



CAVALRY CLUB NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2019

In Memoriam.

In recent weeks we informed members of the sad news of the deaths of two esteemed Elders of the Corps.

Comdt Arthur Joseph Magennis DSM of Ardagh Court, Blackrock, Co Dublin, late of Moore Park, Newbridge, Co Kildare and Ardglass, Co Down; died on 12 Feb 2019, peacefully, in his 100th year at Maynooth Lodge Nursing Home. Art was an Honorary Member of the Club, a veteran of the Emergency and a decorated peacekeeper.

As the oldest surviving cavalryman he was affectionately referred to as the “Grandfather of the Corps”. He enlisted in the DF on 20 Jun 1940 and served as a Tpr with 2 Mot Sqn in Portobello Bks, Rathmines. On completion of a potential officers’ course he was commissioned on 21 Feb 1942 and later served with Dep Cav, 4 Mot Sqn and the GTD. He was Sqn Comd 5 Mot Sqn FCA in 1969-70 and Sqn Comd 1 Armd Car Sqn from 1971 to 1974. Art retired as SO at the Directorate of Cavalry in Sep 1979.

He was awarded An Bonn Seirbhíse Dearsca le hOnóir (The Distinguished Service Medal with Honour) for service in Elizabethville with the Armd Car Gp 35 Bn ONUC in 1961 for showing outstanding courage in volunteering to go blindfolded and unarmed through hostile territory to negotiate for the lives of captured comrades whose execution had been threatened.

He completed a second tour of duty in the Congo as Gp Comd Armd Car Gp, 2 Inf Gp in 1963-64 (this was the last unit to serve with ONUC). He served twice in Cyprus with UNFICYP, first as 2 I/C Armd Car Gp 8 Inf Gp in 1967 and as Gp Comd Armd Car Gp 18 Inf Gp in 1970.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his five daughters Carmel, Mary, Barbara, Maeve and Fiona, his brother Tim, and their families.

Solas Mhic Dé ar d’anam Art agus coladh sámh a shaighdiúir cróga.



Comdt Magennis as a 2/Lt in 1942.



Comdt Art Magennis DSM taking his last parade with personnel of 1 Armd Car Sqn in 1974. The NCOs at the end of the right of the photograph are R to L: Sgt Tommy O'Connor, Sgt Pinto Moore, Cpl Ronnie Howe and Cpl Tom Landers.

Col Hugh O'Connor of Friary View, Kildare Town and Kanturk, Co Cork died on 11 Mar 2019 at St Brigid's Hospice, The Curragh. He was born in Kanturk Co Cork in Jul 1934. He joined the Army as a Cdt with 28 Cdt Class in Dec 1953 and he was commissioned in Nov 1955.

He served in the Cav Corps in 4 Mot Sqn, Dep Cav, 1 Mot Sqn and in staff appointments in HQ C Comd and in DFHQ in Trg Sec and in P & R Sec. He commanded 1 Armd Car Sqn during 1977 – 79, he was OC Dep Cav in 1989; he was Dir of Res Fces in 1992 and Dir of Cav from Dec 1992 until his retirement in Jul 1994.

He served two tours overseas in Cyprus, the first in 1964 with the Armd Car Gp 40 Inf Bn, this was the first unit to serve in Cyprus and later with 10 Inf Gp in 1968; he completed two tours in Lebanon as the Recce Gp Comd, 45 Inf Bn in 1979 and for a year as the commander of the FMR in 1988 – 89.

He was a military observer in the Middle East with UNTSO in 1973 – 74 and he was in the Sinai Peninsula during the Yom Kippur War.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Eileen, sons Hugo, David and Conor and his daughter Anne and their families.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.



Col Hugh O'Connor as a Lt circa 1960.



Col O'Connor as OC 1 Armd Car Sqn with Sgt Kevin (Battler) McDonald (Retd) and his son Sgt Kevin McDonald.

Annual General Meeting.

