



## Military Survey (Geographic) Branch Royal Engineers Association



**Newsletter No 41 Summer 2011**

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### **MILITARY SURVEY REUNION**

**SATURDAY THE 10<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER 2011**

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

**Details on page 2**

**Still not too late to register – why not do it now?**

### **Royal School of Military Survey**

**granted the**

**Freedom of the Town of Thatcham**



**Full story on page 3**

## A REMINDER

### MILITARY SURVEY REUNION

**SATURDAY THE 10<sup>TH</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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.

Please note 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 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.**

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 do try and avoid overly disturbing the routine work. 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. If you wish you may just chew the cud and relax in the company of old friends.

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 photo albums will be laid out here.

**For full details see previous newsletters – a form to return to the organiser is the last page of this newsletter – please send it by 1 September.**

#### Outline programme

- 1300 – 1400:** Arrival, administration – tea, coffee and bar open
- 1400 – 1600:** Tour unit facilities (we intend, at your leisure)
- 1615 – 1715:** Annual General meeting – presentation – brief by Commander JAGO
- 1745 – 2359:** Food is served – dispersal!

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

#### **Still 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?

## ROYAL SCHOOL OF MILITARY SURVEY FREEDOM OF THE TOWN OF THATCHAM

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2011 the Royal School of Military Survey received the honour of the Freedom of the Town of Thatcham in recognition of the many years association between the town and RSMS.

The catalyst for the event was the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal British Legion, the Thatcham branch lobbying for this honour to coincide with the anniversary. Thanks are due to the branch chairman, Ian Bolton, for his initiative in pursuing this quest. In a remarkably short time scale (such events often several years in the planning) the details of the event were thrashed out.

The ceremony took place in the Broadway in Thatcham after the contingent of soldiers from RSMS marched into the town with bayonets fixed, lead by the Corps Band and followed by representatives of the Royal Engineers Association and the Royal British Legion. Once the RSMS contingent was in position the officers from RSMS took post under the direction of Major Mark Huish before the parade was handed over to Lieutenant Colonel Tony Wilby, the Commanding Officer of 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic). Though the Freedom was conferred on RSMS ie a component school of the Defence Intelligence & Security Centre (DISC) and not on the Corps, the link with the Corps remains strong and hence the presence of the Royal Engineers Association in the form of the Reading & West Berkshire Branch lead by the chairman, Adrian Lovell, and the Geographic Branch, with Mike Payne bearing the standard of the latter.



*Adrian Lovell leads the REA contingent through Thatcham.*

The inspecting officer was Brigadier Mark Hallas, the Commandant of DISC, and he was accompanied by the Town Mayor, Councillor Lee Dillon. After the inspection the Freedom Scroll was handed over by the Mayor to the Principal of RSMS, Mr John Knight, John reciprocating by handing over a print of the School. The importance of the occasion was also demonstrated by the presence of the Lord Lieutenant for Berkshire, the Hon Mrs Mary Bayliss JP.

Though the weather was somewhat inclement, rain throughout, the enthusiasm of spectators and their numbers was in no way diminished,

though one poor soul on parade found he was standing in a rather deep puddle – interesting when coming to attention! The Corps Band as always were magnificent shrugging off the slight inconvenience of rain with complete disdain. Though it was predominantly RSMS on parade the Regiment provided all the usual backup administration so necessary on such occasions, the RSM, WO1 Alfie Conetta, playing a vital roll in helping to orchestrate the ceremony. After the conclusion of the event the assembled company decamped to the local cricket club for light refreshments. Hopefully RSMS will have further opportunities to exercise its Freedom of Thatcham before it decamps north.

**Tony Keeley**

## News from the Military Front

### RSM's Column

Things in the Regiment continue to be as busy as ever, so no change, but I'm sure that we wouldn't have it any other way. In a feeble attempt at saving time I'm currently putting pen to paper as I sit here next to the CO on our whistle stop Recce to Afghanistan. Despite the late offer of help from Mick Perry, we have decided to save the money on consultancy fees and do the Survey Recce on our own.

The Recce will also enable myself and the CO to visit the various locations in theatre and talk to the 33 or so Geo soldiers; less about boots fitting and mail getting through, and more a chance to find out how the kit is performing and whether the Pre Deployment Training (PDT) has prepared them for the jobs that they are doing. Anyway more about how the visit went at the end of this article, I intend to finish it on the flight home.

### Training

#### Ex Pinnocks Progress - Sunny Sennybridge! By WO1(RSM) Conetta RE

Ex Pinnocks Progress, the Regiment's main military training exercise was held in Sennybridge over the period 4-13 April 11. This year's exercise was the brainchild of the recently arrived Training Officer Captain Alan Crompton, who, ably assisted by his band of merry men, and the odd bit of guidance from the RSM, put together a first class exercise. The exercise was an attempt to get away from the drudgery of basic military skills, and to try and focus on more contemporary operations, in short, Afghanistan.

With the Regiment being as busy as it is, the hope for 10 sections to compete was always more in hope than expectation. As the competition approached, so the requests for support to various elements of Herrick PDT pouring in; only five sections making it onto the Pinnocks Progress starting lineup.

The Sections set off from Hermitage in the early evening by coach arriving at the rather uninviting SENTA in the early hours of the following morning, cue the first injury, as LCpl Cambridge showed his physical robustness by stumbling as he left the coach and ended up back at camp with a bad ankle. After the necessary safety briefings and issues of food, ammo and radios the Sections began on the insertion tab, which was more about elevation than distance.

The sections then spent the next few days bouncing between; a range package in scenario; Afghanistan orientated stands, helping local civilians etc, and chasing down insurgents. With myself and the Ops Officer, Capt Buglass, spending our time tabbing between stands, it was evident that the early reces by the DS staff had paid off, with some well thought out and executed stands on show.

As the grand finale to the exercise, Capt Crompton had the sections racing over Pen Y Fan, only stopping at intervals to complete some mental agility stands. This proved to be a great finish to the exercise, made even better by the fact that the SMI, WO1 Framallico and future SSM 13 Sqn, WO2 Andrew joined us for the trip.

The only thing left was the traditional smoker, and of course the presentation of the Pinnocks Progress trophy to Cpl Smith from the Signals Wing, who led the victorious 16 Sqn team. All in all a good effort by all of the sections and in particular Spr, now LCpl, Noton for once again leading a section as a Spr, and driving Cpl Smith close for the Trophy.

Capt Crompton should be commended for his efforts at realism, as he even managed to get the weather to mimic Afghanistan; the heat bore down on us for the duration of the exercise, yes you read it right, scorching sun in Sennibridge.

## Ex Pinnocks Progress 2011 By Spr Feeney

So it began, as with most things in the military, with a Power Point brief. Our erstwhile enemy, the Brecon division of the Soviet Airborne had vanished only to be replaced by a far more devious (and current operationally focused) opponent: the Brecon Taliban. An area starkly similar to central Wales had been discovered in Helmand province and the situation was getting out of hand. 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) were to deploy five sections of their most highly skilled, fit, experienced, and above all, available, soldiers to suppress the insurgency. Having disembarked the 'wob-waggon' to start our march we formed up and took in the surroundings. Sennybridge. It didn't disappoint; dense fog and drizzle as far as the eye couldn't see. After some time and a little reconfirmation of gradient appreciation, we reached our harbour area and the game was on.



