

The Military Survey (Geographic) Association



Summer 2012 Newsletter



Issue 45

Chairman's Piece – July 2012

Well, we are now on the downhill side of the summer solstice and the light has started fading and yet the summer hasn't started. For various reasons, including the weather I've not been out sailing yet and my vegetables look as if I planted them yesterday, but enough of that, we all know how bad it's been and I just hope none of you have been flooded.

As you know we have stopped the annual reunion and moved to a more occasional affair when there is a good reason to get together. But all is not lost. There is the opportunity for you all to turn up to the AGM in September, an evening meet with food of some description and the chance to down a pint with one another.

An idea that is being mooted is for the Defence Surveyors' Association and ourselves to perhaps combine forces occasionally for their seminars where they discuss and run through a more technically biased programme, not heavy intellectual stuff but items of interest such as the history of printing in the field (a presentation Rod gave) or Military Survey's role in the 1914 – 18 war for example. We have nothing formal on this and it has only been floated as an idea but I will follow it up and there may be things that will interest some of you. The bottom line is, it can be seen as an excuse to get together with some old comrades, have a good lunch and an interesting day and who knows some of us may be able to contribute from that vast reserve of experience that is sitting out there with you all.

I do fear that if we do not reinvigorate the Association it will wither on the vine and these things are far harder to re-establish than keep going so yet again I would like to hear some feedback.

We have had a change to the committee with our congratulations to WOI Connetta on being commissioned and welcome in his replacement, WOI (RSM) Robinson who I had the honour of serving with many years ago when on operations in the Balkans, one or two stories there.

I look forward to seeing those of you that get to Hermitage in September for the AGM and to the rest, enjoy the Olympics and your summer holidays, toodle pip!

Angus Cross

A Plea From The Secretary – email Addresses

There are still approximately **35 notifications of failed emails** every time I send a message out to the members who supposedly rely upon this method of correspondence with our Association.

My message is simple – **If you are not getting your Newsletters or other correspondence via email anymore it is probably as a result of your failure to inform me of your changed email address.** Therefore, please, please, help me to help you, and save me a lot of time and trouble, by informing me of your new address.

MILITARY SURVEY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1900hrs FRIDAY THE 7th OF SEPTEMBER 2012

Location: DENISON BARRACKS - HERMITAGE

As you will all be aware from the last newsletter we hold “your money” and are thus obliged to hold an AGM and to that end we will do this on the evening of the 7th September 2012 and would encourage all members, that are able, to attend. It will not be just 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. We do intend to provide sustenance; what this will be will be dependent on the numbers attending and it could vary from light bites all the way up to a barbeque if numbers were really large. We shall support this from central funds but you will be asked to contribute something towards this on the night rather than in advance, any such charge per head is expected to be minimal.

Thus your Committee with the kind permission of Commander JAGO, Col Mark Burrows and of course the RSM, WO1(RSM) W (Will) Robinson extend an invitation to members to attend the AGM in the Sgts Mess Hermitage at 1900hrs on Friday night the 7th September 2012.

You are to note that the bar will be open from 1800hrs and the committee will be present to welcome you at that time. Food will be served after the AGM is complete and the presentation has been made to the deserving Sapper. (I.E. at about 2000hrs)

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.

Accommodation: We remain hopeful that a small number of rooms will be available in the Sgts Mess and that this might be reciprocated by the Officers Mess and these will be allocated (if available) on a first come first served basis and some members have already indicated a desire to take up any offer. **You need to contact me directly should you wish to take up this offer assuming it will be available.**

It is vital to establish firm attendance figures early and so once again we would request that you return the attached form **ASAP** but in any case before the 20th August 2012.

Those members who have indicated already their attendance or otherwise need not respond again unless they have changed their minds.

Dress – Smart casual.

Mick Perry - Event Organiser - Problems, enquiries Tel 01635 37510; Email mandpdperry@sky.com

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

BEFORE 20TH AUGUST 2012

Deaths of Old Comrades

It is with sadness that we record the deaths of the following old comrades since the last issue of the newsletter.

Steve Bridge

Steve had a full career as an air survey technician spending his final posting with the Technical Services Group at Feltham. Here he handed in his uniform and then carried on working at Feltham as a civilian until his sudden death from a heart attack on the 8th of May.

Peter Guildersleeves OBE

Peter was Head of the Computer & Geodesy Support Group of MCE in the mid 1980s and was a Newbury/Thatcham local civic dignitary for more than 30 years and as such he was very supportive of Military Survey and helped considerably with regard to the bestowing of the Freedom of Newbury to the Royal Engineers and the Freedom of Thatcham to the RSMS.

Charlie Hodge

Charlie was a National Serviceman who served with the Regiment as a litho tradesman from 1954 until 1956 firstly in the Canal Zone and then at Zygi on Cyprus.

Alan Marsden

Alan Marsden attended 8 Long Survey Course in 1951 and then served two tours in Kenya, latterly as OC 89 Field Survey Squadron, and one with HQ Middle East Land Forces before retiring from the service after a posting with the Army Apprentice School.

Nigel Mayor

Nigel joined the Army as an Apprentice in 1968, he qualified as a Cartographer and served until 1984. He was a renowned rugby player and a really super character who will be sadly missed by all those who served with him. After leaving the service he became a successful businessman in Romsey where he was prominent in many local organisations. A celebration of his life was held in a packed Romsey Abbey on the 19th of July.

Pat Morgan

Pat was the wife of Les Morgan and a keen supporter of the Association, regularly joining Les at reunions. She died very suddenly on the 31st of May.

