*

It was an early morning for all involved. The owner of Namaste Cafe Restaurant offered us help by allowing us to use their kitchen for cooking. **Cpls Shrestha** and **Gurung**, along with their wives, got busy cooking from 0800hrs till midday. It would've taken a lot longer if they had used their own kitchens. Then the setting up of the tables and chairs, buffet sets and the tent for the bar began. At 1800hrs, the guests started to turn up. **Cpl Brent Rushton** volunteered to run the bar for the night. He had various sorts of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. It was also an opportunity for him to show his skills in making cocktails.



*Enjoying food*



*Friends and families relaxing*





The event was a great success for us. We managed to raise €860 from the Charity Night Dinner. We had guests from Brit communities from areas such as Goch and Kalkar. A total sum of €1100 was raised from the Open day and Charity Night Dinner and was given to the Kaaster Nepal Initiative Charity via **Mr. Yagya Raj Subedi**, which is currently working in the rebuild phase of 70 homes in Chitwan, Nepal.

#### Life in Germany- by Sgt Gary Westmoreland

After the Battalion's exploits on Ex Trident Juncture, 2015 drew to a close at a more sedate pace. After some well deserved post exercise leave the usual festive activities began in earnest; a visit to the Christmas markets in Munster was organised while other Christmas markets closer to Wesel also sprang up as Silly Season got well and truly under way.

The Christmas function, organised by **Sgt Kris Dunn**, **Sgt Kez Aldridge (REME)**, **Sgt Gary Smythson (REME)** and **Cpl Will Walmsley (RM)**, took place at the Duden Haus hotel in Wesel and allowed everyone to blow off some steam from the past year.

After a busy 2015 preparing as lead for the NATO Response Force (NRF) 16, 2016 brings a period of heightened readiness and increased commitments for 1NSB. The Battalion takes over the lead stand by unit for NRF; providing the core Signal Support Group HQ, Network Operations Centre (Similar to the JFCIS concept) and Support Element. The Bn is also tasked to provide Deployable CIS support to the 4\* Joint Task Force HQ, 3\* Land Component Command, The Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) and provides a number of early entry capabilities for tasks as directed by SACEUR. The consequence of this is Bn personnel are held at varying and short Notice to Move times, a posture which has its challenges in a multinational tactical unit.

The Battalion continues to provide Deployable and Static CIS support to Resolute Support, as well as its Train Advise and Assist tasks, whilst providing CIS support to NATO's rejuvenated Air Defence support to Turkey. 1NSB will also play a major role in a number of high profile exercises such as BRILLIANT JUMP (VJTF(L)), STEADFAST COBALT, TRIDENT JAGUAR and TRIDENT JUNCTURE.

In the few spare weeks of the year, the Battalion will upgrade a number of its capabilities so they are Federated Mission Network compliant ready for NRF17, conduct internal staff training, undergo any national training activities and provide mentoring support to 3NSB during their preparation as lead for NRF17.

2016 will provide 1NSB with a challenging, testing but interesting environment to continue to develop and maintain the high level of CIS support already provided to NATO and its deployable or deployed formations.

Thursday 4 February was Weiberfastnacht or Women's carnival and so began a long weekend of celebrations and fancy dress marking the culmination of the Karneval season here in the Rhineland. Traditionally eleven minutes past eleven marks the start of the festivities but many of our German colleagues began much earlier. It didn't take long for the other nations to join in and catch up and as the party moved to the Neiderheinhalle, a large communal hall in Wesel, things were in full swing. In classic British fashion, some of the guys burnt out early while others enjoyed a long night of drinking German beer. The Karneval celebrations continued around the Nord

Rhein-Westfalen region all weekend, drawing to a close on Monday night with yet more fancy dress and drinking.



*The guys arrive at the Neiderheinhalle*

#### NATO Military Skills Course - by Cpl Navin Gurung

This year has been a busy year to start with. The role of 1<sup>st</sup> NATO Signal Battalion is to provide personnel for NRF for the 2016 calendar year. With this in place, all GBR personnel have to complete the NATO Military Skills Course with the Joint European Training Team (JETT) prior to any future deployments. NATO Military Skills Course is similar to the MATTs week which is conducted for all UK Armed Forces spread across Europe. **SSgt Dave Turnbull** is the course co-ordinator for 1NSB and planned for the courses in groups for all the GBR personnel based in Wesel to complete the training. I was in the first group to go to Mons (SHAPE). There were eight of us in the group and **SSgt Dave Tuck** was the main POC. We left Wesel at 1400hrs on 03 Jan 2016 and arrived at a very wet and windy Mons (Belgium) at around 1745hrs. It was the first day back from leave and the morale wasn't very high for all of us.

On Monday, we were given the arrivals brief; there were 10 students in total including an RAF and Navy officer. Then there were lessons on LOAC, SERE, WHT and map reading conducted throughout the day.

The following day we went to Chievers Air Base (US Air Force) to complete our CBRN training and zeroing our weapons at 25m range. **Sig Aaron Ashton** didn't have a good experience at the CS testing facility; we saw him coughing a lot just as he left the testing facility. The 25m range was an indoor US Air Force range; it was a new experience for many of us.

Wednesday was a range day for us; the surprising part of the day was a total of five hours drive to and from the Belgian Army Range in Beverlo. However, the ACMT training went well apart from the half an hour time extended due to **LCpl Paul Thompson** and **Sig Andy Yarrick's** remedial shooting at 200m. On Thursday morning we went through our medical and dental records at the medical centre. Those who were due for jabs did get them. It wasn't a nice feeling to have two jabs by two nurses at the same time. Later on in the day, we had lessons on C-IED and BCDT which made use of US Special Forces' excellent animatronic mannequins which can spasm and simulate breathing difficulties.

The physical tests (PFA and AFT) weren't conducted at Mons due to the PTI being on sick leave. However, as we have two PTIs in the Battalion, we were told to conduct them back at our unit. On Friday morning, we did our course validation and



the handover of the accommodation. Then we headed back for Wesel which was a three and half hours drive. Overall, it was a good course and prepared us with the standards needed prior to NATO deployments. The JETT instructors were experienced and good in delivering lessons.

#### **Exercise JURASSIC COASTAL WALK - by Sig Lewis Bestford**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> January, 12 members of DCM (D) set off from Blandford Camp to Lulworth Cove to embark on what we thought would be a nice day of scenic Jurassic Coastal hill walking over 12 miles to Weymouth to develop our navigation skills, leadership, team work, and resilience.

Upon arrival at Lulworth Cove we received safety and basic mountaineering skills briefs from MLT instructor, **Cpl Bhai Rai**. We were then split into groups of 3 and tested on our MATT knowledge by orientating the map and plotting our route. Instantaneously, the morale of the troop hit the deck as we took a good look at the very first “gentle slope”!!!

Having reached the peak of the first hill, we stopped to regain our breath and find our next route on the map, we realised it was going to be more of a mountaineering and rock climbing challenge. “so much for a fun day of adventurous training, eh?” we said to each other as we gazed at the upcoming (essentially) vertical ‘hills’; what better place to put the our skills to the test? A couple of miles later, we approached the first car park where we spotted **Cpl ‘Hitman’ Gurung** appearing out of nowhere; looking wildly out of breath even though he had driven around the hills we had just trekked...

Eventually we reached our half way point at roughly mid day for a dinner break. We managed to stop at one of the local pubs, immediately lifting morale, only to be dropped like a sack of bricks by being told we have 20 minutes to grab a brew. “But 20 minutes isn’t long enough for pub grub”!?! Good job we had been issued some wonderful cookhouse horror bags for lunch... With **Cpl ‘Follow me, I know where we are going’ Marshall** next to navigate, the clearly sign posted route seemed to drag on even longer as he still somehow managed to get lost. Thanks!!!!

At last we were on the last leg of the walk; No more stupidly big hills were in sight, only public pathways and manmade roads to follow. Things were finally looking up... that is of course until we realised the terrain we were walking on; after the rain storm (which we managed to co-ordinate with our lunch break; so we thought we had gotten away with it) the fields had been turned into sludge. Two steps forward, one step back, suddenly three miles turned into six. Obviously being a bunch of soldiers, we just love the dirt and mud, and with numerous people slipping over, and one **Sig Harkness** tripping over a leaf into a puddle of mud, we managed to see the funny side, lifting morale one last time for the last stretch. Not long after, we got to the top of the final hill; civilisation was in our reach, and best of all, the mini bus was in sight, greeted again by **‘Hitman’** looking clean and warm after his hard day’s work of driving the minibus around the actual coast...

#### **Multi Activity Adventure Training – Capel Curig - by LCpl Tullet**

DCM (D)s winter adventurous training got underway on the 7<sup>th</sup> Feb with six lucky individuals representing the troop at Capel Curig Training Camp, Snowdonia Wales. Those individuals were me, **Sgt Morris, Cpls MacDonald, Gurung, Bai and Sig Hubbard**.

The team began the long journey to Capel Curig at 12:30pm Sunday in encouraging conditions, the sun was out and everyone seemed enthusiastic about the week ahead. We travelled via Bristol to pick up **Sgt ‘Damo’ Morris**, which shouldn’t have had much detrimental effect on the travel time, however duty driver **Cpl Mac ‘I’ve got issues with my navigation system’ MacDonald** ended up taking us on a slight detour. Nonetheless with some top tunes banging and a few pit stops later we were nearing the end of our journey, by this time we had passed the border and were introduced to some of Wales’ finest weather. Torrential rain and hail at some points tested **‘Mac’s’** driving skills but he insisted on taking those country roads like **Lewis Hamilton**.

The Nepalese contingent shared a room, as did **‘Damo’** and **‘Mac’** with myself and **Sig ‘Kez’ Hubbard** taking the last room. Small, but warm and dry rooms were in place with a nice country stroll to the ablutions. Because we had missed the 1900hrs scoff timings even though **‘Mac’** had done his utmost to get us there on time, we had to visit the nearest establishment serving food, unfortunately for us it was the pub down the road. A hot meal and a couple of pints later, we headed back to camp for the night.

#### **Day 1**

First thing Monday morning we and another section (5xREME) were briefed on what was likely to happen during the week weather dependent. We were also informed that at the end of the course on Friday afternoon we would be expected to deliver a group presentation on leadership skills and how we had implemented those skills during the activities, much to everyone’s dismay (especially **‘Damo’** who protested the idea). Despite the knockback of knowing we had to do “work stuff” on AT, we were pleasantly surprised to find out that the first activity was rock climbing, indoors.