The format for most days was a short vehicle move followed by a drop off and subsequent patrolling to each stand. The stands on the first day out consisted of the mandatory recce, Afghan command tasks, search and BCD with casualty extraction. Most tasks had an element of interaction with 'civpop' where a friendly but cautious approach was usually best employed. This format continued for another day with the tasks getting progressively more complicated as either time, or our lack of sleep went on. On Friday night, however, we were informed that the next day would be a live range package. With this bit of morale in the bag, we settled for our first bit

of proper rest.

The range package started out like most tasks, a short vehicle move to a drop off point and then a short patrol in. The range staff delivered the relevant briefs, being careful not to give too much away too soon, and Sgt Crick held a weapons interest stand. After an initial group and zero, the sections present were split up between the range serial, admin (involving mysterious balloon inflation) and interest stands. The shoot itself was conducted from fire trenches, as a section. Following a sprint ammunition resupply and under the command of Spr 'Close up!' Noton, we engaged fall-when-hit targets at a variety of ranges. Using the various reference points littered across the range, the fire had to be controlled, directed and the various drills, including cooling drills, carried out correctly. Points were awarded and deducted for this, alongside the target scores. In all, the live firing package represented one of the most rewarding elements of the exercise and broke up the activity nicely.

The following morning the enemy had become more aggressive in their tactics and the patrols we conducted were turning from 'show and reassurance' to 'search and clear'. The language barrier between us and the 'civpop' had grown from a gap to a gulf and Pashtu phrase cards were suddenly a must for all conversations. Threats such as mines and IED became more prevalent and our movement had to be ever more closely controlled by our IC.

Our final day of stands complete, and after a hasty relocation back to our old harbour area following a 'double booking' (how can you double book a wood?), we received the brief from Capt Crompton on the next phase of the exercise. At 03:30 following morning (only technically!) we were up, ready to load the excess kit in preparation for our crack at 'The Fan'. Having two PTIs in the section we took the opportunity to conduct the march over Pen y Fan as a PT session. This was taken largely for safety and motivation reasons, but also because five days of not being able to pull muscle poses in their tight vests was starting to strain and we figured they could do with releasing a bit of tension. Our team was not due to set off until just before 08:00

(why 03:30 then?!!) so we took the opportunity to catch some rest. We made the most of our limited means to keep warm, some more enthusiastically than others.

To my mind, Pen y Fan represented the most satisfying and rewarding element of the exercise. Not only because it signaled the end of the field phase, but it was the culmination of the lessons we had learned working together during the week. The morale and enthusiasm maintained by the whole section throughout the whole exercise passed 'The Fan' test. Though we narrowly missed out on the trophy at the end we can be justifiably proud of the performance we produced. This was down to all section members working hard for each other and sound direction and leadership from our stand-in IC.

### **Operations**

#### **Airfield Survey Task, Afghanistan. 31 Jan 11 – 20 Mar 11 By Lt S Marshall TAGGS Task OIC**

The infrastructure of airfields in Afghanistan is currently not to international standards, and so in order to minimise risk and improve flight safety, NATO has determined the need for high precision geodetic surveys of various airfields to ICAO standards. Through Jan – Mar 2011, ten personnel from 42 Engr Regt (Geo) undertook a Terminal Aeronautical GNSS Geodetic Survey (TAGGS) task, surveying 3 airfields within Afghanistan.

The UK provides field data collection capability to the ISAF Theatre Geospatial Support Group (GSG), consequently PJHQ tasked 42 Engr Regt (Geo), who in turn tasked 13 (Geo) Sqn, to carry out surveys of Dwyer (DWY) and Shindand (SHD) Airfields. Due to recent developments within Camp Bastion (BSN) Airfield, 42 Engr Regt (Geo) were additionally tasked with a re-survey of the newly completed runway on arrival in theatre.



Preparation for the TAGGS task comprised of the Positioning Surveyors Specialist Qualification within the Royal School of Military Survey, followed by 42 Engr Regt (Geo) Mission Specific Training (MST). MST comprised of a 10-day exercise; 4 days infantry training at Bramley Training area, followed by a 6 day exercise rehearsing a TAGGS task, whereby the 10 TAGGS team personnel surveyed to Abingdon Airfield.

The TAGGS task deployment consisted of 2 packets; the advance party and the main body. The advance party comprised of the

Technical Task Commander and the Technical Task 2IC, who deployed 2 weeks prior to the main body in order to set up and receive the technical equipment. The main body consisted of the Task OIC and the remaining 7 personnel. All team members deployed to Camp Bastion, and on arrival completed the 2 day Category 1 Recreation Staging, Onward movement and Integration package (RSOI). Once completed, the team was able to commence work.

A TAGGS task involves the positioning of geodetic control stations, hard surface runways, navigation aids, and photograph identifiable points and obstacles within an airfield. These features are positioned to varying degrees of precision and accuracy according to TAGGS specifications.

Each task commenced with the positioning of one Primary Airport Control Station (PACS) and three Secondary Airport Control Stations (SACS). Global Positioning System (GPS) data from 4 separate 12hr sessions was gathered at each PACS and SACS, in order to provide highly accurate reference points, from which to relate all other airfield features to. Once this data was gathered it was sent to the Geodetic Surveys Division at the National Geospatial Agency, USA,

for computations of PACS and SACS absolute positions (to an accuracy of approximately 4 cm in relation to the rest of the world).

Once the precise location of the PACS and SACS had been determined, GPS and Total Positioning System (TPS) data was gathered to position all features within the airfield. The runway, as the main feature, was surveyed first. This was done using rapid static methods, where data was gathered to determine accurate positions for the ends of runway, threshold markers and threshold. The rapid static method uses GPS data collected over a short time interval, usually between 10 and 20 minutes, dependant on the GPS signal received at the point combined with the number of accessible satellites to the receiver. The centre line of the runway was then positioned using the Real Time Kinematic (RTK) method; short bursts of data were collected, with real time corrections transmitted via data link, from GPS control stations set up on the PACS and SACS. Next all airfield features were positioned (Air Traffic Control tower, Tacan, Airfield Search radar). This was conducted using GPS data collection to determine the positioning of the features, and theodolites to accurately measure their height. All obstacles around the airfield (sangers, masts, towers) were positioned and heighted using the same GPS/TPS methods. The survey finished by positioning between 10 and 20 photo-identifiable points. These were clearly identifiable points selected from imagery of the airfield, which were positioned using the earlier described RTK method.

The surveys of each of the three airfields took between seven and ten days, including drawing up the formal paperwork. The Bastion survey was completed at very short notice by the advance party, though as a British base, proved to be the easiest for coordination and administrative purposes. Dwyer Airfield, at Camp Dwyer in RC (SW) was occupied by the US Marine Corps, and despite a vehicle shortage, the survey was straightforward. Shindand Airfield at FOB Marmora in RC (W) was occupied by the Morbegno Bn, Italian light Infantry. This produced some communication issues, which along with various service support shortages, resulted in a slightly longer stay at Shindand. Each survey was followed up by a brief to the respective FOB/Camp commanders, detailing the work undertaken.

Whilst deployed, Camp Bastion was used as a rear base for operations. Since 42 Engr Regt (Geo) has a cell within Bastion 1, it provided a convenient workspace for a re-group between each airfield and allowed good communications back to the Regiment. Bastion also provided good flight links, since no direct flights between Dwyer and Shindand airfields were possible.

