

The Military Survey (Geo) Branch

Summer Newsletter 2015 – issue 56

CONTENTS

- Visit to Wyton.
- Exercise Trig South 14
page 4
- A posting best forgotten
page 7
- A potted history of a Land
Surveyor
page 9
- Survey of London 1848 -
1850
page 14
- Wanted: Photos of Zyyi
and two Answers!
page 17
- Minutes of the AGM
page 18
- Obituary: Ken Hall
page 23



A VISIT TO 42 ENGINEER REGIMENT (GEO) AT WYTON ON THE 1&2 SEPTEMBER 2015

Introduction

The Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major have formally invited Branch Members to visit unit lines on the above dates. I am sure that many of you, as do I, can remember the Regiment being at Barton Stacey and Hermitage, indeed, there will be many with even earlier memories! I can assure you, given those memories, that you will be utterly amazed to see the new working conditions now enjoyed by the unit. I was taken aback during my recent visit and believe it to be a must see for all of us and it is certainly worth taking the time out for this invite and opportunity to visit. The CO and RSM are looking forward to the retired members of Military Survey Branch REA visiting and have arranged a comprehensive programme including dining and accommodation and indeed a golf match with the unit for those so inclined.

Programme of Events

An overview of the visit will consist of a **buffet lunch in the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess** followed by an **operational brief**, a **visit to the Pathfinder building** and **tour of 16 Sqn and 13 or 14 Sqn** followed by an **informal (jacket and tie) dinner in the evening**.

A visit to Wyton Heritage Centre has been arranged for the following morning and having had a preview I readily commend it to members, it is most interesting and I am looking forward to a longer tour. It contains a vast amount of imagery and mapping of all kinds from the First World War onwards as well as the RAF Station history – a must see! A Golf Match against the unit follows this in the afternoon at St Ives golf course for those interested.

Arrival Procedures

On arrival members will have to book into the station at the gate (RAF Police post) and are then to report to the Sgts Mess where you will be received and allocated accommodation. Members who have booked accommodation are advised to arrive well before lunch to allow time to settle in.

Security

Procedures governing the security and integrity of Wyton Station are of the upmost importance. Cars entering camp are liable to be searched, members are requested to be patient and fully cooperate with all the security measures. Members are also to bring proof of identity so as to ease access (photo driving license or passport) into the Station and will be issued with a pass which is to be worn at all times.

Accommodation

Every attempt will be made to accommodate members and this is likely to be in the Sgts mess. Accommodation might be limited and those who have previously registered their intent to attend will be given priority. The accommodation at Wyton is outstanding with all single rooms being en-suite for all those serving, including the lowly Sapper and I am sure you will all be very impressed with it.

Dining

All meals taken during the visit will be catered for by the resident contractor within the Sgts Mess.

Costs

The total costs for the visit including lunch on arrival, evening dinner, accommodation and breakfast within the Sgts Mess will be £36. For members attending the lunch only it will be £8.50. For lunch and dinner only the cost will be £27.50. It is to be noted that unlimited tea and coffee within the Sgts Mess anteroom is included in the above prices.

Dress

Dress for the visit will be smart casual with jacket and tie required for the dinner in the evening:

Application Form

Those interested in attending this tour of the Regiment must complete the return appended to this newsletter and send it with accompanying cheque to me – Mick Perry by the 17 August 2015. I am afraid there can be no refunds for non-attendance as monies will have been paid to the unit's contract caterers and the food ordered.

Nil Returns are not required but members are asked to donate, additionally and generously, to the "Soldiers Fund" this is for special non service provided purchases to benefit those serving on operations and for their families.

**A VISIT TO 42 ENGINEER REGIMENT (GEO) AT WYTON
ON THE 1&2 SEPTEMBER 2015**

MUST BE RETURNED BY THE 17 AUGUST 2015

TO:- M. Perry, 101 Craven Road, Newbury, Berks, RG14 5NL or mandpdperry@sky.com Tel; 01635 37510

From: Forename:.....	Surname:.....
Address: -	Tel No: -
Type & Make of transport:.....	E-mail: -
	Registration No

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY 1ST & 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015

OPTION 1 - I wish* to attend the full visit to the regiment including lunch, dinner, overnight including breakfast and also visit the Heritage Centre on Wednesday morning.

