

# The Military Survey (Geographic) Association



## Spring 2012 Newsletter

### Issue 44



### Chairman's Piece – April 2012

What a gorgeous spring we have had or is it just a premature summer and a repeat of last year? As you will have seen from the previous newsletter it is at about this time of year that the committee start pulling together the one function we have each year. Unfortunately the response we have had to Mick's calling note has been very disappointing and so at our last meeting we had a major review of our activities.

The conclusion, which I might add we have been coming to for some time, is that the annual get together has lost its attraction. The steadily reducing attendance is certainly in keeping with many organisations such as ours. We, the committee, may well have failed to stimulate your interest but there again, nobody else has come forward with better suggestions either. Whilst the reunions attract little attention we are finding that the newsletter and the web site are very much appreciated and a real strength of the Association; thank you to those who continue to provide articles and items of interest and especial thanks to Alan Gordon our editor and Dave Johnson the web master.

As a result of our review we have restructured our activities as follows:

- Four newsletters annually; spring, summer, autumn and winter.
- Maintenance and development of the web site.
- Quarterly committee meetings linked to newsletter publication.
- AGM to coincide with the spring committee meeting.
- Less frequent reunions, the next one to coincide with the Regiment moving in 2014.
- The Association will continue with individual projects such as the current one of digitising the school course photographs for the period 1960 to 1993.
- The continued support of the Geo units.
- Welfare support of our members.

The interim arrangements for this year are that the suggested reunion dinner is cancelled; we will hold an AGM on the evening of Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September. The next reunion will be when the Regiment leaves Hermitage in August 2014 and so it will be organised for some time earlier that summer, hopefully in conjunction with the Regiment's own farewell activities. Clearly this is some time off and can only be finalised once we know their programme. The hope is that this will be more in line with and on a scale of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations which started us off in the first place.

Enough of that, the project of digitising course photographs is proceeding well and will be a really interesting record of that part of our history. The Association is funding the work at a cost of £1000 which will result in a searchable database of all the available photographs annotated with individual names where we know them. Once this project is complete there is clearly a great deal more we can consider and I'm sure it is making extremely good use of the Association funds.

Please keep in touch, keep well and have a great summer.

**Angus Cross**

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**MILITARY SURVEY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**1900hrs FRIDAY THE 7th OF SEPTEMBER 2012**

**Location: DENISON BARRACKS - HERMITAGE**

As you will have read in the "Chairman's Piece" the events planned and advertised for September this year, especially the dinner, have had minimal support from members and the committee has decided that the time, effort and costs involved are not justified. I would personally like to thank the few members who responded, including the "nil returns" for their support and will have contacted them separately already – thank you once again.

To enlarge a little on what the Chairman wrote, you should note that as an organisation holding "your money" we are obliged to hold an AGM and to that end we will do this on the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2012 and encourage all members to attend. No - it will not just be a boring meeting; anyone who has attended a meeting as currently chaired will be aware they are short, to the point and entertaining and this will not change. To entice you along we do intend to provide sustenance but what this will be will be dependent on the numbers attending. It could vary from light bites all the way up to a barbeque and though this will be supported from central funds you will be asked to contribute towards this on the night rather than in advance, any such charge per head is expected to be minimal.

To expand slightly into the future and on the Chairman's notes, it is intended that in future years the AGM will be held in the spring. As an incentive we do hope the AGM will be followed by a dinner/meal and that members might enjoy such a format and be encouraged to attend, we shall see! You should also note that, in the first instance it will probably be in one of the Messes but it could easily move to a hotel in the future especially when and if the Survey units vacate the barracks at Hermitage. We shall then plan to hold just a reunion (No AGM) at some later point into the future and as indicated by the chairman, probably in 2014.

Thus your Committee with the kind permission of Commander JAGO, Col Mark Burrows, extends an invitation to members to attend the AGM in the Sgts Mess Hermitage at 1900hrs on Friday night the 7th September 2012.

As ever, we do need to know what the attendance might be and thus we ask that members make a commitment as early as possible indicating their attendance or otherwise – thank you.

**Those members who have indicated already that they will not be able to attend the dinner need not respond in the negative unless they have changed their minds and now wish to attend the AGM**

We hope to persuade the unit to allow the use of some accommodation in the various messes on a repayment basis.