The task was a success, with accurate surveys conducted of all 3 airfields. The training had adequately trained the surveyors to conduct the task within the timescale and to the required accuracy. The benefit of the survey was instantly at Bastion, where the survey was the final requirement to allowed direct flights by Tristar from the UK. This is a significant improvement to UK strategic lift and troop transport capability resulting in a reduction on the logistic burden and time spent in transit previously incurred by having to go through Kandahar Airfield.

### CO and RSM's Visit

As alluded to in my opening paragraph, CO and myself have recently returned from a very interesting visit out to Afghanistan. The support is still around 35 personnel, spread over about 17 locations including Kabul, Kandahar, Helmand, Lash Kha Gar to name a few that you may have heard on the news.

Our trip began with a 0430hrs departure from Hermitage, through Brize Norton onto Akrotiri in Cyprus, then Camp Bastion in Helmand province by 0030hrs. Having completed a tour of Afghanistan in 2002 I can confirm that the dust and grit in Helmand tastes the same as that in Kabul. Camp Bastion is a huge camp based next to an airfield in the middle of what can only be described as a desert but, despite the oppressive heat and austere working environment we found the Bastion Geo Cell in fine fettle. The Cell is ably marshaled by SSgt Ball of Army/Navy rugby fame, with oversight and top cover being provided by the SO3 Geo, Capt Griffiths from 14 Sqn.

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Monday commenced with briefs from Capt Griffiths, SSgt Ball, Cpl Ski, Sgt Finch, all of which achieved their aim of updating us on support provided by the Bastion Geo, and also the good work being done with the TiGR project. The next thing on the programme was for a chat with the lads, who all pass through Bastion for a final bit of Geo training, and the odd jamming session with guitars bought by the Mil Svy Geo Support fund. The evening was taken up with a Quiz, provided by the master of ceremonies, SSgt Ball.



The Tuesday morning saw a flight to Kabul to visit Lt Col Cockwell, Maj Richardson and the rest of the team at IASF Joint Command (IJC). The IJC is based on the outskirts Kabul International Airport, and is known rather alarmingly as KIA; it also has a military staff equivalent to the population of a small town. The team of junior NCOs are being worked hard by the upper echelon and regularly miss the one day off given to the rest of the HQ. Despite this all of the lads seem to be in good spirits.

After a number of briefs, and not a small amount of coffee, we had lunch and prepared for our move across Kabul to see the lonesome LCpl Fish in HQ ISAF. This move proved to be a bit of a wakeup call, as two blacked out vehicles turned up to move us across town, followed by the drivers brief that went something like this " *we shall be traveling in two armoured 4x4s, complete with bullet proof windows. We have tourniquets in all sides of the vehicle, if I am killed there is a map on the front dash, an emergency radio to call out the QRF, who will take approx 24 min to get to you...etc etc etc.* " Our immediate concern was the fact that the 24 x 9mm rounds, which would give us a rate of one round per minute to suppress the enemy.

The journey passed without incident despite the town very much resembling a scene from the Kirt Russell film 'Escape from New York'. The visit to LCpl Fish confirmed that he is somewhat secluded, but also that a Geo A/LCpl can hold his own in a HQ littered with high-ranking officers, with LCpl Fish working directly to the COS NCC, a Brigadier.

One piece of advice I had been given prior to my departure from the UK was to avoid large gatherings and in particular high value targets, so when we turned up at the KIA to find out that General Pretraeus and all the main power brokers in Afghanistan were holding a conference in the room above our heads in the departure lounge I began to get a bit twitchy. This was only topped when we checked in and I was asked to act as security on the C130, with my sole purpose to stop any of the local recruited from storming the cockpit. The flight back to Bastion passed with the only thing of note; the local Afghanis demonstrating their dislike of flying by vomiting over each other.

Thursday came around very quickly; the day entailed a short journey to Regional Command South West at Camp Leatherneck, a USMC camp with a Geo contingent consisting of Maj Fairnington, WO2 Mike Shaw, Sgt Mulcock and a small team of juniors. We received update briefs on what they had been up to, how things were progressing in general, followed by a rather large lunch complete with ice-cream (things have changed). After lunch we continued with brief on the team and the details for the proposed Theatre Map Depot. As you would

expect this turned out to be a very well organized day with some good briefs from the team and even a few 'gizits' for myself and the CO.

The excitement was saved for the evening as we were to fly on a sea king helicopter out over the Afghan country side on our way to Lashkar Gah (in darkness). I received the warning of the intense heat in the back of the sea king, they weren't lying, it was baking. Luckily I had my body armour and helmet just in case it became cold! After approximately 40 minutes the cooker door opened and the 3 well cooked Geo Soldiers emerged ready to be eaten. We were met by a slightly weary looking Sgt Donahue, the Geo Sgt from 3 Cdo Bde.

Lashkar Gar from the sky resembles a old fort, most of the happenings in Afghanistan happen in the surrounding environs (15-20km) from the location, so our weapons had to be on our person and body armour within easy reach. The whole location had an air of excitement about it, being that there was a chance that something could happen, although still unlikely.

The Geo Cell was busy, but still managed to fit in the obligatory briefs about the types of tasking that they were undertaking in the various parts of the cell i.e Counter IED, Data Management, Terrain Analysis. In between briefs we went to lunch and sampled the quality of the food, which, bearing in mind the location, was outstanding.

Overall the visit was a resounding success providing a chance to speak with all but those in the most remote of locations (not through choice). At all locations we found the modern Geo soldiers being worked hard in austere conditions, but not losing the banter, or ability to output products that made a difference. I hope that in our own little way we have helped to boost the moral of the Geo troops on the ground and affirm that we value their hard work.

My wider take aways from the recce/visit is that the kit issued is second to none, the G4 support is good and the living/working environment is bearable, as is the workload, but only just.

## Topping Out Ceremony – PRIDE (Wyton) The Roy Lines 16 May 2011

The Programme to Rationalise and Integrate the Defence Intelligence Estate (PRIDE) has reached another key milestone in the development of the new hub for Defence Intelligence at RAF Wyton in Cambridgeshire. A complex of brand new facilities will provide purpose-built, state-of-the-art accommodation for Defence Intelligence personnel currently based at RAF Brampton, MOD Feltham, Denison Barracks near Hermitage, and Ayrshire Barracks in Moenchengladbach.

The implementation of the Programme commenced in March 2009 and is due to complete in the Summer of 2014 with the majority of work to date focused on the construction of new technical accommodation to house the incoming intelligence units. A significant milestone was achieved on 16 May 2011 when the buildings that will be the future home for 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) were made water-tight. The event was marked by a Topping-Out ceremony which is a Scandinavian construction tradition dating back to 700 A.D. when builders would hang an evergreen from the highest structural beam for good luck and to bless the structure. This



tradition continues today to celebrate this important milestone and to thank the workers who made it possible. The ceremony was presided over by the Engineer in Chief (Army) Brigadier I S James OBE ADC, who unveiled a memorial plaque and tightened a 'Golden Bolt' at the highest point of the new buildings. The ceremony was attended by representatives from Defence Intelligence, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation who are managing the construction elements of PRIDE, and Skanska UK Plc, who are the prime contractor for the technical accommodation.