There was a good turnout for the 74th AGM held at the Cav Sch on Monday 18 Feb 2018. Members of the new committee elected are Col Ray O'Lehan President, Comdt Peter O'Kelly Vice President & President Elect, Capt Damien O'Herlihy Honorary Secretary, Lt Col Gerry Brennan (Retd) Honorary Treasurer, Members Lt Col Gerry Cooney (Retd), Capt Mark Morris (Retd), Lt Gen Sean McCann (Retd), Capt Joanne McCarthy, Lt Col Niall Daly (Retd) and Lt Col Gavin Young. The meeting unanimously elected Comdt Eamonn Smyth (Retd) as an Honorary Member of the Club.



L to R: Capt Damien O'Herlihy Honorary Secretary, Col Ray O'Lehan President and Lt Col Gerry Brennan Honorary Treasurer.



A group photograph taken after the AGM. Photo credits Lt Col Gerry Cooney.



Comdt Eamonn Smyth (Retd).

New Cav Corps Officers.

On 04 Feb 2019 the Taoiseach, Mr Leo Varadkar TD, along with the Minister with Responsibility for Defence, Mr Paul Kehoe TD and the Chief of Staff V Adm Mark Mellett DSM, officiated at the commissioning ceremony for the 94 Cdt Class at a ceremony in the historic setting of Dublin Castle, the first occasion that a commissioning ceremony was held at this venue. The class comprised of 68 new Army Officers, 2 Air Corps Officers (ACAL) and 8 Maltese Officers. Eight officers were appointed to the Cav Corps.



This photograph shows the eight new Cav officers with the Cadet Master, Lt Col Gavin Young. L to R: 2/Lt Paul Sheehan, 1 Cav Sqn, 2/Lt Evan Duggan, 2 Cav Sqn, Lt Colm Layton, 2 Cav Sqn, 2/Lt Conor Heffernan, 1 Armd Cav Sqn, Lt Col Gavin Young, Cadet Master, Lt Ruth Ní Riada, 1 Cav Sqn, 2/Lt Ciaran Feeney, 1 Armd Cav Sqn, Lt Jordan Corrigan, 1 Armd Cav Sqn, Lt Donal Lonergan, 1 Cav Sqn. Photo credit DF Press Office.

Retirements.

Three Cav officers have left or are about to leave the DF to pursue careers in the private sector. We wish Colin, Pat and Liam every success in the future.



Lt Col Colin MacNamee who served for twenty seven years is due to retire in early Apr 2019



Comdt Pat O'Connor leaves at the end of Mar 2019 with more than twenty years' service.



Capt Liam Fannon retired at the beginning of Feb after eleven years' service.

Letter from Lebanon from Lt Brian O'Shea 2 Cav Sqn.

I arrived in South Lebanon mid May as part of the second packet of troops sent over as part of the 112th Infantry Battalion. The Troopers and NCOs who make up the Cavalry element of the 112th Infantry Battalion come from three different Cavalry squadrons, 8 different counties and for the majority of the troopers including myself, it was our first time serving on an overseas mission.

We arrived in UN Post 2-45 still covered in a veil of darkness 17 hours after saying our goodbyes to our loved ones and leaving McKee Barracks. The first week in theatre consisted of our initial briefs on the Area of Operation (AO), our Rules of Engagement (ROE) briefs from the Legal Officer and both Cultural and Gender Awareness training. I was attached to various patrols in order to learn from experienced officers who had been doing these patrols and working with the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) for the previous 6 months.

The primary task of the Cavalry element is as part of the Quick Reaction Team (QRT). At all times there are 2 QRTs both on 10 minutes and 30 minutes notice to move should we be tasked and launched by the Tactical Operation Centre (TOC) to respond to any incident which can range from assisting troops on patrol to road traffic incidents. This involved receiving regular update briefs from the TOC on any changes in the situation or AO, as well as carrying out a thorough handover from the previous QRT commander and then briefing the oncoming QRT prior to taking up QRT responsibilities for the next 24 hrs.

When I was not on QRT commander I conducted a wide range of patrols with the LAF. These ranged from vehicle checkpoints with them and our Tanzanian MPs, vehicle and foot patrols in the vicinity of the Blue Line and market walks in the local townships and municipalities. The LAF are always very professional, punctual and courteous, with my NCOs commenting on how much their skills and equipment have improved within the short time between their last trip working with them.