It is vital to establish firm attendance figures early and we request that you return the attached form **ASAP** but in any case before the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

Mick Perry - Event Organiser - *Problems, enquiries* Tel 01635 37510; Email [mandpdperry@sky.com](mailto:mandpdperry@sky.com)

**URGENT ----- RETURN THE FORM ON THE LAST PAGE ----- URGENT**

**BEFORE 20<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2012**

## Carrying The Torch – Again



*John with his 1948 torch.*

Lance Corporal John Bickers RE stood in front of the Rising Sun pub in the village of Charlton two miles from Shaftesbury staring down the A30 towards Salisbury. He was dressed in Army PT kit of singlet, dark blue shorts and khaki plimsolls and he was waiting for Captain Don Wilde RE to appear. The date was the 1<sup>st</sup> of August 1948 and both men had been selected to carry the Olympic Torch for a leg of its journey from London to Torquay where the sailing events were to take place.

Then a small motorcade came into view and there in its midst was Don Wilde holding the flaming torch aloft. The flame was passed to John's torch and off he set for Shaftesbury. There was a car in front of him, a motorcyclist on each side and another car behind which 'encouraged' John to keep up what was a very fast pace. John ran on towards the ancient hilltop town thankful that the weather was dry but aware of a slight wind in his face and getting warmer as the little entourage progressed along the road.

The final approach to Shaftesbury is a long uphill and after passing the ivy clad Grammar School on his left John was surprised at the large crowds that had gathered to cheer him on his way. The final two hundred yards was up the fairly steep main street ending at the top in front of the Town Hall where the flame was passed to next runner in the chain. John, now suffering a heat rash, doused his flame, got dressed back into uniform and returned to the Survey Training Centre RE which was then in the grounds of Longleat House.

And now, 64 years on, John Bickers has once again been selected to carry an Olympic Torch, this time for 300 metres in York on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. We wish him good luck in his almost unique Olympic double.

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## Memories of 1948

Thank you for the latest issue of the Newsletter and for keeping me on my toes regarding dates. (*Editor: thanks to all those who noticed the typo in the last issue – at least it proves that some people even read the newsletter*).

As requested by King George VI I joined the Army on the 16th of January 1947 and after the usual basic training was sent to Barnard Castle to train as a gunnery surveyor arriving there on 27th of February 1947. However, my father complained at the War Office and I was transferred to the Survey Training Centre RE at Longleat on 3rd May 1947.

I well remember Captains Morris and Wilde. They were great in encouraging us with athletics and the unit had a very successful team. We went all over the South and South-West to meetings including the Southern Command District Championships. As a team we stood out from others as we all had pale blue track-suits. At that time clothing was still rationed but I cannot recall where we "obtained" the necessary clothing coupons. We certainly paid for the suits ourselves! The unit cook did his best to help the team. Many were the times we had an early lunch before we left for a meeting in a three ton truck and "lunch" was a hearty stew with dumplings followed by jam roly-poly and custard. This at a time when food was still rationed!

Sorry but rambling.....*Bruce Cox*

## News from the Civilian Front – Apr 2012

### Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)

**Staff Reductions:** As part of the Departments need to reduce MOD's civilian staffing by 25%, DGC has reduced its staffing level over the past 12 months, with approximately 40 staff accepting the Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS) with all those staff having now departed. In addition the Department announced another Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS 2) in Nov 11 which will run for two years from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2014. Some 150 DGC staff applied for release; however less than 30 have been approved with 13 being offered release in June and September of this year with the remainder December 2012 to March 2014. Ultimately, DGC is looking to reduce to 371 by the end of FY13/14.

**Defence Reform:** The Defence Reform review was led by Lord Levene with the aim to design and deliver a leaner and less centralised organisation that works and is affordable within the budget set by the Spending Review. One of the recommendations of the Review was the creation of the Joint Forces Command (JFC) which achieved initial operating capability on 2 April 2012. The Intelligence Collection Group (ICG) of which DGC is an integral part is now part of the new JFC structure and as such ICG has been renamed the Joint Forces Intelligence Group (JFIG), with no change to DGC.

### Programme to Rationalise and Integrate the DIS Estate (PRIDE)

The first of a suite of new buildings to house Defence Intelligence has been formally handed over to the MOD at RAF Wyton. Under the PRIDE programme, a completely new state-of-the-art building has been constructed to house intelligence staff in a completely open plan environment at the Cambridgeshire station. Wyton will become home to the new Joint Forces Intelligence Group (JFIG) which brings together the Command Group and elements of the Intelligence Collection Group.

Options are currently being formulated to consider the move of DGC from Feltham to Wyton, with any relocation taking place post 2016.

### Production – Support to Ops

Production in support of ops has reduced over the past few months; however, there has been extensive work undertaken to support the upcoming Olympics. A variety of products have been produced in liaison with other organisations and other Government Departments in order to ensure the MOD has the necessary geospatial data to meet Olympics requirements, and collaborating to ensure that all safety and security organisations have a common view.

### Production Systems Upgrade

The Production Generation Upgrade project which has seen the installation of new equipment and applications within the DGC Foundation Division (formerly Production Division) has reached the Full Operating Capability milestone. The introduction and this capability has over the past few years been challenging for all concerned and the goal now is to improve production flexibility, leading to reduced production timelines and improved re-use of geospatial data.