Construction activities will now be completed followed by the installation of internal fixtures and fittings and CIS which will enable the move of 14 Sqn (Geo) from Moenchengladbach, in Summer 2013 and then 42 Engr Regt (Geo) HQ, 13 Sqn (Geo) and 16 Sqn (Geo) from Hermitage in Summer of 2014. When occupied the new home of 42 Engr Regt (Geo) will be known as The Roy Lines, named after Major General William Roy (1726-1790). Maj Gen Roy was an early pioneer of military survey and led the production of the first complete survey of Scotland in 1747, his work being one of the driving forces behind the establishment of the Ordnance Survey. The Roy Lines are only one element of PRIDE and a previous Topping-Out was held last September to mark the external completion of the Pathfinder Building which will co-locate the Defence Geospatial Intelligence Fusion Centre (DGIFC) developed from JARIC, the National Imagery Exploitation Centre, together with the Intelligence Collection Group (ICG) HQ, and the Joint Aeronautical and Geospatial Organisation (JAGO) HQ. The Pathfinder Building will provide state-of-the-art facilities for intelligence gathering, analysis and dissemination.

Secretary of State for Defence, Dr Liam Fox, in his 2011 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) announcement promised to "...address the changing character of conflict. We will enhance intelligence gathering command and control, unmanned technology, special forces and cyber capabilities". Defence Intelligence strives to continuously improve output and push the boundaries of intelligence production but they are often constrained by the infrastructure limitations of their current accommodation. The new facilities and the opportunities brought about by co-locating these units in one location will remove many of these constraints and will provide the optimal platform for achieving a better integrated and responsive operation. The most notable change resulting from these moves will be the formation of the new DGIFC which will be focused on delivering high quality intelligence products to field commanders, strategic analysts, other government departments and national allies.

Achievement of Full Operating Capability for the Roy Lines on 2014 marks the end of the first phase in the development of Wyton as a national and international centre of excellence for intelligence production; the new facilities and site have the flexibility to develop to match the challenges of SDSR and the changing Defence environment. ICG currently comprises approximately 3,200 personnel of which around 1,100 will be located at RAF Wyton. Typically 200 ICG personnel are deployed at any one time.

All the PRIDE buildings have been constructed utilising environmentally friendly materials and sustainable building processes wherever possible. The buildings will utilise a biomass boiler in a central 'distributed' heating system and will recycle rainwater enabling re-use for non potable purposes. The roof of the Pathfinder Building has been made from recycled aluminum (equivalent to 5,250,000 cans) and has been part planted with sedum to help with insulation, protecting the building from losing too much heat in winter and from gaining too much in summer. PRIDE will also deliver new domestic single living accommodation at RAF Wyton and will relocate other non-Defence Intelligence units from RAF Brampton to RAF Wyton which will enable the closure and future sale of the majority of the Brampton site.

I will sign off here and I look forward to seeing you all here at Hermitage for the beating retreat.

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

***WO1 (RSM) Conetta RE,***

## News from the Civilian Front

### Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)

In response to the SDSR announcement for a reduction of 25% in MOD's civilian staffing by 25,000 over the next five years, 52 DGC staff (majority being administrative grades) have been offered Voluntary Early Release in this current financial year with departures taking place from 1 Oct 11 – 31 Mar 12. Further reductions are likely to take place in subsequent years, although at this time the mechanism to achieve the required reduction in staff numbers is unknown.

### Intelligence Collection Group Estate Rationalisation - DGC/JAGO Merger

A study into the proposed merger of DGC and JAGO into a new organisation; provisionally called the Defence Geospatial Organisation (DGO) is complete, final outcome is awaited.

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

An investment appraisal examining the relocation of DGC at RAF Wyton is ongoing and progressing to schedule with planned completion by ICG HQ in Sept 11 to be followed by the Investment Approvals Board Initial Gate approval decision point in Oct 11.

PRIDE (Wyton) remains on target to deliver within time, cost and performance parameters. Following the Pathfinder Building 'Topping-Out' in September 2010 work continues with the planned handover of the building to the MOD scheduled for December 2011.

### Production – Support to Ops

DGC support to Ops continues with the production of a range of geospatial products, standard series topographic line maps and numerous digital datasets to meet specific customer requirements. Web mapping services have been developed for operational areas and geospatial viewers published across Defence. Work is continuing at a pace in the production of a 5K fully attributed digital dataset over the Helmand operational area.

### Production Systems Upgrade

Work is continuing on implementing Foundation Division's (formerly Production Division) Production Generation Upgrade (PGU). The new equipment and applications is being used in supporting the production of operational products. Ultimately this capability will allow greater flexibility and will lead to reduced production timelines and improved re-use of geospatial data.

**Old Boys Reunion (Picnic in the Park):** This years event took place on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and saw hundreds of DGC staff leave their desks to meet and catch up with those retired staff returning for their annual reunion. Later in the day a full scale music festival was held, called Feltstock, with proceeds made from the event going to Help for Heroes & the Civil Service Benevolent Fund. 12 great bands (all with some sort of connection to the Intelligence Collection Group) entertained the masses playing a mix of music.

Next years event will take place provisionally on Friday 8 June 2012 (to be confirmed), 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 e-mail: [Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk](mailto:Tony.Ruff943@mod.uk)

**Notable Retiree** May 2011 - Graeme Pitt

**Pete Dowell**

## Taken From The Website

The branch website, <http://survey-branch-rea.co.uk>, is a mine of anecdotes and memories together with photographs of people and places from long ago but as not all members are online or maybe others are infrequent visitors to the site, the newsletter will in future feature a selection from the site. We start with Eric Davey's memories of 13 Squadron and an unusual detachment.

### 13 Field Survey Squadron - Fernhurst: 1957- 58

My memories of the role of the squadron, other than the field troop, are somewhat vague. The OC was Major "Pop" Covington, Captain Bazley was 2i/c and the SSM was Jim Kennedy. Fernhurst Camp was an idyllic setting with the local pub (the name escapes me) opposite.

The field troop was sent on a detachment to Sennybridge, alas in the winter months!! I can't quite remember the purpose of the task, only the need to recover trig stations. I have no recollection of instrument work. Unfortunately the terrain, at the best of times, was boggy but we had snow and ice to contend with as well and spent much of our time extricating our vehicles from the bog. On one memorable day the 1 ton winch truck sent to recover the bogged in the Land Rover became bogged in as did the REME Scammell recovery truck. The conditions were quite appalling and we were not too unhappy to return to Fernhurst in time for Christmas. (*Editor's comment – a bit different from 13's recent visit described earlier in this issue.*)

1958 saw a small detachment sent to Christmas Island on Operation Grapple, Britain's nuclear weapon testing programme. Major "Pip" Sherwood, myself, Sprs Eades and McKentee (two National Service sappers) joined 25 Engineer Regiment at Maidstone and embarked for Christmas Island. The MOD had purchased every available seat on civilian flights to get the Regiment to Honolulu via America. We travelled 1<sup>st</sup> Class on a TWA Clipper stopping off at New York and San Francisco. There we took another flight to Honolulu. Onward travel was then by RAF transport to Christmas Island, just a dot in the Pacific.



*Pip Sherwood observing with a T2.*

Our role in Op Grapple was to site the various photographic and measuring instruments to be used to record the nuclear detonation which was to be some miles offshore to the south of the island. We also had to site the target indicator, a huge arrow gouged out of the earth and painted with bright orange luminous paint. The arrow was a guide to the aircraft which was to drop the device.

My lasting memories were the land crabs that infested the island and the Booby Bird colony on the south of the island. These birds were so unused to humans that they could be approached with ease. The tragedy was that the explosion was to wipe out this bird colony and the Regiment undertook to move a large sample out of harms way. Towards the

end of the Operation the Regiment were required to practice the procedures to be taken when the detonation occurred.