Total cost £36

OPTION 2 - I only wish* to attend the lunch and the afternoon tour of the Regiment plus attend the dinner.

Total cost £27.50

OPTION 3 - I only wish* to attend the lunch and the afternoon tour of the Regiment.

Total cost £8.50

OPTION 4 - I wish* to play golf on Wednesday afternoon (@1200hrs and my handicap is _____)

Total cost is to be notified and paid on the day.

Please enclose a cheque to pay for the options chosen above

**CAN YOU PLEASE REMEMBER THE GEO SUPPORT FUND –
THUS MAKING THE CHEQUE BIGGER SO AS TO SUPPORT THOSE SERVING**

I enclose a cheque for OPTION 1* or 2* or 3* and also to support the above fund - for a total sum of

£.....

Please make it payable to “Military Survey Branch REA”

*Delete as appropriate

Please append any comment or special requirements here:-

.....
.....
.....
.....

EXERCISE TRIG SOUTH 14



In order to assist the enduring security of the British South Atlantic Islands, 14 Geographic Squadron was requested to complete a series of Geodetic (GPS) Surveys covering several sites across the Falkland Islands. This included two helicopter refueling sites, the Onion Range training complex and a critical fuel and communications pipeline supplying an active radar observation post atop Mount Kent.

November 2014 saw the men and women of 14 Geographic Squadron, 42 Engineer Regt, travelled to the Falklands in order to carry out the tasks. On arrival the freight was unloaded and prepared to move, after a few days of finding our feet the Sappers and JNCOs were split down into 4 teams ready to travel to the four different locations across the islands.

Travelling to each of the locations was a fairly simple affair despite the slight issue of some rough weather on the ferry crossing that turned into an early scene of Saving Private Ryan with the landing craft ferry being thrown about. The teams got to grips with new accommodation, some being housed in the prefab accommodation at Onion Range and Mount Kent, whilst the Fox Bay crew found themselves at home with the local government officer, warm and dry. The Hill Cove team found that the roof to their 50 year old barn was not as waterproof as they had hoped and had to break out the ponchos.

Breaking into the main survey, the teams got stuck into the routine with early starts and late finishes. The mood was upbeat as was the weather, well mostly, high winds on Mount Kent made for interesting working conditions with clothes nearly torn from bodies and our lighter Sappers filling pockets with stones for ballast. The very rare glimmer of sunlight on the mountain was emphasised with a low level fly by from an RAF Typhoon, a good break from the nonstop work routine. The weather at Onion Range was living up to its reputation of bringing a tear to the eye with driving rain and hail stinging any exposed skin, making the task a little uncomfortable.

Meanwhile on the western island the other teams were enjoying the summer time that was on offer in the southern hemisphere. Fox Bay was bathed in brilliant sunlight which brought the temperature to a sweltering 11⁰; some softies were even unzipped whilst scurrying around the helicopter fuelling site.



The team to the north at Hill Cove had discovered that the site they were requested to survey had since been de-commissioned and dismantled; nonetheless the team adapted their approach and began a running survey travelling around the island to visit and GPS survey as many mapped helicopter landing sites in the time allowed, whilst of course visiting the farms and wildlife in the area, though once you've seen one penguin...

The teams now had 5 days to get their various sites fully mapped and recover back to Mount Pleasant, an achievable task resulting in each team having at least a full day to explore the local area. Many lessons were learnt over this short time that both the Sappers and the seniors in the Sqn will value, including a slight training gap and the knowledge that penguins stink like nothing else on earth. With a flying visit from SHQ on the closing days of the task the Western Island teams recovered in convoy to Goose Green and San Carlos for a battlefield brief from SSgt Wiggins. On recovery to Mount Pleasant the teams had 36 hours to turn around our kit for the green phase of the exercise.

