

EXAMPLES OF ASSISTANCE TO, AND INVOLVEMENT  
WITH, THE CIVILIAN COMMUNITY ON EX CARTO NORGE 76

Mountain Rescue. All detachment personnel and equipment including helicopters, landrovers and medical packs were offered to the Police and Red Cross for mountain rescue. The helicopter was called out at first light on 25 August and managed to find and bring to safety a mentally retarded man who had been lost in the mountains overnight. On another occasion the team was deployed at first light to search for an epileptic girl but she was found by a ground search team.

Geilo Carnival. The detachment provided three survey stands at GEILO (the nearest large town) Carnival. In addition to the equipment on display, boards were provided explaining why a British Military Unit was operating in NORWAY. Visitors were able to speak to the surveyors and operate theodolites, electronic distance measuring equipment and radios. Some of the photographs illustrate how popular this involvement with the locals proved to be. To show his appreciation, the local tourist manager provided dinner and floorshow at a local hotel for some of those who took part.

Fire Fighting Standby. Despite the abundance of water, NORWAY suffered from the same weather as UK in the Summer of 1976. This created an extreme fire hazard which threatened livestock and property. All CARTO NORGE personnel and equipment were offered to the local commander for fire fighting duties. Luckily there were no fires in the Hallingdal Valley and these services were not required.

Air Photography. In response to a request from the local council, the detachment produced large scale air photographs of Ål Hospital to assist in the planning of an extension. Also photo mosaics of the Home Guard School and the local training area were produced for the Commandant of the Home Guard School, Lt Col AMUNDSEN. These were greatly appreciated.

Helicopter Task. A helicopter and a few men assisted the local Alpine Rescue Team by carrying stores and equipment for a new rescue lodge from the town of Ål into the mountains. This task was co-ordinated through the Liaison Officer, Capt SVARDAL.

Medical. The detachment established a close relationship with the Ål Hospital. The doctor and his family visited the unit on several occasions and were shown around the camp and equipment. CPL HARVEY RAMC paid a return visit to the hospital with the OC and SSM.

Reporter. Because this was the first time British troops had exercised in the area, considerable interest was shown by the local newspaper the HALLINGDOLEN. One of the reporters, TORBJØN TRAGETON, was invited to spend a day with the detachment, this included seeing all the technical departments in operation, a briefing by the detachment commander, and a flight into the mapping area with a survey party premarking and photographing control points. The visit received a full page write up in the paper which has a wide circulation in Southern NORWAY.

Children's Party. Thirty children and their teachers from TORPO Primary School were invited to the camp for an afternoon visit. They were allowed to use the various equipments and given a ride in a landrover around the camp area. The Cook Sgt produced a surprise tea of ice cream, fruit, cakes and biscuits as well as sweets and drinks. The boys then issued a challenge to a game of football while the girls attempted volleyball. The children undoubtedly enjoyed the afternoon, especially it seemed, the insight into living under canvas.

Soccer Matches. Two soccer matches were played against local teams, both unfortunately resulted in heavy defeat, despite courageous performances by the more senior members of the team. The Norwegians were entertained in the Detachment bar after each game and presented with a shield to mark the occasion.

Norwegian Cultural Evening. At the request of the Detachment Commander the Liaison Officer organised a Norwegian evening. This comprised a talk on local history and customs followed by a dancing display and music played on the fiddle and jews harp. The speaker emphasised the closeness of the community of the HALLINGDAL Valley and how the speech, dress, music and folklore differed from other parts of Southern NORWAY. Afterwards all the officers and men of the TORPO Home Guard School were invited back, together with their wives, for a barbeque and drinks. The Commandant was presented with a plaque to mark the occasion. As a result of the evening many British soldiers were invited to visit Norwegians in their homes.

Nurses Visit. At the request of the Commandant a nursing course passing through the Home Guard School was invited to the camp to see the detachment in operation. They were then entertained to drinks and a buffet supper.

Adventure Training. Considerable goodwill resulted from the behaviour and conduct on five adventure training mountain trekking expeditions. Each comprised five men who moved into the mountains for a week staying over night in mountain "Hutte". As many Norwegians were doing the same thing, this was an ideal opportunity to meet a wide cross-section of the population. It is clear from the reports submitted by the expedition leaders that many friendships were made and the British were well received.