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Notwithstanding their heavy workload the lads of 1 Tpt Coy still have to take time out to keep their vehicles in tip-top condition. See 'The Movers' pages 20-21. Photo: Cpl Willie Barr.
Teachtairí Nollag chug na Fórsai Cosanta

Christmas Message to the Defence Forces

An Uachtarán

Don Clewone Fórna,
An Leithneasúcháin Daire F. Sapielton.

It is my very great pleasure to extend warmest Christmas greetings to each member of the Army, Air Corps, and Naval Service and to every Defence Forces personnel, whether at home or overseas.

We are all aware that in the line of duty it is not always easy to spend Christmas with our loved ones, but please know that you are very much in our thoughts and prayers.

To all members of the Defence Forces: your sacrifice and dedication are greatly appreciated by your families, friends, and the nation.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Maire Mhícheall Íosa
Uachtarán na hÉireann

Michael Smith
Minister for Defence

I am delighted to have the opportunity to convey season's greetings to all members of the Defence Forces and their families.

I wish to extend a special greeting to all members of the Defence Forces who will spend Christmas serving in the cause of peace overseas. The number of personnel serving overseas is at its highest level for many years. This year Irish troops are serving in Kosovo and East Timor for the first time. All in all, over 670 members will spend Christmas and the new year serving abroad and they will all be missed by their families at home.

During the past year, we have been sadly reminded of the sacrifices faced by members of the Defence Forces as they go about their day-to-day work. Defence Forces personnel have lost their lives in tragic circumstances at home and abroad in the past year. My thoughts and prayers are with their families, this Christmas.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful, successful New Year.

Guím sonas agus séileacht do chomhchaithe amháin na hÉireann.

Maire Mhícheall Íosa
Uachtarán na hÉireann

December-January 2006
**Chief of Staff**

As the millennium draws to a close I would like to wish you a very Happy Christmas to all the members of the Defence community. I extend greetings to all our serving personnel serving the country in the name of peace at many locations around the world. The sun never sets on the Irish Defence Forces!

Once again I acknowledge the fact that during Christmas and at the dawn of the new millennium, Irish soldiers, sailors, and airmen will be on duty on land, sea, and in the air.

To the families of our soldiers, sailors, and airmen, I wish to thank you on behalf of the Defence Forces for the support you have so faithfully given throughout the year. Those of you who have loved ones serving abroad are particularly in my thoughts and I know how difficult it can be for families at this time of the year.

Season's greetings also to the members of An Fianna and An Teachta Mhíni who are continuing their long tradition of service to the community. Also to our retired comrades, whose continued support is so important to us.

We pray for all those of the military community who have died during the year and that God will comfort their relatives at this time.

With all of you I look forward as we stand on the threshold of a new millennium. We have been through much together and I believe that we can face the future with renewed confidence and vigour. I ask for your patience as we endeavor to solve our problems and overcome the many obstacles.

At a time of great change, one thing has remained constant and that is the loyalty and steadfastness of the Defence Forces. For that I wish to thank you all.

God's Peace on you all this season.

Lt Gen David Stapleton
Chief of Staff

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**Head Chaplain**

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to extend Christmas Greetings to you, the men and women of our Defence Forces, and to your families, as we prepare to celebrate the feast of Christmas and enter the new millennium.

This past year has been an historic year; The Peace we longed for here at home is now becoming tangible and real. Our colleagues are now working in distant lands, not part of our vocabulary at this time last year. We think of those working in Kosovo and East Timor who will experience a different kind of Christmas this year.

This past year has also been a sad year. We remember our colleagues who died in Tarnaki and those who died overseas in Lebanon. Their families are very much in our thoughts at this time.

At Christmas we exchange gifts, as a means of conveying our love, affection, thanks, appreciation and best wishes. We can overshadow the great gift of love and peace, which our colleagues, in particular, bring to far distant lands. We remember them this Christmas working all over the world. We ask God's blessing on them at this time, when they are separated for all who are dear and special to them.

I wish all members of the Defence Forces, and their families, a happy and peaceful Christmas and a Blessed New Year in 2000. As we enter a new millennium, we ask God's blessing on all our future endeavours.

With good wishes,

Monsignor John Crowley
Chief of Staff
In September, 4 W Bde, in conjunction with the Western Health Board, conducted a Food Hygiene Certificate course for 44 personnel, over half of the food workers in the Brigade. The course was a resounding success with all 44 receiving their certificates at a ceremony in Don Us McCoo. Our photo shows Brig Gen John Martin (OC 4 W Bde), Capt M Daly (course co-ordinator) and instructors from the WHB, Ms Maria Larkin and Ms Maire Brennan, with the successful students.