We travelled to a close by establishment called Indy, owned by the Army but run by civilian staff. After a quick brew we were given safety instructions and shown basic techniques in bouldering. Competitiveness was high amongst the group which was good as it meant we pushed ourselves more than we would have normally; everyone attempted similar routes some of which proved too difficult even for the more able climbers. Later on we were put in pairs and taught how to belay so that we could assist our partners in climbing the high walls. After a few attempts everyone had gained confidence so we decided to make things more interesting by racing each other (Similar to the TV show Gladiators) or attempting only the hardest routes. By the end of it everyone was hanging, pun intended. We left the climbing centre around 15:00 hours and travelled back to camp, most of us were obviously jetlagged as we slept until scoff. That night we headed out to the town close by and found another pub, this one had booming Wi-Fi. **‘Kez’** got bored and lost money on roulette online. Shame.

#### **Day 2**

Tuesday morning was again wet and miserable weather wise, and so was the teams’ mood when they were told that they were kayaking today. We travelled to a river opening, got changed into our wet kit and hit the water; having had to wait around for an hour and a half whilst it hailed. The route we were taking was 7km towards the sea at Conwy, the journey started off slow as a few people found it difficult to navigate the kayaks in a straight line. Our section always seemed to be waiting on the REME!





However it was not one of the REME personnel who took a turn for the worse, approaching the sea; me, 'Kez' and one of the instructors found ourselves a little bit too close to a drifting, anchored vessel. As we all tried to manoeuvre away from it, a sudden current put me off balance and I ended up capsizing. Much to 'Kez's' amusement! The water was freezing and I struggled to make it to the edge to find land as the water was carrying me away from it. Luckily the instructor managed to steer me to the side where I could pull my kayak from the water, empty the ocean from it and carry on. Obviously I was getting rinsed (pun intended – I'm getting good at these) for the rest of the week.

#### Day 3

Wednesday started off well because we were under the illusion that we were canoeing but we were actually rock climbing again, much the same as Monday but this time at a civilian centre which offered much more variety. This centre had automated belay devices dotted around which meant you could go and do your own thing to more of an extent, although initially everyone was suspicious of the reliability of the devices. We all attempted a huge wall which dwarfed any we had previously seen and attempted and only I got to the top. I was trying extra hard after failing at kayaking! The centre also offered alternative climbs which I'm sure were intended for those attempting 'Wipeout' or 'Ninja Warrior' but it made the afternoon funny and relaxed. Again in the evening we battered the Wi-Fi in the pub, played some pool and lost many bets.

#### Day 4

To be honest no one was really motivated for canoeing after kayaking Tuesday (especially me), the idea of getting changed, being cold and probably getting wet again wasn't very exciting. (I know, we are in the Army). However, we were told by the instructors that they did not intend on us getting wet, so we did not have to change into wet suits etc if we couldn't be bothered. Result, a nice chill out paddle on the canal we were told. Of course this changed once we hit the water. We paired off again, 'Damo' and 'Mac', 'Kez' and 'Bhai Rai' and myself with 'Hitman Boatman Gurung'. It kicked off right from the beginning, canoes looking for openings to overtake on the tight winding canal it was bound to go wrong. As me and 'Hitman' looked to overtake 'Damo' and 'Mac' they were having none of it, grabbing on to the side of our canoe pushing us back, flicking water at us. Our retaliation was to do much of the same, this repeated over and over again until we decided to let them go ahead.

After a while 'Kez' and 'Bhai' had caught us up and were also jostling for position, again they pushed and pulled us, we did it back but this time there was a casualty. Somehow 'Bhai' had managed to tip over at the back of their canoe, sending himself under water and 'Kez' half submerged; luckily 'Kez' regained composure and threw himself over into our canoe. Still don't know how he did it. Although a stressful moment at the time, it was funny looking back at it.

**A point to note when participating in water sports, waterproof your valuables!**

#### Day 5

Friday was a half day, we abseiled a 25m rock face not far from camp. The weather was dry and slightly warmer, with that, and also knowing we were soon to be going home, morale was high amongst the section. The abseil itself was

comfortable with no one struggling at all. Once the instructor had set up the ropes etc, we did one descent each before heading back to camp.

Once we arrived back at camp the senior civilian instructor came and gave us the closing brief and witnessed the presentation (which the REME guys gladly volunteered to do). We were then free to travel home and left around 1230hrs. Overall a good visit to Capel Curig, although the weather was bad at times we made the most of it, but definitely one for the summer!

#### DCM D Charity Cycle Event - by Cpl Ash Spooner

On a dark and frosty morning on 18 Nov 15, DCM D collected 5 spinning bikes and headed off to Tesco in Poole. The aim was to cycle 1616 kms, a distance from Blandford to Haderlslav; the home town for the Danish DCM who were relieved in Afghanistan, to raise as much money as possible for two great charities, Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and Cancer Research UK. Simultaneously members of DCM D were completing the same challenge in Afghanistan.

The obligatory stop off for breakfast in McDonalds provided the team an opportunity to ensure that they had had a nutritious meal and stuff some carbs into their faces before setting to task. Even **Cpl Stu "My body is a temple" Blakeley** managed to complete the 24 chicken nugget challenge. Eventually **LCpl Hannah Roberts** managed to join us and we could set up.

As we only had 5 bikes we split down into shifts, one shift on the bike, one shift rattling buckets and trying to get as much money as possible, and one shift on rest in the staff restroom. For some it provided an opportunity to play darts - **Sig Kris Dalby** - for others it provided an opportunity to complete some Christmas shopping free from nagging wives and screaming children. Initially we set off in 1 hour stints but as our bottoms were untrained to such abuse it quickly became painful, even **Sgt Rich Beasley** went and bought an inflatable cushion, which provided little relief.



*The ROG element in Tesco Poole having completed the cycling event*



*Cpl Heeney, Cpl Bantha-Magar, LCpl Roberts & Sigs Dalby & Harkness take their turn to push out the miles (some more than others)*



When lunch time came we were all invited into the Tesco's café. **Sig Kez Hubbard** nearly had a heart attack when he got a full meal for 80p. When everyone was fed and watered, BFBS radio turned up and interviewed **WO1 (FofS) Pete Fraser** about the charities and how everyone was coping with the miles that they were completing.



*The deployed element with Sgts Hillyard & Wynter who cycled for a full 24 hrs*

Near the end **Sgt Mark Webb** and **Cpl Stu Blakeley** decided to have a race and see how far they could go in an hour. The Foreman promised them a long weekend if they could get above 50 km/h. **Cpl Stu Blakeley** came first with a very good distance of 49.6 km and **Sgt Mark Webb** came a very close second with 48.2 km. Unfortunately they did not meet their 50 km's in the hour so did not get their long weekend.

We finished the 2179 km's at about 1900 hrs and everyone gladly stopped pedaling. Everyone worked really hard for the two chosen charities and we raised an incredible £1843.40, not bad for a day's work! Added to the impressive \$2100 the deployed element raised meant we had raised an impressive £3300 for two great charities



*The OC Capt Craig Tee practicing for his new career as a catalogue model*

#### **DCM(D) Medals Parade** - by Sig Kris Dalby

On Saturday the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 28 members of 628 Sig Tp DCM (D) returned to the UK from a very arduous tour of Afghanistan. After landing in Brize Norton they were met by Sig 'Dogs Body' Hubbard and brought back to Blandford Camp. After returning their weapons to the armoury they were then met by a welcoming party up at the troop lines. Family members and members of the troop greeted them with welcoming smiles, a few nibbly bits and a few tins of the good stuff.

On the Tuesday of that week it was time to rehearse drill on the square for the following days' medals parade. Not a difficult task as a rule. However nobody had provided the

SQMS with a NSN for sunshine so we had to contend with soul destroying sideways rain that there was no escape from; balanced out with 30 mph wind, which blow the tents and dais across the parade square. It's not to say that the troop didn't conduct itself in a highly professional manner and had it nailed in no time.

Sometimes common sense prevails in Her Majesty's Army and someone upstairs decided that due to the treacherous nature of the weather on the Wednesday, the parade would be moved indoors. So, after the troop set up the room for the parade and the bar area for afterwards everything was tickety-boo for the start time of 1100. A small brass section entertained the spectators whilst **Lt Col Kubitz**, CO 1<sup>st</sup> NATO Battalion presented medals to the deserving individuals. Afterwards he gave a speech praising the work conducted by the troop; followed by a presentation of certificates of appreciation to the members of the troop who were due to leave. Even though I had only been with the unit for 6 months I received one.

With the formalities over, it was time to relax and enjoy the rest of the day. A curry lunch was provided to soak up the beer which was already beginning to flow; a little more freely for some more than others, it seemed. At 1500hrs the bar closed so that we could freshen up and return fighting fit for the evening do at 1900hrs.

Once everyone had arrived in the evening **Capt Craig Tee** presented **Cpl Atkinson**, **LCpl Tonkinson** and **Sigs Whitehouse** and **Robinson** their presentation pieces and leaving gifts from the unit. We all thanked them for their hard work and outstanding service to the unit before standard operating procedure resumed and everyone hit the bar. Entertainment took the form of karaoke and a DJ, who seemed to be inundated by our resident crooner **Sig Steve 'the entertainer' Harkness**. In general the night was a success and everybody earned their late start the next day.

After PT the unit benefited from a well earned long weekend and the deployed personnel went off on their post op leave.

#### **Exercise WESEL STAR 16** - by SSgt Martin Catt

Ex Wesel Star was a Staff Training exercise conducted by SMEs from the Headquarters and Maintenance and Support Coy of 1NSB. The aim of the exercise was to improve and enhance the current SOPs, as well as introduce ourselves to the CIS Battalion of 1<sup>st</sup> German / Netherlands Corps (who had kindly hosted us in their Kaserne in Eibergen, Netherlands).

Day 1 involved some developmental syndicate work. With varying opinions from the different nationalities attending made for some heated exchanges. But at the end of the day, some guidelines were laid down as to what needed to be produced for the next day.

Day 2 consisted of more syndicate work, but now came the fun of re-writing / drafting SOP's. However, there was light at the end of the tunnel. We all headed out for a Team Building social function that evening. After an all you can eat Chinese buffet, followed by teaching the HQ staff the finer rules of playing "Killer" pool, everyone now thinks the Brits spend too much time in the pub.

Overall the exercise was a short, but very helpful start to maintaining and perfecting the Battalion's procedures and also enhancing cohesion within the Battalion.





Congratulations to the following:

**Maj Andrew Richard NICKLIN**, Royal Corps of Signals, awarded an **MBE** in the Honours and Awards List.

**Sgt Nicholas James HILLYARD**, Royal Corps of Signals, awarded a **Military Cross** in the Operational Awards.

**SSgt Michael Seca**, Royal Corps of Signals, Awarded the Joint Commanders Commendation.



## WCIT EMPLOYMENT PANEL



The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists (WCIT) was formed in 1986 and later became the City of London's 100th Livery Company; it subsequently gained its Royal Charter in 2010. Formal links between WCIT and the Royal Signals stretch back to 1992.

One of the ways in which the WCIT support the Corps is to provide access to their Employment Panel for those officers and soldiers who are about to leave the Services or are considering doing so in the next few years.