Bill Pettit

Bill served a full career as a draughtsman including time at Hermitage as an instructor and then continued a civilian career in Malaysia.

Rod Siggs emails details of the deaths of not only Association members but also of any former military surveyors to all on the email distribution list as soon as he receives information. He relies very much on people informing him of a death and it would be appreciated if anyone knowing of such an event would contact Rod immediately so that others may have time to attend the funeral.

Secretary's Page

13th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on Friday 7th SEPTEMBER 2011 at 1900hrs

WOs' & Sgts' Mess, Denison Barracks, Hermitage

AGENDA

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Apologies

On Notice Board prior to AGM

Minutes of 12th AGM

Secretary

Annual Report on 2011/12

Chairman

Financial Status & Audited Accounts 2010/11

Treasurer

Election of Auditors for 2012/13

Chairman

Committee

President

Adoption of new title

Chairman

Any Other Business*

Chairman

Date of Next AGM

Chairman

Closing Remarks

President

*Members are requested to note that "Proposals", under AOB, should be submitted in writing to the Hon Secretary at least a week before the meeting.

The Deserving Sapper Presentation will be made by the President and the Military Update by Commander or RSM prior to / after the AGM.

AGM NOTICE- Committee Members

In accordance with the Terms Of Reference of our Association the following posts are Officers of the Committee and have to be proposed and elected at an AGM:

Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

All existing incumbents of these posts are willing to continue serving on the Committee, but if there are any volunteers to undertake any of these posts you should submit your name, and the post that you are willing to undertake, to the secretary before the AGM.

Additionally, Mick Perry, our Events Coordinator, would love someone to relieve him of his duties which he has been undertaking (virtually) since our formation.

Rod Siggs

REA Notices

The following notices have been received from HQ REA:

CENTENARY DINNER 2012

The Centenary Dinner of the REA will take place at the Victory Services Club on Sat 13 Oct 12, following the AGM. Reception will be at 1800hrs for 1830hrs with the bar opening at 1730hrs.

As in previous years, members' partners are most welcome. Dress for gentlemen will be lounge suits or blazer and flannels with Corps tie; ladies should dress accordingly. Branches are encouraged to bring their Standard with them.

The cost of the ticket(s) will be £20.00 each and applications must be received at HQ REA by 28 Sep 12. All applications should be via Branch/Association Hon Secs and made on a composite REA Form 6. In the first instance, applicants should send written applications to attend with cheques, made payable to "REA Association", together with any special dietary requirements to the Secretary ASAP.

SAPPER SUNDAY

Sapper Sunday will take place on Sun 14 Oct 12 at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. This is the day after the REA AGM and Annual Dinner and a good turnout from REA Members in London and from around the country is expected. Members are encouraged to attend this event, meet RE In-Pensioners and swap stories over a few pints. A curry buffet for limited numbers will be available. It is not necessary to advise HQ REA of your attendance at this event.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

The Field Of Remembrance opening ceremony will be held at Westminster Abbey on Thu 8 Nov 12 at approx. 100hrs when a short service will take place. A senior member of the Royal Household is expected to attend and conduct a review of the plots. The Corps Plot is number 57, which is located close to the West Gate. Entry to the Field of Remembrance is by ticket only. Members of the Association wishing to attend the opening ceremony should request a ticket from HQ REA without delay. As with previous years the Central London Branch will take responsibility for laying out the Corps Plot.

Current Financial Status

Bank accounts from statements as at 6th of July 2012:

Current Account	£1149.34
Reserve Account	£8718.03
Geo Fund	£2098.39 This amount is ring fenced for the benefit of our serving Geo soldiers.

There are still **21** members who have yet to pay their subs 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

News from the Civilian Front – July 2012

Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)

DGC Staffing: Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS1) was completed 31 March 12 with approx 40 civilian staff leaving DGC. VERS2 first round has seen 11 staff depart prior to 30 June 12, we are now in the second round where departures will take place during the period 31 Dec 12 through to 31 March 2014, letters giving the outcome of the selection process were sent to applicants on 2 July 12. DGC's manning target is 405 at the end of FY14/15 which includes 13 military posts.

Programme to Rationalise and Integrate the DIS Estate (PRIDE)

As reported previously the Intelligence Collection Group (ICG) of which DGC is an integral part is now part of the new Joint Forces Command structure and as such ICG has been renamed the Joint Forces Intelligence Group (JFIG), with no change to DGC. The JFIG will have over 3000 military and civilian staff and will be restructured as a number of elements move into the purpose built facilities at Wyton. JARIC has already been rebranded into the Defence Geospatial Intelligence Fusion Centre (DGIFC) and will relocate to the Pathfinder Building along with JFIG HQ commencing in Feb 2013. Additionally, JAGO HQ will move to Wyton May/June 2013 with 42 Eng Reg (14 Sqn) in summer 2012 with the remainder of 42 Eng Reg moving in summer 2014. The possible relocation of DGC is unlikely before the 2017/18 timeframe.

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.

Production Systems Upgrade

An equipment refresh was approved earlier in the year which will result in the Production Generation Upgrade (PGU) equipment being upgraded with new work stations, monitors, network equipment, switches and provision for upgrade of operating system & server versions, plus there is an ongoing project to migrate all workstations to version 10 of ESRI ARCGIS over the next 7 months as operational requirements and other constraints permit. In addition the management workstations will also be upgraded all of which will lead to improved production flexibility, leading to reduced production timelines and improved re-use of geospatial data.

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

Work continues to implement CI training across most areas of DGC with the goal to carry out process flow analysis in order to identify inefficiencies, bottlenecks, and to document best practices. To-date this initiative has seen significant improvements in terms of best practices and production time frame reductions in those areas that have undertaken the analysis.

