



## Military Survey (Geographic) Branch Royal Engineers Association



### NEWSLETTER No 31 (Autumn 2008)

#### CHAIRMAN'S FAREWELL

Four years ago, I took over as Chairman of the Branch. It has been an honour and fun, indeed the time seems to have flown by. However, it is time for some fresh ideas and a fresh face, so by the time you read this Angus Cross will have taken over from me as your new Chairman. I hope you will indulge me while I look back over the last four years – the highs and the not so highs. On the plus side:

- I think our questionnaire three years ago validated the way forward for the branch by ensuring the committee was reflecting members' needs, at least in the near term. I feel sure priorities will change and the committee will need to monitor this, but I see change as healthy.
- I think the idea of a Geo Support Fund, whilst unsuccessful as a "100 Club", has proved very worthwhile in providing direct, tangible support to serving soldiers and their families. Generous donations from members, together with the ability to transfer funds from our main fund should ensure this concept survives.
- We now have a website to stand alongside our highly popular newsletter. The website is a living and growing resource and, as such, needs constant tending and feeding.
- Whilst we have failed to run a major function due to lack of an Events Coordinator, we seem to have found a model for our annual reunions (short AGM, followed by a Games Night against the WO & Sgts Mess and Curry Supper) which is simple to organise, brings us together with an element of the serving Corps and is fun.

On the down side, the major challenge I have faced as Chairman has been finding volunteers to serve on the committee. This has been an on-going battle, which is not yet over. We still desperately need an Events Coordinator, especially if we are to properly celebrate our tenth anniversary in 2009. We also need an Assistant Web Master and a continuing supply of Treasurers, Secretaries and Newsletter Editors etc.

The second challenge we face as a Branch is an aging membership. Failure to recruit new members and to fill these committee posts will see the branch decline and eventually cease to exist. I know nobody wants this. I hope some of you will step forward to help on the committee soon and that we can find a way to attract some young blood.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to say a "Thank You" to all of you for allowing me to be your Chairman, and a very special "vote of thanks" to those of you who helped me as committee members. I am delighted to have handed over to Angus, who I know will take the branch forward. I wish him and the committee well and look forward to seeing you all again soon - but as a "mere" Branch member from the "cheap seats".

*Chris Dorman*

## In Memoriam

It is with great regret that we announce the deaths of the following old comrades.

### ANDY ANDERSON

Army Apprentice School Harrogate  
Intake 56B

Andy was a field surveyor who after Harrogate served in 19 and 13 Sqns then left the Army in 1966.

He was attending the annual Association of Harrogate Apprentices (AOHA) meeting at Pennypot Lane, Harrogate on Friday evening the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October when he was taken ill. He was rushed to Harrogate hospital and then to York where he underwent surgery for an aortic aneurysm. Despite the best medical attention he passed away on Saturday afternoon 11 October.

### Mike Kerridge

Mike, a former carto draughtsman, passed away on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> of October. He had lived in Andover for many years and had been unwell for some time.

### FLANDERS POPPIES

The poppies red, I've heard it said, in  
Flanders fields of green,  
Mark those brave souls who gave their lives  
In that dark hellish scene.  
A poppy then for one who's gone,  
A father, husband, sweetheart, son  
The bright red ranks we see them there,  
And in the autumn disappear....  
To bloom next spring and assure us that,  
They are at the Lord's great table sat.  
So rest in peace and say amen  
As the poppies bloom we will remember  
them.

*Denis Carrington*

## Treasurer's Input

The Branch accounts have been (hopefully) unaffected by the turmoil in the financial markets. We have no holdings in Icelandic banks and the Treasurer has had no need as yet to seek support of a couple of £billion from the Bank of England!

### Accounts

As of 15 October 2008, the Branch accounts stand as follows:

Current account	£ 432.58
Reserve account	£6189.72
GEO support fund	£ 747.57

Currently total income is around £2300 per annum. There are no debtors from previous years, but four members have failed to pay 2008 subscriptions.

