



Military Survey (Geographic) Branch Royal Engineers Association



Newsletter No 40 Spring 2011

MILITARY SURVEY REUNION

SATURDAY THE 10TH OF SEPTEMBER 2011

Location: Ewell TA Centre, Welbeck Close, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 2BG.

THE HOME OF 135 INDEP GEO SQN RE (V)

Your President, Chairman and Committee invite you to join with us on the 10th of September 2011 on this the second occasion that our annual reunion will be held at 135 Indep Geo Sqn RE (V). We take great pleasure in offering you this opportunity to visit one of the least frequented units of "Military Survey" and we are indebted to Major Michael James RE, the officer commanding, both for the invitation and for allowing us the use of "his barracks" on what is, a normal (weekend) working day for his unit.

We should not have to remind you that the primary function of the day is a reunion but as ever we must hold a brief AGM to elect the committee and approve our finances. We do wish to emphasise that it is the opinion of the committee that this is a "reunion" and the most important part of the day must be the unequalled opportunity it will allow to renew old friendships and meet those "names of old" that might have imbued a certain amount of terror in the minds of our much younger bodies - just remember they are old men now - be nice to them (us)!

You should note that 135 Sqn are preparing for a major exercise on this day but the OC does wish you to have the run of the whole unit, you are free to talk to and question the men but are asked to keep conversation short and to try and avoid overly disturbing the routine work which is going on about you. You have free access to all buildings and offices that are open. There are lots of photos, posters and information dotted about which we are sure you will find interesting and we will be bringing up the old photo albums from Hermitage for your continued delectation.

The Junior Ranks Mess will be open and will serve the usual liquid refreshments including tea and coffee. The drill hall is the focal point for the day and the "old" photo albums will be laid out here. If you wish assistance, a tie or the address of an old friend, someone will be there to help you.

The evening meal will remind many of those superb buffets served in various Messes throughout their years of service and it is to be noted that all serving members of the unit are invited to join with us as they finish work.

Further details are later in this newsletter and a return form is at the last page.

REUNION ----- JOIN WITH US ----- REUNION

CHAIRMAN'S MUSINGS

It has been a long and hard winter but the early signs of Spring are here, not least of which is Alan Gordon gently nagging us for newsletter pieces! Having mentioned our long serving editor I would encourage any of you to commit some of your more amusing memories to paper and send them into Alan for the newsletter. There is no doubt there are a fund of fascinating stories out there just waiting to be shared.

This is a quiet time of year for most of the committee, the events co-ordinator Mick Perry being the exception. We, or rather he, has got well under way with arranging our next re-union in September which will take place courtesy of the CO 42 Engineer Regiment (Geo) and the OC of 135 Squadron at Ewell. It would not surprise me if there are a fair number of us who never got to Ewell during their service and I'm sure a visit would be worthwhile as well as the chance of meeting up with old mates.

Unlike those of us who have retired, this is an extremely busy time for the lads still serving what with the commitment to Afghanistan going on and now the additional task taking place over Libya, the Geo world will undoubtedly be working overtime to cope with that.

Reports from the Regiment and articles such as the lead from the previous newsletter are showing how much the items purchased using money donated by you are appreciated; they make life, especially on operations much more bearable. I suspect as the cuts to the Defence budget bite ever harder our small contributions will become more and more important to the soldiers' welfare. So, on that note I will just re-iterate the policy we have adopted over the last couple of year of using our funds to look after our own, that is both serving and retired.

Finally, many thanks to Alf Isherwood for volunteering to take over the Treasurer role from Mike Gowlett. Alf will be well known to many members but for those not fortunate enough to have met him this newsletter includes a brief biography.

And now back to the allotment to plant some more vegetables!

Angus Cross
Chairman

Survey 'Get Togethers' 2011

11 June – DSA 'Maps and Surveys' Seminar – Hermitage

11/12 June – Field Survey Reunion – Hermitage

25 June – Carto Reunion – Lechlade

10 September – Military Survey Branch REA Reunion – Ewell

23/25 September – Chepstow Group 64B – Market Harborough

Details of each event are in this newsletter.

A Few Words From The Secretary

The date for the Reunion and AGM is definitely Sat the 10th September 2011 and not 11th Sep 2011. Apologies for the inclusion of both dates on the return for the event which seems to have confused some.

REA Badge Of Merit - I am sure the whole Branch will join the Committee in congratulating Mike Payne on being awarded the prestigious REA Badge of Merit by the Management Committee at their meeting held in London on 27th January 2011. This was for the outstanding work that Mike has put in over many years for the Reading & West Berks Branch. Most of you will know that Mike also holds joint membership with our Branch and is our principal Standard Bearer.

Norman Hardisty, previously a branch member of ours but now with the Southampton Branch, also received the Badge of Merit and is congratulated.

Association Annual Dinner - is to be held at the Victory Services Club, 63/79 Seymour Street, London W2 2HF on Saturday 8th October 2011. Reception will be at 1800hrs for 1830hrs. Dress for gentlemen will be lounge suits or blazer and flannels with Corps tie; ladies should dress appropriately. Ticket price remains at £20 per head this year which is exceptional value for a four course meal in London. Closing date for bookings will be the 23rd of September 2011.

Sapper Sunday - will take place on Sunday 9th October 2011 at The Royal Hospital Chelsea. Members are encouraged to attend this event, meet RE In-Pensioners and swap stories over a few pints. It is hope that a curry buffet can be made available although this is likely to be very restricted in numbers and those attending the Association's Annual Dinner (above) will be given priority.

NB Members are advised to visit the REA website (<http://www.reahq.org.uk/>) and apply for tickets individually for either the above functions or contact our Branch Secretary who will forward application forms when they become available.

Remembrance Sunday - will be on Sunday 13th November 2011.

National Standard Bearers Competition - The competition will be held at Brompton Barracks during the Veterans/Corps Memorial Weekend on Saturday 16th September 2011.

REA Facebook Presence - The REA now has a presence on Facebook. The page is only in its infancy and it is hoped will develop over time. Please visit the page at: www.facebook.com/pages/Royal-Engineers-Association/175905092455207

email Addresses

Can any member please provide me (Rod.Siggs@ntlworld.com) the new email address for Roy Sabine - email held: roysabine@esatclear.ie

I have this in my email list tuesley@ukonline.co.uk but cannot cross reference it in the main list of members. So the questions are, "Does anybody recognise it and who does it belong to?"

I also frequently get this message from some members who have a Spam Filtering System installed: "Sorry, but you (Rod.Siggs@ntlworld.com) are not on my list of pre-approved contacts, so your message has been put on hold". A simple message from me – please, please put my name on your list of approved contacts otherwise it makes sending out all the Branch's correspondence so difficult.

Rod Siggs, Branch Secretary

Alf Isherwood



My Army career started in 1952 when at 15½ I joined as an apprentice field surveyor at the Army Apprentice School, Harrogate. After three years it was into the Royal Engineers and down to Cove for 6 months Engineer training before moving on to Hermitage for a short introduction to multiplex.

A posting to Singapore was the next move at the formation of 84 Field Survey Squadron. There followed three years of many and varied tasks around Malaya and promotion to Cpl. (This part of my career is shown in more detail on the branch website)

From Malaya it was a posting to 13 Squadron at Fernhurst for a short period as orderly corporal. 1959 saw me off to SMS as an instructor and promotion to Sgt. In 1960 I was married to Diana and immediately posted to SHAPE in Paris in temporary charge of map procurement and distribution. During our time there our daughter Sarah was born.