### Collaboration with Ordnance Survey (OS)/Continuous Improvement (CI) Initiatives

Work is ongoing to implement CI training across DGC and to carry out process flow analysis in order to identify inefficiencies, bottlenecks, and to document best practices. Significant improvements in terms of best practices and production time frame reductions have already been identified in areas where CI initiatives have been carried out.

### New DGC Organisational Structure

In the middle of last year the DGC Management Team carried out work in identifying a potential future model for DGC for the 2015+ era. The work was necessitated by the need to reorganise as a

consequence of an overall reduction in DGC resource levels required by the post-SDSR savings measures. The preferred option was to take the DGC's core production elements and form a number of 'Task Teams' with an 'Enterprise' wrapper surrounding these Teams that would enable pan-DGC business processes, be outward-facing, connecting to customers and partners.

Following significant preparatory work since the inception of the future DGC model concept the decision was made to form 2 Task Teams and conduct 6 month trials in order to assess their effectiveness, the first team will stand-up in May and the second in July. Following these task Team trails Director DGC and the Management Team will be able to make an informed decision regarding the way forward for DGC.

### [The Olympic Games and the Armed Forces Support to the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games \(LOCOG\)](#)

MOD Feltham has been selected as a site for accommodating approximately 1,000 Service personnel with a camp to be located on the sports field. Work will start soon on the construction of a temporary camp that will remain until its dismantling in October 2012. As a result the forthcoming Old Boys Reunion (Picnic in the Park) will now take place within Hotine Building.

### [Old Boys Reunion \(Picnic in the Park\)](#)

This year's event will take place on Friday 15 June 2012, please note the change in date from that previously advertised. Those previous members of the Garrison, military as well as civilian who wish to attend should send their name, contact details directly to:

Tony Ruff – FGSSA Reunion Coordinator Foundation Division,

Room 019, Hotine Building, Defence Geographic Centre, Elmwood Avenue, Feltham, TW13 7AH

Tel: 0208 818 2702 or e-mail: [Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk](mailto:Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk)

### [Notable Retirees](#)

Sheila White, Keith Burton, Jeff Raby and Ann Grant

*Pete Dowell*

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## History Matters - Information Wanted

### [520 Field Survey Squadron RE](#)

The number 520 had been used during World War Two by a Field Survey Company RE but at some time post-war, the number was reintroduced when 520 Independent Field Survey Squadron RE was formed from "Z" Reservists and Territorial Army personnel. A brochure showing how maps were made was produced by the squadron while on exercise, possibly "Ex Trade Union", with 13 Field Survey Squadron RE in 1951. This brochure contains a group photograph showing about 55 personnel. At that time the squadron was equipped with six of the 10-ton mobile train lorries which preceded the introduction of the familiar semi-trailers which only went out of service after the First Gulf War : -

### [529 Field Survey Squadron RE](#)

In 1951 this unit, described as "Birmingham's Survey Unit" was based at Welsh House Farm Camp, Tennial Lane, Harborne, Birmingham. A brochure produced at its annual camp in 1951 shows the map production process in mobile print train lorries. A group photograph in this brochure shows about 113 personnel.