An Air Corps student who completed their Standard NCO course recently in the DFEC was Cat Eamon Mag, Gerry Casey, Brendan O'Callaghan, Dominic Fitzgerald, Jonathan McMahon, Joe Flynn, Roddy Molloy, and Liam Cullen. Photo: Tony Flynn

Chief of Staff, Lt Col Denis Scola, and GCOC E Bde, Brig Gen Edmund Haskele, with Donnacha's Chief of Staff who recently visited McHale's.

Pte Chris McCarthy (4 Coy, 14 Bde) who recently visited McHale's.

Lt Col Scola (CO) and wife, Maureen, with Boyne's Ruan's Kashing at the People of the Year awards in the Burlington Hotel. Photo: Cusack Photography

Pte Anthony O'Sullivan, who is serving with 5 Int Bde in Kosovo, couldn't believe his eyes when former Irish soccer legend Frank Stapleton walked into his kitchen. Frank, and a film crew from T2V, were in Macedonia for the Ireland game. On the morning of the match they visited the Irish contingent in Kosovo and after the match that evening Frank presented 5 Int Bde with $500 from T2V to go towards the refurbishment of two local houses that the lads are working on. (For more on that see 'The Moment', pages 20-21.) Meanwhile a lucky group of off-duty personnel were able to attend the match in Skopje. Rev Fr Muldowney's photo shown: Pte Murphy, Pte Mulvany, Cdt Gibson (Coy OIC), & Pte O'Brien on their way to the match.

11 Pictured are Sgt Noel McWilliam and Capt John Connolly with the Air Corps Golf Society's Perpetual Trophy, which they won this year.

12 Members of the Year 8 PSC class with DFEC staff and instructors outside the School in McHale Bns.
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INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

MILLENNIUM, or Y2K, hype in the media has for many of us, fueled the fires of fear. Cyber chaos, planes falling from the sky, power failures, hospital confusion, crashing stock markets, public disorder and the possibility of human-induced Armageddon! Are these scenarios likely from January 1st 2000? In a recent newspaper article Jerusalem was cited as being 'likely to be seriously affected' as it is a probable destination for fundamentalists anticipating the Second Coming. Sites such as Stonehenge or the nearest sacred mountain top are likely to be packed with zealots for the world's end.

There are those who might put forward that the media are themselves somewhat guilty of scaremongering or creating an amaligence of terror for Y2K. Maybe, Nevertheless the reality is that throughout the world defences against such tamr and agitation are being taken seriously. Security in Israel is taken as a normal fact of everyday life; but next year it will be extra special. In the US, the FBI has stepped up on extreme right wing Christian and millenarian terrorist groups. The Vatican has set up a special unit to monitor potential threats to Pope John Paul. In addition, recent trends in terrorism are contributing to growing awareness that the nature of terror is changing just as the nature of modern geopolitics has changed over the past decade or so. Supercrime cannot any longer exist, and old ideologies are defunct, thereby leaving unstable vacuums in many regions. This has led to a range of potential flashpoint situations, ranging from extreme ethno-nationalism to religious fundamentalism.

There are many defintions of terrorism because by its nature it is difficult to define. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as the practice of using violent and intimidating methods, especially to achieve political ends. The US Department of Defense defines it as the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear, intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. It is in this sense that terrorism can be distinguished from criminal violence. The FBI defines terror-
gious terror. Secular terrorists are more likely to be targeted carefully and generally attempt to minimise casualties in civilian areas. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Al-Qaeda type terrorist organisations may employ tactics in the service of their religious cause that seek to maximise civilian casualties.

In view of the above it can be concluded that the reliance on violence, the legitimacy and the legitimisation of these acts are viewed by various doctrines and religions as sacrosanct acts. For example, the modern Islamic suicide bomber is glorified in paradise.

Below: Above: A recent danger that has arisen is the possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorist or militant groups. A dangerous precedent was set with the use of Sarin nerve agent by the Aum Shinrikyo attack on the Tokyo underground.

Left & right: Prorighters on the streets of Atlanta, a country which has suffered greatly from religiously motivated and militarised terrorism in the recent past.

Right: The bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi and Dar es Salam by Al-Shabab graphically illustrate the vulnerability of even the strongest military powers to random acts of terror.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the nature and motivation of terrorism has undergone significant change. During most of this century terrorism has tended to be theocratic-nationalist or secular in nature, especially up to 1968.

There is a crucial difference between the secular and religious forms of terrorism. Secular terrorists are more likely to seek the position of liberation in a conflict rather than be a part of the solution. They are more likely to be motivated by a desire for power and control over others, rather than by a desire for religious or ideological goals. Secular terrorism is often driven by political or economic motives, while religious terrorism is driven by religious zealotry and a desire to assert dominance over others.

In contrast, religious terrorism is often driven by a desire to assert dominance over others, whether they are perceived to be enemies of the faith or simply those who are not following the correct religious path. Religious terrorism is often more likely to be directed at civilians, who are seen as a target of both the religious and political groups that seek to control them.