Most members pay by Standing Order and this saves in cost and administration time for the Branch. Any member willing to pay by SO who does not do so at present is encouraged to contact the Treasurer or Secretary.

### Donations

We have recently donated £220 to 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) for equipment for the Corporals' Club and for tower fans for soldiers serving in Afghanistan. Other money is available to meet requests.

### Website

Relevant finance information, for instance audit reports, worth statements and budget forecasts, is regularly included on the Branch website.

*Michael Gowlett*

### CONTACT DETAILS

If you change your email address or newly go online please let the secretary know ASAP. Similarly, don't forget to let him know of changes to postal address or phone numbers.

**AGM and Reunion 2008**

Summer this year turned out to be Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> of August and, by happenstance, that was the day of this year's AGM and get together hence about 50 members and some partners converged on Hermitage in glorious sunshine and later in the afternoon, gently sweated through the formalities in the lecture theatre.

The event started with tea and cakes in the conference room accompanied by much effusive greetings between old friends with the best overheard welcome being "Good grief – you're still breathing!" The predominant age group was the over 50s with several very sprightly octogenarians present and in good form. The time over tea seems to have been taken up by the question "what have you been doing since we last met?" Serious lamp swinging only started once we had moved to the Sergeants Mess after the AGM business was completed. After the initial tea and cakes we were enticed upstairs for the AGM, details of which Chris relates in his valedictory piece in this Newsletter, whilst WO2 Mark Parker whisked the ladies off to Newbury to meet the mayor.

Following the business element, Branch President, John Elder presented Cpl Fife with this year's good fellowship award then Commander JAGO, Colonel John Kedar, gave us an update on today's organisation and what has been filling the days of his soldiers on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

This top-level view was put into perspective by two presentations by the "guys on the ground". Listeners were enthralled, here was today's equivalents to them in their youth – different time, different place but somehow, resonant! SSgt Marshall described his time with the Special Boat Service in Basra and award winner Cpl Fife then spoke fluently of his operational tour in Afghanistan.

Formalities over we all drifted slowly in the afternoon sunshine to the Sergeants' Mess where we received the usual very warm welcome from the members and their ladies. Then, how quickly we were all 'up at Nanga Gaat', 'swimming off Tunnel Beach' or 'parading in the cold rain at Barton Stacey' as old friends reminisced. In my case I met up with two of the three people that I flew to Singapore with in 1964, Tot Hodgson, over on a visit from New Zealand, and Taff Eveleigh up from South Wales. The it was 'let the games commence' and a very confident Mess team looked extremely fit and skilled but, as the evening progressed, it became apparent that age, cunning and perhaps an element of pity from the SNCOs allowed the Branch to finally win the day. The curry supper taken in the middle of the games was a pleasant reminder that nobody quite does curry like the Army, whether contracted out or produced by serving cooks.

Thoughts as I drove home a very pleasant day and hopefully in 30 or 40 years time there will be a group of grey haired former RE Geo people gathered together somewhere with the air filled with long forgotten stories of Basra Palace, Helmand and the like.....oh, and of course.....Hermitage!!

And finally, a special thanks to this year's coordinator WO2 Mark Parker and the RSM, Al Beeton, who had only taken up the appointment a couple of weeks previously.

*Editor*



**2009 AGM & 10th Anniversary**

An outline programme celebrating the branch 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary has been proposed; it will tie in with the JAGO and Regiment celebrating 60 years association with Hermitage and the Newbury area. The proposed programme is:

**Thursday 2 July Evening:**

Cocktail Party followed by Beating Retreat followed by supper and social in one of the Messes.

**Friday 3 July AM:**

Regiment exercises the Freedom of Newbury with the Branch standard and a marching contingent included.

**PM:**

AGM in the late afternoon.

**Evening:**

Band Concert organised by the Army Benevolent Fund in barracks or nearby.