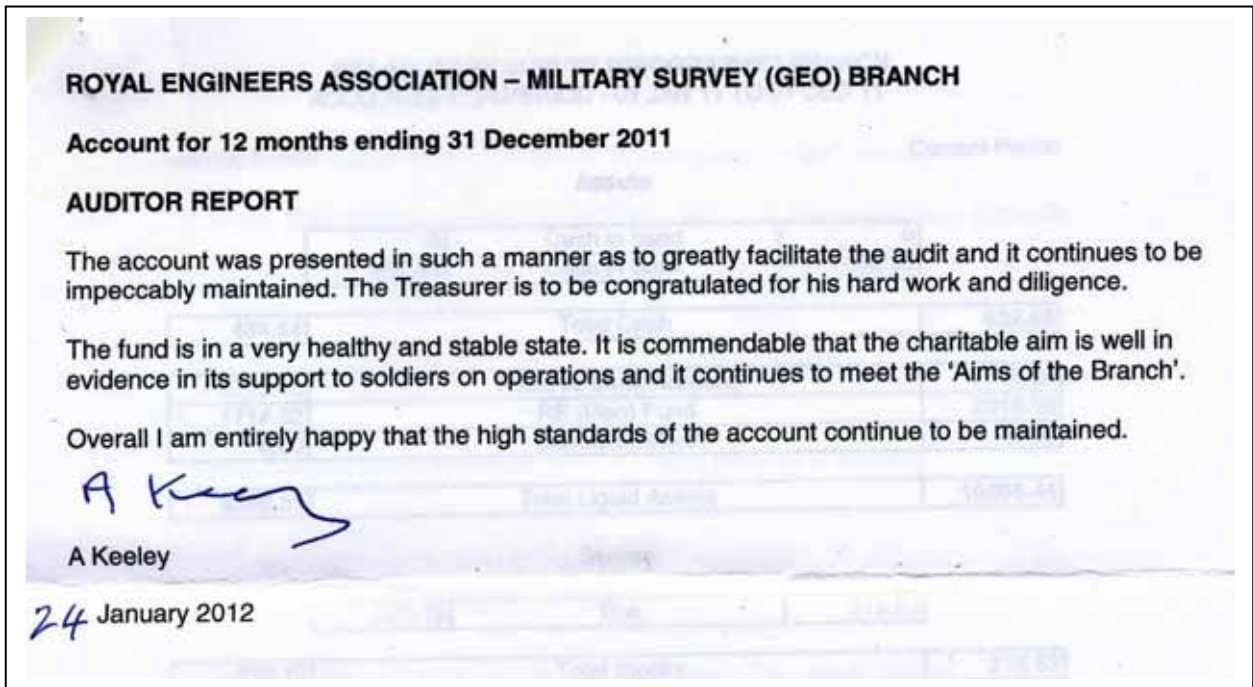
**Anyone able to provide any further information about these units, their formation, activities, personalities, equipment and their demise is invited to contact the Editor of this newsletter.**

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Treasurer's Input

The audited statement of accounts for the year ending 31 December 2011 and the auditors comments are shown below so that all members have a chance to peruse them prior to the AGM.

REA MILITARY SURVEY (GEOGRAPHIC) BRANCH			
ACCOUNTS FOR PERIOD - 01 JAN 11 TO 31 DEC 11			
Previous Period			Current Period
<b>Assets</b>			
	0	Cash in hand	0
	438.54	Cash in Bank	632.86
<b>438.54</b>		<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>632.86</b>
6713.45		Reserve Bank Account	7715.60
1714.32		RE (Geo) Fund	2016.98
8.00		Sundry Debtors	40.00
<b>8866.31</b>		<b>Total Liquid Assets</b>	<b>10405.44</b>
<b>Stocks</b>			
	229.19	Ties	218.53
<b>229.19</b>		<b>Total Stocks</b>	<b>218.53</b>
<b>9095.50</b>		<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>10623.97</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
	0.00	Sundry Creditors	0.00
	1714.32	RE (Geo) Fund	2016.98
<b>1879.66</b>		<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>2016.98</b>
<b>7215.84</b>		<b>Net Working Capital</b>	<b>8606.99</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
	0	Investments at Cost	0
	650.00	Capital Property	650.00
<b>650.00</b>		<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>650.00</b>
<b>General Purposes Fund</b>			
7567.12		Balance as last Balance Sheet	8039.18
472.06		Add Excess of Income	221.58
		Subtract Excess of Expenditure	
<b>8039.18</b>		<b>Accumulated GPF</b>	<b>8260.76</b>
I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief all liabilities and assets are shown in the Balance Sheet			
Date	<u>4/1/2012</u>	Signature of Treasurer	<u>[Signature]</u>



### Current Financial Status

Bank accounts from statements as at 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2012:

Current Account	£1367.83
Reserve Account	£8717.16
Geo Fund	£2089.18 This amount is ring fenced for the benefit of our serving Geo soldiers.

There are still some members who do not pay their subs by standing order and have not paid for this year. It would be appreciated if they would settle as soon as possible. Please make sure that whatever method you use you include your name in the deposit reference otherwise I have to make a guess as to who it might have come from. All payments must be made out to **Military Survey Branch REA**. Our NatWest sort code is 60-01-17 and the account number is 81148119. Anything other than these details will be refused by the bank.

*Alf Isherwood*

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**[www.militarysurvey.org.uk](http://www.militarysurvey.org.uk)**

Our website continues to go from strength to strength thanks to the efforts of webmaster Dave Johnson and those who send in contributions. Average statistics for the first three months of the year are very impressive:

**Average number of pages looked at during 1 month = 6,500**

**Average number of visits (a person opening the website) during 1 month = 2,000**

The site needs to be kept vibrant and regularly refreshed with new material in order to maintain this level of interest so – dig out the old photo album or jot down those memories and send from to Dave Johnson at [webmaster@militarysurvey.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@militarysurvey.org.uk).

## The Saga of the Sergeants' Mess Bar

I was employed as Sergeants' Mess barman in January 1960 joining Reece Parkinson, an ardent Yorkshireman and cricket fanatic. He was fifty years old having served in the army which stood him in good stead with mess members. I, on the other hand, was only seventeen, something that had been overlooked by the powers that be as it was deemed more important that the bar was properly staffed thus meeting the needs of members.