The fast turn round from the survey task was achieved with the slick workings of a Sqn in its element, a quick kit inspection to check that the Sqn would be in full working order for the duration was followed by a road move to Onion Range, an 80km² open live fire range which happens to be filled with baby's-heads and giant sponge bogs that swallow vehicle and man alike. The road move set the mood; rough, cold and wet were the order of the day in the back of the TCV. Apparently it wasn't too bad in the air cushioned driver's seat, or in the Land Rovers. After we had been disorientated and shook loose the Sqn arrived at Onion Range complex and bedded in, lessons and briefs of what was to come followed.

The Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT) began with a look back to 1982; this entailed the movement of kit across from a roadside Land Rover to the firing lane a good kilometre away. It all appeared to be going fine until one of the smallest Sappers in the unit disappeared into a shoulder deep moss hole, no injuries sustained just a red faced Sapper and the amusement of everyone else. It was a sobering walk as we experienced a tiny amount of what our predecessors on the island had. We moved onto the LFTT with gusto now and the live firing began; individually at first, with a double river crossing and 5 targets to our front, as the training and lessons kicked in the wooden figure 12 targets didn't stand a chance.

After every individual had passed through the lane we moved onto pairs and fire team tactics for the section level assault that was to follow in the coming 3 days. Once the Sqn had completed a full section level assault up the “Lane of Pain”, as it was now known, it was time to switch to a blank fire scenario out on the exercise area. All this was a relief to an exhausted WO2 Watson, who had accompanied every single attack.

The Sqn re-deployed into a harbour area after yet another brain shaking TCV ride. Once we had arrived and settled in, the routine quickly re-established itself with a flurry of activity to set up a working harbour area before darkness fell. The night was quiet, some call it the calm before the storm, we were tired enough not to notice. The next day was a whirlwind of lessons for the Sappers that went by fairly quickly, then the night engulfed us and the weather came back with vengeance, ponchos were strained at bungee cord bonds and the clouds cut out any visibility.

Naturally this was the night our “enemy” appeared, like badly trained ninjas they came forth but were pushed back from the harbour by the ever alert stag positions. This left the rest of the Sqn to hunker down against the elements. We had a slight insight into what it was like back in '82 with 5-10 metre engagements occurring all night with our enemy, nerves began to strain with the constant threat of attack, an eye opening experience. Morning broke, the enemy had withdrawn, and routine began with some minor repairs that usually follow a storm passing through a harbour area. “You’re soldiers first!” was the morning call and those downcast eyes turned to steel as resolve was dredged up from unknown depths, the days orders were received and so began our patrols.

The planning from the section commanders proving invaluable as the enemy failed to find one section’s patrol and was completely out manoeuvred by two section, this was, as always, followed by the final attack. The enemy positions were pre sighted and our plans were made, using the ground brilliantly the two sections were in position quickly and the fire support started to pour suppressing fire onto the enemy positions. The assault went in and the position was neutralised, “why have you stopped firing?” asked the exercise staff, surprised at the speed of attack, “he’s dead” the answer came back. Victory for the Sqn, or so we thought, a casevac as always follows a final attack. Down over the moss and the babies heads we battled towards the TCV for the extraction to Mount Pleasant, and relax. “Right, get your weapons cleaned. GPMG’s first.” No time to relax yet.



On completion of the green phase the Sqn now had some down time before travelling back to the UK, this meant it was time for the much anticipated fancy dress dinner night. A superhero theme was the order of the night that followed a dinner put on by the chefs at Hillside camp in Stanley. A full Regimental style "Top Table" dinner, albeit in superhero fancy dress, where thanks were given for our attached arms; John "Radioactive Man" our medic, Kenny "Chief Chips" our Chef and OCDT Horswill. The dinner was followed by an overwhelmingly warm welcome into the local pubs in Stanley.

Throughout the night the drinks flowed inevitably leaving some a little worse for wear the next morning. That bleary morning soon saw the Sqn perked up and fresh with the Act of Remembrance atop Sapper Hill overlooking Stanley, a solemn but inspiring event that emphasised what we as Sappers are truly capable of.