It is emphasised that this is an outline plan and as with all plans it may change. There will be a charge for the events to cover costs but it will be kept to a minimum and you can come to it all or either day. More details will be announced once they are firmed up meanwhile please put the dates in your diaries now and let any other past surveyors know about it. Lets make it a celebration to remember.

<b>Dates For The Diary</b>	
6 Nov	Field of Remembrance Westminster
9 Nov	Remembrance Sunday
<b>10 Dec</b>	<b>Branch Committee Meeting</b>
8-15 May	Spring Families Reunion
15-17 May	Ripon Weekend
<b>3-4 July</b>	<b>Branch 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion and AGM</b>

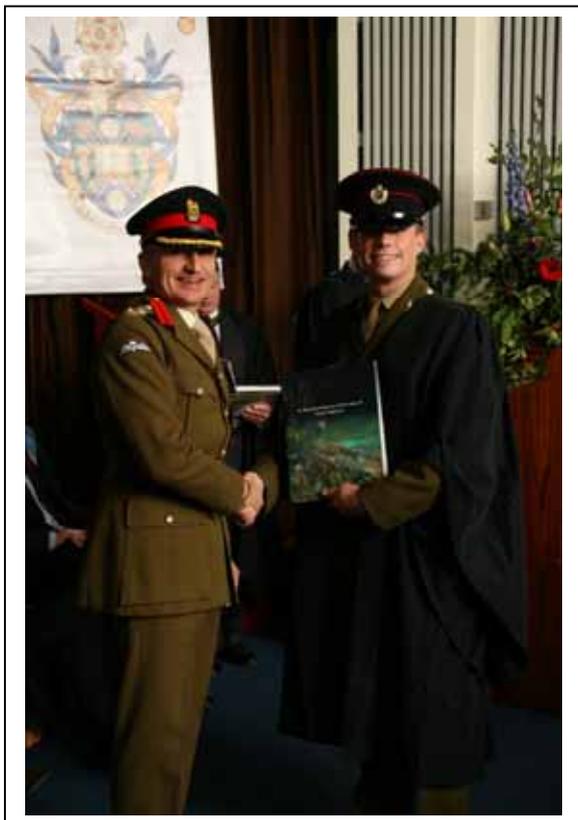
**FOUNDATION DEGREE GRADUATION CEREMONY**

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> of October marked a notable occasion when 18 Royal Engineer Geographic Technicians were awarded Science Foundation Degrees in Applied Computing at a Graduation Ceremony at Hermitage. This Foundation Degree programme, accredited by Sheffield Hallam University and run by the Royal School of Military Survey, has now been running for five years and is one of very few such programmes in the British Army and indeed the graduation ceremony is the only offsite event sanctioned by the University.

This ceremony was the culmination of almost five years of hard work and study. To achieve this award, students are required to follow an initial nine-month course, three years experience in an operational unit and a further nine months' study at the School. The Foundation Degree is designed to integrate academic and work-based learning and focuses on vocations, skills and knowledge that are relevant to the needs of the employer. All this training is designed to give the Geographic Technicians the vital skills they need when they deploy on operations. The key to the success of the programme is the strong partnership between the Royal School of Military Survey and Sheffield Hallam University. Out of a potential 24 graduands from the last 3 courses to finish their Level 5 training, when considering operational commitments, 18 was a pleasing turnout. It was nearly 19 graduands but LCpl Matthew Smith, returning from Afghanistan, was subject to a twenty-four hour delay in Kandahar missing the ceremony by a day.

The day of the graduation dawned fine, and with staff and students suitably gowned, the ceremony commenced. Professor Peter Jones, the Vice Chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University, presided at the ceremony with Major General Rose MBE, Director General Intelligence Collection, attending as the senior military representative. After the academic procession entered, the Principal of the Royal School of Military Survey, Mr John Knight, welcomed guests, students and family to the ceremony. Professor

Jones delivered his keynote address stressing the value the University placed on the relationship with the School and the important place foundation degrees have in the learning process. Mr Chris Symonds, the Public Orator and Course Leader, then called forward the graduands to be congratulated by the Vice Chancellor before receiving their certificates from the Executive Dean, Professor Button.