In March of that year I turned eighteen and became of legal age to dispense alcohol. Not that anyone noticed! Reece was on first name terms with members as they were to him. For me it would take a further two years. I was addressed as barman and I turn addressed members by their rank. Quite often the bar would remain open well beyond ten-thirty at night, when we had to clock off. On such occasions we were allowed a bunk to sleep in.



*RSM Bob Eade in front of the 1961 Summer Ball tentage.*

May and the cricket season started and so Reece took off for his native Yorkshire leaving me to hold the fort. This posed a problem, every night I would have to walk four miles to Thatcham where I lived. It soon began to tell on my young body because I was also disabled. A solution was soon found; I would be allowed to live in. Naturally the civilian authority disapproved but RSM Bob Eade got his way and I was put on the mess ration strength. Now I became also an outcast among my fellow civilian workers. I had a roof over my head, a bed and three meals a day. All I could wish for. From that moment on my only concern was to meet the needs of the mess.

The Sergeants' Mess bar was a hole in the wall measuring three feet high and four feet wide with a small counter. Inside the bar the walls were decorated with beer, spirit and wine labels collected from all parts of the world. A shutter had to be taken down on opening and replaced on closing. In reality it was too small as the mess was well attended most evenings and totally inadequate when mess functions were held.

Easter block leave 1961 and three members remained in the mess, Dave Wheelock (REME), Ted May, Reg Breen. The mess was closed down for Easter so those of us living in messed in the OR canteen. Good Friday evening and the above three were lounging in the dining room watching TV when I enquired if they would like the bar open. After a few drinks the conversation got round to the small bar opening. Mick Pooley appeared, a grin lighting up his face to see the bar open. Enthusiastically he joined in the conversation on how to improve the mess bar.

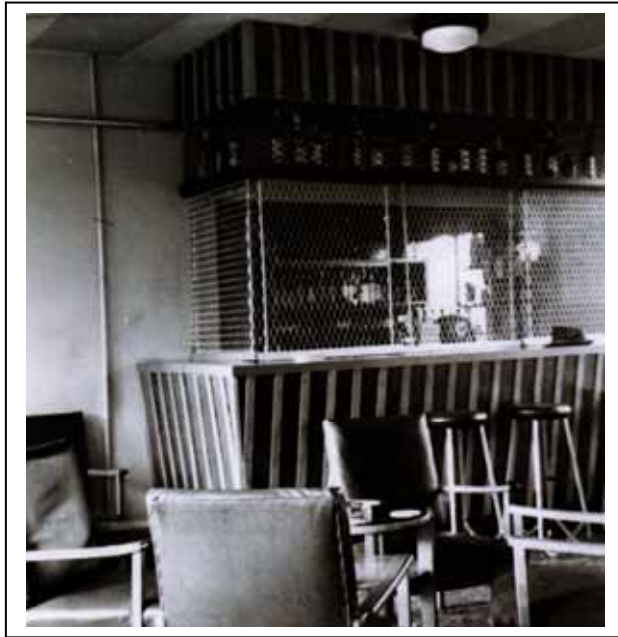
After breakfast on Easter Saturday morning we all gathered at the bar as I took down the shutter. While I dismantled the bar fittings and emptied the shelves the others began demolishing the wall. By lunchtime the whole expanse had been revealed and rubble tossed out through a window onto waste ground between the anteroom and mess kitchen. The die was well and truly cast; there was no turning back now. Amazingly building materials began to appear, wood, screws, nails, formica and steel mesh for the proposed shutters. When it all came from I had no idea and felt it expedient not to enquire. One thing became very clear, there were no plans or drawings and what was taking shape was all down to ingenuity and imagination.

By Easter Monday a wonderful transformation had been achieved, an appealing looking bar counter covered in pink-flecked formica now provided space for drinkers to place their glasses and games to take place and there was also a canopy for displaying bottles. Dark stained plywood panels were accentuated by pale coloured batons, repeated for the canopy. Against the pale blue interior walls all was set off nicely. News spread to the married quarters, that evening the mess filled and a party



atmosphere ensued. All approved of what had been achieved, the new bar suitably wetted. Having been a party to this event filled me with cheer, to the four mess members involved I had become Mike.

The euphoria of that Easter weekend was to be tempered when the camp resumed duties. Dave, Ted, Reg and Mike had to face RSM Bob Eade for carrying out unauthorised building improvements, each to receive a severe dressing down. I also for opening the bar while the mess had been closed down for the holiday. While we all felt the pressure of this admonishment, then to be surprised the following Saturday evening when Bob Eade and his wife entered the mess complimenting us on our endeavours.