After 14 months in France I was posted to 14 Squadron in Germany as Troop Sgt and a spell as stand in Chief Clerk. In 1965 another move, this time back to 84 Squadron serving in Sarawak for a short spell and then on to Sabah with promotion to S/Sgt. The last year of the tour was back in Singapore with a short spell in north Malaya during the Thai border survey.

1968 saw me back at Hermitage on the field survey teaching staff until 1972 when I was on the move again, this time to Cyprus as WO2 in charge of the Map Depot. Two years later I was back in UK this time with 19 Squadron, 42 Regiment at Barton Stacey but after one year here I was promoted to WO1 and received my last posting which was as Depot Manager with 8 Map & Air Chart Depot in Guildford.

Retirement and Civvy Street started in December 1977. After two months out of work I joined Seiko, the Japanese watch company, where I stayed until 1996 when I took early retirement. It wasn't very long before I had a call from the company asking if I could do some holiday cover that I have continued to do until recently.

I have been involved for some years with Reading & District Fuchsia Society serving in several positions on the committee. While serving as Chairman I offered, with the assistance of a team of volunteers, the societies help in maintaining one of the small gardens at the Royal Berkshire Hospital which has now been running for seven years.

Alf Isherwood

TREASURER'S INPUT – SPRING 2011

Financial Results – 2010 The accounts have been successfully audited. The full annual accounts including the auditor's (very generous!) report can be seen on the website under 'Members – Accounts'. In view of the healthy state of the balance sheet, the committee decided that last year's surplus of £473.06 will be added to the RE (Geo) Fund for the welfare of JAGO soldiers.

Subscriptions In the accounts, this is a quiet time of the year for expenditure but not so for income! The majority of members' subscriptions have been paid in February and March and the Treasurer and his successor, Alf Isherwood, have been busy getting the ledger and subs book up to date. I will be able to give a full report on income and a full budget forecast and worth statement for the next newsletter. Meanwhile, 'work in progress' continues.

Michael Gowlett

News From The Military Front

RSM's Column

Doesn't time fly when you are having fun; here I am on my third military front update already and almost halfway through my tenure. Unless you have been living in a cave you will undoubtedly be aware of the turmoil and upheaval that is unfolding in parts of the Middle East and North Africa, this, as you can imagine has sent planning wheels spinning all over the MOD. Combine this with a military that currently expects Geo to support many components of that wheel, and you have a recipe for late nights and short notice.

Despite the fact that the Regiment is running on hot it is hard to keep thoughts off the possible consequences of Strategic Defence and Security Review from our minds. On the 4th April 2011 the information concerning Tranche 1 of the volunteer/non volunteer redundancy fields were announced; a field being a set of criteria which will let soldiers/officers know whether they can apply for, or may be told, that they are redundant. Briefs were carried out and lists promulgated, you'll be happy to hear that Geo is a pinch point trade and as such is not being considered in Tranche 1.

With the CO, Lt Col AR Wilby, now firmly in post the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess decided the time was right to invite him to be dined in at our Mess. The evening was a great opportunity for him to see his SNCOs in a more social environment. The evening was extremely well attended with 14 Geo Sqn making the long journey from Germany and many of the outstations arriving to welcome him into the Mess.

Training

Training continues to be challenging and as I write this the Regiment has only just returned from Ex Pinnocks Progress. Articles on the exercise will be included in the next contribution to News from the Military Front.

170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp and 42 Engr Regt (Geo) PNCO Course
By Spr Hewitt

At the end of October 2010, 42 Engr Regt (Geo) amalgamated with 170 (Infra Sup) Eng Gp on a five week PNCO (Potential Non Commissioned Officer) course run mainly by 170 (Infra Sup) Eng Gp with the help of 42 Engr Regt staff, to be run in various locations starting at Chillwell.



On day 1 the course had a PFA (Personal Fitness Assessment) which claimed its first few victims, followed by a thorough kit inspection with added free phys, for those who either didn't have the right piece of kit or those who hadn't labelled it correctly with their name. In the afternoon, all the kit was packed and the course set off to Weymouth to start the course in earnest.



The second day started in Weymouth which was our barracks for the next two weeks. As expected the two weeks were filled with plenty of room inspections, lessons and lots of PT in the mornings which at times was a bit cheeky, but was quite amusing when it was blowing a gale, absolutely hammering it down, freezing cold, and when crawling through the wet grass. Other highlights in Weymouth included the raft race, between the four sections. This didn't go too well for one of the sections since they ended up drifting down shore at a rapid rate of knots and had to be saved by the rescue boat. All in all it was a memorable experience.

The start of the third week meant the beginning of the military exercise phase in Sennybridge which is of course every squaddies favourite place. In mid November it was a bit chilly to say the least, with temperatures reaching -18°C on one of the nights. The time in Sennybridge was probably the hardest part of the course but also the most rewarding as the lessons learnt in the first two weeks came into practice. The general cheekiness of patrols, being bugged out, and bad weather all led to strong team work and cohesion within and between the sections. Although this phase had been severely testing and rewarding everyone was happy to see the end of it and civilisation again.

The last week mostly comprised of rifle drill ready for the pass off parade and recovery from the exercise. The rifle drill was looking good by day three, but due to snow and ice on the parade square it was decided that the parade was now going to be held inside a hanger. This was a bit of a disappointment for the course but a necessity due to the persistent snow dumps. The final day came around and all the practice paid dividends being credited to the course; the parade went brilliantly. The awards were handed out by the Commandant, HQ RSME Brig Baveystock which included Best Soldier, Best Endeavour, and Soldiers' Soldier. Afterwards the course finally fell out to enjoy a well deserved long weekend.

Operations

With all areas of the Regiment now accustomed to reacting at short notice to an impending threat, the current crisis in Libya was not likely to catch us unprepared, and it didn't. Data preparation began in earnest as soon as trouble began in Tunisia and Egypt, ensuring that by the time things rumbled in Libya we were ready with data and technicians. The support began with our dedicated cover deploying to support the Spearhead Lead Element in its initial planning phase being crashed out. Other elements have since deployed to PJHQ to bolster the Geo element. Coincidentally I have visited both Tunisia and Egypt in the last two years.

With all the talk about Libya we shouldn't forget that the Relief in Place (RIP) in Afghanistan is almost complete, and will remain the main effort for the Regiments personnel. SSgt Marshall has already returned home from Camp Leatherneck and is preparing for his new posting to Washington following his recent selection for promotion to WO2; great for him but not for the regimental hockey team.

The recent six week surge to complete the TAGGs airfield survey task, under the command of Lt Marshall and the 13 Geo Sqn STCO, WO2 Dave Mills, has recently returned to Hermitage to complete the relevant reports. At present only a limited number of personnel have the experience required to complete this niche capability, so another successful task brings much needed experience and input into our tactics, techniques and procedures(TTPs).

Our lads continue to impress with the quality of the service they provide on Operations, and it's particularly nice to see that the success of the DATAMAN system in both Lashkar Gah and Camp Bastion, has been recognised in the form of the TFH Commander's commendation being awarded to SSgt Giles for his efforts during its initial integration in theatre.