*The E-in-C presenting LCpl Ciesielski with his REA Prize.*

It was then the turn for the prizewinners to receive their awards, the awards covering years 2006 and 2007. Sgt Ryan Bell was awarded the Sheffield Hallam University prize as the top student for 2007. The Royal Engineers Association Prizes for Achievement were presented by the Engineer-in-Chief (Army), Brigadier BJ Le Grys MBE to LCpls Ryan Ciesielski, Stuart Paronuzzi and Richard Warmington. When the prize, a copy of *'Follow the Sapper'* was presented to LCpl Ciesielski he showed that he was a true sapper when he told the Brigadier that he already had a copy of his own, Brigadier Le Grys exhorting him to give a copy to his father! The James Walke Prize was endowed by the Walke family in

memory of Jim Walke who will be well remembered by many members. The award is to the student on the Class 1 course who has shown sustained academic merit, outstanding leadership and team spirit for the duration of the course. Brigadier Le Grys presented the 2007 prize to LCpl Martyn Frank. The Terry Straeter Award was donated by Marconi Integrated Systems, now part of BAE Systems, in honour of Dr Terry Straeter and his contribution to the development of digital photogrammetry and geographic systems as employed within Military Survey. The award is currently made to the Class 1 Technician who has made the most contribution to group working and team spirit on the course. Kevin Porter, the Business Development Director Joint Air and Land at BAE Systems kindly agree to make the presentations to LCpl Garry Anderson for 2006 and LCpl Joseph Deboo for 2007.

Clearly the foundation degree is proving very popular with the graduates and a number are registering with the Open University to continue their studies. More formal progression to a full degree, through courses at Sheffield Hallam University, is coming to maturity as is also the use of specialised courses run at the School to gain extra credits. And finally, I would like to offer my congratulations to the graduating party and wish them every success in their future academic studies and military careers.

*Tony Keeley*

### **"MAPS & SURVEYS 2009"**

Following the success of the seminars in 2007 and 2008, the Defence Surveyors' Association will run another seminar on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 at Denison Barracks, Hermitage. At the moment there is unlikely to be a specific theme, rather another eclectic mix of subjects again presented in chronological order. Anyone who would like to present at this seminar should contact Mike Nolan at [maptolan@googlemail.com](mailto:maptolan@googlemail.com) or call 01635-253167. Full details of the programme will be advertised later. Efforts will be maintained to keep the attendance fee economical.

**'You're Never Too Old'**

On Friday 3 October 2008, I went to see Colonel Michael Cobb at his home in North Devon. Colonel Cobb was CO 42 Survey Engineer Regt in the late 1950s and brought the Regiment from Egypt to Cyprus. Colonel Cobb was also Commandant of School of Military Survey for a time. Two photographs of him now adorn the stairs in HQ JAGO.

My reason for visiting him was to congratulate him on the award of a doctorate of philosophy by the University of Cambridge for his magnum opus - *The Railways of Great Britain – A Historical Atlas*. The atlas of 646 pages is in two volumes and depicts all the railways, every line, junction and railway station in Great Britain. He has recorded details of railway companies, dates when the lines and stations opened, closed, reopened or even moved. The detail is legible and drafted with painstaking attention detail onto a 1:63,360 base map. He did all the research himself. I looked at his work books and saw something of the enormous effort that went into this very impressive piece of work; work that took 25 years to complete. For example, in London he depicts the over-ground railway network on 2 sheets and the underground network on another two sheets. These four sheets alone are almost worth the price of the atlas, being published by Ian Allen. The atlas is now in its second edition with most of the errors now corrected. Michael tells me there are only 4 small errors in the second edition: I couldn't see any. It has been well received and is a very significant addition to the body of knowledge about the railway systems in great Britain.