Once a year the Employment Panel visit Blandford in order to run a one-day mentoring workshop; the event is open to all ranks from Corporal to Brigadier. The next visit is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and will involve centralised briefings on themes such as:

- How to write a killer CV
- Building your achievements bank
- Psychology of interview and interview techniques
- Never eat alone – building up your network

Additionally there is also an opportunity to have a one hour personal coaching session. Many of the attendees in

previous years have continued to receive personalised mentoring for up to a year as they go through the career transition process. It should be noted that the work of the WCIT Employment Panel is not an alternative to the MOD-provided Career Transition Partnership; it is complimentary to the CTP and is tailored to meet the likely specific needs of Royal Signals personnel seeking a CIS-related second career.

If you are interested in attending the Employment Panel Workshop on 8<sup>th</sup> June then you need to register by sending an email to [events@royalsignals.org](mailto:events@royalsignals.org) before 15<sup>th</sup> May. Please include the following in your email:

- name, rank, service number, unit/organisation, current appointment, contact phone number (preferably mobile), contact email address (not DII), dietary requirements and car registration number (if not based in Blandford)
- An acknowledgement that by registering you are consenting to your details being held on the HQ Royal Signals database.

Finally, should individuals require accommodation in Blandford they will be responsible for contacting their respective mess or BGSU to make their own arrangements.



# ROYAL SIGNALS CYCLING

Appointment	Name
President	Brig J Cole
Chairman	Lt Col J Barber
Road Secretary	Maj N Purdy
MTB Secretary	Maj Tedby
Tri Secretary	Maj D Phillips
Road Manager	SSgt R Gibson
MTB Manager	SSgt M Margrie
Tri Manager	Sgt C Mansell

## ROYAL SIGNALS ROAD RACING

With a new Road Secretary in post, a ‘five-year plan’ was announced with the goal of becoming Inter-Corps Champions in 2020 to mark the Corps Centenary. The target for the 2015 season was to finish within the top 5 of the Army Cycling Union (ACU) Inter-Corps Road Race Series (ICRRS), focusing on team ethos, developing race tactics and promoting the sport in the Corps, and the Corps in the public arena. The season commenced with Ex JURASSIC RIDER, a pre-season training camp, which led into the ICRRS.

To kick start the development of team ethos in what is generally (and incorrectly) considered an individual sport, the team were encouraged to buy the new kit, and through team subs get a team polo shirt. A sense of team spirit spread quickly, and after just a couple of road races, team members began using the tagline ‘#proudtowearblue’. As the season continued, more and more members of the Corps, including Reserves, turned up to race, having seen race reports on Jimmys in Sport. As the season progressed, so did the team’s tactics, and it was a mark of success that seven riders (three of whom were novices on Ex JURASSIC RIDER) were promoted to the A-League in-season. Team tactics also led to the Corps securing three B-League victories out of the nine-race season.

Looking further afield, beyond Army Cycling, the Road Race Squad secured a visit to Manchester Velodrome, hosted by the Team GB nutritionist Nigel Mitchell. Team GB links to sports nutrition company ‘CNP Professional’ enabled a visit to the CNP Head Office where the Road Team gained sponsorship for a forthcoming endurance event, Revolve 24.

Revolve 24 was a ground-breaking event in the cycling world; a 24 hour race around the iconic Brands Hatch circuit. The Road Race Team entered two male and one women’s four-rider teams. In what turned out to be a hugely tactical event, the Corps performed extremely well securing 1<sup>st</sup> overall in the women’s event and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> overall in the men’s event. Revolve 24 even ‘tweeted’ the teams’ success on our sponsor (Resilient Networks) twitter feed.





# LING AND TRIATHLON

#Proudtowearblue



For 2016 the Corps aims to consolidate everything we have learnt so far and once again compete for silverware. With the introduction of a C (Beginner) League to ICRRS, Regiments are encouraged to enter individuals to race on their behalf. Every point gained from this race will accumulate and be carried into the Corps Championships later in the year.

## ROYAL SIGNALS MTB

Mountain Biking as a sport within R SIGNALS has grown hugely this year. A distinct increase in participation at events has enabled the R SIGNALS team to be a dominant force at each and every race. The R SIGNALS repeatedly secured podium finishes and achieved numerous honours for the season.



Members of the Corps attended the ACU run Ex WELSH EPIC training camp, also the Corps Team ran further training camps in Scotland (Ex LANARKSHIRE RIDER) and France (Ex LAPIERRE RIDER). These training camps will be run again in 2016, with the addition of a further training camp (Ex CYMRU RIDER) towards the end of the year to cater for increasing demand. Throughout the season personal training programmes and unit run events have provided a key link between training camps and competitions to develop technique and fitness levels of the riders.

The R SIGNALS now holds the majority of Army MTB Team places in both Cross-Country and Gravity Endure disciplines. The MTB Secretary has recently changed hands to **Sgt Carl Mansell** whose main focus for 2016 is the continue rider development and increase participation at events.

## ROYAL SIGNALS TRIATHLON

Royal Signals Cycling and Triathlon has enjoyed considerable success over the last 12 months, however this success has been primarily by the Road Cyclist and Mountain Bikers, Triathlon has been left in their wake... In order to enhance participation in Triathlon across the Corps a five year plan is being developed, key to this plan is the participation of novice athletes and growing the sport

within the Corps. Regardless of ability, any triathlete (or potential triathlete) will be welcome, this is to be an inclusive Club not an exclusive elite Team.

There have been successes this year, however they have been limited, or athletes are too modest to say. It's important to publicise what





we are doing as a club, regardless of distance or standard if you are out racing we need to know so we can grow the club.

In order to get the club together and build some team spirit, it's suggested that we do our best to enter the following races, targeting them as a club with maximum participation:

- 18 May 16** Army Sprint Championships
- 6 July 16** Army Standard Distance Championships
- 14 Sept 16** Army and Inter-Corps Relay
- TBC** Royal Signals Triathlon, Colerne



In addition, a number of entries into the following civilian events have been secured by the club:

- 29 May 16** Poseidon Olympic Triathlon
- 4 Sept 16** Rubicon Middle Distance Triathlon

For these events the more experienced members of the club will join novices for the event but rather than racing will help with pre-race admin, settling nerves and support through the day – more to follow, if you are interested get in touch.

Follow us on:

- Facebook: RSignals Cycling  
RSignals Triathlon
- Twitter: @RSIGSRoadRacing
- Instagram: Royalsignalscycling

Contact us at:

[RSignalscyclingroadracing@gmail.com](mailto:RSignalscyclingroadracing@gmail.com) or through any of the team managers.



2015 Success		
Event	Winner	
R SIGNALS Inter-Unit Road Champs	18 Sig Regt	Major Unit
	37 Sig Regt	Minor Unit
	18 Sig Regt	Women
R SIGNALS Inter-Unit MTB Champs	18 Sig Regt	Major Unit
	RSMDDT	Minor Unit
	3 Sig Regt	Women
ACU Inter-Unit Road Champs	3rd place	30 Sig Regt
ACU Inter-Unit XC MTB Champs	11 Sig Regt	Major Unit
ACU MTB Endurance 6hr Champs	<b>SSgt Loynes</b>	
	<b>SSgt Whittaker</b>	
ACU MTB XCE Eliminator Champs	<b>SSgt Loynes</b>	
ACU Inter-Unit Ladies Individual	1st	<b>Capt Sewell (Reserve)</b>
	2nd	<b>SSgt Smith (Reserve)</b>
Inter-Corps Road Race Series	3rd	
ACU Inter-Corps Cross-Country Series	2nd	







LCpl Joel Franks starts well



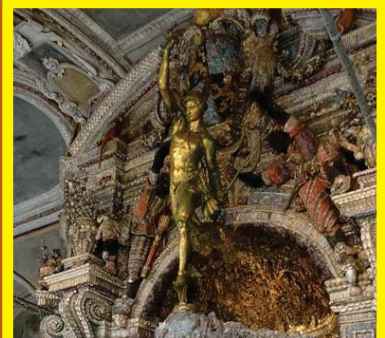
Sgt Sarah Ball winning the jump



Maj Chamberlain and Capt Berry taking in the culture



Full Squad with Nexor strip



Jimmy at The Munich Residenz

# EXERCISE BAVARIAN BASELINE

by Capt Phil Berry 14SR(EW)

Ex BAVARIAN BASELINE (Ex BB) was the R SIGNALS Basketball Team's sports tour to Munich conducted over the period 7-13 Feb 16. The aim of Ex BB was to prepare Corps basketball players for competition, including the respective Inter Unit and Inter Corps championships and as a reward for all of their commitment over the years. It has been 15 years since the last overseas sports tour for the basketball team, so it was a long time coming, and therefore an opportunity to organise something special.

The initial estimate for the tour was planned on a trip to the USA however it became too costly so an alternative had to be found. After some deliberation it was decided that the best option would be to take the basketball team to Munich: a) because I had never been there, b) it was affordable and c) the standard of basketball was very high. On arrival in Munich I was also delighted to discover that our time in Munich coincided with the Fasching Karneval (the annual party celebration throughout Germany).

The tour was a balance of basketball training, basketball games against local opposition, and various cultural visits. The training took place in the mornings at the MTV sports hall in the centre of Munich, which offered three courts and a large gym area upstairs if required. The hall provided us the opportunity to train all three of our teams and run through our 'plays' for the games. Following training the players were then free to visit the cultural sights of Munich.

During our stay we played three games against local opposition. The first men's game and the ladies game were played against an inner city team called Ost who fielded two strong teams. Our first men's team lost 58 – 37 with a great display by **LCpl 'Munich Cup' Franks** leading the scoring, whilst the ladies, who fought until the bitter end, were overmatched and also beaten. A big thank you is extended to **Maj 'Hofbräuhaus' Aylward** as it was her last ever game for the R SIGNALS. The third game against TSV Haar provided a better result for us and a win for our second men's team of 54 – 36, with **Sgt Greg 'two rooms' Cole** back on form. All of the games were played in the best spirit and the teams that hosted us were very courteous and social.

Munich is a large city and one that is full of culture and activities. During the tour the teams took the opportunity to visit some sights which included the Allianz Arena (home to Bayern Munich football club) and also the BMW Welt. Some of the older team members toured the historic sites with **Maj 'everyone needs a hat' Chamberlain**, which included the Munich Residenz (former Royal Palace) and eventually all roads led to the one of the many Bräuhäuser.

Ex BB was a success and it achieved all of its aims and objectives, thanks must go to those that helped organise the event and amongst others, Nexor for providing sponsorship, for the best kit in Army Basketball and tour support. The tour provided an opportunity to compete against strong civilian sports teams who were well drilled and practiced, which in turn led to some very competitive but enjoyable games. The personalities we met in Munich were welcoming and hospitable, and they relished the chance of meeting and playing against an overseas sports team. If you are thinking of organising a sports tour I would certainly recommend Munich!