Our time in the Falklands had come to an end, with our surveys completed and our customers satisfied, it was back to Wyton station via an 18 hour flight to reflect on the privilege and honor of supporting the enduring security the Falklands Islands.

Sappers Michael Brand and Robert Wrigglesworth

A Posting Best Forgotten
by
Ron Birch

Various articles have been published about the activities and tours of 512 Specialist Team, Royal Engineers (512 STRE), including postings to exotic locations that one could only dream about. During the seventies, eighties and beyond 512STRE was possibly recognised as the 'Crème de la crème' of postings and enjoyed by numerous members of Military Survey. However it only achieved this status through technological advancement of communications and travel and the efforts of those early 'pioneers' for whom this was not the paradise posting predicted.

512STRE was formed in the 1960s to work alongside the US Army Mapping Service and the US Coast and Geodetic Survey Department (equivalent to our Ordnance Survey) in satellite geodesy as a global requirement in the determination of size, shape and configuration of the earth.

The Headquarters would be based in the British Embassy, Washington DC staffed by a Lt. Colonel and one other Officer. Field Units would consist of four Military Surveyors, supported where appropriate by REME and ACC personnel, and would be expected to relocate to various locations throughout the world every 3 or 4 months. However this could only be achieved providing air, shipping and communications would be available. One location in particular that could not satisfy this criteria, was a small island in Antarctica - South Georgia

In 1968 having recently been promoted to WO2 I received a posting to 512STRE. I should have been impressed, how many get the chance of serving in USA? However as more facts came to light this was obviously not the dream posting expected. I was soon informed that USA would simply be a staging post; my tour would be an unaccompanied posting to Antarctica for 12 months depending on shipping availability for return. As more facts came to light it soon became obvious that my field unit, although not exactly the pioneers who won the west, were certainly the guinea pigs for the future.

As posting time approached I was summoned to see the Quartermaster to receive my overseas equipment. Another shock as I was not only handed tropical khaki greens but even a white ceremonial dress uniform! To my plea that this equipment was perhaps not what one should wear in the Antarctic I was regimentally informed "Your official posting says - Care Of British Embassy Staff, Washington DC USA" and in my book that is tropical." Thus, two weeks later I arrived in America complete with tropical kit.

My first introduction to the Head Quarters in Washington was to be told that I would not be receiving any overseas allowance, being categorised as only transient, any payment might jeopardise the future of the project. Instead accommodation would be provided in hotels or motels. What was not made clear was that it was room only; I would have to pay for my own food.

To say that I was financially embarrassed with the high living costs in the 'States is putting it mildly. The situation was such that the US Mapping Service loaned a car in order to travel some 10 miles to an Army complex at Fort George Mead to take advantage of cinema and PX facilities.

My next liaison was with the powers that be in the Pentagon where included in the formalities was a check on our preparations for 'going south'. On seeing my clothing was more suitable for a beach holiday than the frozen wastes I could incur the Officer simply said "How you Brits won the war beats me". So I was issued with everything one could imagine including Parkers and even skis. We stayed in USA for about two weeks learning about satellite systems before flying to Montevideo in Uruguay from where we would sail to the Falkland Islands on our way to South Georgia.



The sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia lies some 2000 miles south east of Cape Horn with an icy mountain spine rising out of the Southern Ocean to over 3000 metres like a misplaced section of the Alps. It is a place with all year round snow covering the mountainous interior and the sea freezing over during the winter months.

The grave of Sir Ernest Shackleton, the Antarctic explorer, lies adjacent to Gritviken whaling station whilst a Cairn and Cross, a memorial tribute set up by his former comrades, stands proudly on the tip of Hope point at the mouth of the cove. We would be housed in a hut bearing his name, Shackleton House.

My accommodation could not be faulted being in a centrally heated purpose built building but contact with home was virtually non-existent, this of course was years before mobile phones. We were simply allowed one telegram of 14 words each month sent via the island's radio system. Otherwise one had to reply on letters from home delivered by the occasional passing ship.