Much as I would have liked to experience the detonation and see the thing to the end, our job was done and we had to return to Fernhurst. This time we flew all the way by RAF aircraft landing at Honolulu, San Francisco and Goose Bay, which after the heat of Christmas Island would have put brass monkeys to flight !! A memorable experience but not listed as my favourite posting.

**Eric Davey**

## LIFE BEFORE MILITARY SURVEY: WHO AM I?

In the 1950s the school leaving age was set at fifteen years resulting in the average age of new entrants to Army Apprentices Colleges of some fifteen and a half. However, having attended a Grammar School, it necessitated staying in education to well past my sixteenth birthday. During this time I had become interested in an Army career so visited my local recruiting office to find out how my limited skills could possibly fit into this vast array of military might. After all, I had never been an Army Cadet and had even been homesick on a Boy Scout camp! My only claim to fame therefore, (which surprisingly seemed to impress the smooth talking Recruiting Officer) was five "O" levels including mathematics.

So to his sales pitch - *"Mathematical ability is the prime requisite of a Military Surveyor so you would be an asset to that profession!"* Thus, in September 1951, proudly believing this sales jargon, I found myself as a much older but new member of 51B's Survey Department.

Three months later having settled down to Army life but slightly disillusioned with my survey training my thoughts harboured back to those flattering words of the Recruiting Officer about my mathematical ability being an asset to Survey. However, the nearest I had got to mathematics during those long three months was counting the number of times I was required to scribe something about co-ordinating the hand and eye using a crow quill pen. Perhaps it was my inability to produce a worthwhile creation without ink blotches invading my projects. Perhaps it was that my friends and colleagues were better at drawing and lettering than me, but more likely it was my boastful attitude. However, whatever the reason something persuaded me to make what proved to be a dreadful decision. I decided to change my trade!

After a lengthy interview with both my Company Commander and the Oi/c Survey it was decided that I might be more suited to become an electrician — no, don't ask me why, I don't know either but I was too frightened to disagree! An aptitude test was eventually arranged at Hildebrand Barracks where I duly paraded to be confronted by the tallest and broadest SSgt I had ever seen - a truly frightening sight to behold. Pleasantries over, well not exactly pleasantries, just something like *"It's people like you who can't make your mind up that p---me off!"* It was now time for the test.

The test appeared quite simple as I was issued with two small sheets of *Meccano* plating, eight nuts and bolts and a basic diagram. The task being to assemble both metal sheets together using the nuts and bolts. Surely success was just twenty minutes away, the time allotted for this simple task. A few minutes later, quite relaxed with a smug look on my face and my metal plates fixed together I awaited further instructions. It was then that I noticed that the diagram showed the plates fixed in the reverse pattern to my attempt. No problem, simply undo and re-assemble. However no sooner had I separated my masterpiece than that huge mountain of a SSgt bellowed *"Time Up Lad"*.

I will never forget the look in his eyes as eight screws; eight bolts and two sheets of *Meccano* metal fell quite separately in front of him! But his look of disdain could not even compare with his vocal opinion of what he thought of me. Etiquette decrees that I cannot repeat the exact vocabulary used but suffice to say a polite interpretation could be *"No wonder Survey didn't want you, Get out of my sight and return hence from where you came"*

So back I crawled to Penny Pot to beg forgiveness from my Survey masters and ask for a second chance. Fortunately I was allowed back; not exactly welcomed, more like the black sheep rather than the prodigal son.

A few weeks later the survey training took on a different perspective as we put away our pens and entered the world of trigonometry and mathematical problem solving. I humbly admitted that I knew less than my masters who had arranged and prepared the training programme to suit the service not just a young upstart!

Who was the mystery boy soldier – answers to the editor please....but no prizes!

## **Life After Military Survey – Stan Evans**

I drove out of the gate at AAC Chepstow for the last time in December 1978, it had taken almost 6 months to PVR and cost me £70. I had landed a job as a surveyor for a major Libyan oil company. Locky Lockwood also applied for the job but it came to me, luckily enough. The next 5½ years was spent working all over Libya, I met a few old RE Survey hands and even loaned out equipment, (Marcus, you probably owe me a beer still). There was no doubt that the military technical training stood me in good stead and I ended up in AGECO as the head of Surveying and Drafting.

Leaving Libya in 1985 and taking on the role of Europe, Africa and Middle East (EAME) survey supervisor for Western Geophysical (WGC) was a huge jump. It put me in technical control of all EAME survey crews. WGC was the largest geophysical exploration company in the world at the time, specialising in oil and gas exploration. The British surveyors in WGC were mostly ex-RA, the only ex-RE surveyors I came across were Bob (Fred) Clarke in Algeria and Bill Duane who had been a chief surveyor but left to go to Southampton University on an Earth Sciences course. He came back as a summer student in Syria and we had a lot of fun as a team beating the production of the regular surveyors on the crew. WGC took me into many Middle East countries and all across North and West Africa. It was interesting to go back to the Emirates and see the changes since a detachment there with Mike Nolan, Jim Shaw, Chris Moorhouse and the rest of the team from 1 ASLS in Cyprus in 1972 / 1973. I stayed with EAME until 1991 when I was transferred to the corporate headquarters in the USA. Liz and I left our son in boarding school in the UK at this point.

Over the next eleven years I became the worldwide Geomatics Manager for WGC working in the Houston research department. Mike Barnes was right across the street with RACAL and we managed a few social sessions together.

Putting my instructional skills to work, I devised courses for company surveyors which I delivered all over the world. It was easier for me to go to regional centres than bring flocks of surveyors to Houston. I did learn that some English colloquial expressions do not have the same meaning when translated into foreign languages by interpreters at the back of the class. “Teaching your Grandmother to suck eggs” has a whole different meaning in Spanish in Venezuela!

Trimble, Ashtech and Leica were developing new portable GPS and Inertial survey equipment and being part of the research department, we became a test unit for new ideas, many of which were incorporated into the manufacturer’s final versions of the equipment. Between 1992 and 1996 I oversaw the change over from conventional survey to GPS on most of the WGC crews.

While based in Houston I took the Assessment of Professional Competence and joined the RICS. I missed out on the offer of transferring from the Society of Surveying Technicians while on site in Albania and did not get my transfer application out in time.

The period in the USA saw me work worldwide, including North and South America where I drove through the most northerly traffic lights in the USA on the North Slope of Alaska at Deadhorse and 2 months later stood on the end of the world in Tierra del Fuego. Working at -40F is an experience also.

In 2001 WGC merged with another seismic company and after 18 months on the transition team I returned to the UK. Our son was very happy to have Mum and Dad back in the UK however we did manage to leave a daughter in Houston to finish her university course. I became an independent survey consultant to the oil industry although one of my first projects saw me take on the role of Health, Safety and Environment supervisor on a seismic crew in Algeria. Having bluffed it for a year I took the NEBOSH diploma in HSE and now have both survey and HSE to work at.

In 2004 I took up a teaching post at the Survey Centre in Worcester, part of what was Cartographical Surveys Ltd. I was not only teaching but also involved in commercial surveys and with my GPS background from WGC I was also the project manager for a large GPS survey throughout the entire Trent basin for the Environment Agency. The Survey Centre had a strong relationship with Leica Geosystems and through that I met up with Simon Mears again.

In 2006 I went back to consulting and have spent the last five years in Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya where I seem to have become the king of camp construction as well as doing the survey and HSE quality control.

Liz and I moved to the Costa Blanca in Spain in 2007, the result of too many wet English summers. One of these years I may think of retiring but I have to say that I enjoy the life so much I would be reluctant to give it up.