Regardless of the specific form that terrorism takes, it is clear that it is a serious and growing threat to global security. It is essential that we take steps to address this threat, both by preventing the spread of terrorism and by working to bring those responsible to justice.
TO THE WATERS AND THE WILD

Would any sane person volunteer to spend a week at the end of an Irish November splashing about in freezing, fast-flowing rivers, bone-chilling lakes, and icy Atlantic waves? No, of course not. Which would lead us to have some doubts about the sanity of the 14 students from around the Defence Forces who attended the All-Army Intermediate Kayak Course in the West last month. Here, to put the case for the defence is one of the students, who wishes, for obvious reasons, to remain anonymous...

I WAS a Monday morning and my first time in Costume Bld. A group of us sat quietly, lost in our own thoughts. What will it be like? How cold is the water in November? Am I good enough? Even though it wasn't freezing the ice had still to be broken amongst the students of the 3rd All-Army Intermediate Kayak Course. The opening address by Capt. Rosale Coleman alloyed our fears somewhat and we relaxed further after we were introduced to each other. Our first day's activity was to be a paddle on the River Inny at Ballinamore, County Longford, followed by a practice session on Eakin's rolling instruction and support strokes in Tuam Swimming Pool.

About an hour later we rendezvoused with multi-coloured Michelle Min, dressed in our wetsuits, buoyancy aids, helmets, and ... the kind of things that I typically couldn't remember the name of.

We were told we would be learning 'break-in' and 'break-out' techniques, although to be honest I was more concerned about whether my kayak would 'break-up' or 'break-down'.

We embarked on our river trip at Newcastle Bridge all wondering how bad the rapids could be on the 2.5 mile stretch between there and Ballinamore. Scenes from the film 'Deliverance' plagued my private thoughts ... after all we were kayaking through the heart of the Irish wilderness.

Split into two groups, paddled tremendously. Each member on the river tossed us with further suspense and posed the burning question: 'What lies around the next corner?'

Before long we hit our first rapid which everyone negotiated successfully. It gave us all a great confidence boost and a thrill for more. We were warming up now and sharing the excitement offered by the next Bld. Our instructor, demonstrated break-in and break-out techniques using a combination of strokes we had learned on our basic courses. We tried to mimc him. That was fun even with a hint of suspense, as every few minutes someone would do an 'Lompeigh' punt through the horizontal plane. The result of these spectacular dunkings would be the 'I'm done' getting very wet and the rest of us cheering and joking at their misfortune. However, the instructors were 'on the ball'...
whisking all victims to the safety of an eddy or the river bank.

The ensuing rapids were challenging and we loved it. Captivating became more common and less traumatic. We were hearing how to cross the flow without being swept downstream - a technique called "ferry gliding." On quiet sections we created side-by-side exchanging friendly banter and avoiding the next challenge.

Two-and-a-half hours from Newcastle Village we reached our port of egress in Bambrookham Village. We had completed our first river of the course and we were as happy as we were wet.

After a quick change of clothes it was back to Airline for "rest" and then to Tuam Swimming Pool for our rolling session.

We were each paired off with somebody who could roll and practised this difficult self-rescue technique. As the session drew to a close some were successful while others packed away their determination for the next session on Tuesday night. At the end of a long day we headed for Dun Llŷn Homestays where we were guests of An Gwlad Clacht.

The following morning we rose with slight muscle pains reminisc-
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The smiles from the local children and the constant cries of "Hallo mee-stin!" are surprisingly the daily greeting from Dili's population. This is despite the fact that the area was devastated by militia forces who support integration with Indonesia following the pro-independence referendum result on August 30th, 1999.

Driving around Dili, one is constantly faced with ruins of a few buildings which are a reminder of this most recent cycle of violence experienced by the East Timorese. Yet despite the recent horrors, the East Timorese people display an amazing spirit and resilience in the face of adversity. Perhaps this can be attributed to the strong Catholic ethos and the open, friendly nature of the people who seem to be prepared to forgive and move on.

Dili is not the only centre of population to bear the scars of the recent cycle of violence in East Timor. Moving further west to the town of Suai one is confronted by a scene of almost total carnage. Suai's ravaged environs suffer some of the worst atrocities and it is estimated that the town has suffered up to 90% damage.

It is in Suai that the ARW has been deployed within the 1st Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (1 RNZIR) as part of the Reconnaissance Company and acts as the eyes and ears of the Battalion Commander.

Since the unit arrived in mid-October it has completed several tasks within its battle area of responsibility (TACR). Ranger Wing personnel have mounted extended patrols into enemy-held areas and through foot patrols, facilitated humanitarian aid and ensured the safe return of internally displaced persons from West to East Timor. They have also detailed suspected militia and have generally been involved in security tasks and a "hearts and minds" campaign along the border with Indonesian West Timor.