New DGC Organisational Structure

Work is now underway following DGC's Management Team decision to conduct a feasibility study into a possible reorganisation of DGC in order to identify a potential future model for the organisation in the 2015+ era. This is as a consequence of an overall reduction in DGC resource levels required by the post-SDSR savings measures. The option being worked is the establishment of a number of 'Task Trial Teams' that contain DGC's core production elements.

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The first team is now in place, fully operational with a comprehensive programme of work. This team will continue to function for approximately 6 months with another 'Task Trial Team', due to stand-up end July 2012, which will run in parallel. Both teams will collect comprehensive metrics, performance and timelines so that early next year 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 was selected as a site for accommodating approximately 1,000 Service personnel with a camp to be located on the sports field. Construction of temporary camp is now complete and is totally self-contained; it will remain in place until it's dismantled in October 2012. Below are some photographs of the tented encampment.



Old Boys Reunion (Picnic in the Park): This year's event took place on Friday 15 June 2012 and saw DGC staff reuniting with those retired staff returning for their annual reunion. Although the event took place within the confines of Hotine Building, due to the sports field being used as a temporary camp for the Armed Forces support to the Olympics, it was a great success.

The date for next year's event has yet to be finalised and will be published as soon as it is known. 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

In Memoriam: It is with great regret that I report the death of Steve Bridge on 8th May 2012. Many will remember Steve from both his military and civilian careers.

Notable Retirees

June 2012 – Hilary Gell

June 2012 – Richard Chesney

Pete Dowell

BIOGRAPHY - WO1 (RSM) WD ROBINSON RE



Mr Robinson enlisted into the Royal Engineers in February 1995 after four years as a Territorial Army infantry soldier. After completing his Phase 1 Training at Army Training Regiment (ATR) Bassingbourn he moved to 3 Royal School of Military Engineering (3 RSME) at Gibraltar Barracks, Camberley for his B3 Combat Engineering Course. After LGV Driver Training at Leconfield he was posted to the Royal School of Military Survey (RSMS) at Hermitage for his Class 3 Geographic Technician Course. On completion of his common skills module he was selected for and trained as a Terrain Analysis Technician. On posting to 13 Topographic Squadron in October 1996 he exercised in the UK and in Germany.

In 1997 Mr Robinson completed his JNCO Cadre with 22 Engineer Regiment and was promoted to LCpl and then deployed to Sarajevo for a six months as a TACISYS Commander. This was a challenging Multi-National tour working as part of HQ SFOR within the combined J2 Cell with most NATO coalition partners represented.

After Bosnia he returned to 13 Squadron and again exercised in the UK and Germany. His Class 2 TERA Course was dispatched in 1999 with a posting to Herford in Germany to HQ 1 (UK) Armoured Division Geo Cell. Whilst at 1 Div he exercised hard across Germany and on Exercise ULAN EAGLE at Drawsko Pormorski Training Area in Poland. Promoted to Cpl in Sep 1999, his Class 1 TERA course was completed in 2000 and he was held on the strength of RSMS awaiting posting to ATR Bassingbourn as a Section Commander after successful completion of the Royal Engineer JNCO Instructor Course at 3 RSME. His posting to ATR followed in 2001 where he was privileged to instruct both adult and junior recruits.

In January 2003 Mr Robinson arrived at Hohne Garrison in Germany as a newly promoted Sgt and into the Geo Sgt role in HQ 7 Armoured Brigade (The Desert Rats). He was almost immediately deployed to Kuwait as tension between Iraq and the international community increased. This deployment became known as OPERATION TELIC and he was soon providing and briefing detailed terrain analysis to the Brigade Commander, his Staff and Battle Group Commanders in preparation for invasion. War fighting operations commenced on the 20 March 2003 with Mr Robinson deployed across the border very early during the invasion.

After nearly three thoroughly enjoyable years at 7 Armd Bde Mr Robinson moved in Sep 2005 to JHQ Rheindalen, as a Staff Sergeant posted into the Geo Cell at HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC). Mr Robinson and his team deployed to Afghanistan for a 9-month tour in Apr 2006 which proved to be enormously rewarding whilst at the same time providing huge challenges. Mr Robinson was part of the creation of the Afghanistan Country Stability Picture (ACSP) that sought to provide situational awareness and analysis within a Geographic Information System (GIS) of Reconstruction and Development activity within Afghanistan. The initiative was very well received and acted as an accurate decision making tool on R and D for President Karzai and Aid Agencies alike.

Promotion to WO2 followed in 2007 with a posting to the DGC in Feltham as the Operations Room Warrant Officer (OPSWO) – a newly established post. This saw a great deal of activity in support of worldwide operations. Both Iraq and Afghanistan were operational theatres running simultaneously with numerous smaller operations also supported by DGC. The OPSWO acted as a ‘translator’ and ‘facilitator’ between military units and the civilian staff of DGC. The tour was hugely rewarding with Mr Robinson travelling to Washington, Austin Texas, Canberra, Northern Ireland and Germany. In Aug 2009 Mr Robinson moved to the Training Management Branch (TMB) of RSMS as the TMB QMSI. He assumed responsibility for Class 2 Geographic Technician Courses and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to

impact positively on the next generation of Geo Soldier. This tour was cut short in June 2010 when Mr Robinson moved to ATR Winchester as the Squadron Sergeant Major of B Squadron.