# EXERCISE NORDIC

On 23 Nov, Team 11 (RSS) Sig Regt set off for Norway and Ex NORDIC MERCURY GLACIER, where we were due to start a training programme that would push some of us farther than we had ever been before. The journey through Europe was the first test and after 26 hours filled with petrol station stops, energy drinks and 'Hello' by Adele blasting from our radio we finally arrived in Trysil, Norway.

The weather on arrival can only be described as impressive. We rolled into the resort in what seemed to be two feet of snow, which some of the team had never seen before. The first thing on everyone's mind was getting all our kit into the lodge and then getting our heads down, mainly because we started training first thing in the morning.

The team was made up of **Capt Alex Booth**, **Sgt Scotty Moran**, **Cpl Dean Smith**, **Sig Thomas Ross**, **Sig Aaron Raines**, **Sig Harry Quaiife**, **Sig Deevendra Gurung** and **Sig Shikar Pun**.



From the start of the exercise we were already playing catch up. The other teams had gained a three day head start on us and our first five days would be intense while we caught up. The first lesson we learnt was ski maintenance, which included waxing, storage and the characteristics of a ski, all of which we had to get to grips with as soon as we could. An hour after that, we were out on the snow, doing our best impression of *Bambi on Ice*.

By the end of the first week we had mastered some of the basics such as transferring weight from one ski to another while maintaining balance and how to use our poles – though **Capt Alex Booth** may have required some 'additional training' on the way.

Two types of skiing were learnt throughout the first week; classic skiing and skate skiing. The classic ski is used for covering long distances and is the harder of the two techniques to learn, whereas skate skiing requires more physical effort but is closer to rollerblading and so has a nice familiarity to it. All of our team made clear progress in the first week, even if along the way most of us took some heavy falls in the fresh Norwegian snow.

We continued skiing throughout the weekend however this didn't stop the team from sampling the local nightlife. The final challenge of the first week was a hard session in difficult conditions where the team covered 8 miles in just over 2 hours. Those still getting to grips with skiing technique had to resort to using double poling (where you push with both poles simultaneously) most of the way, making the simplest activities nearly impossible later on due to some very sore arms.

The second week was structured so that we had a two hour classic session in the morning, a range session in the afternoon and a skate session after this. We had been skiing twice a day since we had arrived trying to catch up with the other teams and were all starting to fatigue. Despite this, from Sunday onwards we were increasing our distances and being challenged by the instructors.

Finally after putting in the hard work to catch up with the other teams we were granted a well deserved day off on Thursday of the second week. The day off was a chance for the team to catch up with admin and to generally stretch and recover ready to finish the week with more technique and range sessions.

At the start of week three we were warned there would be two practice races coming. The first, a skate race, was a time trial during the first half of the week. The race itself was a 4.2 km sprint for novices but the course was icier than usual as **Sig Pun** and **Sgt Moran** discovered by mostly falling, rather than skiing, downhill. The loop didn't seem too arduous since it was quite a short circuit and there was a decent amount of flat and downhill to counter the one extreme uphill – but it definitely gave us all a taste of what was to come and how hard Nordic Skiing was under the pressure of the clock!

The second practice race, a 5 km classic, came in the second half of the week. This consisted of two skis round a loop of track with a nice long downhill but an arduous climb up past the range, which had heart rates soaring. We were released from the start according to our bib number so the chase was on from the start and the team achieved a good overall result in the standings.

These two races really put what was to come during Race Week into perspective for our team. As such, our final day off was filled with ski waxing, shopping for last minute kit and stretching and swimming in the gym. This recovery was well appreciated by the team as the races had been a real shock to the system and we all realised what we had let ourselves in for. The evening was well spent in the *Big Horn Steakhouse* and after probably the best steak dinners most of us had ever eaten it was time to hit the hay and prepare for training the rest of the weekend. The last of the training for that week went well and everyone was feeling positive about the progress we had made going into Race Week.

And finally it was here – Race Week would see 11 Sig Regt put into practice three weeks of hard training, except for two who had picked up knocks and injuries in training and were relegated to course officials. Monday was the first full on competitive race against the other teams and it clearly wasn't friendly practice anymore, but 'down to business.' The course was prepped with four sets of tracks dug into the snow, our bright orange race suits were donned and before we knew it the 15 km classic race was underway. The racers from the team achieved a good spread in the standings





# MERCURY GLACIER

by Sig Harry Quaife, Sig Shikar Pun, Sig Deevendra Gurung, Sig Tom Ross and Sig Aaron Raines

and it was fair to say the race went well, with **Cpl Smith** achieving 15<sup>th</sup>, **Sig Quaife** achieving 20<sup>th</sup> and **Sig Raines** achieving 23<sup>rd</sup> out of almost 70 racers. **Capt Booth** and **Sgt Moran** came in a bit behind the rest after some hard falls which they blamed on 'poor track conditions.' The walk back to the lodge after the race was probably worse than the actual course and the sting of -13°C on every extremity imaginable through our thin lycra took a toll on some...

Race two was the skate biathlon which included six laps of a tough course broken up by a shoot every two laps until we finished on a final two loops. The race was theoretically about 10 km but with penalty loops for missed targets actually averaged around 11 km. In his favourite discipline out of the two types of skiing, **Capt Booth** achieved 10<sup>th</sup> overall, and **Sig Quaife** achieved best junior. The whole team did well for a sport in which we turned up as complete novices! Poor **Cpl Smith** had picked up a 'bad toe' after the classic race so he unfortunately could not take part – however, this did not stop him assuring anyone who would listen that he really would have been up there had he been fit!

With a day's rest in between we had the final and ultimate test, the military section of the entire exercise, the Patrol Race. The evening before, kit was checked, weighed and primed for a smooth run, including revision for the pre race inspection and scenario knowledge test from **Brig Tim Carmichael**.

The race was classic in style and included an arduous climb up the alpine slopes on what seemed to be the longest possible route. Waiting for us at the top of the mountain was '**Mad' Mac** a cockney ex-RTR soldier resembling a *Lord of the Rings* extra, with the news that our command task was a snow sled casualty evacuation to the top of the hill and from there we would have to get on the ski lift back down the mountain to continue with the race. The evac was easy, but only for **Sig Raines** who was selected to carry the skis and poles up to the top while **Capt Booth**, **Sgt Moran** and **Sig Quaife** put in maximum effort pushing the casualty filled sled up the steepest hill in Norway.

After many miles, a few falls and two shoots on the range it was an all out race to the finish and some hot juice and barbeque. It's fair to say that the Patrol Race took it out of us and we were all knackered. Once we'd got back to the lodge, reflected on what we had just achieved and had a shower we attended the prize giving, where **Sig Quaife** won Top Junior for the Biathlon race, **Sgt Moran** got third veteran overall and **Capt Booth** picked up a prize for being a top-10 biathlete.

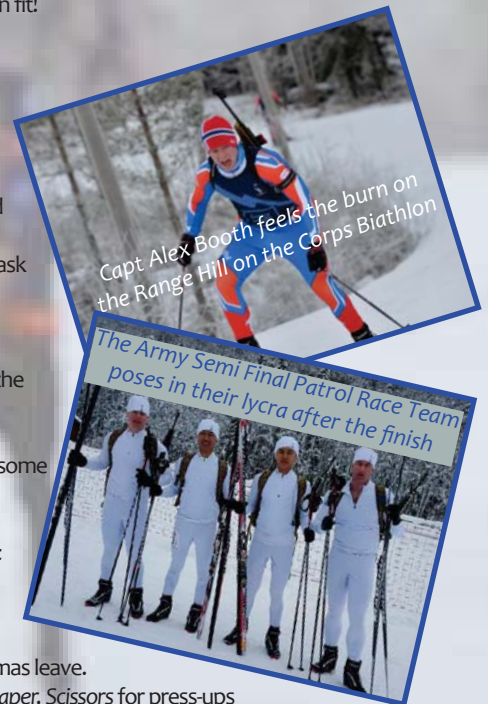
Finally, after all the training and racing it was time to pack up and head back to the UK for Christmas leave. The journey back held nothing special for us except for **Capt Booth** and **Cpl Smith** playing *Rock, Paper, Scissors* for press-ups on the Eurotunnel. Unlucky for him, **Smudge** contrived to lose ten games out of twelve. Being a PTI we all expected **Smudge** to handle doing his 200 press-ups a bit better to be honest.

Phase two began on 3 Jan with a journey to the Obertilliach Biathlon Centre in Austria where we would have a short week to revise on what we had learnt in Norway before we travelled to the Army Semi-Finals. The courses looked challenging but never the less we were eager to get back on the skis and see if we still had the ability to succeed as we had throughout phase one of the exercise. Early on, we spotted a bistro overlooking the tracks where we could eat lunch watching other signals teams train. From that vantage point, we also realised that national teams from Germany, Russia, Estonia and Ukraine were training alongside us - but they clearly had all the gear and no idea. After some good and tough training, we left for France and the Army Semi-Finals where we would compete against 32 other teams, some of them including GB athletes and racers with multiple seasons under their belts.

Arriving in Les Contamines, France we were all raring to go for the first race! It would be the 15 km classic, where as a team we did well and came 20<sup>th</sup> out of 32 teams and 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the novice teams, a great result for a team from a training regiment. The next race was the classic relay where the team had to tag each other after a 5 km loop – tougher than it sounds on skis! We came 3<sup>rd</sup> again out of the novice teams and 23<sup>rd</sup> overall, one place behind the Coldstream Guards, who we had now generated some friendly competition with.

Wednesday was a welcome rest for all of us after the considerable efforts the whole team had put in and Thursday was shortly upon us with the biathlon individual race. It was a staggered start and it's safe to say we all received great support from other units and our own teammates who would rush over at the finish to congratulate the racer with a warm drink and some blue roll to wipe what ever he needed to wipe. Our times for the race averaged about 50 minutes which was a brilliant achievement, and generated smiles and confidence all round at results time. Friday saw the biathlon relay with a strong and confident 11 Sig Regt team rearing to go. All went smoothly until **Sig Quaife's** rifle sling snapped through no fault of his own and the team lost five minutes repairing it. He put in a brilliant effort to catch up on the skiers in front by a minute on his last lap and the team followed his example to still place 22<sup>nd</sup> of 32. We were all delighted with that result and even more so to find we came 4<sup>th</sup> of 9 novice teams despite the setback.

After a well earned rest the team then took part in the military patrol race, with some trepidation after the Norwegian version, but happily the whole team found the course a bit easier and nowhere near as cold! The team all worked hard throughout and came 23<sup>rd</sup> again, a consistent performance from a young novice team who are all already looking forward to getting involved next year at their future units.