Perhaps the most important point is that Michael Cobb is 92 years of age, going on 55! At a time when most of us are looking for a quieter and more reflective life, Michael Cobb started this project and finished it 25 years later. His award of a DPhil at the age of 91 rates him as one the oldest to be given such an

award. He tells me that when he went to be interviewed at Cambridge, he expected to be 'grilled' on his work, following which the board would deliberate. However the Board had already determined to grant the award and there followed a pleasant morning where Michael expanded on his work; his hobby and his passion.

He has combined his passion for the railways with a surveyor's meticulous attention to detail, to produce a monumental piece of work. It is already being used by railway enthusiasts and other historians, for the atlas brings insights into aspects of history not envisaged by Michael when he started his work 25 years ago. As Dr Richard Smith Head of Geography at the University of Cambridge said:

"It is a definitive record. It is not just of interest to the enthusiast but a vital tool for anyone seriously interested in the economic geography and history of Great Britain. There is nothing like it."

I have a passing interest in the railways of Great Britain and I was fascinated to see this atlas. I came away hugely impressed with Michael's work. Heavy hints have been dropped about a Christmas present for me. If the hint is taken up I will return to Devon to ask Michael to sign my own copy.

*John Elder*



*Mature air surveyors enjoy the sun at the AGM  
Pat Pearson, Bruce Oxley and Taff Eveleigh.*

## The Story of Military Survey The Time to Tell Your Story

There is currently an initiative by a small group of people to produce "The Story of Military Survey". It would be a mammoth task to produce 300 years of history as a definitive reference document hence the writing of "The Story" which we hope will be about the "Maps" and "Chaps" – who did what, when and why.

The initiative has begun and we would like to deal with the period 1945 to 1990 in the first instance. There are a number of reasons for this, which includes the fact that those who were there could contribute. We are looking for original first-hand anecdotes, views on situations, interesting technical aspects and so on. To illustrate the type of material we are looking for some examples follow:

Arnold Smith's 24 printing machine packing crates, the start of Terrain Analysis in the 1 Br Corps divisions, how we surveyed Ireland whilst fishing. The Far East, Aden, Oman, attachment to the Brunei Survey Department, Northern Ireland, and Falklands are all within this time frame. BAOR and endless exercises was a feature, the introduction of auto-carto and series K6611, National Service and the TA.

What we would like is your thoughts and ideas. They need not be polished but should be true. Email or hard copy is welcomed. At present we do not need any photographs (if they are available an indication would be helpful).

This is not in conflict with the REA website and the initiatives of Albie Field will not be compromised but possibly enhanced as we can copy material to him.

Now is the chance to tell your story.

Please send the story -very happy to take the **period 1936 to 1995** - to:

Christopher Nash  
cnash@tecrea.net

Hard copy to: 5 Dorin Court  
Pyrford  
GU22 8PS

## News from the Military Front

### The RSM's Column

Hello to everybody, and let me say in my opening sentence of my first Column what a pleasure it is to be a part of your committee for the next couple of years. I see it is an honour and one of the "perks of the Job". It was a pleasure to meet many of you at the recent AGM and I certainly enjoyed the subsequent games night, as I know many of my mess members did. For those of you who don't know me, I thought it may be appropriate to introduce myself

I am from Stranraer in the South West of Scotland. I joined the Junior Leaders Regiment RE in Dover in Feb 1988, and left a year later to go to Gibraltar barracks to complete Combat Engineer Training. I first arrived at Hermitage in Jun 1989 and was soon loaded onto the Class 3 Print course. I spent a few years in 13 Sqn before being posted to 14 Topo Sqn in Dec 1993. My time there was superb for many reasons, not least the people of all ranks around at that time and of course, the famous Düsseldorf Alt Stadt which I got to know intimately!