The ARW is ideally suited for such tasks as it is an experienced, robust unit which has refined its many SF (special forces) skills over the years at home and abroad. Personnel from the unit also have wide experience in overseas operations including Lebanon, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and Fiji.

The International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) was established under UN Security Council Resolution 1266. It is a Chapter 7 (peace-enforcing) mission and is mandated to restore peace and security to East Timor to protect and support the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) in carrying out its tasks and to facilitate humanitarian assistance operations.

The Australian led INTERFET includes troops from Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Norway, France, the United States, Great Britain, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Portugal.

The force is continuing to expand and may soon include contingents from Fiji, Egypt, Kenya and Jordan. INTERFET has a considerable range of assets available and the force's total strength stands at 9,200. Within this is a strong air component, consisting of both fixed and rotary wings and a sizable maritime capability.

The 1st Irish Component (1 IRCOM) commanded by Lt Col Danny Fitzgerald, is made up of 400 all ranks and is serving a four month tour. The unit is deployed over a wide area from Goin to Dili to Suai. The contingent office is run by the National Command Element, based in Dili and comprising Lt Col Fitzgerald as the Senior Irish Officer, Capt Johnny Whitaker (Staff Officer), Cpl Spy Amin, and Sgt Ben Lindsay. The National Support Element (NSE), based in Dili, is commanded by Comdt Pat Nixon and has a staff of three, including Comdt Landy, Sgt Gary Campbell and Capt Noel Lunn. The NSE's function is to provide logistical and administrative support to the troops in the field.

Currently, INTERFET is in transition with the United Nations Temporary Administration East Timor (UNTAET), who are co-existing with the force in East Timor. The role of INTERFET is expected to be completed and handed over to UNTAET sometime in early 2000. Until that time, the Irish Component will continue to play its part in helping to ensure that peace and security are maintained in East Timor and that its people can begin to look forward to their future with hope.
"The Movers"

1 Tpt Coy have been in Kosovo for four months now and in this feature Capt John Prendergast & Sgt Paul Byrne give us a taste of what life has been like for the personnel of the Unit.

On Sunday 29th of August, 1999, 1 Transport Company (KFOR) left Ireland for Kosovo. We landed in Thessaloniki, Greece, at 23.00hrs and spent our first night in a Greek Army barracks. After a restless night we proceeded to the docks to organise the transport for the long haul to Libard, Kosovo, which was going to be our home for the next six months.

After an uneventful journey we arrived in Camp Clarke early on Tuesday morning to be greeted by the engineer group and our advance party. Elements of which had been on theatre since August 6th.

The Company consists of five officers, 36 NCOs, and 62 privates, drawn from S&T, signals, ordnance, cavalry, medical, engineers, infantry, and Air Corps. The personnel involved have extensive overseas service, with all but three having previous experience abroad. Ten members of the company had also served in the previous deployment of a transport company to Somalia.

This mission has proved, however, to be different to anything any of us had experienced before. For the majority of us it was the first time we've worked on a non-UN mission. It has also proved interesting and challenging to be involved in a mission from its inception. The day-to-day living problems of a new mission have provided interesting tests for all of us.

The unit is under the operational control of HQ KFOR Main (Prishtina) and our mission is to provide on order equipment and material to military units and humanitarian organisations to enable them to support their operations.

Since our arrival on theatre the unit has been involved in a variety of tasks which have changed as the mission has evolved.

For the months of September and October we were heavily involved in the rotation of KFOR units through the port of Thessaloniki in northern Greece. This involved travelling through three sovereign territories and crossing two international borders. Coupled with this was the fact that convoys were not allowed to travel through Greece in daylight hours. These convoys provided good experience for all ranks in the role of heavy logistical support. They were particularly beneficial in enhancing the leadership skills of our NCOs who were heavily involved in the planning and execution of these convoy missions.

As the mission developed so too did the tasks change. The railway facilities were improved by KFOR and this led to the Unit being involved in the transportation of military equipment from the railhead in Pristina to various sites throughout Kosovo. To date we have assisted in the rotation of Italian, British, Swedish, and Polish materials. These tasks have involved Irish soldiers staying overnight in the camps of the various nationalities and it is only after seeing their living conditions that we realised how much the facilities are.

The Company has also been involved in a variety of other military tasks ranging from the transportation of bridging equipment to repair damaged bridges, the collection and distribution of uniforms for the newly formed Kosovo Protection Corps.

As well as military tasks the Unit has also become involved in the distribution of humanitarian aid. One of the United Nations Main Missions in Kosovo is providing shelter for over 100,000 people whose homes have been destroyed during the conflict. For a number of weeks now we have been involved in the transportation of these kits from Pristina to the Pec area - an area which was particularly devastated during the war.