ATR Winchester trained 16 year old male and female Junior Soldiers from the technical parts of the Army with Mr Robinson acting as SSM to approximately 200 Junior Soldiers and 40 Permanent Staff. Each Junior Entry lasted for 6 months and again this role was challenging but massively rewarding. Mr Robinson was again privileged to work with the very best Instructors that the Army has to offer. After 2 years Mr Robinson was selected for promotion to WO1 and was appointed RSM 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic).

WO1 Robinson enjoys reading, running and was in his youth an orienteerer and mountain marathon addict. More gentle pursuits now occupy him with dreams of classic car restoration in the future.

NEWS FROM THE MILITARY FRONT

RSM's Column

At the time of writing I have been in post as the Regimental Sergeant Major for a little over 3 months. My initial observation is that, as ever, 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) continues to punch above its weight and deliver deployable geographic support to Defence and that support is in greater demand than ever. The officers and soldiers that make up the ranks of the Regiment are working harder than ever but continue to maintain that famous sense of humour for which the British Soldier is famous and routinely attract the praises of those that are exposed to them. I am hugely privileged to be the RSM at this time of demanding operational tempo for the Regiment and at a time of significant change – not only for the Regiment but for the Army as a whole. There are currently many challenges to face but the quality and tenacity of our 'people' will pull the Regiment through and as I walk on my 'rounds' the calibre of our young soldiers in particular is notable. This column aims to update the wider Military Survey community on Regimental activities but underpinning that is the officer and the soldier that make things happen. They are our greatest and most valuable commodity and are peddling very hard – all are to be congratulated and are producing significant results across Defence.

42 Engr Regt - Operations Update

- Geo personnel currently deployed on Op HERRICK: 3 Officers, 34 Soldiers. These are stationed throughout Afghanistan (Kabul, Kandahar and throughout Helmand province)
- Within Helmand province, Geo personnel continue to provide direct support to kinetic operations down to Company level. This support includes complex geospatial analysis using intelligence gathered from a variety of methods.
- The Geo team within RC (SW) led by Maj Saunders are providing geo support to the regional command as well as providing both basic GIS training and map reading instruction to the Afghan National Army.
- DATAMAN continues to be a vital source of Geo capability in theatre. Not only is it providing its own web service (Geo Viewer) but it is also feeding the theatre recognised mapping and imagery to a number of other command and control systems. Its success in theatre has resulted in a further 2 systems being deployed, supporting specialist operators in Kandahar and RC (SW).

Airfield Surveys

- 13 Geo Sqn has recently completed a survey of RAF Fairford enabling the airfield to continue to comply with civil aviation requirements. This survey was also supported by the US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) ensuring that our techniques conform to the required standards.

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- 13 Geo Sqn is also planning an airfield survey of the main UK airhead in Afghanistan (Bastion airfield) and has recently been tasked through ISAF to conduct surveys of airfields in Southern Afghanistan (Kandahar) and Western Afghanistan (Herat). These surveys present unique challenges as this survey party will be operating outside the UK's Area of Responsibility (AOR) and relying on the life support and force protection from our coalition partners.

Olympics

- In addition to support in Afghanistan, the Regiment has been involved with Geo support to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Geo Soldiers are embedded in a number of HQ's, including MOD, Army HQ and the FCO and are providing direct geo support to planning, contingency operations and exercises. In addition the regiment have a number of contingency teams on high readiness to provide additional Geo support to unforeseen civil, criminal or natural occurring incidents that may affect the smooth running of the Olympic Games.

Exercises

- The Regiment has continued to support a large number of exercises in support of Brigades and Battle Groups in preparation for their deployment. Currently the Regiment are supporting exercises with PJHQ, JFHQ, 4 Mech Bde, 3 Cdo Bde, 102 Log Bde and DSTL.
- In addition the Regiment are providing Geo teams in support of contingency operations. These include supporting the Airborne Task Force (ABTF), Lead Commando Group (LCG) Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Joint Force Head Quarters (JFHQ).
- 13 Sqn are planning to deploy to Cyprus in November on Ex Trig Med which is a survey task to ensure that the 'Peace Line' as marked by boundaries has not moved (due to land creep on the part of the former opposing factions on the island). The Task is conducted every 2 years.

Army 2020 Announcement

An announcement has been made recently on the new size and shape of the army. This will see further reductions in numbers, restructuring of the 2 'Fighting Divisions' into Reactive and Adaptive Divisions and a greater more integrated role for the 'Army Reserve' previously known as the Territorial Army.

The effects on 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) can be seen below but thus far no Geographic officers or soldiers have been made redundant and we remain a resource in great demand. The restructuring will see a more integrated and formalised role for our Battlegroup support piece but the main headlines are:

- 135 Geo Sqn (V) will be brought under the command of 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) so that better use can be made of civilian specialist skills.
- The Regiment remains part of Joint Force Intelligence Group (JFIG) and the only Royal Engineer capability that will not be under the direct command of 8 Force Engineer Brigade (8 FEB).

In many respects the recent announcements have little direct impact on the Geographic community although the manner in which we support Defence and particularly the Field Army will change slightly. Germany drawdown will continue apace with the 'Reactive Division' located around Salisbury Plain in order to allow heavy armour to exercise.