A New Geo Cell in Afghanistan - HQ RC (SW) **By SSgt Marshall**

At the beginning of 2010 rumours that 1 Marine Expeditionary Force Forward (1 MEF FWD) United States Marine Corp (USMC) would be re-designated as a Regional Command came to fruition. A merry band from across the Regiment and Major Bell RE who was currently serving at DILSNA Washington DC were formed to create the Geo Cell that would work within Headquarters Regional Command South West HQ RC (SW), Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan (on paper at least). The build up training took place in various locations around the UK and Sennelager in Germany. Due to a number of outside constraints and date changes for the start of the tour the team would never actually be fully formed until 22 July 2010 in Afghanistan. Maj Bell had deployed some 10 days before the rest of the team, mainly due to a lack of accommodation and office space. Our small British input of 100 personnel to the HQ was to be dwarfed by the 8000 US Marines on the same site.

After our arrival we had 1 day's acclimatisation before attending the compulsory Reception Staging and Onwards Integration (RSOI) training on Main Operating Base (MOB) Bastion a short journey from Leatherneck. RSOI complete and completely cooked after a day on the ranges in helmet and body armour we headed to our new home.

After what seemed like days of filling out forms for various different US accounts, agencies and security check points we entered our new office, a tented complex with miles of fibre optic cable and dust everywhere. A new building was under construction and we would be due to move in to our new air conditioned home in 5 -6 weeks. Unbelievably for a construction project in Afghanistan the completion date was brought forward and after constructing our own desks and chairs we hauled our 17 boxes of brand new GEOSYS computer equipment into the new open plan office. This office was shared the resident USMC Topo and Imagery Analyst's from 1st Intel Battalion.

To say the USMC is a well fed organisation is a massive understatement, the highlight of the week being Surf and Turf on a Sunday evening. Lobster and Steak night is always well attended by all, US identification cards are required due to the amount of Brits sneaking across from the neighbouring Camp Bastion. Free cans of drink and snacks at every meal to take away, there really is nothing here to spend your money on.

The gym facilities are excellent, running routes everywhere. The only thing missing on Camp Leatherneck is any sort of welfare facility. Compared to other US Army Camps the USMC really are the poor cousins, luckily for the British we can pick up the BFBS TV and radio signal from Bastion and use their welfare phones and internet.



Picture L –R: LCpl Bennett, SSgt Marshall, Spr Kendrick, Spr Boyes, Sgt Fife, Maj Bell

Life in Leatherneck By Spr Bennett

We're at the fifty seven day point as I write this. According to my chuff chart that's around a third of the tour complete. This is my second time in Afghanistan (the first being a five week TAGG's survey task earlier in the year) and my first full tour. I take pleasure, however, in winding my mates up by saying it's my second tour and that I wouldn't already have a medal if the survey task didn't count. They always bite when I say that.

We left Hermitage fifty eight days ago after a course of PDT, OPTAG and briefing days, mostly aimed at Officer level, and featuring more death by powerpoint than ever before. A portion of it was in Germany though, so I did manage to "recuperate" in the evenings.

We were to travel to Camp Leatherneck and establish a Geo Cell in the newly created Regional Command South West, RC(SW). Things went relatively smoothly and despite a fair amount of indecision by some of the Americans we moved into our new office building ahead of schedule. Unlike some other geo cells we share the space with the rest of the South West Analysis Centre (SWAC) and our American Geo equivalents, "Topo", pronounced, "Tow Poh" of course. They turned out to be a group of like minded and switched on people, not at all the stereotypical Marines. Only one of them chews tobacco and they hardly ever Hoo-Rah us.

One of the highlights of the tour for me came a few weeks ago when I was promoted to LCpl for the duration of the tour. We were told all the Royal Engineers were having some kind of parade in the HQ compound. On being brought to attention by SSgt Marshall we were given the "Importance of correct dress" speech by Lt Col Sturgeon RE. I had heard about this and knew what was coming next. I didn't expect Commander RC(SW) Maj Gen Mills to turn up just in time for a photo though. That same evening there was a CSE show on in Camp Bastion featuring a genuinely hilarious Canadian comedian but more importantly the CSE dancing girls who were appreciated by all. It also made a nice change as there is nothing in the way of welfare/recreational facilities on Camp Leatherneck. The only activity other than work is PT so as you might imagine I'm fitter than I was when I arrived. No Op Massive as yet though. This is mainly due to the Gym's being rammed full of protein ingesting Marines lifting huge weights that are designed to look impressive but weigh less than your average PTI's bergen.

Our working day starts at eight except for three times a week when we do PT at six thirty. A lot of people may be recoiling in horror at the thought of group PT on tour but it is proving to be a good group activity. Each one of us takes turns in deciding what the session will consist of be it a circuit/run or my favourite the Osprey(Body Armour) Run.

The plus side of being on Leatherneck is the food. Although I am starting to get a bit bored of the weekly rotation, Mongolian Night is always a morale boost. It's steak and lobster night tonight, and although it's not been as good since they stopped chargrilling the steak, it still beats rations. The only downside to American food is that you can't get a good bacon sandwich or full english breakfast.

I am currently looking forward to R&R which, again, my chuff chart tells me is forty one days away. Hopefully the time will pass as quickly as the first fifty seven days and I will be back in England before I know it.

Promotions

The number of promotions has continued to be hard to predict in the shadow of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. At the top of the tree only WO2 Si Crago gained a selection for promotion to WO1, a direct result of the lack of WO1s applying for commission. The competition for WO2 was also very tough with SSgts Pearce, McEvoy, Marshall, Haslope being selected from a very competitive cohort. Lastly the Sgts to SSgts proved lean for Hermitage Station with only the main stream Sgt Agus, from the RSMS, and Sgt Sorbie of the REME receiving the good news. 14 Geo Sqn in Germany faired rather better with Sgts Wright, Whiteman, and Graham all being selected. At the time of writing we await with anticipation for the results of the Sgts' board.

I will sign off here with thanks to you all for your continued support and assure you that your legacy is in good hands with the current crop of Geo soldiers.

'Once a Sapper, always a Sapper'!



WO1 (RSM) A Conetta RE,
Hermitage Station

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Field Survey, Topo Tech and Honorary Members Gathering

11 June 2011 at Denison Barracks



2009 saw a successful reunion of mainly serving former field surveyors. The second 'fieldie' reunion will be held at Hermitage over the weekend of the 11th and 12th June and this time they would like to see many of the more 'mature' fieldies coming along to enjoy a beer or two, a good curry and to swing the lamp into the early hours.

The event will start in the Sgts' Mess with a light finger buffet for lunch and a look at the equipment used by the Geographic Technician today, a briefing on current operations and field survey tasks and a chance for some old boys to tell us about their experiences in Civvy Street as surveyors.

At some point during the early evening there will be an official photograph taken of all attendees that will be forwarded on to all at a later date.

It is also our intention to have a slide show running in the background in the Mess of any fieldie photos taken on exercises or operations over the years. Please can any interesting shots be forwarded to Ady Beard as early as possible, with names of faces in photo, unit, operation or exercise name, location and date (included in the file name, metadata or in an attached text file).

The DSA will run the fifth in its series of seminars on historical military surveying, mapping and charting on the same Saturday as this event.