I spent almost all of 1996 in Bosnia, predominantly in Mostar as a Detachment Commander which was an excellent double tour. As a reward for doing back-to-back tours I was sent to Australia on an exchange exercise in 1997. I was the Provost Sgt at Hermitage for a year in the late nineties before going off to JARIC, then the RIGC in Northern Ireland, and then on to a NATO post in Northern Italy for 18 months, during which time I deployed to Afghanistan. I moved on from there to become a SSM of a Training Squadron back at Gibraltar Barracks which was intensely busy, but enjoyable not least again, due to working with some excellent guys of all ranks. I took up post as RSM back at Hermitage on 21 July 2008.

My interests away from work are travelling, mountaineering and sport. I have been fortunate to visit many places with the army including major expeditions in the Indian Himalayas, Kazakhstan and Peru as well as rugby tours to the USA, Portugal, Malta and Belgium. My own travels and a passion for

“backpacking” has taken me to Brazil, Japan, Namibia, South Africa, Thailand, Canada, The United Arab Emirates, Australia, New Zealand, as well as all over Europe. I am a passionate supporter of both the Scottish Rugby and Football teams and have frequently donned my kilt and travelled to far flung destinations to watch them; often a painfully crushing experience, but never, ever dull!

Last but not least, I have a long-term girlfriend called Clare who is originally from Halifax but now lives in Cambridgeshire. She has just been accepted to become a PCSO with Cambridgeshire Police. That's WAY too much about me, onto more interesting stuff

### Operations and Training

In terms of commitment to operations, the situation has not changed much since Rob wrote his final column notes; we currently have 28 personnel deployed and the main focus continues to be centred on Afghanistan. As briefed at the AGM, many of these guys are young Sprs and LCpls, some of them working in pretty exposed Forward Operating Bases. The feedback coming back to the Ops Room is that the lads are doing an exceptional job. Over a long hot summer it has often been the case that some of the computer equipment will not work during the heat of the day, therefore our Geo Techs have been out on the ground with other Sappers carrying out clearance patrols, providing top cover from vehicles and the getting involved in some combat engineering tasks into the bargain. Speaking from an RHQ perspective we are extremely proud of their adaptability, resourcefulness and “can do” attitude. In my humble opinion this comes about as a direct result of spending their military infancy as Sappers – our guys would not be of the same stock if they did not have that all important initial grounding.

### Regimental Exercises

The entire regiment has been deployed on exercise throughout September. Ex Fougasse Returns was in essence a technical exercise which involved 13 Sqn setting up at JARIC and 14 Sqn travelling from Germany and setting up at DGC at Feltham, with 16 Sqn and both of those establishments supporting the work.

Predictably 13 Sqn had problems getting sensitive data released out of JARIC in order to carry out some more interesting work. They were prepared for this and managed to carry out some useful training including a positioning survey task on the airfield at Wyton. 14 Sqn carried out some live tasking to support DGC. The Sqn were given data sets for Somalia and asked to produce some products, which was a very realistic scenario. Although in an exercise environment, if the products were deemed good enough after stringent checks, they would be used by DGC.

The second exercise followed hard on the heels of the technical phase; “Fougasse Rising” saw the entire regiment deploy to Dartmoor Training Area in order to conduct military training. The exercise was split down into three distinct phases, the first involved section patrols across the entire training area, the second being a survival phase and the third a range package.

A very wet summer meant that Dartmoor was extremely difficult to negotiate with all personnel loaded with full kit. Most of the sections gritted their teeth and stuck to the tasks in some very demanding conditions. There were a few unfortunate injuries as a result but for the most part the aims of that testing phase were achieved.

The survival phase was organised by SSM Stu Taylor of 13 Sqn. Stu being from a 59 Commando background managed to persuade one of his old chums, a combat survival instructor to come along and run the survival phase. This was a fantastic success, the guys were taught to live off the land building shelters, eating limpets and berries, learning how to gather water, and even skinning and cooking a deer! The range phase was conducted at the unique Tregantle Fort ranges which look out to sea. All personnel were given the opportunity to fire a match shoot with their SA80 personal weapons and also fire the GPMG. All in all a successful exercise, but as always areas to look at and improve next time out.