*The new Mess bar*

From that moment on evenings in the mess really came alive and over the years I saw in many dawns. The best years of my young life were spent witnessing a very unique way of life. Evenings of "twenty-one aces" proved hilarious, then there were the impromptu occasions of merriment and high jinx's where inhibitions did not get a look in. Through it all nothing ever got out of hand. Occasionally the furniture suffered but all was replaceable. An aid to the enjoyment was a big old radiogram with a wonderful tone often echoing the strains of Glen Miller, Bert Kampfert, Duke Ellington etc. Bob Wyse was one music lover and his collections of music provided many an evening's entertainment. The term "swinging Sixties" has often been quoted by the media, in its own way the mess certainly did swing, and it was the Sixties.



*The Mess ante room of the early 1960s.*

During 1966 I became very aware that life in the mess was changing never to be the same again. After Christmas I took my leave to pursue life elsewhere. With me I took the fondest of memories shared with some very special people. I touched only the periphery of their lives and there I remained, as it should have been.

Over the succeeding years I remained in contact with Dave Wheelock and through the Survey Branch website I have been contacted by Eric Davey and John Coles. It pleased me to note there

are others out there who are still with us. I should like to take this opportunity to thank them for the many happy memories I have, memories they contributed to and for putting up with a very young person in their mature male environment. My disability of the right leg prevented me from following the family tradition of "following the drum" but my years at the Sergeants' Mess more than compensated.

**Mike Chaplin**

## **The Hermitage Course Photos Project**

The Association is sponsoring a project to produce a digital archive of all the available photographs of the Military Survey soldier trade courses held at Hermitage between the early 1960s and 1993, the main SMS/RSMS courses held for Military Survey's civilian staff during the same period and the Long Survey/Army Survey courses to date.

So far all the photographs that are available have been collected together, sorted and then scanned, cropped, enhanced and converted to pdfs, a total of 840 photographs. These images were input into a database and then Dave Johnson entered every surname of every person on every one of the 840 courses, together with their first name where known, into the database – a mammoth task as the statistics below show:

1770 individual soldiers attended at least one trade course

312 British officers attended a Long Survey/Army Survey Course

718 Military Survey civilians attended at least one course

Many of the soldiers attended primary, intermediate and advanced courses with 123 also enjoying six months on the Survey Staff Specialist Course. In addition, there has recently been an increasing tendency for some of those commissioned from the ranks to then attend the Army Survey Course.

In the same way, many civilians attended multiple courses at Hermitage often starting with an induction course followed by basic air survey, topo air photo reading and then a management course as they moved up the promotion ladder.

In all, the number of separate entries of names and course details that Dave has made into the database runs into the many thousands. The end result will be a database on DVD that can be searched by course or individual name.



However, help is required in two ways. Firstly there are 75 soldier courses for which no photograph could be found. A list of these missing courses has been put on the website and it would be appreciated if readers in possession of any of these course photographs would contact Dave ([webmaster@militarysurvey.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@militarysurvey.org.uk)) to arrange for a copy to be included in this significant archive of Military Survey's history.

The other area where help is needed is in naming some of the students where there are no names on the photographs. We have been given help from a number of sources but there are still a lot of 'nameless/unknown' former military surveyors. Course photos without names will put onto the website at regular intervals with a plea for names and again, if you know the answers please email the webmaster.

As a taster here is a photo of a Camera Operator course from, we think, the early Sixties which includes Ian Batt and Joe Rennison...but who are the others? Answers please to the editor or webmaster.

**DEFENCE SURVEYORS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SEMINAR**

**SATURDAY 16 JUNE 2012**

A reminder that this year's "Maps & Surveys" Seminar on historical military surveying, mapping and charting will take place at the Royal School of Military Survey between 1000 and 1700hrs on Saturday 16th June 2012. The cost of attendance is £20, to include tea and coffee breaks and a finger-buffet lunch with drinks.

The seminar not only provides a series of fascinating presentations several of which relate periods of history in which you may have taken part but it is also great chance to meet up with old friends.

The presentations are:

**1050-1130 – The Gough Map: the first modern map of Britain?**

By Nick Millea, the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

**1130-1210 – Wellington's Surveyors in the Peninsula War.**

By Dr. John Peaty, Defence Geographic Centre.

**1330-1410 - Photographic Intelligence Gathering in the Berlin Corridors.**

**1410 - 1450 – Moving Map Displays – Forty Years of support to RAF Navigation by DGC.**

By Richard Chesney, Defence Geographic Centre.

**1530-1610 – Surveying the "Ulu" – A Troop Commander's tour in Sarawak 1964-1966.**

By Major General (Retd) Roy Wood, DSA.