Over humanitarian convoys have involved the distribution of firewood to Shkoder and Albanian villages. We have also been involved in distributing aid from the "Air for Life" a band of school equipment collected by British families in Germany. One of the more challenging tasks we have undertaken so far is the transportation of mobile mortars for the International War Crimes Tribunal for Kosovo (ICTY). This involved the transportation of bombs from mass-grave sites to proper graveyards.

We have also been involved in other tasks apart from the ones we receive from HQ. One mission of mercy came from inside our own camp. One of the local workers now employed in our camp had fled his home during the war, together with his brother and their families. On returning they found their homes had been severely damaged by fire. The personnel of 1 Tpt Coy took it upon themselves to try and help these unfortunate families.

Since starting this project the unit has received generous donations from unit members families and friends. The funding has been used to put a new roof on one house and a new floor in the other and to replace all the windows and doors.

On November 4th we were visited by An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, who was accompanied by the Chief of Staff, Lt Gen David Stapeleton. During his time with us the Taoiseach visited the troops at work while they were transporting building materials for UNHCR and helping CIRH with the exhumation of mass graves. He then paid a visit to Camp Clarke where he met the majority of the Company.

Later that day the Taoiseach attended various meetings with COM KFOR (Commander, KFOR), UNMIK officials and representatives of the Albanian and Serbian communities. That evening he returned to Camp Clarke for a dinner held in his honour. The visit was a great success and was much appreciated by all the members of the Company.

Other visitors to the camp have included Mr Pat Cox MEP and a Liberal delegation from the European Parliament. COM KFOR has recently paid us a visit and we have also had visits from Irish people working with UNMIK, OSCE and various other Aid Agencies.

With the weather now changing for the worse, things are becoming more interesting for us. Temperatures are slightly above freezing during daylight hours but at night they have dropped to as low as -10°C. This change in weather has had an adverse effect on driving conditions and has led to a need for even greater vigilance on the roads of Kosovo.

Even though our workload is heavy we do have some leisure time. The leisure period now has started and many of our personnel have opted to spend it at home while others are going to places like Cyprus, Malta, Greece, Austria, and Italy. Sport features largely in our leisure time and highlights included a KFOR version of the rugby world cup with Teams from England, Wales, Scotland, USA, Fiji, France, and Belgium, all competing for KFOR's World Cup trophy with the American team emerging as victor.

On the soccer front, a small number of the Company were able to attend the Ireland versus Macedonian game in Skopje. We have also had a number of competitive soccer matches against teams from the Royal Irish Regiment and the Irish Guards as well as a local selection.

To date this mission has proved to be of great benefit for all members of 1 Transport Company. We have worked with armies from most of the major military nations and we have seen that we can hold our own with the best of them. It also appears that this type of mission will be the blueprint for peacekeeping missions of the future and if this is the case then important lessons have been learnt which can only benefit our involvement in future missions.
Since the end of the Cold War, the security climate of the world has become very unsettled. The threat of a major confrontation between the eastern and western blocs has receded somewhat only to be replaced by bitter inter-ethnic regional conflicts. With these simmering disputes threatening to boil over, the UN has begun to formulate a policy of rapid intervention using forces made available to it by its members. In order for this policy to work a rapid reaction force would have to be placed in the area of operations (AO) quickly, with the equipment to deter aggression and protect the troops of the force.

Many of these hot spots often have poor infrastructure, such as narrow roads and light bridges which would be unsuitable for heavy vehicles such as main battle tanks (MBTs). In light of this, a force equipped with a family of standardised light armoured vehicles (LAVs) which benefit from strategic mobility, through rapid air transport could play a very important part in giving substance to the UN policy.

The vehicles of Telford Light Armoured Vehicles (UK) are one of the world's leading LAV producers, with over 14,000 vehicles sold to 40 different countries. These vehicles have seen reliable service in terrain varying from boggy and rice fields to desert and snow.

One of LAVs's most successful products has been the Scorpion CVRT (Chassis, Engine, Turret, Radio), a vehicle which gives its crew protection from conventional and anti-personnel landmines. The Scorpion's aluminium armour gives the crew protection from high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warheads and shell splinters while allowing the vehicle to be transported by medium/high-speed helicopters. The Scorpion is a very versatile vehicle for the role of the vehicle.

Continued design work has seen the Scorpion CVRT family evolve into the Stormer, a multi-role combat vehicle designed for use in the Middle East. The Stormer 30 is a three-man light armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HE-MG and 20mm rounds ready to use.

The Stormer 30 is a three-man light armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HE-MG and 20mm rounds ready to use. The Stormer 30 is a three-man light armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HE-MG and 20mm rounds ready to use. The Stormer 30 is a three-man light armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HE-MG and 20mm rounds ready to use. The Stormer 30 is a three-man light armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HE-MG and 20mm rounds ready to use. The Stormer 30 is a three-man light armoured reconnaissance vehicle protected by spaced steel armour over an aluminium hull designed to resist 14.5mm Soviet HE-MG and 20mm rounds ready to use.