Capt Alex Booth feels the burn on the Range Hill on the Corps Biathlon

The Army Semi Final Patrol Race Team poses in their lycra after the finish





# EXERCISE SNOW LYNX

On 2 Jan 16 while the rest of the world was still tucked up in bed and either recovering from hangovers or morally contemplating how to attack Day Two of 'Dry January', eleven members of 299 (SC) Sig Sqn met for an early breakfast at Eurostar St Pancras to deploy to Les Arc, France for a week of Adventurous Training (AT). This exercise initiated a two-year cycle of ten Level 2 and 3 AT expeditions and exercises designed to give all members of the Sqn the opportunity to test and develop their skills and abilities in a non-operational environment, with a few beers thrown in to help with Sqn bonding for good measure.

The genteel train ride through France was predominantly spent checking the Plan Peisey SnowCam as the rather nervous Expedition Leader had been monitoring a very green set of hills over his Christmas leave. As luck would have it, our arrival was supposed to herald the first meaningful downpour of the season and in the seven hours spent on the train the green hills finally morphed into something the instructors would be able to enact their punishing regime on. On arrival in Plan Peisey the group were met by our delightful hosts, Pam and Mal, received the first 'daily detail' from the Exercise Leader and retired to bed ready to hit the slopes (some more literally than others) the following morning.

The group was divided in two based on experience and ability. One group, ably instructed by the resident Sqn instructor, headed off to complete Ski Foundation Level One (SF1) and the more advanced group embarking on SF2. Due to a lack of instructors in the Sqn the second instructor, **Col Simon Thomsett** – late PWRR, kindly offered to join the exercise following an ATG website trawl. As a point to note, this process was extremely effective and removed the time-consuming need to negotiate for support with other units; highly recommended for other expeds in need of instructors.

Team SF1's aims were to get to the end of the week, able to competently and confidently parallel ski on red runs, which to all concerned sounded much nicer than whatever the SF2 gang would be doing that involved shovels, probes and fighting gravity up, rather than down the hill. The SF1 group kicked off with a quick remind and revise of some basic principles and then headed off to get acquainted with the snow. It was at this point that some dark horses on skis emerged (not literally) and the race to elevensies was consistently led by the fearless and fast YofS, swiftly

followed by the Ops Offr. After a couple of days fruitlessly trying to identify the 'edge' the instructor was advising she get on, the OC finally remembered how to co-ordinate her skis and knees with the hill for a brief morning. She then decided to celebrate her achievements by falling off a small ledge and abruptly ending her skiing week. Throughout the week the group's skills and individual ability levels grew exponentially under the instructor's guidance and carefully selected lessons.



*The SF1 group enjoying the more challenging of weather conditions*

The SF2 group was on the trip to progress from the skills acquired on previous skiing trips and to gain the SF2 qualification. On the first day, **Col Thomsett** established quickly that the group was skiing to the level required to start SF2. This then started a week of intense, and sometimes cold, learning. His tutelage included a blur of lifts, skiing in powder, trying to keep up with the group as legs got tired, a rare hot chocolate/coffee, skiing in powder, some excellent lunches and more skiing in powder. The excessive skiing in powder, which was deeper and more challenging than any of the group had ever encountered, was a result of one of the Troop Commanders requesting to learn to "ski in powder a bit." **Col Thomsett** was more than happy to oblige.

The result was that the group well and truly improved their skills and as per the fundamental aims of AT, found themselves out of their comfort zones. Whether that was waist deep in snow off piste struggling to find a ski, or precariously navigating through hoar frost brittle snow down a steep black run. On day three the group

slipped on their touring skins and schlepped on up the mountain. Unfortunately, the conditions were not particularly favourable after that and our skins stayed in our daysacks for the remainder of the week, our schlepping TOs having been achieved. Aside from the powder and the schlepping, enduring memories were: one of the Troop Commander's taking out the instructor, incurring a hefty beer fine; the exceptional and inexhaustible supply of dits provided by **Col Thomsett** and the excellent banter within the group.

In conclusion, the expedition proved to be successful, not only were the aims of AT met but the choice of a chalet provided a relaxed and permissive environment for members of the Squadron to bond. The choice to travel by train would certainly be recommended to future expeditions, as not only was it cheaper than flying or driving it was also much safer and comparable in time. Overall the expedition was a challenging but enjoyable start to the year and has allowed members to refresh before another busy year at the Sqn.



*The resident Sqn instructor at his best*



*The RQMS and YofS taking advantage of the short lived better weather*





# EXERCISE DRAGON HURRICANE

by LCpl Richardson, 33 Eng Regt (821 EOD & Search Sqn)

The journey to Hotel La Roz, La Rosiere, started nice and early on Saturday at 5am. A mere 16 hours later, we arrived at 00:10 Sunday morning, French time. Luckily they still laid on an evening meal for us (with unlimited free refills of wine!), and after this we went to bed, ready for an 8 o'clock start the same morning.

Firstly we were split into groups, those who can ski and those who can't. Those who couldn't made their way down to Les Eucherts - a short 5 minute bus journey from the hotel - to learn the basics and experience the Magic Carpet - in effect an escalator to get you to the top of a mini hill. Here we were taught the basics of skiing by our instructor Jim, 58 Sqn. The first time the group went down a green slope (the easiest), it was certainly emotional for Jim, as it seemed like we hadn't listened to a word he taught us! The highlight of this first run was seeing someone go off piste, falling over into two feet of snow, skis coming off and then having to crawl his way back on to the slope in a seemingly endless battle against the snow.

After a few days of practice, those in the beginners group were all parallel skiing with some confidence and tackling a number of blue and red routes. These are longer and steeper than green slopes, thus requiring more finesse and skill on the turns, along with being able to slow yourself down pretty quickly.

The more advanced group, or those who had been skiing before, were thrown straight into the deep end with some runs down red and black routes. Of course there were some learning objectives to be completed, new turns and new ways to more efficiently and effectively ski. Later on in the week they moved onto touring, which involves going off piste, navigating and route finding through potentially avalanche prone terrain.

No Army AT package would be complete without easy access to reasonably priced beer (for a ski resort) and this was no exception, with the hotel having a friendly bar with various theme nights, highlights being a pyjama party and karaoke. Luckily all the staff and locals who frequented this place were British, so minimal French speaking was required.

Overall it was a thoroughly enjoyable week, with everyone having gained the required skills to get the Army qualification of SF1 (Ski Foundation 1) for those who had not skied before, and SF2 for those who had. At the bargain price of £150 all in, with meals included. I would certainly recommend organising an AT package skiing for your regt (though don't hire minibuses that are restricted to 55mph).



*Sgt 'Alex' Blake and LCpl 'Dave' Richardson before the first mornings skiing*

# EXERCISE DRAGON JERBOA PISTE

29 Jan - 7 Feb 2016

by WO2 (YofS) Moran



On Fri 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 16; eighteen 'Desert Rats' from HQ 7 Inf Bde & HQ East deployed on Ex DRAGON JERBOA PISTE 16, the annual Brigade HQ Ski Expedition.

The exercise deployed in Minibuses by road and ferry to Neustift, Austria, part of the Austrian Tyrol Ski Area. The area has guaranteed snow with excellent on piste and off piste skiing terrain suitable for the expedition.

Groups were accommodated in self-catering apartments in Neustift which were warm and comfortable and included secure ski storage complete with boot warmers and equipment prep rooms. All bedding and towels were provided, along with decent cooking facilities. Food was purchased in apartment groups with CILOR from the local supermarket(s).

Once settled in Neustift a safety brief which included a Non Freezing Cold Injury (NFCI) lecture was delivered to all participants on the first evening. Afterwards the group set about completing or training for the respective SF1 & SF2 courses.



Following a daily risk assessment by the instructors, “on snow” training was complemented by evening theory and practical lectures covering the respective syllabus elements.

On the first ski day after a period of warm up exercises and gentle on piste runs a ski assessment of the participants was conducted. Following this the party split into 3 groups,

working towards either SF1, SF2 or on developing their competence of skiing in preparation for SF3 which we hope to deliver next year. These three groups were assessed daily with movement between groups as abilities developed or difficulties were encountered, the three instructors also rotated between the groups to ensure moderation.

The snow on piste and weather conditions were excellent throughout, although reduced visibility on the first, fourth, fifth and final day was experienced. This did not affect the course programme. Temperatures’ dropped to -27C during the expedition, but no injuries were sustained and a large deposit of fresh powder snow on the evenings of day 4 and 5 allowed the instructors to demonstrate and conduct some very good on piste powder techniques on the final day.

At the end of the course 7 personnel achieved SF1 and 2 achieved SF2 standard (1 failure), the remainder concentrating developing the skills required to undertake SF2 or SF3 at a later date. After the final day’s assessment, return of equipment and the preparation of the accommodation for handover, the group enjoyed a meal together in a local restaurant in town before departing the following morning to return to base location.

This exercise has been hugely successful, with the training being of high standard and delivered safely.



## WCIT JOURNEYMAN SCHEME



The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists (WCIT) was formed in 1986 and later became the City of London’s 100th Livery Company; it subsequently gained its Royal Charter in 2010. Formal links between WCIT and the Royal Signals stretch back to 1992.

The standard entry route into WCIT for those with suitable professional qualifications and experience is to be directly elected as a Freeman of the Company. However, in keeping with the traditional practice amongst the other Livery Companies, WCIT also have an entry route for younger and less experienced applicants; they are invited to undertake a three year ‘Journey’ where they are mentored by a more senior member of the Company.

The focus of the mentoring is towards developing individuals in the four disciplines of Competence, Confidence, Community and Company. The Journeyman Scheme has its roots in deep history, where apprentices in the City of London would serve as ‘Journeyman’, to confirm their worthiness to become Freeman of the City and independent practitioners of their chosen trade. In the modern era, a Journey is a three year opportunity to explore the life and opportunities on offer in a Livery Company.

In 2012 a pilot scheme was introduced whereby a small group of Royal Signals officers and soldiers were

invited to become WCIT Journeymen; with the majority of their joining fees and annual subscriptions being paid for by the Royal Signals Institution (RSI). It has now been decided to extend the scheme and open it up so that any serving (regular or reserve) member of the Corps of the rank of staff sergeant, warrant officer, captain or major may apply for one of the (up to) ten annual RSI-sponsored places on the WCIT Journeyman Scheme.

Overall, the three year Journey typically costs an individual about £1,000 and the RSI will refund 80% of the costs of the Journey for the selected individuals. Upon successful completion of the Journey and the individual becoming a Freeman of the Company the RSI will reimburse the remaining 20% of the costs of the three-year Journey to help offset the cost of becoming a Freeman.

The closing date for applications has been set as 1 July annually; with a selection board taking place in the Summer before commencement of the Journey in September. Further information on the WCIT is available at <https://www.wcit.org.uk> whilst information on the application and selection criteria will be promulgated shortly through a Royal Signals Information Note (RSIN) and then embodied in PD 025. The POC for queries is **Lt Col Ben Howarth**, [jfc-cap-c4isr-taccis-so1@mod.uk](mailto:jfc-cap-c4isr-taccis-so1@mod.uk).