**1610-1650 – Current "Geo" Operations.**

By Colonel M.R.H. Burrows and others from the Joint Aeronautical and Geospatial Organization (JAGO).

Bids to attend this seminar may be made by email to [maptnolan@googlemail.com](mailto:maptnolan@googlemail.com), or phone 01635 253167 or write to M.A. Nolan, Tall Trees, Broad Layings, Woolton Hill, Newbury, RG20 9TS.

**Old Boys Reunion (Picnic in the Park)**

**If you ever served at Feltham then this event offers an opportunity to meet up with many of those people that you used to work with.**

This years event will take place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2012 in Hotine Building. Those previous members of the Garrison, military as well as civilian, who wish to attend should send their name, contact details directly to:

Tony Ruff – FGSSA Reunion Coordinator Foundation Division,  
Room 019, Hotine Building,  
Defence Geographic Centre,  
Elmwood Avenue,  
Feltham TW13 7AH  
Tel: 0208 818 2702 or e-mail: [Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk](mailto:Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk)

## The Closing of Lithographic Production at Ewell

It was with remorse and a touch of sadness, possibly even regret, a situation alien to an old Survey Print Technician (well before Geo Techs) nurtured through a Regimental life with characters such as 'Nasty' Nick Collins and Mark 'Pig' Huish to name but a few that I found myself as I processed the paperwork for the disposal of the last Heidelberg and Roland printing machines within 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic). After long discussions with a number of organisations, as to who was going to fund the removal of the equipment, alter external fixtures and fittings, employ the tradesmen, etc; that the unit found itself in the position to dispose of the equipment.

The Squadron had not used the equipment in anger for some time and additionally direction had been given that lithography, as means of mass production, was to be no longer supported and other means would be introduced/the capability gap highlighted.



*The last litho equipment from 42 Regiment on its way to a new life overseas.*

The equipment was finally sold to a company from the North of England, to dispose of over the waters to sunnier climes, so if you pass by a sweat shop in India there may well be an Indian toiling over old Military Survey equipment; unknowingly. The removal went extremely smoothly, two days, and without notice; akin to an assassin slipping through the remains of his aftermath; resulting in the loss of a capability that had been an essential and pivotal element of Military Survey of old. The future is bright for the unit, as it utilises the new GEOSYS and still continues to provide support to the Regiment's main effort. The Squadron members eagerly await the new systems and equipment that will be provided by FDG.

***Captain AP Barton GSO/QM/TRG OFFR 135 Indep Geo Sqn RE (V)***

### News From the Military Front

There is no 'News From the Military Front' in this issue as it falls just after the handover of the RSM appointment. We wish Captain Alfie Conetta every success in his new post in Northern Ireland and welcome WO1 (RSM) Robinson, offer our congratulations achieving the appointment and look forward to working with him in the future.

## 'Potted' History of Military Survey on the Website

Some time ago it was agreed in committee that we would produce a 'potted' history of Military Survey with two aims in mind. Firstly, for it to be shown to new recruits into Geo to give them an overview of the heritage that they are about to join in much the same way as infantry regiments instil a sense of belonging to a 'family' to their new recruits. Secondly, to use it as a way of advertising the existence of the Military Survey Association and showcase to a small extent what we do for those still serving.



The history, albeit little more than some snapshots of the more exciting bits that are likely to appeal to young soldiers, is now on the website and available for all to take a look. Just go to the website, click on 'Links' and then click on 'RE Military Survey Potted History'. Any comments most welcome through the webmaster.

*The King and Monty visit Military Survey just after D-Day – one of the images in the 'potted' history.*

### **Dave Cuthbert – 'Cuthie'**

**1950 - 2012**

Cuthie was a former Photo Tech who served at Barton Stacey in the 1970s. He had been in poor health for some time and died on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April. His funeral was held at Colwyn Bay Crematorium on Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of April.

His sister Rosemary, who had been living with his for the last year, would be pleased to receive cards or letters from anyone who had served with Cuthie. Her address is 25 Sunningdale Avenue, Colwyn Bay, LL29 6DF. Rosemary has said that if anyone wishes to send a donation to St David's Hospice, care of the address above, it would be really appreciated.

Bryan 'Ozzie' Osborne sent the following memories of Cuthie.