The downhill is protected to the crew from TSPR-4 anti-tank mines and all lesser types of landmines. The three-man crew operates the air-conditioned vehicle which can be armoured from a single machine gun up to high-powered autocannons, which had previously been unavailable to light vehicles.

The vehicle has a number of armoured glass windows allowing the driver and crew to have good visibility in mobile and dangerous situations. With a top speed of 110km/h and a range of 300km on road (560km off-road) the Stormer 30 is a very capable vehicle which allows the crew to maintain a presence in far flung corners of any area of operations.

As can be seen from the News a range of different vehicles exists which are able to provide strategic mobility as well as tactical effectiveness to any force wishing to serve the United Nations as a fire bridge, allowing quick reaction and deployment to hot zones to try and minimise the outbreak and spread of hostilities by which the civilian is always the first casualty.
END OF YEAR MADNESS

250-hour exercise designated "Forest Shield" took place over the weekend of 16th/17th October in County Meath. The exercise, organised by E Coy, 7 Inf Brn FCA, based in Killeen, comprised 120 personnel, drawn from all elements of 7 Inf Brn with elements from 3, 7 Inf Bde. 3 Inf MP Coy, 11 Inf MP Coy, 11 Inf Sig Coy, and 11 Inf Sig Coy, in support.

The purpose of the exercise was to practice officers and NCO's in the conduct of a major exercise, to include the employment of appropriate forces, to deal with the wide range of emergency situations in unfamiliar terrain. It was conducted under the watchful eye of the troops were practiced in navigation, communications and signals, base camp and patrol skills, as well as ambush and anti-ambush drills. There was also emphasis on the handling of some of the equipment, particularly the solar panels.

On arrival at HQ E Coy on Saturday morning the troops were divided into Blue Force (D Co) and Red Force, and then divided into the exercise scenarios. Each group consisted of a full infantry platoon with attachments, a company HQ, and its own dedicated exercise security officer. An efficient BDE staff was assigned to each group. Red Force had an additional element, namely the Special Boat Group under the command of Sgtd Eoin McNaughton, E Coy.

The exercise was completed, with a special salute for the Special Boat Group under the command of Sgtd Eoin McNaughton, E Coy.

Above: Friendly forces patrol the streets of Killeen. Photos: Cecil P. Lynch.

Right: Red Force check out the area ahead of advancing. Below: It's been a hard day's night!

Blue Force's 1 Bde was making a counter-attack against the invading force. A platoon from Blue Force under the command of 2Lt Bradly was deployed to locate and destroy the Red Force platoon under the command of 2Lt Farrell, D Coy, and subsequently

FOREST SHIELD

By Capt Kan McManus, E Coy, 7 Inf Brn

December-January 2000
SHELLS
past and present

BY MICHAEL O’REILLY

The collecting of inert military carriages can be historically, geographically, and technically a rewarding hobby. Broadly speaking, there are two main categories in the subject: rounds for pistols, rifles, heavy machine guns (HMG), and mortars and artillery. Although this article concentrates mostly on aircraft cannon shells, some,HMG rounds are also included. It is generally accepted that the term cannon is applied to guns that have barrels between 15mm and 30mm.

The term for HMG and HMG rounds used during the Second World War by the Luftwaffe’s Messerschmitt Bf 109 and Focke-Wulf FW 190 fighters is quite a fascinating study in its own right. The muzzle case, projectiles and fuses when fitted were each stamped with their manufacturer’s code as is often the case when they were made in separate factories. Up to 1940 these codes consisted of numerals occasionally on their own, but in the majority of cases the letter “T” was included in its prefix. However, during 1940 these codes were changed to letters. It is interesting to note that each collector has access to an online code list that can trace the lot of the factory locations both in Germany and the occupied countries. The following illustrates two examples of these codes in the numerals and letter versions respectively: P 346 - H. Huck, Metallwaren, Nurnberg; eeo - Deutsche Waffen-u Munitionsfabriken (DWG) AG, Poznan.

Main pic: This article deals with many of the more common aircraft cannon shells employed by the Second World War to today. A popular calibre over the years has been 20mm and is still widespread use. These Mirage 2000s of the French Air Force are armed with 30mm canons. Photo: French Ministry of Defence.

Bottom Left: A selection of cannon shells and HMG rounds from WW2 to the present.

Bottom Right: Some of the cannon shells and HMG rounds used by the Germans during the war.

might now be spent differently, or may have changed completely. For example the Polish town of Poznan, mentioned above, is now known as Poznan. This gives the enthusiast a further challenge in pinpointing the locations of shells that can certainly enrich your knowledge of geography.

The most important Luftwaffe cannon rounds that have become quite rare and also are seldom seen in the hobby market are the HMG rounds. Hence the accompanying previously unpublished photographs of these shells should be of interest to students of the Luftwaffe. A standard 13mm Mauser rifle case is also included to give a sense of scale.