# EXERCISE CARVING DRAGON

by LCpl C Kirnon

January saw 45 members of 22 Sig Regt take part in Ex CARVING DRAGON, the regimental ski trip to the Southern France resort of La Rosière. It enabled participants to either gain their SF1 qualification or carry on with continuation training. Little did we know that the coach journey from Stafford would take 21 hours...

It was our first morning of skiing and luckily the sun was shining (as it did throughout the week), which meant that all the thermals we had brought with us wouldn't really be needed. Unless however if you were like **Sig 'Snowball Paul' Humphries** who, like a less coordinated Bambi, spent a lot of time picking himself up off the floor. We were split into various ability groups, ranging from a group who already held the SF1 qualification; down to a group for those individuals who were about to be introduced to the pizza/chips principle. The groups with inexperienced skiers spent a lot of the first day on a steady pale green slope, where they were able to practice basic skills such as getting in and out of your skis, climbing up the slope using your ski edges and most importantly how to stop using a technique known as the snow plough.

Miraculously it wasn't until day two that we had our first injury. Feeling perhaps too confident, **Sig George 'My BFF is the Corps Ski Champion' Green** decided he would like to move from the beginners group to an intermediate group. This turned out to be a foolish decision; not too dissimilar to a scene from the beaches of Normandy, he was taken to the ground within a matter of metres. Having been removed from the mountain followed by a very expensive trip to the doctors, Sig Green was confined to the hotel bar for the remainder of the trip... Perhaps he wasn't being foolish after all?

Moving onto the actual slopes for the beginner groups helped them to develop the skills they had learnt on the first day. This included turning and stopping when needed, which is important on the busy slopes in the resort. Day two was the first exposure for many to the dreaded ski lifts, which over the course of the week accounted for several comical moments. The advanced groups began to enjoy the more challenging red slopes and even managed to ski to an adjoining Italian ski resort, where the slopes were much quieter enabling some of them to beat their high speeds on the very popular 'Ski Tracker' App. The quickest man by the end of the week was **Sig Gam 'Have No Fear' Gurung**, clocking an impressive 72.6mph!

By day four most people were progressing quite well and ski lift incidents were becoming far less common. The beginner groups began to learn parallel turning; which is a far more effective way of turning on the slopes, enabling more control of turning and speed. This was also the first day the beginners tackled the blue slopes, which proved much more challenging due to the increased gradient and variety in snow conditions across the piste.

By the final day everyone had experienced varying types of green and blue slopes and the gap between the more advanced skiers and the beginners was beginning to close. The instructors had taught the majority of skills and techniques required and it was more a case of practice makes perfect; all the groups went at their own pace tackling the different types of slopes. The end of the trip was bittersweet. After six days of eventful skiing everyone was at the required standard to be awarded their SF1 qualification. However everyone knew what lay ahead, another 21 hours on the coach back to Stafford!



*Cpl Eddie Edwards demonstrating 'The Penguin'*



*22 Sig Regt stop for a photo with Mont Blanc*



# EXERCISE DRAGON SORBET

9-16 Jan 16

by SSgt Kerry Hopkinson

Returning from Christmas leave always leaves you feeling a little down and deflated..... Unless you're part of the biggest Reserve Regt in the Royal Signals and are heading out to Austria for a week's skiing!

Everyone had made the flight and I saw some excited faces at Salzburg airport as we got everyone together for the short journey to the hotel that would form our base during the next week. The resort of Kirchdorf is quiet and traditional which suited our group as most of them were in bed for 2200 at night from a hard days skiing.

The main group were split into Ski Foundation 1 and 2 – beginners and intermediates that formed the backbone of the trip led by **SSgt Kerry Hopkinson**, **SSgt Kate Hopkinson** (That isn't a typo there are 2 x SSgt Hopkinson's) and **Capt John Berry**, The SF2 group were covered by **SSgt Tim Abbott** and **Capt Anna Andrews-Reed**. The final gang were the continuation group of more advanced skiers led by **WO2 Si Nicholson**. With all the admin smashed on the first day the 35 of us were ready to go!

**SSgt Kate Hopkinson** had a hard choice of what to wear for the first morning – her opening comments were: 'It's all about looking good' pity she failed on that one! The beginner area of St Jacob is an instructors dream with lots of flat areas and easy lifts. The other groups decided to get some tips and test and adjust on the same slopes to warm the legs up that had sat still for a long time over Christmas leave.

**Capt John Berry** immediately sacked off his instructional duties and hit the black slope! We didn't see him until Wed on the Steinplatter. **WO2 Paul Holland** - more used to a warmer kitchen environment took the time here to stretch off his arms.... back and shoulders by grabbing the tow rope a little too enthusiastically and giving the best superman on skis impression I have seen.

You can imagine by the end of the first day we had a great buzz amongst the group with 5 more days of skiing to follow. A hearty dinner followed and some Austrian music in the bar rounded off the first day. **Maj Dave Taylor** put the musicians to shame by playing the spoons on his head – the clip is available on YouTube it's a sight to see.

As the week went on all skiers progressed but special mention must go to **LCpl Chow Chung** and **Cpl Ricky Chauhan** who were our guests from 16 Sig Regt. Both lads fitted into the group seamlessly and **Ricky** was awarded the star skier award from his instructor.

Another one that deserves a special mention is Ships Cat – **SSgt Mark Coley**. He has a special talent for tripping over air or a blade of grass. With this in mind he managed to pile in while at a standstill on the flattest bit of piste you could find and twisted his sideburn. A trip in a skidoo really cheered him up!

During the week the advanced and SF2 groups had Kitzbuhl All Star Ski passes which gave them a massive area to choose from. **Sig Tom Harman** and **Sig Nick Marshall** became obsessed with their apps telling them how far they had skied for that day. The record is claimed to be at 25 miles for the continuation group of **SSgt Cat Smith**, **WO2 Robbo Robertson**, **SSgt Jimmy Bond** and **SSgt Jase Kent** who was having a break from his usual instructor duties.

Many of the people on the trip had never skied before, including **SSgt John Norton**, **Sig Olivia Halcrow**, **Sig Vaughan** and **LCpl Hathaway**. These comprised a relatively youthful element to the group, to offset that we had **SSgt Steve Hewitt**, **WO2 (SSM) Norm Fowler**, **Cpl Bri Hardy** and **Sgt Jase Whitehead** to temper the youth with their experience and wisdom! This was a good mix and showed that you can teach an old dog new tricks!

Half way through and Wednesday was nominated by **Sig Nick Marshall** as the SF2 group injury day, with the touring becoming difficult due to increased snow fall. **Sig Nicola Bailes**, **LCpl Graham Casey** and **SSgt Paul Hall** all taking tumbles – although **SSgt Halls** was making a snow angel so I'm not sure if that counts. It was on this day that **Maj Dave Taylor** decided to take out **SSgt Kent**. It's a good job **SSgt Kent** is an ex PTI – lord only knows how he would have come off with the 17 stone OM hurtling towards him.

For the last night all the instructors nominated their star skier for the week. It was a brilliant way to end the trip with everyone asking when the next one was and saying how much they had got out of the week. Thank you to the Regt for their support and to all the agencies that provided funding to make sure it was affordable for all ranks. A special than you goes to WM RFCA whose contribution made a difference to the affordability of this trip.



SSgt Mark Coley ready to mount the wheelchair



The skiers of Ex Dragon Sorbet 2016



SSgt Kate Hopkinson adjusting her trousers and deciding what to wear for tomorrow





## The Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

Incorporating The Royal Signals Association

*Swift and Sure Help for Signallers in Need*

Your legacy can help us safeguard the Royal Signals Community



Every year the RSBF helps hundreds of those who have fallen on hard times. This includes serving Signallers injured on operations, the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, members of the Corps who need assistance with specialist medical care for their children, or veterans who need help in maintaining their mobility and independence.

*Help others in their time of need*

There has been a long-standing saying that the "Corps looks after its own" and we help wherever we can. In the past five years the RSBF has granted approximately £2 million to help fellow serving and retired signallers and their families in times of need.

We don't distinguish between Regular, Reserve, National Service, ex-ATS or WRAC who served with the Corps, officer or soldier and their dependants. Any case brought to us will be considered with expert support from SSAFA, The Royal British Legion and the Army Benevolent Fund.

You can help too - by leaving a legacy in your will. It's simple to do and can make all the difference to someone who has worn the same cap badge.

*Find out more*

If you would like to make a difference please contact the Association. We will be happy to provide information on how to leave a legacy so that others from the Corps might benefit from your generosity.

Contact **Caroline** on 01258 482090 or email [rsa@royalsignals.org](mailto:rsa@royalsignals.org)  
Royal Signals Association

### Oral History Project - WW2, Palestine, BAOR, Falklands, Iraq...

*Serving future generations by preserving memories of yesterday's service, today*

The Royal Signals Museum is building an Oral History collection to ensure stories are recorded for posterity. The Museum is especially keen to capture memories of those who served in WW2, in Palestine or any of the campaigns prior to 1960 as well as in BAOR. The project will cover all post war operations and theatres, including recent operations, and asks anyone willing to share their story to get in touch.

The information gathered will be used to supplement current and future museum displays as well as being a valuable addition to the Corps Archive, helping to preserve Corps history and heritage.

The actual recording of oral histories is usually carried out in the Museum by trained staff and volunteers.

For more information please contact **Martin Skipworth** 01258 482683  
email [headofresearch@royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk](mailto:headofresearch@royalsignalsmuseum.co.uk)



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**Welfare Secretary: Mrs L Sizeland**  
**Membership Secretary: Mrs CA Addison**

I am putting fingers to keyboard to write the April WIRE notes before the 71<sup>st</sup> AGM on 19 Mar. In line with my thoughts last year, since the adoption of the current rules of the Association at the AGM last year, members have seen very minimal changes in the running of the Association.

The 2016 Association and Retired Officers Newsletter is now in the process of being published. Copies will be available on the website shortly so that you can either download a copy or read on screen. I hope that you will enjoy reading it, if you would like to receive a printed copy, please send A4 sized SAE with "large postage" stamp to RSA Admin Officer NL 2016, HQ ROYAL SIGNALS, Griffiin House, Blandford Camp, DT11 8RH.

The membership chart for those enrolled during 2015 shows 783 new members and 231 replacement cards issue; the Facebook group has also grown and at the time of writing has 10,248 members. If you are on Facebook, search for the Royal Signals Association and ask to join us.



Over the last year both the Corps Colonel and Corps RSM have undertaken a programme of visits to branches to augment those made by the Chairman, the General Secretary, the Assistant General Secretary and me. We are all grateful for the generous hospitality with which we have been greeted and look forward to seeing many of you during the year.