### 135 (Independent) Geographic Squadron RE (V)

135 (Indep) Geo Sqn deployed to Norfolk for their annual camp and carried out some invaluable technical training, Geographic Information dissemination training and some

of their annual military tests. They also carried out operator training on their impressive JCB rough terrain forklift, which replaced the old Fork Lift Rough Terrain vehicle. The Sqn hosted the Commander, the CO and I on a formal dinner night midway through the camp which was a memorable evening.

### Royal School of Military Survey

The RSMS hosted a graduation ceremony on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct 08 to present the Class 1 students with their newly acquired foundation degrees (as described in detail elsewhere in this newsletter). The Vice Chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University came down to present the certificates and there were many VIPs from the university and indeed our organisations in attendance as well as family members and partners as guests. This is a great example of how the army has moved with the times in recent years. The soldiers now have transferable qualifications which they can take to the next level which will be recognised by civilian employers when the guys and girls chose to leave the army. This type of venture is often key to tempting our potential Geo soldiers through the door in the first place.

### Sporting Activities

Our talented cricket team won the Army minor units cup, but lost the Sapper cup final to 1 RSME at Chatham. Young Spr Cripps who has just left RSMS on completion of the 0 – 2 Geo course came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Army road cycling 35 km road race. He is a real talent and has his sights set on representing Wales at the sport – good luck to him. Training has started in earnest for the Rugby and Football teams so good luck to them for the season ahead.

Enough for now, regards to all until next time.

***'Once a Sapper, always a Sapper'!***

***Al Beeton***

WO1 (RSM) RE  
Hermitage

## Obituary Simon Fraser

Simon always impressed with his upright bearing, courteous manner and cheerful smile. He was also very bright, a “can do” man, quick to find a solution when one was needed but still able to express his views with simple clarity and even suffer fools politely. These qualities stood him in good stead when, at the highest levels in NATO he was responsible for international protocol and policies in the Military Geographic field

Born on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1936 in Edinburgh he was educated at Edinburgh Academy before joining the Army and entering the RMA Sandhurst in 1956. After commissioning, he was sent to the RE Young Officers course at Chatham and thereafter to the Medway Technical Engineering course where he gained his engineering degree and found a lifelong partner, schoolteacher Margaret Sinnett, whom he married in 1958.

In 1960, Simon and Margaret moved to Osnabruck where Simon became a troop commander in 25 Engineer Regiment and they started their family, eventually to be four. In 1962 he moved on to the Army Junior Leaders Regiment at Rhyl in North Wales and followed this with a major career change. In April 1963 Simon became a student on the Army Survey Course at The School of Military Survey, Hermitage leaving the main stream of combat engineering to become a military land surveyor. Beginning in 1964, with two months as a leader (Survey) on the British Schools Exploring Society's expedition to Iceland, he was then posted to 13 Field Squadron in Aden as a field troop commander employed mapping a large area of South Arabia, from the coast inland to the Empty Quarter, under very challenging conditions.

On his return to the UK in 1967 Simon was posted to the Ordnance Survey, then based at Chessington but subsequently at the new buildings in Southampton soon to be opened by Her Majesty the Queen. During the Queen's visit Simon, well turned out in No.1 “Blues” with boots and spurs, became her ADC for the day. When the Royal Party moved into the lift to visit the upper floors, Simon being the last to enter with his back to the doors, the lift refused to move. After

a short and embarrassing pause, Her Majesty gently pointed out that the doors couldn't close with the Captain's spurs in the way! Simon made a smart move forward and the situation was resolved. The story of Simon's spurs is now part of the long history of the Ordnance Survey (and no doubt the Fraser family)!

Leaving Southampton to attend the Geodesy Research Course at Oxford University, Simon entered a period of academic intensity as he first developed his own understanding of the science followed by a two-year period at the School of Military Survey as Senior Instructor in land survey and geodesy. Simon rose to, and enjoyed, the challenges.