### Footnote



*Stan's current home from home in Kenya*

Members past and present of 13 Squadron may be interested to know that last year whilst working in Central Turkana Province to the west of Lake Turkana in Kenya I found the Squadron plaque hanging up in the lobby hut of the Women's lodge just outside of the town of Lodwar. There were no dates associated with it and the receptionist knew nothing about it. The Aden Dhows looked in good condition though.

I forget the actual name of the lodge but it is run by the local women's committee as a fund raising endeavour and to give employment to local women. Quite why a bunch of Geo types would stay at a hotel with no beer beats me unless standards have

changed so much since my days as a field surveyor. They did let you bring your own in though!

**Stan Evans**

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## Historic Military Maps Event

The National Archives, 25 October 2011

The National Archives announces that it will be holding an event to celebrate its vast rich holdings of historic military maps and hydrographic surveys, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the Suez Crisis, including some of the latest accessions to the archives. Original documents will be displayed, so numbers will be limited. The day is free of charge. The National Archives is in Kew, Surrey. There is a public restaurant on site where refreshments may be obtained. Further details about the day will be available nearer the time.

To book your place please contact Andrew Janes at The National Archives: by email at [andrew.janes@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.janes@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk); by telephone at 020 8876 3444 extension 2229; or by post to Advice and Records Knowledge Department, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU.

## **Lt Col Ivon Edward Sleep FRICS RE**

Ivon was born on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1923, the eldest of three Sleep brothers. Philip came next, and he and Ivon grew up together in Bere Alston, a tiny village sandwiched between Dartmoor and the Tamar Vally, where their father was headmaster of the village school and inexplicably almost everyone was called Sleep, although unrelated. Patrick was born several years later, when the older brothers were already teenagers. This was an idyllic rustic childhood living in School House, and Ivon's only bad memory was of the shopkeeper, probably another Mr Sleep, who relieved him of his first pocket money, one old penny, not for sweets but for a flypaper.

Ivon attended Tavistock Grammar School where he met Heather Cuss, his future wife and lifelong companion. He joined the Army at the age of 16 as a Boy Apprentice at Crown Hill Barracks in Plymouth. In the entrance exam he got all but one of the questions correct, according to the Army. Asked whether blackberries grew on a bush or a tree, Ivon ticked 'other', as every country boy knows that blackberries grow on a bramble, which is neither a bush nor a tree; the Army thought blackberries grew on a bush.

At the outbreak of the Second World War Ivon was a sergeant in the Royal Engineers. He was posted to Montgomery's Eighth Army in North Africa where he quickly received a field commission. He was trained in explosives and learnt to speak Arabic. During this time he was sent to blow up a German desert airstrip, accompanied by a squad of Ghurkhas and their British officer. They managed to plant all the charges without being detected and were so pleased with themselves they retired to a nearby jebel hilltop and sat down to watch the fireworks. The charges went off as planned, blowing up several German planes on the ground and disabling the airstrip, but when they got up to leave they discovered that while they had been watching the show they had been surrounded by Germans, who took them prisoner. At the German camp the Ghurkha officer asked the Kommandant if he could say a few words to settle his men, and was told he might, provided he spoke English so the Germans could understand. The officer did so and ended by saying, "and don't forget the Ghurkha motto," and then said in Nepalese as Ivon later discovered, "Going home tonight men". Officers and men were segregated and Ivon went straight to sleep, as he had taught himself to do. The next he knew was when a Ghurkha NCO tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Ready to go now, Sir." The Ghurkhas had taken care of the guards and had a German half truck standing waiting, in which they headed off towards the British lines. They drove through several German roadblocks where Ivon shouted a few words in German and they were waved through. The first serious challenge came when unknown to them they had driven behind British lines and they were stopped by a Redcap standing in the middle of the road and shouting, "Where do you think you're going?"

Ivon fought at El Alamein, where he was in charge of a Daimler Dart armoured scout car. He was standing in the turret when there was a direct artillery hit and he was thrown clear. His fellow crew members were all killed outright.

Ivon was selected for parachute training and sent to Mahdi, just south of Cairo. All went well until he had to jump from a moving flatbed rail truck to simulate a parachute landing; he hit a rock and broke his foot, so never did earn his parachute wings. While laid up in Cairo he reflected how his father had also recuperated in Cairo after having been wounded at Gallipoli in the First World War.

After the Sicily landings the Eighth Army, including Ivon, fought their way up the west coast of Italy. The Sappers were kept very busy as this coastline is bedevilled by rivers draining the Apennine Mountains, each of which required bridging. Ivon was at the fall of Rome and a family heirloom is the bottle opener he liberated from a Roman waiter's back pocket!

At the end of the war Ivon, now a Captain, returned to UK where he married Heather, his childhood sweetheart. He was posted to Graz in Austria and the newlyweds travelled across Europe by train, but in separate compartments; as an officer in uniform Ivon travelled First Class and was not allowed to downgrade, whereas his new wife only warranted a third class ticket.

They spent a happy couple of years in Austria, before Ivon was posted back to UK to join Survey. During this period he assisted moving the Middle East Survey facilities from Nasser's Egypt to Cyprus, then a British colony. He remembered non-stop work, day and night and thought, probably deliriously, that if he could devise a way to make the clock run backwards he could gain the extra time they desperately needed to get the job done. During this period he remembered a very happy meeting with his brother Philip, also a Sapper, at Zigzag by the Suez Canal.

In the early 1950s Ivon and Heather had two children, John and Moira. Ivon was posted to the Survey Branch alongside Chessington Zoo. In his spare time he studied hard and so passed his exams to become an Associate of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (ARICS). In 1956 he was promoted to Major and posted to 42 Survey Engineer Regiment in Zyyi, Cyprus and the family moved out to live in the Army town of Berengaria, just outside Limasol. Ivon's commanding officer was Lt Col, later Major General Irwin, who was later Director General of the Ordnance Survey. Ivon commuted daily to Zyyi, about a 60 mile journey each way. At the time we were fighting against EOKA, the terrorist organisation led by Col Grivas, who effectively won the war when Cyprus was granted independence. On the way back from Zyyi one day, Ivon's Land Rover hit a mine. He was thrown clear but landed in a thorn bush that did more harm than the explosion.

Back in UK Ivon was posted to the School of Military Survey at Hermitage, Berkshire, where he taught for three years. This was followed by a two year posting to Aden as Deputy Assistant Director Survey at the time of another colonial uprising. Aden was a British Protectorate and a strategic refuelling point on the route through the Suez Canal/Red Sea to India and the Far East. From there Ivon was responsible for military mapping of Arabia while the terrorist insurgency went on in the background.

In the mid sixties Ivon was promoted to Lt Col and posted to the Headquarter of the British Army of the Rhine at Rheindahlen, West Germany as Assistant Director of Survey, where he was responsible for liaison with NATO before the fall of the Iron Curtain. After four years he returned to UK for his final military posting at the Headquarters of the Ordnance Survey in Southampton. At this time the Ordnance Survey was in the process of civilianisation, so when the time came for Ivon to retire from the army after forty years service, he took a civilian post with the Ordnance Survey with a more or less seamless transition from soldier to Civil Servant.

Ivon spent four years as Ordnance Survey Regional Officer for south Wales and southwest England, including his beloved Dartmoor. One retired Admiral's wife wrote to him to say she understood all the triangulation points on Dartmoor had now been used, so would he please take them away as they were spoiling the view.