2015 looks as if it will be another busy year for us. During the year I am looking forward to visiting Bedford Branch, Guernsey Branch, Founder's Day at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Cambridge Branch, the NMA for the Annual Service of Dedication, the gathering of the clans in the north, Southport Branch, the opening of the Field of Remembrance, the Cenotaph Parade, and Project Noel.





The RSA Reunion 2016 will take place on 18/19 June and at the paperwork can be downloaded for return to us from the RSA website. The return address on the application form is [events@royalsignals.org](mailto:events@royalsignals.org), or Reunion 2016 at HQ ROYAL SIGNALS, Griffin House, Blandford Camp DT11 8RH. This year we have added an informal entertainment on Saturday evening (Party in the Park) including refreshments and music, it will be based on the marquee on the Officers' Mess arena and further details will be forthcoming. Among the programme of regular events we will be presenting Tactical Recognition Flashes (TRFs) to new Signallers at the Princess Royal Day Parade, and the Veterans will then join the parade to march off the square with 11 Signal Regiment. We hope you will be there for this very special weekend offering the chance to reconnect with your service past and join friends old and new.

**New Life members.** A warm welcome to the following members, enrolled since the last issue of *The Wire*:

<b>Sgt W Aston</b>	1943/47	<b>Sig S Jones</b>	1981/90	<b>SSgt TJ Sluman</b>	1993/16
<b>LCpl S Botterill</b>	1977/88	<b>Cpl D Jones</b>	1959/69	<b>Sgt R Stock</b>	1981/87
<b>LCpl SG Bull</b>	1982/93	<b>LCpl NK Jones</b>	1992/96	<b>Sig J Summers</b>	1947/49
<b>Cpl A Carvin</b>	1992/14	<b>LCpl N Kelly</b>	2000/07	<b>Cpl L Sutherland</b>	1983/92
<b>Cpl T Coffey</b>	1983/89	<b>Sig GF Linnell</b>	1961/67	<b>Sgt AJ Taylor</b>	1978/93
<b>Sig RA Cooper</b>	2001/07	<b>Col MP Llewellyn</b>	1981/15	<b>Sig G Tennant</b>	1993/97
<b>SSgt W Davidson</b>	1936/46	<b>LCpl JF Lynn</b>	1969/75	<b>Sig D Trehearne</b>	1958/60
<b>Sgt A Dingle</b>	1971/86	<b>SSgt GP Marchant</b>	1975/90	<b>Cpl KE Vicary</b>	1976/90
<b>LCpl TL Elliott</b>	2002/14	<b>Sig CE Mason</b>	1971/78	<b>Sig R Viner</b>	1977/80
<b>LCpl S Evans</b>	1981/91	<b>Cpl A Mason</b>	1958/60	<b>WO1 T Ward</b>	1982/91
<b>Sig P Foy</b>	1959/61	<b>Sig SG Morgan-Russell</b>	2005/09	<b>Brig TJP Watts OBE</b>	1982/16
<b>SSgt PS Gartside</b>	1985/05	<b>Sig G Moules</b>	1959/61	<b>LCpl LJ Williams</b>	1989/97
<b>Cpl IJ Giles</b>	1994/15	<b>SSgt MD Nordon</b>	1992/15	<b>LCpl M Williams</b>	1996/02
<b>SSgt P Grills</b>	1992/16	<b>Sig R Price</b>	1980/86	<b>Sig AP Wills</b>	1982/84
<b>SSgt JT Hall</b>	1992/15	<b>WO2 K Reynolds</b>	1972/86	<b>LCpl G Wood</b>	1962/70
<b>SSgt S Harris</b>	1992/16	<b>LCpl DA Rigg</b>	1956/58	<b>Sig J Yates</b>	1974/80
<b>Sig M Joice</b>	1995/00	<b>LCpl C Scott</b>	1998/05		

## CHESTER BRANCH

The Branch recently held its 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Get-Together and Lunch at the Mollington Banastre Hotel near Chester. After a delicious 3-course meal, **Mr. Andrew Gray-Montgomery** (known to his friends as "Monty") was presented with a trophy by RSA chairman **Brig. David Hargreaves**, the guest-of-honour. The trophy, a 3-D Jimmy, is inscribed "To Monty from the Chester Branch RSA for service to the Royal Signals since 1947".

**Monty** undertook National Service 1947-49, followed by 16 years in the TA from 1953-68 at 304 Sig Sqn (later 67 Sig Sqn) in Blacon, Chester and then 80 Sig Sqn, "Gilwern", Chester moving to Harrowby Road in Birkenhead where he was SSgt Line Troop. He was awarded his 50 year RSA badge by **HRH Princess Anne** in 2013 and has been heavily involved for many years with the Chester Branch where he is currently Vice President.

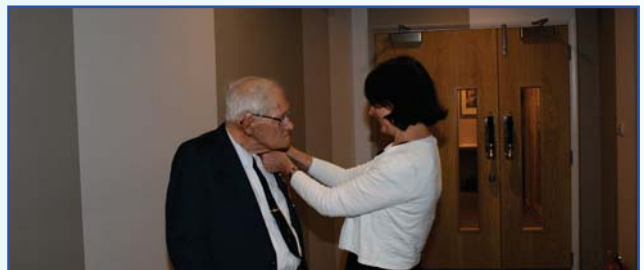


"Monty" (centre) with his wife Shirley and Brig David Hargreaves

## DORSET BRANCH

### Dorset Branch AGM 2016

The 2016 Annual General Meeting of the Dorset Branch was held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February at the Hall & Woodhouse Brewery Visitor Centre. Immediately after the meeting, the President, **Col (Retd) Cliff Walters**, introduced The French Honorary Vice Consul for the South West, **Mme Josette Lebrat**. **Mme Lebrat** then presented the Legion D'Honneur to founding member, **Bob Simpson**, on behalf of the French Government.



Mme Lebrat pinning Bob's medal onto his jacket

**Bob's** history in the Corps began at the outbreak of WW2 when he was called up in November 1942 and left the Local Defence Force which he had joined when war broke out. Following training in Blackpool and Catterick he served with 79 Armd Div (Hobart's Tommies) and landed in France on 8 August 1944. He fought through France and Belgium to the Rhine crossing and was awarded MID. Following discharge from the service on 31 December 1949 he re-enlisted in Shrewsbury on the same day. **Bob** then served in 1 Commonwealth Div in Korea and was awarded BEM following the crossing of the Imjin River in April 1951. **Bob** finally left the Army on 30 December 1954.





*Bob and his family following the presentation*



*Bob's medal*

## LOUGHBOROUGH BRANCH

Chairman	<b>Charlie Miller</b>
Vice Chairman	<b>Les Wilkinson</b>
Secretary	<b>John Abram</b>
Treasurer	<b>Helen James</b>
Visiting officer	<b>Nev Davies</b>

### Shropshire Branch AGM 2016

After over 41 unbroken years in office **Maj (Retd) John Wall MBE TD JP** handed over Branch Chairmanship to **Maj (Retd) Charlie Miller** on 10 February 2016 at the Branch AGM held in The Toby Carvery, Shrewsbury.

Following National Service 1949-51 and a subsequent posting to the SR/AER, **John** was recalled in 1956 and served with 222 AF SR during the Suez operations. After serving with 86 SR AER, re-numbered as 80 SR AER, with the re-organisation of the Reserve Army in 1967 **John** was commissioned with 35 Sig Regt (V), promoted to Capt (TOT) and then to Major (TOT) in 1977 until he retired in 1987. **John** was awarded the MBE (Military) in 1987.

**John** is the last serving Founder Member of the Shropshire Branch, having been present at the inaugural meeting held in Shrewsbury on 28 March 1958. **John** was one of the key members who kept the Branch going through the years and has served in almost all of the Offices but his lasting legacy is a remarkable 41 years of unbroken service as Branch Chairman.



*Outgoing Chairman John Wall (right) receives a 'thank you' presentation from the new Chairman Charlie Miller*

To mark the occasion **John** was presented with a crystal vase engraved with the Corps Badge, and his wife **Philomena** with a bouquet.



*L-R Chairman Charlie Miller, Philomena and John Wall, Branch Secretary John Abram*

**Les Wilkinson** was elected as Vice Chairman, **Helen James** was re-elected as Treasurer, **John Abram** was re-elected as Secretary, and **Nev Davies** re-elected as Visiting Officer.

Our new Chairman **Charlie Miller** has recently retired from Regular Service, his last posting being with HQ 11 Sig and WM Bde at Donnington, where he has now taken on a Reserve Officer role working with the Cadets. Looking forward to 2016 the Branch will continue to meet with wives, partners and guests at various venues around the County for Business/Lunch meetings in the winter months and Business/Supper meetings in the summer. Chairman **Charlie** will also be looking for opportunities for the Branch to take part in HQ 11 Sig and WM Bde events and activities.





# LAST POST

Cpl R Ackroyd	1971/78	22-Feb-16	WO2 EF Hunt	1938/48	26-Feb-16
LCpl D Biddles	1940/47	05-Aug-15	Col D Johnstone OBE	1949/79	30-Jun-14
Maj T R Blackwood	1952/73	29-Dec-15	WO2 N King	1937/46	18-Jan-16
Capt PH Bourne	1943/47	15-Jan-16	Sgt J Luck	1963/83	13-Jan-16
U/k P Brown	1958/64	u/k	Sgt A W Lythaby	1960/85	14-Jan-16
Capt WF Budden	1945/70	19-Jan-16	WO2 AL Malin	1986/12	28-Jan-16
Capt MT Caddick	1949/68	03-Jan-16	LCpl GH May	1951/53	11-Feb-16
Sgt L Clark	u/k	11-Feb-16	Cpl WJ McCue	1966/92	17-Nov-15
Sgt HG Clucas	1944/47	18-Dec-15	Maj JF Mitchener	1942/61	05-Feb-16
Sgt K Dale	1965/87	05-Jan-16	LCpl E A Phillips	1972/79	18-Feb-16
LCpl R Darbyshire	1978/89	15-Jan-16	Sig T Plaskitt	1963/67	12-Jan-16
Cpl A Dew	1950/58	u/k	Sgt P Poulsen	1970/92	14-Jan-16
Cpl A Frankland	1963/78	02-Mar-16	Cpl J Pratt	1949/52	01-Jan-16
Sgt A Gane	1984/94	02-Jan-16	Maj K Pritchard	1974/10	23-Jan-16
WO2 H Garlick	1960/76	09-Jan-16	Sig D Rands	1946/48	13-Feb-15
WO2 D Greenbrook	1942/68	01-Feb-16	Sgt MJ Rees	1964/87	11-Jan-16
Sgt HW Harding	1964/86	26-Jan-16	Sgt C Robinson	1969/85	09-Jan-16
Lt Col PJ Hartshorn	1953/79	10-Jan-16	Sig R Rossiter MBE	1939/46	29-Oct-15
Sig CR Hayles	1964/73	03-Jan-16	Sig EN Senior	1974/79	16-Jan-16
LCpl DG Haynes	1956/62	20-Feb-16	Cpl L F Thomas	1942/47	22-Feb-16
Sgt P Heaton MM	1933/45	09-Feb-16	Maj JF Thornton	1950/85	16-Feb-16
Sig K Hepple	1971/77	29-Jan-16	SSgt WA Verity	1954/83	10-Feb-16
Sgt S Hodgson	1981/96	12-Feb-16	Sgt G R Williamson	1963/79	19-Feb-16
Cpl JW Holmes	1962/78	03-Feb-16			

## ROYAL SIGNALS REUNION WEEKEND 18/19 JUNE 16



Enjoy a fantastic weekend at Blandford Camp.  
See [www.royalsignals.org/rsa-reunion](http://www.royalsignals.org/rsa-reunion)



# Royal Signals Benevolent Fund



**Swift and sure in serving those who serve, have served and their immediate families**

***'Our baby son Alfie's survival hung in the balance but thanks to a grant from the RSBF we didn't have to worry about the cost of travel.'***

Fortunately, the nightmare of those early days is very much past and Alfie is now a healthy, happy toddler.