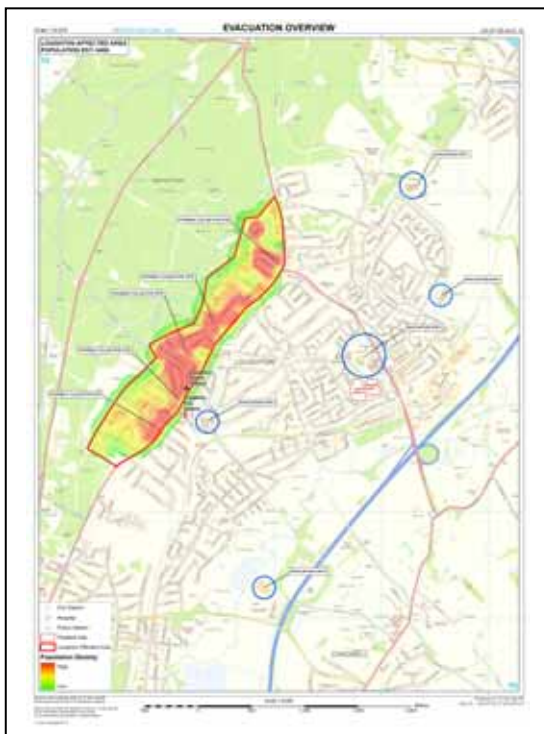
Exercise FOUGASSE RETURNS

At the end of June and start of July the Commanding Officer directed that 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) should exercise its Op OLYMPIC Contingency Teams and also use the opportunity to

exercise other 'teams' in a technical capacity, furthermore this exercise was to be used as a vehicle for a period of military training and sub-unit competition on the military and on the sporting front.

16 Geographic Support Squadron headed up the organisation and implementation of the technical phase of the exercise with Maj Andy Williams driving the concept of the Op OLYMPIC contingency teams hard. The technical Directing Staff team was headed up by WO1 Steve Hutton who ran the tasking and the development of the scenario and from that the nature and quantity of tasking. Mr Hutton states:

"The main aim of the exercise was to test the technical ability of the contingency teams that have been earmarked to support Op Olympic if required. The type of work they had to produce was nothing new to what is required when our soldiers are deployed on Operations, however this exercise was London based, and with that a variety of new issues that would be unfamiliar to the Geo Analyst were experienced. These issues were built into the Exercise scenarios and required the exercise player to utilise unfamiliar datasets, terminology and symbology, along with undertaking work that required a rapid response in defining analytical answers. One of the more intriguing tasks compiled, required the teams to develop a 3D model centred on the financial area in London from which they had to conduct viewshed analysis to determine where they would best site mobile CCTV cameras. This brought with it a number of peculiarities as the teams were also required to utilise Open Source data to interrogate whether their site was suitable enough or not, e.g. not placed in the middle of a road or on the entrance to a tube station".



*Example rapid response product
Forest Fire Evacuation Map*

Both 13 Geographic Squadron and 14 Geographic Squadrons supplied Op OLYMPIC Teams to the exercise with the Regiment in its entirety going onto extended working hours at Denison Barracks. Spare office space in RSMS and throughout the camp was utilised with EXCON running from the Geospatial Analysis Support Cell (GASC) in 16 Geographic Support Squadron. All Regimental personnel were fed and watered from a field kitchen established just outside the barracks providing not only superb food from our military chefs but also a good degree of Esprit de Corps and a shared experience.

The technical phase ran from Thursday 28 June until Tuesday 3 July where a debrief and wash up was conducted and specific tasks and products discussed. All technicians were pushed hard and undoubtedly lessons were learned specifically on Data Management but also on product design and time appreciation. Effectively though the Op OLYMPIC Contingency Teams were exercised and found to be more than ready for deployment and supporting the Olympics from a Geospatial Support perspective.

Exercise FOUGASSE RETURNS – Commanding Officer's Competition

On completion of the technical phase of the exercise the Regiment was handed over to the RSM who ran a CO's Competition with 13 Sections comprising 6 junior ranks each. The objective was to give junior commanders the opportunity to command sections of men and women in difficult and challenging situations and to use a competition as a vehicle for leadership development but also to promote teamwork, communication and Esprit de Corps. The competition was held on the 4 July at Denison Barracks and comprised the following 6 stands:

1. Observation Stand
2. Casualty Extraction (Stretcher Race)

3. Gun Run (Equipment Race)
4. Vehicle Stand
5. Indoor Obstacle Course (Blindfolded in pairs)
6. Range (Patrol Base shoot in respirators)



As ever, when the soldiers of 42 Engineer Regiment are presented with a challenge they rise to it and the grit, drive and determination of the men and women who participated was remarked upon continually by those running it and those that observed the sections going through the various stands. After an action packed and demanding day the Commanding Officer awarded the 'Pinnocks Progress' trophy to Cpl Kempster of 14 Geographic Squadron.

Exercise FOUASSE RETURNS – Sheppard Memorial

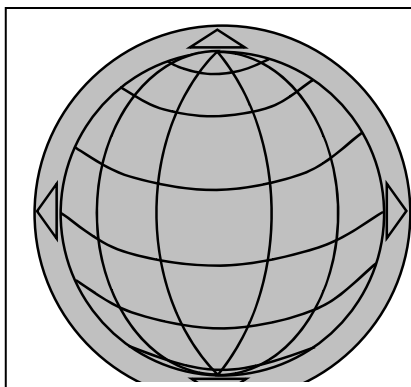
The Sheppard Memorial is run annually and is an inter-unit sports competition. Having been put through their paces both technically and militarily the Sqns were then pitted against each other on the Sports Pitches and competed in the following events with both an A and a B Team:

1. 5 a side Football
2. 6 a side Hockey
3. 7 a side Rugby
4. Chain of command race

As ever the competitive spirit was brought out on a very warm and sunny day with the Sqns playing hard to win. The Chain of Command race comprised an Officer, WO, a SNCO, a JNCO and a Spr the highlight of which was the dunking each of them received in a 'S' Tank (Large rubber water supply tank).

14 Geographic Squadron emerged as the overall winners of the Sheppard Memorial Trophy and the event, not to mention the Exercise as a whole which was finished off with a BBQ.