Additional tasking for myself and my troops were vehicle convoys to and from Beirut. I quickly learned that preparation is key and it was very to learn all the routes to and from as you know situations can change very quickly. A RTA or on going situations may force a convoy to divert at any time and take an alternate route. Knowing my routes, correct timings and detailed briefs (particularly actions on) delivered to my troops allow for us to respond to any situation and avoid any confusion.

One of the challenges I faced was learning to navigate the IRISHFINBATT AO that is made up of numerous municipalities surrounded by farm land, undulating terrain which shares 17 Km of Border with Israel. This border is marked by the Blue Line barrels and a Technical fence which provides a buffer zone between both countries. On QRT we could get tasked and launched in our MOWAGs and many of the roads and streets are small and cannot be accessed with armour. Knowledge of our routes was crucial.

Social media and the evolution of both the internet and technology has greatly improved communications to loved ones back home. I was able to video chat with my girlfriend and parents

back home as well as send messages on my down time. This makes the separation far easier and I always ponder what would it have been like before the internet when we relied on letters and telephony alone.

My time in South Lebanon so far has been a very good learning experience as a young Cavalry officer. I am currently 3 months into my 6 month trip and have learned more in these 3 months than I have in the past 2 years since being commissioned in January 2016. Being able to work closely with troops has given me a great level of confidence and allow me to hone my skills as a junior officer.

The Cavalry Corp is unique as we get to work in smaller, more tight knit groups compared to other corps within the Defence Forces. We get a unique opportunity as Cavalry officers to serve those troops we work for. The welfare of the troops is key and it is important to be authentic, honest and listen to those troops you work with and for. Cavalry troopers are the most competent and skilled troops in the Defence Forces. They are robust and reliable and make my job as a young officer who's first trip it is overseas that much easier.

I look forward to coming home and being able to utilise all the lessons I have learned to my daily work within my home unit. The challenges of working in an overseas environment have been very rewarding and I look forward to going over again in the near future.



Historical Cavalry and Armoured Vehicles Photographs.

This year, 2019, marks the centenary of the commencement of the War of Independence (also referred to as the Anglo-Irish War from 21 Jan 1919 to the Truce of 11 Jul 1921). Over the coming newsletters we hope to show photographs of AFVs deployed by British forces during the war.

1920s.

By the end of the War of Independence the British Army Order of Battle included GHQ Troops based in Dublin and this formation included 3 Bn Royal Tk Corps, 17 Armd Car Bn and 5 Armd Car Coy and the following AFVs from these units were employed in different areas of the country, Medium A (Whippet) tanks, Mark IV tanks, Mark V tanks, Armd Rolls Royce, Peerless, Austin, Jeffrey-Quads and Lancia armoured cars.

In 1920, the number of operational British Army personnel had been increased to approximately 17,000, and 1921 saw that numbered increased to approximately 25,000. Two additional Divs were established to meet the threat, one Div in Belfast and the Dublin District Div.



10 Jun 1920. These six Imperial War Museum photographs show Armoured Rolls Royce cars employed in what was called “road clearing” operations near Carrignavar in Co Cork on 10 Jun 1920. The IRA trenched roads, felled trees, telephone and telegraph poles and build barricades across roads to impede movement, to canalize vehicle movement and to delay reinforcements. Photos credit the IWM Maj Gen Peter Strickland collection. Gen Strickland was GOC 6 Div with HQ in Victoria Bks Cork and in Jan 1921 he was appointed as military governor for the six counties of Munster, Kilkenny and Wexford.

1930s.

In 1934, the Armoured Car Corps was retitled as the Cavalry Corps and the new organisation provided for a reserve known as the Volunteer Force. A new type of unit was established - a cyclist squadron and 1 Cyclic Squadron (regular) was based at McKee Bks Dublin. The regular structure had the Office of D Cavalry, 1 Armoured Squadron, 2 Armoured Squadron (Cadre), 1 Cyclic Squadron, 1 Horse Squadron, 2 Horse Squadron, Cavalry Depot, School and Workshops. The Reserve Volunteer Force had nineteen Cyclic Squadrons and six Horse Squadrons; it also had five Cavalry Sub-Depots in Athlone, Galway, Limerick, Cork and Dublin.