All of the shells featured here have steel cases except the 20mm MG FF AP which has a brass case. Shells with identical cases are arranged in pairs with their respective armour piercing (AP) and high-explosive incendiary (HEI) projectiles. The incoherent rounds are the calibres from a 30mm Mk 108 and the projectile from a 30mm Mk 103.

The 105mm AP was regarded as a formidable round in its day. Its longest outside case was capable of penetrating steel armour at 200m. An interesting point concerning the 13mm and 15mm calibres is that whilst earlier batches had conventional percussion primers these were mostly fitted with electric primers. The ‘nicked one off’ in the photograph is the 20mm Sperrshitz, flat shell. These were fired from the famous multi-barrelled Flak 53 guns which were manned by the Luftschutz (air defence) gunners throughout the war. Set size (SDS) versions of these shells were used in built-up areas and were designed to blow themselves up before returning to earth in the event of not hitting a target. This was achieved by either allowing the tracer or a separate incendiary charge to burn through the HEII chamber.

Now onto the miscellaneous of cannon shells used in the Second World War. The following are just a few observations of these rounds and their associated armament.

The 55° Boys anti-tank round has a belted brass case and is derived from a Big Game hunting cartridge. The projectile is a solid with no explosive filling. Captain Boys designed the gun in the mid-1900s and it was the only British anti-tank weapon used during the First World War. Five rounds were fired in an overhead fire magazine. The weapon utilised a simple bolt mechanism and although fitted with a scope according to the Boys, the weapon still gave its users a hefty kick.

The Boys saw service in several wars and 40mm Gun canisters but due to its projectile’s lack of penetrating power in the improved armour being fitted in the early years of the war it was superseded by the PIAT projector during 1942.

The 12.7mm Soviet cartridge which exists in AP and HEI forms was developed in the USSR in 1938 for the DSHK M-38 HMG. Still widely in use today, this cartridge has a heavier bullet than its equivalent 12.7 Browning, giving it a slightly better performance.

The 14.5mm cartridge was used Soviet anti-aircraft during the Second World War. Available in AP and HE II versions, it also saw use in the Vietnam War. The barrelled 20U 2A guns firing this calibre gave a very slight overpressure.

The famous 20mm Hispano cannon is synonymous with the Spitfire, Hurricane, and Typhoon fighter aircraft. Post-war these guns armed the outboarded Vampires and Gloster Meteor. The Hispano cannon comes in AP, HEI and the Luftschutz (air defence) incendiary. The round in the photograph is the non-incendiary HEI version.

This 17.7mm HMG’s round has no actual fuse, instead a hardened steel fin case is screwed into the body. On impact the bullet or some piece pushes the detonator which lets off below it, thereby exploding the HEI filling. It was designed to penetrate and set off armoured fuel tanks. The ubiquitous 20mm Oerlikon long-case shell was used for air defence by both the Allies and Germans during the war and the weapon is still in service. The shell shown here is an original German steel-cased HMG version manufactured during 1942. The one beside it is a 20mm Oerlikon KAA, a steel-cased modern light anti-aircraft round.

The ancestry of the 30mm Aden gun goes back to the German World War Two 30mm Masur M123a10 rifle cannon, of which a basic version was copied. The 30mm Aden was the 1950s vintage Supermarine Spitfire’s main armament. The Hawker Hunter and the Spitfire built. The name Aden also was the name of the Development Enfield.

The gun’s cartridge case is belted, made of brass and electrically primed. The French DEFA round, as used in the Mirage Mt., is quite similar but has an slightly case. The 25mm Aden cannon has the same external dimensions as its 30mm namesake but fires the steel-cased 25mm Oerlikon KAA round. The Hawker Hunter HRS has a detectable fuselage pod with a single containing one of these calibres with 100 rounds. The 27mm Mauser BKZ 77 round is also based on the wartime MG 213a cannon. The Tornado IDS version is fitted with two forwardage-mounted BKZ74, each with 180 rounds. The bolted, steel-cased cartridges are electrically primed and come in different calibres.

The seven-barrelled 30mm GAU-8/Ahead cannon is fitted to USAAF A-10 Thunderbolt ground-attack aircraft. The gun is fed from a drum containing up to 1,350 rounds of slightly/medium-calibre, electrically-primed ammunition. The cartridge cases measure 173mm in length. The Rani, the seven-case, and are nicknamed “milk bottle rounds” due to their size. Some other significant rounds not pictured here would include the 20mm Hispano used by RAF Phantoms, the rapid Second World War-vintage 20mm Danish Madsen, and the Soviet 20mm ShVAK and 23mm Yak types. Hopefully, this short treatise on cannon shells will give some insight into how this particular realm of ordnance holds such an attraction for those who study and collect them.
The War Goes On