The Exercise had achieved the CO's intent in terms of exercising contingency teams in their roles but also had a much wider impact on unit cohesion and esprit de corps. Technically, militarily and on the sports pitches the Regiment's officers and soldiers again proved they are very capable, flexible and robust.



Geographic Stable Belt

There has been a move across the Corps for some time to mark the various specialisations with a 'specialist buckle' to the stable belt. These specialisations have been Parachute, Commando, Explosive Ordnance Device, Ghurkha, Diver and Royal Monmouthshire Engineers.

At the Regimental Affairs Committee Meeting 13 Oct 11 the introduction of a Geographic Specialisation stable belt buckle was

approved. Since this approval a 'Geo' stable belt has been commissioned, produced and receipted into the PRI for all qualified Geographic officers and soldiers to purchase and wear. The new Geographic buckle consists of a globe design with the four cardinal points depicted as small arrows. The Geo buckle replaces the RE cap badge but in all other respects the belt conforms to the standard RE belt with the same dimensions and colours.



Summer 2012

The Regiment is currently into a demanding period of support to operations and will continue to work in support of both enduring operations in Afghanistan but also in support of Op Olympic. Leave has been split into 2 blocks to ensure 'one foot on the ground' should there be a requirement for more support as the Olympics run their course. Teams from both 13 and 14 Geographic Squadrons have been 'stood up' and organic staff embedded in London continue to provide intimate Geo Support on demand.

After the Summer Leave period the men and women that make up the ranks of the Regiment will turn their attentions to Mission Specific Training for the next Afghanistan deployments and will also focus on preparation for a Regimental Junior NCO Cadre early in 2013. 14 Geographic Squadron will have their last summer in Germany and also focus on their move to RAF Wyton in summer 2013 so it remains a busy time with the Regiment continuing to work very hard but in the best traditions of the 'Muddy Old Sapper' with a smile on his or her face.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Robinson'.

WO1 (RSM) WD Robinson
RSM
42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic)

Anecdotes – Editor's Plea and Apologies

Once again I apologise to those who have sent in articles but notice that they are not included in this issue. As previously explained, the hardcopy version is printed four up and so the page count has to be dividable by four – hence a last minute shuffle, adding and taking away article of the right length to get the 'maths' right. All articles will be included sooner or later and I would appreciate as many as you can send me.

My Unofficial Knighthood

Older members may remember a young civilian lad named Michael who was employed on general duties at the school for a number of years. A real gentleman and salt of the earth who unfortunately suffered from learning difficulties, albeit he had an encyclopaedic knowledge of boxing. I was fortunate in getting to know him quite well on my many tours at the School in varying ranks, always on first name terms.

In 1972 I returned once again to SMS on being appointed to the dual roll of RSM/SMI. During my initiation tour I was introduced to civilian staff members, one of whom was Michael who immediately greeted me with a smiling "Hello Ron I'm glad you're back!" However a senior member politely reprimanded him by saying "Michael from now on you must not call Mr Birch Ron, you should call him Sir". Michael was not embarrassed or disappointed; he simply said "That's good; glad you're back Sir Ron."

For the next two years, almost daily, I was greeted by a smiling Michael with a friendly "Good Morning Sir Ron". Yes, I know I should have told him otherwise, but it was the only knighthood I would ever get so why not 'milk' the occasion? Perhaps not from Her Majesty but what the heck! it was my unofficial knighthood.

Ron Birch

The White Horse

After finishing training at 1 TRRE at Malvern six of us made our way to Hermitage and were met off the train from Didcot at Hermitage station by Cpl Johnny Pearce – he of the 'wing commander' moustache! It was the 12th of November 1953, a glorious autumn day and the road from the station was knee deep in leaves from the avenue of trees. This rural idyll was to be home for the next nearly nine months. One of the first things that we noticed was the 'White Horse' public house just up the road towards Hampstead Norris and soon it was a regular venue for some very convivial evenings.

I drank cider in those days and, although now living in Herefordshire, I rarely touch it as real ale is the nectar now. Anyway, we had got well towards closing time one evening when someone had treated me to a scrumpy. I suddenly realised that I was standing on the bar, glass in hand and holding the barmaids hand with the other as I sang 'Ilkley Moor' for all I was worth.

We must have been a bit noisy on the way back to camp sometimes as there were warnings about noise when entering the camp. The married quarters in Faircross were fairly new then and not that far from the guardroom. So we decided to use Doctor's Lane which started opposite the White Horse and came out on the Chieveley Road by the gate to the sports field. One evening someone spotted glow worms in the long grass and wanted one! At this distance in time it is difficult to believe rather inebriated 19 year olds in Army uniform rolling about in the grass looking for glow worms.

On another evening one of our number, John Aday from Reading, appeared out of the darkness on the way back to camp carrying a white glass globe from the brick pillar outside the garage and filling station next door to the White Horse. This became a habit but they were always replaced by new ones the next day and never a mention to the Commander. However, John got his posting to BAOR, and rather sooner than expected. When he came to clear his locker there were SIX glass globes and he said "what the hell do I do with these?" Well, we got an RAOC carton from the cookhouse and after dark took them down and put them on the garage doorstep. One can only imagine the disbelief when the proprietor of the garage found them next morning.

Michael Sharp

Life after Military Survey – Vic Moncrieff



I work as a supply teacher and back that up by private tutoring - the legislation on age discrimination was good timing for me. This is the reason for my not being able to attend reunion events. By the end of school Summer holidays - which is a month earlier in Scotland, I'm eager and have to be available - to get back to work. I have degrees that qualify me to teach Physics, Chemistry, Biology, English, Computing and at Primary Schools. I haven't got around to Maths and Geography, but there's still time, although I now plan to do a PhD in Education. Mathematics, English, Physics and Chemistry are the main secondary school subjects that give the teenagers trouble.