The seminar will run from 1025 to 1700 hrs and so is a good trailer for the field survey event – details elsewhere in this newsletter.

Unfortunately the unit is unable to provide any accommodation on barracks but a list of B&B's and hotels in the local area is available.

The cost will be in the region of £15-20. The final price will be determined once returns and numbers have been received and known. This will pay for lunch, curry and bar staff. The major bonus is - beer still only costs £1 per pint in the Sgts' Mess!

If you would like to attend, or want further information, please contact WO2 Ady Beard at jago-docsplanwo@mod.uk or call him on 01635 204497. All applications need to be in by the 10th of May 2011. A great opportunity to pull up a sandbag and swing and a lamp!

Ady Beard



Carto Reunion 25 June 2011



Carto Reunion spookily coincides with the Trout Fest (<http://www.thetroutinn.com>) again this year, so make a date in your diary for Saturday the 25th of June for a repeat of last year's festivities but with even more wine, wild women and song.

We had a great turn out for our first year and it would be good if we could find more fallen comrades between now and June, so please re-double efforts to ferret them out. To register your intention to join us or to find out more information contact Nick Adnitt on 01264 336 339 or email him at nickadnitt@aol.co.uk.



Highlights from the Committee Meeting

A committee meeting was held at the WOs' & Sgts' Mess, Hermitage on Tuesday 1st March 2011 with nine in attendance and apologies from Alan Gordon, Pete Dowell and Ken Hall. Updates on Treasurer matters, planning for this years reunion and on recent events in the military and civilian Geo worlds are included in this newsletter. Other points discussed were:

- Membership now stands at 364 – be nice to top 400 so why not recruit someone today!
- The CD with a potted history of Military Survey aimed at new RE Geo recruits has been reviewed and there a few minor amendments to be made.
- The proposal to produce the RSMS 'Rogues Gallery' is still under investigation.
- 135 Sqn is to be encouraged to nominate someone for the Branch Award.
- The President welcomed Alf Isherwood and thanked him for volunteering to shadow Mike Gowlett with a view to succeed him following a vote at the AGM.
- The Committee considered the merits of creating a Facebook and Flickr site but after discussion decided to take no action at this time.

Newsletter Dates 2011/12

Edition	Dates for Input	Target Published
Summer	By 15 July	End July
Autumn	By 15 October	End October
New Year	By 10 January	End January
Spring	By 15 April	End April

Tony Hoadley

Tony Hoadley, a much loved husband and father, died peacefully on the 13th of March 2011.

Tony had been a national service officer serving from 1958 until 1960. He attended an Army Survey Course, achieved the rank of Lieutenant and was a Branch member.

News from the Civilian Front

Staffing Stuart Haynes OBE retired as Director DGC in early March; he has been succeeded by Paul Hancock.

Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) Following the SDSR announcement of a reduction of 25% in MOD's civilian staffing civilians by 25,000 over the next five years DGC is still awaiting definitive direction on SDSR reduction in DGC numbers. Senior Management currently assume a worse case cut of 25% with an initial 20% reduction in the next 12 months from 464 to 371 a loss of 93 civilian posts. The Department-wide Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS) scheme will be the prime mechanism to achieve this reduction. The scheme closed 31 March with offers to be made to successful applicants in July 2011.

ICG Estate Rationalisation - DGC/JAGO Merger A study is in work to look at the merger of DGC and JAGO into a new organisation; provisionally called the Defence Geospatial Organisation (DGO).

Pride Programme to Rationalise and Integrate the DIS Estate (Pride) is also to conduct a study into the possible relocation of DGC from the Feltham site to Wyton in the 2015 timeframe.

Production – Support to Ops DGC continues to produce a range a geospatial products in support to Ops, standard series topographic line maps, digital datasets such as ditch analysis, cross country movement and compound map products. Now work has commenced on a 5K fully attributed digital dataset over the Helmand operational area. DGC has also supported recent Ops in the Middle East and North Africa with a range of standard and non-standard products.

Production Systems Upgrade Production Generation Upgrade (PGU) continues, with the installation of new equipment and implementation of new production flowlines DGC Foundation Division (formerly Production Division) is becoming more flexible in its capabilities. The departure from stove-pipe systems and applications to open commercial packages has provided the division with greater flexibility in the use of resources, improved staff capabilities all of which will lead to reduced production timelines and improved re-use of geospatial data.

Old Boys Reunion (Picnic in the Park) A reminder that this year's event will take place on Friday 10 June 2011, 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 Production Division,
Room 019, Hotine Building,
Defence Geographic Centre,
Elmwood Avenue,
Feltham TW13 7AH
Tel: 0208 818 2702 e-mail: Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk

Notable Retirees

March 2011 – Stuart Haynes OBE, Director DGC

Pete Dowell

Wanted: An Event Organiser

Mick Perry would very much like to stand down and hand over to someone else. The role is not too onerous as regards time and effort.

Why not contact Mick (details on last page) to find more about what the job involves?

Life After Military Survey – Paul ‘Scouse’ Murray



In March 2009 Captain Scouse Murray was sworn in as one of The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard.

The original Yeomen of the Guard or Yeomen Archers were created in 1485 to guard the new King, Henry VII. As then, our sense of duty and commitment to our Monarch is absolute. We no longer carry the harquebus, or a quiver of arrows with the longbow of by-gone days, or indeed protect the body of the Sovereign in its true meaning, but we are as proud and certainly no less loyal to our Sovereign, because, we are **THE** Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard (The Body Guard).

The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard is now the oldest Royal Body Guard, and also the oldest military corps now existing in this or any other country, pre-dating the [Gentlemen-at-Arms](#) by 24 years and The Queen's Body Guard for Scotland, The Royal Company of Archers, who were founded in 1676.

Though The Body Guard can be traced to the armed personal guards of the Saxon and Norman sovereigns, its real historical origin is to be found in the body guards of the Plantagenet kings of eight hundred years ago. These latter guards however, were known by various designations, such as "Cross Bowmen of the Household," and "Archers of the Guard of the King's Body," and were often created anew by the Monarch on his accession.

The Yeoman State Dress worn is, in its most striking characteristics, the same as it was in Tudor time some 521 year ago. Because so few changes have taken place in the accoutrements of The Guard, it is not difficult to envisage its appearance through a great part of English history. Although in 1809 the ancient records of The Guard were destroyed during a disastrous fire at St James' Palace, enough information has been compiled from other sources to provide a vivid description.

DOUBLET - Scarlet cloth Tudor, embroidered, back and front cut whole. Full sleeves gathered into wristband with one hole and small button. Four skirts pleated into waist. Three small buttons and holes on left shoulder, and five small buttons and holes on left side seam. Blue Velvet and Gold lace shoulder strap on left shoulder with one large button.

EMBROIDERY - Rose, thistle and shamrock with scroll and ER surmounted by a Tudor Crown on back and front. *Trimming*s: 3/8 inch gold spot lace and blue velvet. *Linings*: white cotton, body and sleeves, blue shalloon skirts.

BUTTONS - Gilt, crown and German border.

SERGEANT-MAJORS - On right arm four chevrons of 3/4 inch gold spot lace surmounted by crown.

BREECHES - Scarlet cloth, split falls, 3/4 inch gold spot lace garter, with gilt buckle at knee; and three small buttons and holes. Red, white and blue ribbon rosettes at knee.