Two years ago I wrote in An Cosantoir that a simple truth prevailed in South Lebanon. I stated that in view of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) were well and truly bogged down in what amounts to military quagmire, and that there was neither the remotest prospect of a political solution in sight nor any potential for an immediate IDF military disengagement. I drew attention to the fact that on December 1st of that year Lebanon’s war of attrition had continued unrelentingly with the detonation of yet another roadside bomb (RSB), which on that occasion immobilised an IDF Merkava main battle tank near Al Tin village. Later that same evening a Hezbollah rocket attack fell well short of its target and demolished part of a schoolhouse in the Christian village of Ein Hiel deep in what well-nigh twenty years we have called the Israeli Controled Area, or in UN parlance, the ‘IC’. I also wrote that a few days previously an Amal operation had gone horribly wrong when a number of 120mm mortars were fired into this same area but again fell short of target and landed in the village of Beit Laff, killing eight innocent civilians. In the parallel world of Lebanese politics I noted that the then Prime Minister Rafik Hariri had refused to guarantee any security along the border with Israel if the IDF withdrew because he claimed that “only God could guarantee security”. And at the Conference of Security States in Tehran Lebanese President Hrawi was uncompromising in his insistence that while occupation did not amount to terrorism, surrendering to occupation was in this view insane. On the Israeli side of the fence Israeli Government spokesman Uri Luleminberg warned his fellow citizens that a unilateral IDF withdrawal from Lebanon would only be a prelude to a disaster for which might be defined in the longer term the IDF re-entry Lebanon with divisions and brigades and policies of burned earth. It was all depressingly familiar stuff—existential politics at its worst—coming from nowhere, going nowhere and achieving absolutely nothing, and not the remotest prospect of an end to the conflict in sight.

The human cost of occupying South Lebanon is of course very high for Israel and up to that point in 1997 I recorded the IDF statistics of 219 IDF fatalities and 694 wounded since 1982. Israel was equally devastated in Lebanon but would most certainly be equally devastated. The only certainty I could predict was that in the coming months many further Israelis and Lebanese would spill their blood on battlefields already saturated. Unfortunately we now know that this particular prophecy has indeed come to pass. Two years later, and weeping another blue beast, I am again in the midst of these same killing fields and have been for myself those stray Amal shells exploded in Beit Laff in a tiny Muslim village which hags precariously to the northern slope of a deep valley (Velay) fully exposed to anyone who might decide to shell it. In another Hezbollah position in Hezbollah-controlled villages journalists and armed resistance targeted Israeli forces...
proposition of precision ethnic cleansing, with ruthless columns pouring in all directions. No, it is all over yet in Southern Lebanon for 25 years. The absence of meaningful political dialogue has necessitated the permanent establishment of a UN interim force and the expansion of an unarmed military observer mission which has itself been in place for over half a century. Progress to this time of writing in late 1998 has been painfully slow and a final solution is certainly not immediately to hand. With Shihan Naem Kour, Hezbollah's political leader in the south, claiming that all diplomatic attempts to halt the hostilities were doomed, and that Hezbollah will not accept anything less than the total defeat of the enemy and all its collaborators, "the road ahead in the coming months will prove tortuously difficult. With the advent of a new millennium peacekeepers across the Middle East remain hopeful that a resolution to Lebanon's incessant bloodletting may finally be in the offering. But we have hoped before and been frustrated...Unfortunately we may well be disappointed again."

A mural on the roadside between Tilnine and Haddathah celebrates another Hezbollah martyr.

All of this invariants leads to the inevitable critical question of whether new Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak can actually deliver on his election promise to withdraw the IDF from Lebanon over July 1st 2000 and whether the new millennium will herald a new beginning in this part of the world. The 'smart money' suggests that he will unequivocally by because he has built his political career squarely on this key issue. However, his stated objective is to achieve this within the context of an agreement with Syria; and that scenario the odds are against succeed in Damascus over the crucial coming months.

Hezbollah cannot under any circumstances be left to their own devices in Lebanon, as indeed the DLA cannot be abandoned by Israel. Any attempted IDF withdrawal in an ill-fated scenario could plunge the ICA into a civil war and provide the international media with yet another opportunity to catalogue the barbaric phenomenon of precision ethnic cleansing, with ruthless columns pouring in all directions.

5. IDF/SLA positions around Bati Kaf were shelled again on the evening of 11/298 – traditionally without casualty to either side.
6. UNIFIL, Daily News Summary, 29/998, No. 1, (302)
7. UNIFIL, Daily News Summary, 29/998, No. 1.
9. Foreign Report, 29/12998, No. 1
10. The Daily Star, Beirut, 29/12998, No. 1
11. The Jerusalem Post, 30/12998, Ch. 2 to Mafarag in the IC on 29/12998, the Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Mr. Shavit and SLA Brigaden and Battalion commander that the IDF would not abandon their zones.
12. The Jerusalem Post, 30/12998, No. 1.