His next postings included time at the MOD, a spell in Germany in command of 14 Field Survey Squadron before moving back to the MOD to manage the career postings of all officers and soldiers in the Military Survey Service. For this work he was awarded the OBE. He then returned to the Ordnance Survey for two-and-a half years before entering an extended period of work in NATO in the rank of Colonel, as Chief Geographic Officer in HQ AFCENT and then Chief Geographic Section SHAPE. In this field of international co-operation, his outstanding personal qualities and clear appreciation of the factors concerned undoubtedly led to his successful guidance of many a NATO agreement. A busy social life included overseeing the Officers' Club, organising the annual Burns' night and leading the AFCENT Historical Society as President.

On his retirement in 1991 Simon worked with the Royal Signals in Corsham and undertook selfless work in his local community, including acting as auditor for a number of local charities as well as becoming a committee member or officer of several societies and associations. He was honorary treasurer to the Frome festival almost from its inception and occupied the same position with the mid-Somerset branch of NADFAS for several years. He will be sadly missed by his wife Margaret, their four children, his grandchildren and his many friends.

**EB, AM**

### HONORARY MEMBERSHIP OF THE INSTITUTION OF ROYAL ENGINEERS

After the Council of the Institution of Royal Engineers recently elected Stuart Haynes and John Knight to honorary membership a suitable occasion presented itself at the Hermitage annual cocktail party for the Commander of the Joint Aeronautical and Geospatial Organisation, Col John Kedar, to present the two worthy individuals with their Corps ties. Stuart Haynes is the Director of the Defence Geographic Centre (DGC), formerly the Mapping and Charting Establishment and a Royal Engineer establishment. John Knight is the Principal of the Royal School of Military Survey (RSMS), again a former Royal Engineer establishment. It was highly fitting that these individuals should be so honoured as they both uphold and foster the links with the Corps, both from a heritage aspect and more importantly from the operational support to RE (Geo) provided by the DGC and in RSMS' role in training all RE (Geo) officers and soldiers. The Corps ethos in the DGC and School remains in excellent hands.



**....and finally**

Anyone any ideas as to why and where we paraded in pyjamas – and who were the stars? Thanks to Nick Collins for the photo – but he doesn't know the answer.

**NEWSLETTER DATES**

We will aim to produce four issues each year based roughly on the seasons as follows:

<b>Edition</b>	<b>Dates for Input</b>	<b>Published</b>
New Year	By 1 <sup>st</sup> January	Mid to end January
Spring	By 1 <sup>st</sup> April	Mid to end April
Summer	By 15 June	Early July
Autumn	By 1 <sup>st</sup> October	Mid to end October

Input from members is vital to ensure that the Newsletter is kept vibrant and interesting hence – please let the editor have any snippets that you think might be of interest; anecdotes, information, ‘where are they now’, etc. If you are not in position to provide word-processed documents – no problem, just post your hand written into to the editor who is happy to type it.

**Summary of Web Site Contacts**

*REA*

<http://www.reahq.org.uk>

*RE Forum*

<http://www.royalengineersforums.co.uk>

*Geo-Branch Website*

<http://survey-branch-rea.co.uk>

**Hon Secretary**

Ken Hall  
30 Church Road  
West Huntspill  
Somerset TA9 3RN  
email: [kjhsurveys@aol.com](mailto:kjhsurveys@aol.com)  
Telephone: 01278 794 600

**Hon Treasurer**

Mike Gowlett  
1 The Rookery  
Highclere  
Newbury RG20 9QR  
email: [mgowlett@aol.com](mailto:mgowlett@aol.com)  
Telephone: 01635 253 337

**Webmaster**

Albie Field  
5A Claire Court  
Higher Erith Road  
Torquay TQ1 2NQ  
email: [albie@albiefield.co.uk](mailto:albie@albiefield.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01803 212 880

**Editor**

Alan Gordon  
1 Majorca Avenue  
Andover  
SP10 1JW  
email: [alan.gordon7@talktalk.net](mailto:alan.gordon7@talktalk.net)  
Telephone: 01264 359 700