The RSBF post bag is bulging with Thank-you letters similar to the one from Alfie's dad. Many comment that, they never expected to need our services but all are mightily relieved we were there for them when they did.

**In the last five years the RSBF has granted close to £2million, including £332k on more than 550 deserving cases in the last 12 months.**

As a charity we provide financial assistance to those in need, provided they have worn the Royal Signals Cap Badge for at least a day; in some instances we can help immediate dependent family too. Sometimes our help isn't obvious as we don't handle individual case work, that is done by any of: SSAFA, The RBL or, for those currently serving, Unit Welfare Officers, but once a genuine need is established we will be approached by them for funds.

## **Adventure, challenge, heritage**

Welfare grants are an important part of our work but we help in other ways: adventurous training, support to units, RSA events, Royal Signals Museum and professional development to name but a few. And of course you help us by raising money too.

***'On y'er bike?'*** *It certainly was for 30<sup>th</sup> Signal Regiment who recently used pedal power to drive their fund raising efforts.'*

We're impressed by the imaginative ways you fundraise to support the RSBF - the climbs and karaoke, the fun-days and football, raffles and marathons, and all those creative challenges that get the tins rattling and sponsors digging deep. It's great to see units pulling together and pushing out to family and friends, and a relief to see the money rolling in.

## **Pennants of Merit for Fundraising**

*And the winners are?*

As a charity we recognise just how much energy and effort many of you devote to supporting us, so last year we introduced Pennants of Merit for Fundraising. The very first pennant was awarded in 2015 to 21 Signal Regiment, a worthy winner but a close call from keen competition.

We'll soon be choosing the 2016 recipients so make sure your Unit or Regiment posts a submission, letting us know what you did, when and where. We know charity begins at home but we understand you are keen to support others too, so we take into account all charity fundraising activity, not just that for the RSBF.

## **There for you when you need us?**

We want to continue to make sure we are there for you, should you need us. That requires sustained help and support - donations, day's pay giving, legacies and gifts – we rely on your continued generosity and your sublime fundraising efforts.

Whatever you do, please don't stop helping, do continue fund-raising and do keep having fun in the process. We're always delighted to hear about the things you do to raise a pound or three, or thousand or more for the RSBF and we'll do what we can to support you. Remember to let us know – formally, or via Facebook, Twitter, Email – what you are doing to fundraise and wherever we can, we will help spread the word.

**RSBF proudly serving past and present members of The Royal Corps of Signals**

If you need help or require information about the RSBF and benevolence please contact **Linda**.  
Email [rsbfgrantscoord@royalsignals.org](mailto:rsbfgrantscoord@royalsignals.org)

To find out more about fundraising, legacy giving, making a donation, how to enter for the Pennants of Merit for Fundraising or for any other matter please contact **Sandra**. Email [RSBFCommunication@royalsignals.org](mailto:RSBFCommunication@royalsignals.org)





18 (UKSF) SIGNAL REGT

## Special Forces Communicator



18 (UKSF) SIGNAL REGT

## Special Forces Communicator



## 18 (UKSF) SIGNAL REGIMENT

**SFC Course**

The SFC Selection Course runs twice per year and is 25 weeks long. SFC selection is a tried and tested system used to select those with the right qualities to serve as an SFC.

SFC is a tri-service qualification open to all volunteers from any part of the Regular Armed Forces (RN, RM, Army and RAF) as well as Army Reservists. The potential SFC must be fit, motivated and have the aptitude to assimilate the skill-set required to operate and maintain modern CIS in a close support role with Special Forces units.

Service as an SFC is both unique and rewarding. The tempo of operations is high but so are the rewards, as service with Special Forces offers a clear enhancement to a soldier's career profile. Operations of an SF nature require men of courage and high morale who are self-disciplined, intelligent, reliable, determined and physically fit, and who possess mental, moral and physical stamina.

Determination and the will to succeed will be the over-riding factors which will result in you passing SFC selection and qualifying as an SFC.

As well as being eligible for employment in a number of challenging roles within the unit it will also entitle you to a 5 year minimum posting, a £4500 'golden handshake' and £17.57 per day additional pay (rising to £20.60 on promotion to Sgt).

Service as a SFC is entirely voluntary and any decision to attempt the SFC course must come solely from within.

**How do I apply?**

Call the 18 (UKSF) Signal Regiment Recruiting and Induction Cell (RIC) for specific personal advice. Prior to attending an SFC Briefing Course conduct preparation and training as advised by the Recruiting and Induction Cell (i.e. map reading, practical navigation, physical development and basic CIS revision).

**SFC Briefing Course**

All applicants must attend one of the four mandatory briefing courses held every year before they can apply for the SFC course. The aim of the one week course is to brief aspiring SFC volunteers on the UKSFC selection process, service within 18 Signal Regiment and to assess their potential in order to give pre-selection preparation advice. On completion of the Briefing Course applicants have 12 months to attend an SFC course.

**SFC Preparation Course**

All applicants attending the SFC course have the option of attending one of the two SFC Preparation Courses run per year. The aim of the 3 week course is to better prepare applicants for the aptitude and CIS phases of UKSFC selection while providing further preparation advice.

**Course Dates**

**SFC Briefing Course**  
 2/15: 26 Apr 15 to 01 May 15  
 3/15: 06 Sep 15 to 11 Sep 15  
 4/15: 11 Oct 15 to 16 Oct 15  
 1/16: 14 Feb to 19 Feb 16  
 2/16: 24 Apr to 29 Apr 16  
 3/16: 04 Sep to 09 Sep 16  
 4/16: 09 Oct to 14 Oct 16

**SFC Preparation Course**

1/15: 17 May 15 to 05 Jun 15  
 2/15: 22 Nov 15 to 11 Dec 15  
 1/16: 23 May to 24 Jun 16  
 2/16: 14 Nov to 16 Dec 16.

**SFC Selection Course**

1/15: 08 Jan 15 to 30 Jun 15  
 2/15: 02 Jul 15 to 16 Dec 15  
 1/16: 07 Jan 16 to 29 Jun 16  
 2/16: 30 Jun 16 to 14 Dec 16

**Exercise Support and Unit Presentations**

Where appropriate 18SR RIC can provide equipment and expertise in niche areas for unit battle camps and exercises. Requests for support or unit presentations should be made to the RIC on DI.

**Additional Information**

DIN (Current year) 01 Personnel (Volunteers for UKSF)  
 DIN (Current year) 07 Training (UKSFC Selection course dates)  
 Army: AGAI Vol 2 Chapter 43  
 R SIGNALS PD 206  
 Army net: [www.armynet.co.uk](http://www.armynet.co.uk)  
 RCMO  
 18 (UKSF) Sig Regt Recruiting Cell

**RIC Contact Details**

Mil: 94475 2537  
 Civ: 0800 169 9864  
 Dii: 18sr recruiting



The Special Forces Communicator Course is open to all male volunteers from any part of the Regular Armed Forces (RN, RM, Army and RAF) as well as Army Reservist candidates.

Interested? Call: **94475 2537 / 0800 169 9864**



# RACE THE SUN

**2016**

Thursday 26 May 2016  
2 Signal Regiment  
Imphal Barracks, York, YO10 4HD

## POC

WO2 (SSM) Gopal Saru  
2Sig-246Sqn-SSM  
94777 2103  
01904662103

## Event Organiser

Maj Paul Whillis  
2Sig-246Sqn-OC  
94777 2544

## Cost

£275 Major Units  
£175 Minor Units



The 25th anniversary edition of the fourteen stage team relay event around York and North Yorkshire.



Kayaking, running, tabbing, cycling, orienteering, cycle orienteering, swimming, duathlon and stretcher race legs







## ***Training on your doorstep, where we put our students first***

*"BV Associates Limited is more than a training provider and you get far more than you would expect. They understand your needs and help you every step of the way, even after the training course has long finished". A Peters*

We are proud to serve members of the Armed Forces wherever they find themselves and our aim is to help you maximise your available funding whilst minimising your personal contribution.

### **No Hidden Costs**

Unlike other providers, we don't have hidden costs - our course prices include VAT and all exam fees.

### **Pass Power Promise**

We go further than anyone else – fail an exam and you can re-sit the course and exam for free within a year.

**Course Bundles (ELCAS approved):** We can provide single courses or bundles of the following courses to suit your own future career aspirations or to support existing continuous professional development.

NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health & Safety plus (11-days)

NEBOSH National Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management (5-days)

NEBOSH National Certificate in Environmental Management (6-days)

NEBOSH Intl. Technical Certificate in Oil and Gas Operational Safety (5-days)

NEBOSH Certificate in Construction Health and Safety (10-days)

First Aid at Work (3-days)

Risk Assessment (2-days)

Teacher Training (5-days)

We also provide the following courses:

Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS) (5-days)

First Aid Refresher (3 hours) or Requalification (2-days)

IOSH Managing Safely (5-days)

CPR Defibrillator Training (1-day)

Emergency First Aid (1-day)

IOSH Directing Safety (1-day)



### **Our Venues**

We have 12 venues with easy access from the whole of the UK allowing you to choose the venue that best suits your own training needs, split the course dates around your own schedule or train at multiple venues:

Aldershot (Hampshire)  
Chatham (Kent)  
Paderborn (Germany)  
High Wycombe (Buckinghamshire)

Tidworth (Wiltshire)  
Maidstone (Kent)  
Catterick (Yorkshire)  
Kinloss (Scotland)

Bovington Camp (Dorset)  
Woolwich (London)  
Cleethorpes (Lincolnshire)  
Chester (Cheshire)

**Find out about all of our courses, costs and future dates at [www.bvassociates.co.uk](http://www.bvassociates.co.uk), email us at [info@bvassociates.co.uk](mailto:info@bvassociates.co.uk) or call us direct on 01494 864100**