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HAT - Flat brimmed black velvet Tudor hat, gossamer body, crown 5 inches deep, brim 2 ¾ inches. Red, white and blue ribbons in bows all round close above brim.

SWORD BELT - Maroon leather, diced, 3¼ inches wide, laced as Shoulder Belt with large baldrick frog, gilt oval buckle the width of belt, with gilt metal slide.

SHOULDER BELT - Scarlet cloth 3¼ inches wide, lined blue shalloon; four rows gold 3/8 inch light of blue velvet between the laces; two gilt eyelets 4 inches from bottom of each end with blue ribbon tie; a large gilt swivel riveted with two plates to end of belt.

HOSE - Scarlet Merino stockings or tights.

SHOES - Patent-leather Oxford, with rosette-buckle, and red, white and blue ribbon rosettes. (Note, if any Yeoman arrived for duty with a pair of patent-leather shoes the Messenger Sergeant Major would have a coronary, regardless of what the Official Court Dress Regulations may state. There is friendly rivalry between the various Regiments/Corps regarding the quality of the shine on one's shoes. Wearing patent leather is seen as the lazy option).

RUFFS - White muslin, four rows 3 inches deep, goffered into neck band with tape drawstring.

CLOAK - Blue Inverness with hood, lined Scarlet Italian, gilt rose clasp at neck, and eight buttons. Generally only worn at the laying-in of state of a Monarch.

GLOVES - White cotton, buttoned at the cuff (used to be buckskin).

PARTIZANS - (Yeomen Only) - Steel head, blue and gilt with Royal Arms and Royal Cypher and crown, fitted into long gilt socket, below which is a large yellow and crimson tassel. A lance wood staff 6 feet 2 inches long to top of tassel, steel shoe.

STICK - (Sergeant-Majors and Officers Only) - Black varnished stick, silver boss let in top device, Royal Cypher and crown, with rose, thistle, and shamrock, and motto, plated band, eyes for tassel, plated ferrule.

SWORD - Gilt hilt, half basket, with three bars; Royal Crest; Crown pommel; white fish-skin grip, gilt wired. Blade blued and gilt, with Royal Cypher and Crown; Black leather scabbard, gilt locket with hook, Royal Cypher engraved above hook; gilt shoe.

The weight of the tunic, breaches, hat and ruff combined is 16lbs (7.2kg); the sword weights 1lb (.45kg) and the partisan weights 7lbs (3.15kg). The total marching weights of The Body Guard kit weighs 24lbs (10.8kg).

It should be noted that Servicewomen are not excluded from applying for an appointment as a Yeowoman of the Body Guard so long as they meet the criteria.

Candidates must have completed no less than 22 years in the Army, Marines or Royal Air Force; retired at no less than the rank of Sergeant; hold the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal; be at least 5ft 10ins tall and have a chest measurement of at least 38ins and should have been accepted and taken the loyal oath before their 55th birthday. All Yeomen must retire at the ripe old age of 70.

In the 12 months I have been a Yeoman, I have been on duty at investitures, garden parties, the State Opening of Parliament, the Garter Service and a State Banquet, the highlight though was in fact my first duty which took place in the Lady Chapel in Westminster Abbey on the occasion of the 500th Anniversary of the death of our founder King Henry VII in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Making it even more special was that Donna also attended the Service as a guest and afterwards we attended a reception in the Throne Room in St James' Palace.

I am the 705th Yeomen since 1825 and the first from Military Survey (I Think)!

Scouse Murray

Bernard 'Lofty' Proud

1931882 Sergeant Bernard George Proud, Royal Engineers, died on the 12th March 2011.

Bernard was a surveyor in the Royal Engineers from 1945 to 1955. He left school at 16 and, because of an interest in maps and being good at mathematics, joined the Ordnance Survey Apprentice Tradesmen Boys Royal Engineers in 1945. His training took place at Bryn Howel in Wales and he was given the nickname "Lofty" (he was 6' 4"), which stayed with him for all his time in the army and was still used at reunions. In the photograph below, taken at Bryn Howel, Bernard is standing fifth from the left in the back row.



In May 1946 the Boys Unit left Wales and moved to the RE Survey Training Centre at Longleat in Wiltshire. Bernard completed his training here in July 1947 and was classified as 'Surveyor Trigonometrical A3'. He then went to do his basic military training at Norton Barracks near Worcester. Thirteen weeks later he transferred, as Sapper Proud, to No. 1 Training Battalion, R.E., near Malvern for Corps training – bridging, demolition, etc. When he completed his training in December 1947, he then expected to be posted back to Survey Training Centre for further training, but in fact he and a colleague, Tom Jackson, were posted to a survey computing unit based in Hanwell, Middlesex. Their task was to assist in the preparation of navigational aids for the RAF. Apparently it was not uninteresting work and they had some very smart electric calculators to work with. No computers then!

In April 1948, Bernard and Tom returned to the Survey Training Centre and were interviewed to determine what courses they should attend. Bernard suggested that as he wanted to stay in the making of maps it would be useful to know something of the printing processes involved, so he trained as a 'Helio Worker A3'. In October

1949 he was posted to 42 Survey Engineer Regiment, which was based in the Suez Canal zone at Sobraon Camp at Fayid. His first job was to travel across the Sinai by jeep to assist in the last of the observations in a trigonometrical chain from Jordan to Egypt. He crossed the Sinai realising that this was roughly the reverse of T. E. Lawrence's camel trip from Jordan to Egypt. The survey party he was joining had based itself in an old fort at Kuntilla. Bernard's task was to set up one of the last two lights required to complete the Mediterranean Chain. He travelled south from the fort by jeep to the foot of a hill, with equipment consisting of a large box containing the light, a large heavy duty 12 volt battery, some COMPO rations and a can of water. In order to carry this all to the top of the hill he was introduced to a local Arab and his camel. Despite Bernard having no Arabic and the local not having any English, together they loaded the camel and eventually arrived at the hill top and Bernard set the light up in daylight,

centring it over the trig point and orienting it as best as he could. Whilst waiting for night time, he reflected: *“less than a fortnight ago I was sitting in a train watching Europe flash by, and aware that a pleasant dinner was in the next carriage. Now I was sitting on a bleak mountain with a chap who could not speak English and his exceedingly smelly camel; the latter seemed to defecate almost continuously and, when not doing so, passed wind”*. Anyway, after dark, the light from the observer at the other end (some 30 odd miles away) was seen. Standard Morse signals were exchanged by use of the lamps and a flat piece of wood from his compo box until the other observer signalled “all clear” and that was that!



In March 1950 Bernard transferred, with Tom Jackson, to Aqaba in Jordan to join the 19 Topographical Squadron which was based in Ma'an. The work in Jordan was to put in the control for mapping and heighting of air photography recently flown by the RAF. Some major triangulation had been carried out, but a denser concentration was required. Once this was completed the squadron got down to heighting. The air photographs were flown in straight lines and the draughtsmen back in Egypt marked on the photos where they needed heights and sent them to Ma'an for surveying. Heighting consisted of usually 3 or four surveyors, each in a jeep with a driver, a wad of air photos and a wooden box containing 3 barometers. A further set of barometers was left at a trig point with one surveyor and was known as the base barometer set and was used to keep a

log of pressures, recorded at regular intervals during the day. Bernard's introduction to the job was to be the base man. He recalls that on his first day his trig point was on a small rocky hillock. Being base man he did not need a vehicle, so he was stationed there for about 8 hours with a thermometer, his barometers, a record sheet and pen, a bottle of water and a piece of wood to shade the barometers. He began to worry when the thermometer started to drop, heralding rain that in his words *“had never been experienced since Noah was a boy”*. It finished after ten minutes, but he was soaked through so he took off all his clothes. As the nearest habitation was 100 miles away he was not worried about offending anyone, however, he was a little concerned about sunburn on those 'parts' not usually on view!