Currently I am the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) specialist, covering a maternity leave, for the Severe and Complex Unit of the Additional Support Needs Department at Lanark Grammar School. It's a long way and a long time from 19 Topographic Squadron, 42 Survey Engineer Regiment at Barton Stacy in 1967.

The recent deaths of Andy Anderson and Jimmy James took me back to the AAS Harrogate where Jimmy was our instructor on the A111 Surveyor Trigonometrical Course. The other member of the trio of students was Geoff Morris of whom I have never heard since he left Barton Stacy for Mons Officer Cadet School in 1965. The enduring memory is Jimmy trying to get us to understand Right Ascension and Declination, Sidereal Time and the Celestial Sphere. Great names! Complementary to the class work were the nights spent on the tennis court beside the Harrogate Survey Wing doing Position Line Fixes and 'Latitude by Altitude of Polaris or Octantis.'

John Bickers carrying the Olympic Flame also reminded me of my asking his advice in 1967. Should I leave the army? In view of the intervening years, that was quite a question, to which I still do not know the answer.

When I left the army I worked for Seismograph Service in West Africa. I married my wife Jean in 1974 and she spent a year in Nigeria where I had become a sort of advisory land surveyor for the Italian Oil Company, AGIP. Jean did not care for the life - or perhaps I made that my excuse - so I came home and was a double glazing salesman for four days, before spending a few years on the North Sea with some time as a hydrographic surveyor. Seabed surveying from submersible with Vickers Oceanics was the highlight of that, but I was not very good at it, and was happy to get a job in the Opencast Executive.

I started to study with the Open University and became Computer Applications Officer for the Scottish Opencast. With the rationalisation of the Coal Board in 1987, I accepted a redundancy package and after three years working as a freelance setting-out engineer and finishing my first degree, I took a Post Graduate Certificate of Education, and became a teacher of Physics, Science and Computing.

I was employed at a private school for dyslexic children in Staffordshire for five years and then became a supply teacher. This along with tutoring suits my temperament just fine and I have worked like this for over fifteen years now. I work most of the time in secondary and primary schools in Lanarkshire, Borders and Ayrshire. In addition, and as a financial safety net, on average I tutor about twenty private students for one hour every week. I work seven days per week during most of the year, but I like helping children and young people overcome their lack of confidence and trepidation about examinations, and I like driving around the countryside of Clydesdale. I think that the experience of surveying in the army and later in the oil industry has made me a bit solitary and not a good team worker. I like to be in charge and maybe I'm only good enough to be in charge of myself.

I was a Fellow of the Society of Surveying Technicians, having taken the Joint Test of Competence in 1982. Along with degrees in Physics and Computing, that allowed me to become a Member of the RICS in 1998.

From the army one of the many things I have taken is a respect for and appreciation of, the theory of errors - all these cold days and nights observing stars and points of light in the mist, balancing for refraction and observing many repetitions of the same angles. I use it a lot in work I am, and propose, doing in Educational Research. Reciprocally, a quote I read this morning when studying reads:

'... leaving or giving up a place that is safe, that is 'home'- physically, emotionally, linguistically, epistemologically - for another place that is unknown and risky, that is not only emotionally but conceptually other; a place of discourse from which speaking and thinking are at best tentative, uncertain, unguaranteed...'

This was written by Teresa de Lauretis on feminist theory in 1990. I think it describes what it was like for most of us joining - and leaving - the army.

Vic Moncreiff

Carrying The Torch For The Second Time

This time my 'run', in reality a walk, was on the A1036 Tadcaster road into York past the Marriot Hotel and thankfully the weather was very kind on the day. It was a most exhilarating, exciting experience and I was quite overwhelmed by the attention of the crowds. I had wonderful support from family and friends who came from Harrogate and surrounding areas and felt humbled by it all very and proud to be one of probably only four people to have carried it twice.

John Bickers



Saturday 7th of September

WOs' and Sgts' Mess Hermitage

Come along for a pint and a chat with old friends

NATIONAL SERVICE EXPERIENCES

I was called up for my National Service (N/S) on the 19th of April 1956 after a six month deferment. As I had completed my training as a Cartographic Draughtsman before N/S I was destined for RE Survey. I did six weeks initial square bashing at Malvern, where I was introduced to the joys, among other things, of how to burnish a coal bucket with a darning needle! I was then dispatched to Worcester for weapons and explosives training which I thoroughly enjoyed.

My next stop was SMS Newbury where I completed a Topo Course. We had some very good instructors and I learnt a lot. The course included a few days in the field creating a map by plane-table method. However steam age this may sound now, it really did drum in the basics and it was quite addictive and we all worked long hours to finish.



The RE's Centenary occurred during my time at Newbury and four Sappers from every regiment throughout the world were to attend a parade before the Queen at The School of Military Engineering at Chatham. We assumed they would send four deserving regulars but all 200 of us were marched onto the square and put through our paces on a hot sticky morning. I need to explain that in those days we wore serge battledress with blouse pockets with button-down flaps. So we were all presenting arms when I managed to bring my pig-sticker bayonet through my pocket flap! So I froze, then completed the present arms. At which point the RSM in traditional manner yelled "That horrible man, slope arms and march off the square". Much to my surprise, this resulted in me going to Chatham.