*I served with Dave at Barton Stacey in the 1970's and he was a wonderful guy. Known simply as "Cuthie" to everyone who knew him, I like many others will remember him for his wit and candour both of which he held in abundance.*

*I especially remember his "stag" in the Expendable Stores at Barton Stacey, a real so-and-so of a job but one which became the vehicle for all that was Cuthie. Pity any poor naive new sapper who descended on the store with a request for nails, cotton buds, chemicals or as in one case "cloud remover" for aerial films, having been set up by the balance of his mates! Yup Cuthie had the eye dropper bottle ready, filled and waiting when the unsuspecting youth arrived.*

*I will always remember the glint in his eye at the opportunity to share a joke as I am sure will ALL members of Military Survey who shared service with him.*

## Annual Range Shoot – 1956 – What happened Next?

Some time in the early summer of 1956, the whole of B Squadron of the School of Military Survey was transported to the range at Ogbourne St George for the annual shooting spree. It was probably May and the weather was glorious. So were the doughnuts and tea available from the mobile canteen, which (I think) was not a NAAFI truck but some other organisation, perhaps Toc H. The doughnuts were the best I've ever eaten.



*Hermitage in the 1950s.*

The whole day went swimmingly except for the last event, which was ten rounds prone at 200 yards while wearing respirators. I had forgotten to take my army-issue spectacles (those with the flat side-pieces specifically for respirator use, and with small, round lenses) and so had to use my usual glasses which had a big, clumsy frame. I managed to get off four or five rounds but by then I couldn't see through the eye-piece of the respirator which had worked its way further round my head with each round fired. So I emptied the

magazine with the bolt, collected the live rounds and empty cases to the total of 10 and swore the standard declaration - *"I have no live rounds or empty cases in my possession, SIR"*.

Some weeks later, Pt 2 Orders announced that a respirator inspection would take place the following Monday and that respirators were to be left on beds. That weekend I had a pass and didn't get back into camp until ten seconds before first parade and so I heaved my respirator onto my bed and ran for the square.

When the respirator case was opened for inspection a live round fell out! This generated some considerable excitement, and pdq I was marched before the Squadron Commander – Major Beer – who pointed out that this was Court Martial territory and what did I think I was playing at? There followed a series of verbal exchanges, sympathetically loquacious by him (he was a decent man) and pretty brusque from me, whilst the Sergeant-Major was ready to slap me in the stockade there and then. I tried to explain that I could only think that the round had been ejected from the breech direct into the respirator case which had been lying open directly under my chest, but this didn't appear to be making much of an impact. In the end, seeing the gates of Shepton Mallett Military Prison opening before me, I interrupted yet another stream of blather with a very firm *"Believe me, Sir, if I had known the round was there, you would NOT have found it!"*.

This stopped him dead. He cogitated in silence for a few seconds, realising that he couldn't argue with the logic. Claw marks on the cartridge case rim showed that the round had been in a magazine at some time so he discharged me, with a warning about carelessness.

Another highlight of my brief military career.

*Dave Swindlehurst*

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## Notice Board

### Editor's New Email Address

Please note that the editor's email address is now

[alan.gordon67@btinternet.com](mailto:alan.gordon67@btinternet.com)

He is happy to receive articles, anecdotes, notices or photographs on any subject that might be of interest to readers on this address at any time.

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### Diary Date Reminder

**15 June: Picnic in the Park at Feltham**

**16 June: DSA Maps and Surveys Seminar**

**20 August: Last day for AGM returns**

**7 August: AGM and Get Together**

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### Parting Words

If every reader recruited one new member the Association would double in size!

The editor apologises in advance for all typos and other errors!

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### Anecdotes

The Editor really appreciates receiving anecdotes or short pieces that may be of interest to readers and so many thanks to those who have sent contributions in over the last few months.

If your piece hasn't yet made it into the newsletter please don't take offence as I assure you all input will eventually make it into print. Getting each issue to fit the right number of pages (the hardcopy version is printed four up which drives the number of pages) whilst ensuring time sensitive material is included is quite a juggling act hence – some articles get put aside for a future edition.

The bottom line is – please keep the articles flowing in.

**SEND ALL RETURNS BEFORE 20 AUGUST 2012 TO:**

**M. Perry, 101 Craven Road, Newbury, Berks, RG14 5NL**

Problems? [Then contact me on] [mandpdperry@sky.com](mailto:mandpdperry@sky.com) or Tel; **01635 37510**

From: Forename:.....	Surname:.....
Address: -	Tele : - .....
	E-mail:- .....
Type & Make of transport:.....	Registration No .....

<b>I *shall/*shall not be attending the AGM on Friday 7 September 2012; I will be bringing the following guests:</b>		
1 .....	2.....	3.....

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>PLEASE - PLEASE REMEMBER THE GEO SUPPORT FUND</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I enclose a cheque to support this for £..... payable to “Military Survey Branch REA”</b></p>
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If you have any special dietary needs or require **disabled access** please detail these below and every attempt will be made to accommodate them.

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NB military units do not cater for severely disabled conditions (for obvious reasons) and we apologise in advance for any shortcomings that might cause individual inconvenience.

\*\*Delete as appropriate.