19 Topographic Squadron – Bernard 2nd from right in front row.



In Iraq in civvies – Bernard 2nd from left.

In July 1951 Bernard was issued civilian clothes and went with his unit to Habbaniya in Iraq – to update maps in preparation for a possible Russian spring offensive. In 1952 the unit moved to Kuwait, then back to Iraq, then onto Jordan and then to Aqaba before returning to 42 Survey in Fayid.

After a spell in GHQ Fayid, Bernard was then posted to Cyprus. Armed with a driver and a jeep he did trig identification for Air Ministry tests. After returning to the School of Military Survey near Newbury in 1953 and becoming Troop Sergeant of 2 Troop, he also completed

a plane table survey to meet the updated All rate - based at Tidworth with the 32 Assault Regiment, RE. Then later in 1953, Bernard transferred to 14 Field Survey Squadron, part of the BAOR, and was posted to Lemgo in Germany. His first job was to assist with a cadastral survey of an old WW2 airfield on the Dutch border, after which he mapped areas along the British/Russian zone border. A good friend of Bernard's in Germany was Eric 'Dusty' Saunders and they kept in touch right up to the end of Bernard's life.

In March 1954 Bernard married Margaret Lance, a girl he had first met on a Hayling Island beach in 1945, and in August of 1954 Margaret joined Bernard in the unit's married quarters in Dortmund. One of his last jobs before leaving the RE in 1955 was updating the map of the Hohne Ranges.



Plane tabling on Salisbury Plain.

After his resignation Bernard returned to the UK, as he said *'with de-mob suit, £40 and a pregnant wife'*. After a period as a land surveyor with London County Council Bernard joined Mowlem in 1956 and was posted to Iran (Persia as it was then). Then in 1957 he joined 'Seismograph Service Limited' a UK seismic survey company. He remained with SSL from 1958 until he retired in 1989. During his SSL career he moved from land surveying into project management, becoming a senior 'Party Chief' for the company. He ran seismic (and coring) crews in England (various times), Nigeria (early 1960s), Oman and the Trucial States (1960s), the North West Territories of Canada (early 1970s), Botswana (1970's) and South Africa (1980s). His time in Botswana and South Africa were probably his most enjoyable with SSL; Margaret was with him in Gaborone and Johannesburg for nearly all of the last fifteen years of his working life.

After leaving SSL, Bernard and Margaret returned to the UK, to the slight disappointment of their children who had been expecting continued access to an exotic African holiday destinations. They settled back into the family home in Bound Lane on Hayling Island, which they had bought in 1966 and for a while, Bernard took a part-time job at the island's hardware store. He and Margaret lived in Bound Lane until the house and garden became too big and they moved to a house on Hayling sea front in 2003. Unfortunately, in 1999 he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, which progressively got worse such that from 2009 he was quite debilitated. In 2010 the disease was so far progressed that he had to move to a permanent care home, where he sadly died in 2011.

Another friend from his Army Days, Tom Hartley, in a letter to Margaret, Bernard's widow, said: *"Time with 'Lofty' was always happy – and at times quite hilarious. He had a wicked sense of*



humour and was always good company. His height always insured I was never christened 'Lofty' and as 'right marker' he would always set a long marching stride just to make it difficult for the rest of the squad!"

Bernard George Proud, 1929 to 2011, Sergeant, Royal Engineers 1947 to 1955, beloved husband, father and grandfather. He is survived by his wife Margaret, his three sons and one daughter – Tim, Ian, Richard and Diana (and their partners Jo, Sue, Lois and Paul respectively), and his nine grand-children: Tania, Claire, Ben, Peter, David, Hannah, Isabel, Rebecca and Daniel.

Richard Proud

Army Apprentice College Chepstow – Group 64B

It is proposed to hold a 64B group (Chepstow) old comrades reunion on 23-25 September 2011 in Market Harborough. Any member of the Survey component of the Group who is interested in attending should contact Ian (Gramps) Parr at the following email

address: ilp514@hotmail.co.uk or call 023 802 67552.

Specifically looking for Dave Young, Trevor Evans, Robert (Charlie) Brown, Duncan Brimson, Mick Stonefry, Jim Steger and Jim Adamson.

Life After Military Survey - David Powell

Having left Military Survey in December 1972, after having served in Chepstow, Cove, Barton Stacey, Hermitage and Düsseldorf, I joined an aerial survey company in Worcester prior to setting-up my own business in April 1982 (just over 29 years ago!) in Ferndown, Dorset, carrying out small land surveys for architects and setting-out roads, pipelines, etc. In 1985 I moved the firm to Ringwood, Hampshire (just 10 miles east) and, by 1989, had 39 employees and a fleet of 21 Subaru cars, with work throughout the UK and in mainland Europe and the West Indies. The 1990/91 recession hit our market sector badly and I decided to scale down the firm and specialise in expert witness work (although retaining our core land surveying clients). We (David J Powell Surveys Ltd) are now, probably, the leading firm of expert-witness land surveyors in England & Wales and we are all members of the RICS. Bob Avenell, the Branch President, is a free-lance land surveyor who is a vital member of our team and we regularly bore the rest of my staff with tales of Military Survey!

Since my learning-curve in Chepstow and Hermitage I have managed to become a Fellow of the RICS, a Member of the Academy of Experts, a Member of the Land Registration Rule Committee, an ex-Chairman of the Geomatics Faculty Board of the RICS, a Board Member of the academic Journal, Survey Review and a published author of books on neighbour/boundary disputes.

At the ripe old (?) age of 63 I am enjoying life to the full and hope to keep working until my legs stop working. I have homes in Dorset and Mallorca, no hobbies or interests other than working, reading airport novels and drinking fine wine, but I have four grandchildren of whom the eldest already regularly asks "what did you do in the army Granddad?". "Not much!" is my somewhat facetious response.

Looking back, I was not the most military of people during my time in Military Survey but, as time goes on I become ever more grateful to the superb grounding given to me by Ron Birch, Bob Loudon, Roger Henry, Geoff Roberts, Tony Jones, Robin Blackburn and, not forgetting, Major Eady who sorted me out (for want of a better phrase) when I definitely needed sorting out!. I would not be where I am now without their help and advice all those years ago. I feel I owe each and everyone of them a slap-up meal to say "thank you".

David Powell

MILITARY SURVEY_(REA) REUNION (& AGM)

Saturday 10th of September 2011

Location: Ewell TA Centre, Welbeck Close, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 2BG

The Home of 135 Indep Geo Sqn Re (V)

Your Committee, in conjunction with 135 Indep Geo Sqn RE (V) and with the kind permission of Commander JAGO, the CO 42 Engr Regt (Geo) and most importantly, the OC of 135 Indep Geo Sqn RE (V) have arranged for this years reunion and AGM to take place at Ewell.