Ivon was transferred to the Department of Overseas Surveys and posted to Antigua in the British West Indies to lead a cadastral survey to establish land ownership. He was also responsible for several adjacent islands as well as the Cayman Islands. He had his own court of law to hear property and boundary disputes and his decision was final.

Ivon's last appointment before retirement was at the headquarters of the Department of Overseas Surveys at Tolworth Tower, South London. From here he oversaw surveys in West Africa and in Yemen. In West Africa he coined the acronym MMBA – miles and miles of bl\*\*dy Africa, which he realised worked just as well in Arabia! Yemen had been a very closed society and Ivon's surveyors were the first there since Napoleonic times. Ivon noted a similarity in many of the Arabic names on the Napoleonic maps that bore no relation to actual place names. He deduced that the French surveyors must have been short staffed and so had ascribed place names by standing at the start of a road out of town and asking passersby where the road went;

so many places on the map were called the Arabic equivalent of 'Don't know', 'Don't ask me' or 'Not a clue'. One of the biggest problems Ivon encountered was that his surveyors were often held hostage by local headmen until the government would agree to build a road or bring in electricity or water; so maybe the Napoleonic surveyors had come up with a practical solution to this problem by not venturing very far into the country.

Ivon and Heather finally retired back to Tavistock, where they had met at the Grammar School. Ivon spent many happy years leading walks across Dartmoor, on which he was an acknowledged expert, until degeneration of his lower back forced him to stop.

Ivon died on 23 February 2011, just short of his 88<sup>th</sup> birthday, after a long period of a gradual deterioration of his health. He was a Sapper to the core.

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### WO1 Paul Abrams

Paul joined the Ordnance Survey Apprentice Tradesmen Boys unit at Bryn Howell in 1945 and after boys service trained as a lithographic tradesman at the Survey Training Centre, Longleat before a posting to 42 Survey Engineer Regiment in the Canal Zone in Egypt. A tour at the School followed before three years with 14 Field Survey Squadron then based in Dortmund. In 1959 he went to the London School of Print for a year-long course after which he took up a post as an instructor at the Army Apprentice School in Harrogate. It was then back to Germany but this time to the SPC in Mönchengladbach where he served from 1962 until 1965 followed by another tour with the Regiment, now at Barton Stacey. In 1967 he took up his final post which was as the WO1 at SPC where he stayed until his retirement in 1971.

He then settled with his wife Helga and daughter Christine in Germany near Hamburg where he built up a successful business dealing in silverware.

For some time his health had not been very good, although he never complained and was always cheerful, in fact he often said he had enjoyed many more years than expected after a bye-pass and a lung operation.

Paul passed away on the 5th June leaving his widow Helga, and daughter Christine, who is a teacher in England.

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### WO1 (RSM) Terry Evans

Terry entered boy's service at the Army Apprentice School Harrogate in 1954 and, after the usual spell with the Training Regiment and then the School, he joined 42 Survey Engineer Regiment at Zygi in Cyprus for a three tour. 1961 saw Terry posted for a two years to 13 Squadron then at Fernhurst before he returned to Cyprus, this time for a two year tour with 1 ASLS RE based at RAF Episkopi.

Two instructional tours followed, first at the School and then at the Apprentice College at Chepstow before spending from 1969 until 1971 with 14 Squadron in Germany. Next came a long stint at Hermitage and then to Northern Ireland as the Survey Adviser although ill health cut this tour short. He took up the post of RSM at Barton Stacey in 1976 and retired from the service in 1978 when he returned to his native Torquay.

Terry had suffered ill health for some time and passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May. His funeral was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June at Torquay Crematorium with the Branch Standard and old friends in attendance.

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## Memories of Terry Evans

There are so many memories going back for nearly 57 years that it's difficult to distinguish them into individual anecdotes. We served together in Military Survey, though not always at the same location, from boys' service at Harrogate in 1954 until 1978. We became friends and we met and kept in touch ever since. We shared many interests; sport, current affairs, mutual friends, the countryside, humour. Rather than specific incidents, here are some headings:

### Humour

Humour, on the dry side, was never far away in Terry's company, and I think we shared this trait. He had the capacity to put across his opinions, arguments, in ways that were spiced with the funny side that he could find in all situations. We were together around 1976-78 at 42 Regiment in Barton Stacey when I was the WO in Air Survey Troop and he was RSM. The Oi/c Air Survey sported impressive sideboards which Terry took exception to. Many RSM's might have had a quiet word ('bad for discipline, sir') or might even have asked a more senior officer to take it up. Terry's way was to say in company, *'I understand you're auditioning for the Onedin Line, sir, with those sideboards you've got every chance!* With his personality he could get away with these things down the years – many, including me, couldn't. The following is an excerpt from the eulogy read at his funeral '...He was born to Reg and Eileen Evans on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1937, and was a loving Brother to Pam, Julie and Roger. One memory of his early wartime childhood was playing on Torquay Seafront and being strafed by a German fighter aircraft. Luckily a sailor grabbed him and hurled him to safety, into one of the sunken flower gardens.' Terry would probably have seen a funny side to this!

### Sport

Sport played a big part in our early lives. We were both in a strong hockey side at 9 Training Regiment, along with other contemporary ex-Harrogate boys, notably Jack Pugh and Michael Martin. This was maintained when we were all posted in 1958 to 42 Regiment in Cyprus, when we had arguably the strongest Army unit team on the island. A particular memory which we recalled frequently down the years was of beating the powerful, and previously undefeated, team from Royal Air Force Nicosia. I think they were surprised to see a lot of squaddies climbing out of a 3-ton truck at their comparatively well-appointed camp (in comparison to our tents). They were certainly surprised when we won 3-1 (as I recall it). The cricket team we played in was not too dusty either, led by Captain Geoffrey Seaton who had played the game at first class level. After Cyprus we went our separate ways for a few years, but we both continued to play sport. As time went on and bodies aged and joints deteriorated we both took up golf, and it's a great regret for me that Terry and I never shared a round.

### General Thoughts

It's not just a compliment to say that Terry was a 'good man', it's the truth. I found him honest, plain spoken, reliable, always great company, and loyal – as I've no doubt his many other friends found him. I never saw him the worse for drink, which cannot be said about some others of us in his wide circle of friends! He was a good soldier, a good family man (as his extended family bears witness), and it's a great shame that he's gone when he would have had much more to give. My wife Pauline and I will miss him greatly, and we will keep in touch with his family.

**Michael Gowlett**

## Harrogate and Psychological Denial – Case Studies

Denial is a [defence mechanism](#) postulated by [Sigmund Freud](#), in which a person is faced with a fact that is too uncomfortable to accept and rejects it instead, insisting that it is not true despite what may be overwhelming [evidence](#). (Wikipedia)

### Case Study 1

Picture the scene. It is December 1954 at the Army Apprentices College and intake 54B has received 'credits' before going home on their first leave. As I recall it apprentices' pay was 17/6 a week, of which 10/- and 5/- could be drawn on alternate weeks. The remainder was retained by the Paymaster and paid out before leave at Christmas, Easter and in the Summer as 'credits'. Thus I received, again as I recall it, the unimaginable sum of £7 10s. This included a £5 note, which was black on white and seemed about half the size of a tabloid newspaper page. Armed with this money and a typed bus voucher for the journey to Harrogate station *which was about the same size as the £5 note*, I set off on Christmas leave. Bearing in mind the title of this piece, the more quick witted readers might guess what happened next.