At Chatham we were treated to a month of drill practice in the mornings and trips out or sport in the afternoons. But this was not your usual drill. We had immaculate French-polished rifles with glossy, enamelled metal parts, all too small, so they rattled when slapped in a drill movement. We were also tailored into blue dress uniforms, peaked caps, white chamois-leather belts, rifle-slings and scabbards. During this time I met Sappers who had experienced the terror campaign in Cyprus. When the day came for the parade we were ready ages too early but eventually a ripple of cheering came along the street and we were brought to attention only to discover the bored crowd were cheering a street cleaner collecting horse droppings. Being inspected by the Queen was quite an experience; I remember being surprised how short she was. By the time I got back to Newbury my intake had moved on so I was put in charge of the coal yard. This involved delivering coal throughout the camp and to married quarters.

My next stop was RAF Wyton where I spent the rest of my two years except for a three month spell in Singapore. Life at Wyton was very enjoyable as we were a group of twelve Sappers (6 Radar Air Survey Liaison Section) on a huge RAF Station, including Sgt. Jim Young, known as Junior, Corporal Jimmy James and I was the L/Cpl. During this time we were involved with revising maps of Aden and a lot of the time was spent teaching cartographic skills. The OC was Major Rowland Bowen who was affectionately known in the RAF Mess as the "Pearshaped Gentleman". I arrived at Wyton on their Station Sports Day and the dozen Sappers had covered all except the one mile walk for which I was immediately volunteered. This was how I discovered my aptitude for race walking and following this first win went on to walk for the RAF and afterwards each year in the War Office Sports in Civvy Street.

I was grateful that Major Bowen had encouraged me to take evening classes to gain further GCEs so that I was able to take the exams to become a Chartered Quantity Surveyor and eventually became an FRICS. During this time the OC dispatched me to Barton Stacey to attend a War Office Selection Board. While this was a lot of fun, none of us were recommended as suitable officer material. My lasting memory of this experience was of one of the candidates constantly shouting "come along chaps". The joke is he was a member of the Tate & Lyle family who much to everybody's annoyance got a 'deferred watch'.

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Soon after returning to RAF Wyton Cpl Jimmy James and I went for three months with the RAF Squadron to RAF Seletar in Singapore. The task was to complete an aerial survey of the Malaya/Siam border where British Forces were involved in bitter fighting with the Communists Terrorists (CTs). Trig surveyors were fixing the ground control in the jungle for the aerial photography. The two of us were supposed to be plotting the photography and confirming its suitability for mapping. The Sappers responsible for drawing these maps were stationed at RAF Changi. As they were very short of cartographic draughtsmen, someone at the War Office had spotted that this had been my job in Civvy Street so I was diverted to Changi to help out. During this emergency they were working a shift system but morale was very high and in between shifts we did plenty of swimming and I quickly settled in. Our barrack block was adjacent to one occupied by Gurkha soldiers who spent much of their time stripped to the waist playing rounders. We thought we were fit but not by their standards.

After a couple of weeks I was whisked back to RAF Seletar as originally planned. Apparently the Air Ministry had prevailed over the War Office on this occasion. During the time I was at Seletar one of the helicopters supplying the Sappers in the jungle border region was shot down by the CTs. This involved some rapid photo reconnaissance followed by the four of us (two airmen and two sappers) spending eight hrs on and 8 hours off looking for a crashed helicopter in hundreds of photographs of tree tops. It was eventually located but by the time soldiers arrived all the CTs had left were British body parts suspended from the trees.

All too soon the job was done and we flew home. Flying each way involved nine or eleven hour hops for five days with stops at Tripoli and Malta, Habbaniyah, Karachi and Ceylon. We flew in Hastings aircraft, sitting on steel deck chairs alongside many other service personnel.

When I got back to Wyton again, I was nearing the end of my service and the inevitable demob party. Just before demob I particularly remember lying on my bed being utterly exhausted after a cross-country run when the small package arrived containing my general service medal. I pinned it on my sweaty running vest and was surrounded by several impressed younger sappers. I started to tell them how I survived in the jungle on mud and berries but they soon learned that actually I had spent most of my time perfectly safe in Singapore.

After National Service I spent twelve years with 135 Survey Engineer Regiment in the Territorial Army during which time I became a Sergeant. We completed many mapping tasks though with rather more sophisticated equipment than had been available during National Service. I also spent one summer camp with a unit from Ripon who allowed me to drive huge backactors and bulldozers which I found addictive.

National Service provided me with wonderful opportunities which have coloured the rest of my life. It is a shame a similar experience is not available for the youth of today!

Roy Honeywood



Notice Board

Diary Dates Reminder

20 August: Last day for AGM returns

7 September: AGM and Get Together

Military Survey Course Photographs DVD

The project is now very near its conclusion, the committee have trialled the product and there are some technical tweaks required and a little more work is needed to sort out who's who with people who share the same surnames – who'd have thought that were two M Perrys in Military Survey!!

It turned out that the most common surname among soldiers who have attended a Hermitage course was Brown and that Mike is the most frequent first name for officers – how's that for real trivia!

In order to decide on the best means to produce copies we need to get an idea of how many will be needed. At the moment we are considering charging members in the region of £5 per dvd to go towards the production, postage and packing costs.

If you think that you would be interested in having a copy please let the editor know by emailing him at the address given in the contact list in this newsletter – this would in no way commit you to buying one in the future but would be used solely to gauge interest in the product.

It is hoped to have the final version ready for issue sometime in the autumn of this year.

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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 or Tel; **01635 37510**

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

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

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PLEASE - PLEASE REMEMBER THE GEO SUPPORT FUND</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">I enclose a cheque to support this for £..... payable to “Military Survey Branch REA”</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.

.....

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.**