Apr 1935. This photograph shows a VF Cyc Sqn marching past the GPO during the Easter Parade, the parade was reviewed by Eamon De Valera Taoiseach of the Irish Free State.

1940s.

This photograph shows the commissioning ceremony of a potential officers' course at the Mil Col during the Emergency.

Of the eighty officers commissioned from Emergency Course H on 21 Feb 1942, ten were assigned to the Cavalry Corps: Capt Thomas A Dwyer, Lt Col Henry (Harry) Costello, Comdt Denis Quinn, Comdt Dan Kennedy (Club President in 1980), Capt John Chadwick, Capt John O'Shea, Comdt Art Magennis, Capt John F (Jack) Coffey (Club President 1957), Comdt Thomas Malachy McMahon (he was the last member of the DF to die in the Congo) and Capt Patrick Eamonn (the Pug) Walsh.



21 Feb 1942. Oscar Traynor TD is presenting the commission scroll to 2/Lt Dan Kennedy, Art Magennis followed by John Chadwick are next in line.

1950s

1959. This photograph was taken at the Cav Club Dinner in 1959



L to R: Col Jim Cogan D Cav, incoming Club President for 1960, Lt Clem Kinsella Committee Member and Club President 1959 and Liam Cosgrave President of the Supply & Transport Officers Club (he served as a Capt during the Emergency and he was Taoiseach from 14 Mar 1973 to 05 Jul 1977).

1960s.

Apr 1964. 40 Inf Bn was the first of twenty two DF units to serve in Cyprus from 1964 to 1973, in all, three infantry battalions and nineteen infantry groups deployed. Following the Yom Kippur War (also called the October War), 25 Inf Gp was re-deployed to UNEF 11 in the Sinai after a few weeks in Cyprus. The first seventeen units had Armd Car Gps and were equipped with Panhard AML 60 armoured cars.



Col Hugh O'Connor as a Lt with 40 Inf Bn in Famagusta Cyprus. L to R: Lt Hugh O'Connor, Sgt John (Sixty) Byrne, Cpl Paddy Power (Capt Retd).

1970s.

Summer 1971. This photograph was taken outside Plunkett Cookhouse in 1971 during the 5 Mot Sqn annual training camp. In 1980 the large dining halls were used to garage the reformed 1 Tk Sqn AFVs and the HQ 1 Tk Sqn used the offices & store rooms.



Second Row No 6 from the Left Lt Billy Moran, No 7 Capt Jude Ainsworth, No 8 Comdt Jim Lavery DSM Sqn Comd.

1980s.

1986. This photograph was taken at the Officers Mess McKee Bks before 11 Cav Sqn moved to Griffith Bks in 1986.



Front Row L to R: 2/Lt Roger O'Keeffe, Capt Gerry Cooney (Club President 2006), Capt Noel Treacy (Club President 1984), Capt John Matthews, Lt Joe Kelly. Back Row: 2/Lt Richard Hodson, Capt Éamon

Ó Briain (Club President 1997 & 98), Lt Noel Maher (Club President 1992), Lt Pearse Buckley (Club President 1994).

1990s.

Nov 1992. This photograph was taken in the Glen of Imaal Co Wicklow prior to an AFV shoot.



L to R: Comdt Lester Costello (Club President 1991) OIC Tech Wing Cav Sch briefing three students on the Cav Young Officers Course, 2/Lt Paul Rochford (back to camera), Lt Colm Ó Luasa and 2/Lt Graham Heaslip.

Club Events for 2019

- i. Curragh Museum / Vehicle Based Workshops & Lunch Thursday 28 March
- ii. Theatre Night June Dates TBD
- iii. Archives / museum in CBB visit 02 May 2019
- iv. Golf Outing Wednesday 15 May 2019
- v. Elders Lunch 18 July 2019 DFTC MilCol (GC)
- vi. Cav Day Saturday 07 September 2019
- vii. Possible O/Night trip to Belfast for Bushmills / Titanic September / October
- viii. Decedal Dinner October
- ix. Annual Dinner 02 November 2019 Location Collins Barracks Cork

Carpe diem.