On the journey to London I reached into my pocket to examine the £5 note and found.....a typed bus ticket! The bus conductor must have found himself to be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. This was too horrible to contemplate and psychological denial quickly set in. If I wasn't prepared to admit the tragedy to myself I certainly wouldn't confide in my travelling companions, so it wasn't until I reached home that I emptied my pockets and confirmed what I already knew! My parents were not well off and my father was a strong believer in learning by experience, so I was not generously reimbursed by loving parents. Enquiries to the Harrogate bus company were predictably fruitless. Not the best Christmas ever!

As an afterthought, I did a Google search for the value of £5 in 1954 in today's money. It ranged from £107 using the Retail Price Index to £282 using 'average earnings'. Believe me, it meant more to me than either of those conversions!

### Case Study 2

Fast forward to the late 1980's. Once again I was back in Harrogate but my circumstances had changed. I had long left the Army and I was working for National Power, the electricity generator, which was one of the successor companies to the recently privatised CEGB. Harrogate was the northern headquarters and I was to run a four-day course for power station managers on, of all things, 'Influencing Skills'. I booked in at the Hotel Majestic, one of those Victorian piles built in the heyday of Harrogate as a spa town (and at which we apprentices gazed at in wonder as we trudged back to Penny Pot Lane). I had dinner in town and sunk a couple of beers and settled in for a good night's sleep. I wouldn't have eaten a crumb or slept a wink if I knew what was to happen that night!

On the way down to breakfast I looked out at the car park and saw.....*a gap where my car had been parked!* No, I must have made a mistake; my car must be out there somewhere. Again I sought immediate comfort in psychological denial! I went on down to breakfast (how could I have been so stupid?), but this time I applied rational action more quickly. The police soon let me know that my car had been stolen, used for a burglary in Harrogate, and finally written off during a police car chase in the centre of Sunderland, with one occupant severely injured! No, it wasn't the loss of my company Vauxhall Astra GTX (which I did like), or my personal belongings, which really exercised me – they were all replaceable. In any case, the police in their bluff Yorkshire way, said "*believe me, you wouldn't want anything back that was in that car*".

The 'denial' referred to the complete loss of four days training materials – lecture notes, a video, OHP slides, handouts, exercises. This was long before the days of internet, Google searches, downloading, Power Point and all that jazz. So, a four-day course stretched ahead with no material and an audience of power station managers, who were (are!) not the most sympathetic

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audience! Hazy memory tells me that I negotiated ('influenced') a stay of execution for a half day or day, cobbled together some bits and pieces and ran a shortened course – but it was not a relaxing time! Never, ever, again did I leave my training materials in my car overnight.

So, readers, is there something in the air of Harrogate to encourage psychological denial or am I more subject than most to that defence mechanism? If I can't answer that I'm still in denial! Readers may also wonder whether my employment as a management trainer wasn't a contradiction in terms!!

**Michael Gowlett**

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### TREASURER'S INPUT – SUMMER 2011

#### BANK ACCOUNTS AS AT 28 JULY 2011

Current account	£863.48
Reserve Account	£7,714.82
RE (GEO) Fund	£2,194.74

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS AS AT 28 JULY 2011

So far 264 members have paid £2,112. Discounting exempt members, 11 people who paid subscriptions in 2010 have not paid in 2011. It would be helpful if these members would pay their subs as soon as possible, or let the Secretary or Treasurer know if there is change of circumstances.

#### BUDGET

An estimate of the end of the end of year figures will be available in the next newsletter, when the AGM and reunion expenses will be known.

#### HANDOVER

Alf Isherwood and I are continuing to work on the handover of the accounts. Alf expects to take over the day to day running after the AGM and to finally assume control after the end of year audit is prepared.

**Michael Gowlett**

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### Newsletter Dates 2011/12

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

### 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](mailto:ilp514@hotmail.co.uk) or call 023 802 67552.

## Tim's Tale

We've all been there, done that. Yet, as one gets older it's amazing how the mind can remember events that took place so long ago, often with great clarity.

One such memory I can see in my mind's eye as if it was yesterday.

The location: The Tidworth Detachment from SMS.

The time: Night time in 1957.

The project: Produce a 1:1250 scale map of a length of road using a plane table and clinometer.

Sometime before, at Newbury, the A3 Trig Course hopefuls had been trained in Morse code and the use thereof. For some reason on this course no one had really got to grips with the technique of separating the dots from the dashes using a light pointing towards the other station. Consequently, when my forward station asked for some adjustment of light from our beacon for his observation, his Morse code was gibberish. I asked him to repeat his request time after time but the incoming Morse didn't make any sense at all. After a long time, with everyone getting colder and colder as the night progressed, I flashed my last message which included one or two expletives - if I remember correctly. Then we packed up and went back to Tidworth Barracks.

Forward now to the following morning when I was merrily plotting my traverse down a dip and curve in the road near the Tidworth Military Cemetery, oblivious to a Land Rover which had silently pulled up behind me. In a cloud of steam and righteous indignation, a certain officer who had a certain reputation bore down on me and I knew there was going to be trouble. "Walker" he roared, "*what the ----- hell were you sending on your Morse light last night?*" Quick as a flash I realised this officer must have been on the receiving end of my last message. "*What is the Morse for 'More Light'?*" he continued as if I was standing thirty yards away instead of three feet. "*I was asking confirmation of his request, Sir*", I said, "*I couldn't make out what he wanted*", and I blurted out a series of words that included dots and dashes in various combinations which sounded fantastic to me, but were in reality nonsense as my mind had frozen on what the Morse alphabet was.

"*Harrumph*", he shouted, but at fewer decibels than before. "*Well, ----- do it clearer next time*". Whereupon he returned, muttering something about the youth of today, to the vehicle and departed.

I realised at this point he hadn't a clue how to read Morse either, but my confidence won the day. I was 17 years of age when this incident happened and I learned a valuable lesson that day.....when in a tight spot a bit of bluff can do wonders.

PS. I have travelled that road many, many times since over the years. It is the A 338 near Collingbourne Ducis and I never fail to recall the incident every time I have driven past it.

**Tim Walker**

### Editor's Note

Many thanks to Mike Gowlett, the anonymous Harrogate Boy (any ideas?), Taff Richards and Tim Walker for responding to my plea for anecdotes and photographic input to liven up the newsletter. I hope this has primed the memory pump of readers who will put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard (either input will do) and share some memories with readers. Please email or post your contribution to me by 15<sup>th</sup> of October to make it into the next issue.

## Survey Training Centre XV – 1948

Taff Richards has sent in this photograph of the Survey Training Centre rugby XV taken after a match away from Longleat at Tidworth in 1948 by Sapper DJ Wheadon of Chard, Somerset. Dave Wheadon was a national serviceman who served in 42 Regiment at Fayid and later went on to become a professional photographer and is now a member of our branch.

Taff has identified quite a few and believes that the one on his left was a Captain Halliday (the answer is yes it is Ted Halliday). He wonders if anyone can fill in the blanks – if you recognise any of the anonymous players please let Taff know by calling him on 01639 643 207 or email [trevor.richards87@ntlworld.com](mailto:trevor.richards87@ntlworld.com).



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**REUNION (&AGM) 2011**

**PLEASE SEND ALL RETURNS BEFORE 1 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:**

**M. Perry - Mil Svy Branch  
101 Craven Road  
Newbury  
Berks, RG14 5NL  
[mandpdperry@sky.com](mailto: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 10 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 of .....Numbers attending the AGM on the 10<sup>th</sup> 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.

.....

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.