It is designed to be very much a **REUNION** and an opportunity to visit a unit that many of us will not have had a chance to visit before. We held an AGM there in 2001 with a magnificent turnout and this is a good time to visit them again to show our support for those many civilians who give up so much of their time to our volunteer army. The intention is to provide an opportunity at a different venue for members to once again meet friends and socialise during what will be a "normal" TA working day as they prepare for their annual exercise. We do hope unit personnel will join with us during the evening and have asked them to do so; please make them feel welcome part of our community and do encourage them to join with us as members.

To ensure the success of this occasion, it is vital, given the difficulties and cost of catering, to establish firm attendance figures as early as possible and therefore you are requested to complete and return the attached form **as soon as possible but at the latest before the end of July**.

RETURN FORM ATTACHED – LAST PAGE

Outline Programme

1300 - 1400: Arrival and administration - tea, coffee - Bar open.

1400 - 1600: Tour unit facilities (To be arranged and timings confirmed).

1615 - 1715: Annual General Meeting.

1745 - 2359: Food is served - Dispersal!

We are, as ever, required to hold an AGM and this will be held prior to the evening meal. **It will be short** and include the election of committee members, a statement of milestones and achievements since last year and will seek your thoughts and suggestions for the future. In addition we do hope to have presentations from Commander JAGO and OC 135 Sqn as well as the prize giving to the deserving Sapper.

Menu and Cost

Once again we have kept the outlay to a minimum but we do have to reflect the true costs none of which can be offset against unit budgets. The unit and the catering staff willingly looks after us and it is only through their kind generosity that costs can be kept as low as they are! We have, however, noted various comments from members and once again this year we have decided to do something different to satisfy your impeccable tastes! This does mean a slight increase in cost over previous years (there is a small subsidy from funds to cover staff costs) to £14 per person, but this is inclusive of coffee/tea etc on arrival and to get your taste buds working I include the menu below for your delectation, **beat this anywhere if you can:**

A selection of carved cold meats – Roast Beef, Gammon, Turkey etc.

Seafood platter – Prawns, smoked salmon etc.

A variety of salads plus bread.

A selection of sweets along with cheese and biscuits.

Dress

To forestall confusion and lots of questions it is anticipated you will agree that smart casual is right on this occasion. Dress up if you will but please avoid dressing down!

Location and Accommodation

Directions are given below. You might also note that the unit is only fifteen minutes walk from West Ewell Railway Station, 25 minutes by train from London Waterloo. There are a number of Travel Lodges in close proximity as well as some small and medium sized hotels or you could take what is a very tempting option and stay in London at the Union Jack Club (at Waterloo) where a single room costs as little as £36.50 (no en suite or TV) or £50 (en suite with TV). A twin/double room with all facilities is £90.50. NB these are 2010 prices. Early booking is necessary.

Security - Access

To reiterate previous advice: owing to the ever-present security situation you will have to identify yourself on arrival, so please have some form of identity with you. Help us by forewarning anyone whom you might be aware of who intends "just turning up" - please, please - get him or her to contact us first!

General

Finally, if you feel that you have something you can contribute to this event that would be of interest to all, or some, please do contact us prior to the event to discuss inclusion.

***Mick Perry
Event Organiser***

Problems - enquiries? - Telephone 01635 37510 - e-mail mandpdperry@sky.com

Finding 135

Route 1 M25 Junction 10, take A3 signposted Kingston, London.

Proceed along A3 until Tolworth Towers roundabout, follow signs for A240 Reigate, Epsom.

Follow the A240 for 3 miles. Look for signpost with TAVR. Shell garage on right side of road. At junction with A24. Turn right at lights and in 10 Yards turn right into Welbeck Close.

Route 2 M25 Junction 8, take A217 signposted Sutton, London.

Proceed along A217 until Burghheath, at traffic lights by Shell garage turn left, signposted A240 Epsom, Kingston.

Follow A240 to Ewell bypass. At roundabout by Esso garage turn right, follow signs for A240/A24, Kingston, Sutton. Approx 1/2 mile look for signs for TAVR. At Traffic lights by shell garage turn left and in 10 yards turn right into Welbeck close.

A Minor Incident in the Cold War

The forty year long Cold War had many incidents that were cliff hangers for a short time – the Cuba Missile Crisis, the shooting down of Gary Powers' U2, the building of the Berlin Wall, to name a few but one such incident remains little known – the illegal detention of one of Her Majesty's cartographers at Berlin's infamous Checkpoint Charlie. The intrepid cartographer was Sapper 'Scouse' Bradshaw and now, with the Cold War long over, is perhaps the time to put the story into print.



A BRIXMIS Opel Admiral car crossing the bridge back into West Berlin from Potsdam.

First, some background for younger readers. Following the Second World War Germany was divided into four zones of occupation. Once the Cold War started only members of the British, US and French Military Missions were allowed into the Soviet Zone and they entered via the Glienicke Bridge from Berlin to Potsdam. Berlin city was divided into four occupation sectors but here any soldier in uniform could go into any sector and until the building of the Wall, did so as a matter of course. After the building of the Wall the only access to the Soviet Sector was via Checkpoint Charlie (Alpha and Bravo being at the start and finish of the road corridor linking West Germany to West Berlin) and visits to the Soviet Sector were strictly controlled by the Allied powers.

Back to the story. One of the minor tasks for the Survey SSgt serving with the British Military Mission (BRIXMIS) was to cross into East Berlin every few months and visit the sole shop selling maps and buy up copies of the latest editions for the BAOR Map Library. By 1976, after over two years with the Mission, the novelty of these shopping trips had long worn off and so I had the bright idea that Scouse Bradshaw, the office's carto tech, could don number 2 dress and go through the long rigmarole necessary to get through the Wall. Hence one morning in mid December, he appeared into work in best number twos, was briefed on the mapping to look for, fully briefed by the Adjutant on the rules regarding crossing the Checkpoint and moving around East Berlin with a very heavy stress on the fact that the East German police (Vopos) and Border Guards had no authority over him and in the extremely unlikely event of becoming involved with them, he must demand to see a Soviet officer. Scouse was then handed a wad of East Marks, put under the tender care of Cpl Tony King, a very experienced driver, and set off in a Mission Opel Admiral.

After reporting in to the RMP Duty Room at Checkpoint Charlie the car slowly wended its way into the East under the dead-pan stares of the Vopos and through the concrete block chicane designed to stop speeding cars escaping to the west. Once through the complex of buildings and they drove down Friedrichstrasse and turned right onto Unter Den Linden when - the unbelievable happened – the Mission car, one of the most pampered vehicles in the Army, spluttered to a halt. This happened just outside the East Berlin Opera House where our young sapper had been asked to collect some opera tickets for a forthcoming cultural event!

All attempts to restart it failed and so the two sat there for a while and discussed strategy. The options were either – wait in the car for 5 hours as search vehicles were always sent to look for late returnees, or hope to flag down a passing allied vehicle but, they appeared to be the only representatives of the west in East Berlin that day. Eventually it was decided that Sapper Bradshaw would hotfoot it back to the west through Checkpoint Charlie, after all he was looking very smart in his British Army No2 dress, so there should not be a problem, should there? Once through he would report to Checkpoint Charlie RMP and contact BRIXMIS MT for recovery. The last bit of the plan was that if he got into any difficulty he could just walk back to the car and wait

for the search team to come and find them. Spr Bradshaw left the safety of the vehicle, pulled down the front of his tunic and adjusted his beret. As he turned to go, Cpl King reminded him to have nothing to do with the East German police or border guards – just walk straight through to the West.

With some trepidation and excitement the young Sapper stepped forward and headed back up Unter Den Linden and then turned down towards the East German side of the infamous checkpoint.

Scouse takes up the story – “I remember the glances and stares that I received on my walk from the East German people, their inquisitive looks as a smart, lone British soldier walking on his own in the East was not an everyday occurrence! As I approached Checkpoint Charlie, I thought of all the times I had seen this location on television and in the movies, it was the root of many spy novels. Indeed I thought of the number of lives lost to those unfortunate persons making an escape bid to the west at this very point.



The East German side of Checkpoint Charlie.

My thoughts were sharply interrupted as a Vopo stepped out of the shadows and with his hand on his breast pocket demanded “*Ausweis Bitte*”.

I remembered everything that I had been told by the Adjutant, SSgt Gordon and Cpl King.... I am in uniform I will show him nothing. I replied “*Auto Kaput*” then walked past him and further into the checkpoint. As I did this the Vopo shouted in German to his colleagues. Two guards advanced and blocked my passage to the west. The first guard was now behind me too. I could see a soldier in the tower resting a telephoto lens on his colleagues shoulder and was snapping

away furiously. A lot was going on around me. One of the guards gesticulated to turn around and follow the man in front. At this point I was thinking it would be wiser to go back into the East and await recovery with Tony. I turned around and followed the man that was now in front of me. He marched about 10-15 metres and then turned right towards the main buildings of the checkpoint. To this day I remember the dull off colour yellow of the corrugated sheeting that hid the building from those legally passing through the border.

This was my chance, as the guard I was following turned right, I marched straight on back into the East. Unfortunately the two guards behind me ran up and put their hands on my shoulders and turned me towards the building.

On entering the inner sanctum of Charlie, a large room with a well worn reception type desk in the far right hand corner which was busy with people giving documents to the military for their perusal. To the left was a series of rooms. I was ushered into one of these.

Once in the room I was left alone, the key turned in the lock. Over the next couple of hours I was either left alone or with one or both of my guards. They both spoke English, one was nice, the other was not. My request for a Soviet Officer was a long time coming.

Eventually after nearly two hours a guard came in and said I could go. I came out and turned left and walked towards the west. I was being escorted out. Again the man in the tower was taking photos, I placed my escorts head between his lens and my face in a futile attempt to stop him. Then suddenly there was a flash of light on my left, they now had a profile picture too.

As I left Checkpoint Charlie I walked up to the RMP Post to report the breakdown and arrange recovery. When the RMP realised that the breakdown happened several hours ago, he asked what I had been doing since. When I told him his attitude changed completely. 'This is a possible International Incident' he gasped and the paper work started flying. He contacted HQ Berlin Brigade and the 'Incident in the East' plan was immediately put into action. This included contacting the Military Mission, BRIXMIS, any number of Intelligence branches and the Soviet authorities in East Berlin. He also asked if I would go with the recovery vehicle and trailer to collect poor old Tony and the Opel.

The rest of the day was taken up with debriefings by various interested branches and finally I returned to the Mission offices where I was congratulated by Brigadier Elderkin, the Chief of Mission, on maintaining under very a frightening circumstances the rigorous stance of not recognising East German authority over occupying forces."

3 PD 131700 A PD A BRITISH SOLDIER CMM WHO HAD ENTERED THE SOVIET SECTOR IN A MIL VEHICLE VIA CHECKPOINT CHARLIE WAS DETAINED BY EG CHECKPOINT SECURITY GUARDS WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO LEAVE THE SOVIET SECTOR ON FOOT PD THE VEHICLE CMM IN WHICH HE WAS TRAVELLING CMM HAD BROKEN DOWN IN THE SOVIET SECTOR AND HE DECIDED TO "WALK OUT" IN ORDER TO ARRANGE RECOVERY OF THE VEHICLE PD THE DRIVER REMAINED WITH THE VEHICLE PD THE SOLDIER WAS DETAINED FOR ONE HOUR FIFTEEN MINUTES BEFORE HE WAS ALLOWED TO PROCEED PD INVESTIGATIONS CONTINUE P.

An extract from the daily 'Live Oak' Berlin Intelligence Summary detailing the incident.

After the Mission car was recovered it was found that it had recently been on an extended tour in East Germany and had to resort to using the low octane fuel available there and had not yet been thoroughly cleansed.

And the footnote to the story is that the East German guards at Checkpoint Charlie were always strict and authoritarian but unluckily for Sapper Bradshaw, it turned out that only a few days before his visit a young East German man had walked through the Checkpoint wearing a US Army uniform and, in accordance with the rules, the Vopos had ignored him. However, once over the border the escapee turned and loudly taunted the Vopos who were almost certainly severely punished....and then several days later an unsuspecting young soldier from Liverpool innocently walked into the Checkpoint – it was on the cards that he was going to be in for a bad day! However, he has dined out on the story ever since and not once did he show his Military ID Card to the Vopos or guards... Result. Over the forty four years that BRIXMIS existed, dozens of Mission members were detained in East Germany but only once was a Mission member detained at Checkpoint Charlie – Scouse Bradshaw turned out to be unique!

Alan Gordon and Richard 'Scouse' Bradshaw

"MAPS & SURVEYS 2011"

**The Defence Surveyors' Association Seminar
Royal School of Military Survey
Saturday 11 June 2011**

The Defence Surveyors' Association will run the fourth in its series of annual seminars at Denison Barracks, Hermitage, on Saturday the 11th of June 2011.

As for previous seminars, the presentations will cover a variety of 'survey' subjects presented in generally chronological order. For further information or to book your seat contact Mike Nolan at maptolan@googlemail.com or call 01635 253167.

REUNION (&AGM) 2011

PLEASE SEND ALL RETURNS BEFORE 31 JULY 2010 TO:

**M. Perry - Mil Svy Branch
101 Craven Road
Newbury
Berks, RG14 5NL
mandpdperry@sky.com
01635 37510**

From:

Forename:..... Surname:.....

Address: - Tel No: -
.....
E-mail: -
.....

Type & Make of transport:.....Registration No

I will/will not be attending the Reunion and AGM on 11 September 2011, I will be bringing the following guests:

	<u>Forename</u>	<u>Surname</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
1
2

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR GEOGRAPHIC SUPPORT FUND NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

I enclose a cheque for £..... (Payable to: Military Survey Branch, REA)

Being the total ofNumbers attending the AGM on the 10th Sep 11 @£14 each,

PLUS £..... TO BOOST THE GEO SUPPORT FUND - plus any unpaid annual subscription or annual subscription for new member joining this year £8.

NB If you can only attend the AGM and not meal then you must send £3 pp to cover the cost of refreshments.

Please note that any excess funds or overpayments etc will go to the Geo Support Fund unless you specify otherwise.

If you have any special needs or require **disabled access** please detail these below and every attempt will be made to accommodate your needs.

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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.