During the twelve months I spent in South Georgia only eight ships arrived, six of these arriving within the three months 'Summer' period so news from home was scarce to say the least. The unwritten rule of ships navigating around Antarctica was to drop and exchange 3 films to the Antarctic Islands. We were spoilt during those three months with six drops but for the other nine months we simply watched repeat after repeat. By this time I had become the island's unofficial projectionist and one of our films was the "Funeral of Winston Churchill". My Christmas treat was to show and view this film no fewer than twelve times throughout Christmas Day to the island's inhabitants—Happy Christmas!

After ten lonely months we received the welcome news that we would shortly be leaving for home as a ship had been hired by USA to detour slightly from its course to South Georgia. However once again there was a sting in the tail of this posting as only days before it arrived to take us home it was realised that it had Argentinian registration so was automatically barred from landing in British or Falkland territory; so back to the drawing board. It was another two months before we finally boarded a ship going to Stanley where we would stay for a fortnight before embarking on the scheduled monthly Stanley to Montevideo ship. From Montevideo we flew northwards to New York for onward passage back home.

I could now look forward to a long period of leave (as promised by my HQ) with my wife and young family as I had not had one day off during that tour. But this posting curse was still not over as I reported to my new posting at the Army Apprentices College, Chepstow only to be informed by the Adjutant that "College Staff get more leave than most Army units so that should compensate you for not having leave during the past year."

The good thing to come from this unusual and forgetful posting was that a Specialist Unit was now firmly established and perhaps due to our endeavours, administrative and teething problems had been recognised and corrected for future units.

Thus, 512 STRE became the pinnacle of postings and the envy of a selected few.

**A potted look back at my time as a Land Surveyor
By Alan (AI) Roberts FCInstCES (ex FRICS)**

In early April, I attended the funeral of a village friend and ex-RE surveyor, Fred Baker age 99; who was involved with mapping for D-Day, and a member of our Branch. I had the pleasure of meeting up with Rod Siggs and Noel Grimmett, and the Crawley REA Standard Bearer, who had attended on behalf of our Branch. Although our paths had never crossed, we knew many people in common, and as a result of our chinwag had my arm twisted to write a potted history of my career.

In thinking about this I realised there were so many colleagues who I had the pleasure of working with it would not be possible to mention them all, so my apologies if I missed you out.

I joined up, and went Harrogate in intake 53b, and did my three years with the other eleven great chaps in our Survey intake. I enjoyed my time and particularly meeting Pete Usher, who taught us in 6th Term, whose wedding I went to with my then girlfriend Lovona, and who remained a good friend for the rest of his life.

After our Field Engineering Course I was posted to 13 Sqn. at Fernhurst, in late 1956, along with Trevor (Bill) Powell from my intake. Lovely time, not much survey work, promoted L.Cpl. Ration NCO for 6 months. I had married my lovely wife Lovona in Mar 1958 and after our honeymoon I went off to Newbury for an A II Trig Course, with Bill. We in fact attended an A I Course, but had A II pass marks to get. Here I had the pleasure of meeting up with Jim McCulloch, Bob Wise and Len Wallis, along with others. Afterwards back to Fernhurst, as John (Zom) Kennedy's Orderly Corporal until February 1959, when I was posted to 42 Regt. at Zyyi, Cyprus.

I spent my first 6 weeks as NAAFI manager (all the Cypriots had just been dismissed), which was an eye opener. I understand we made so much profit for the PRI Fund that it became an embarrassment. Peace in Cyprus in March 1959, then I went, with some others, on Road Revision around Northern Cyprus for 6 weeks.

I was then posted to 47 Sqn. at Episkopi, where I spent the rest of my 3 year posting. During this time both our children were born. I had an interesting job sorting out the Middle East Trig Library, RAF F49 camera calibrations, and 'sheet size' cards for the Regiments mapping, plus a limited amount of field work. One Job was setting out Romboid Aerials for Signals, pointing to outlandish places like Rawlapindi, Singapore, etc., Then to Malta with Stan Stanley for 3 weeks to set out similar sites there. During my time there I was promoted to Corporal. I also had the pleasure of giving away Albie Field's fiancé Murial, at their wedding.

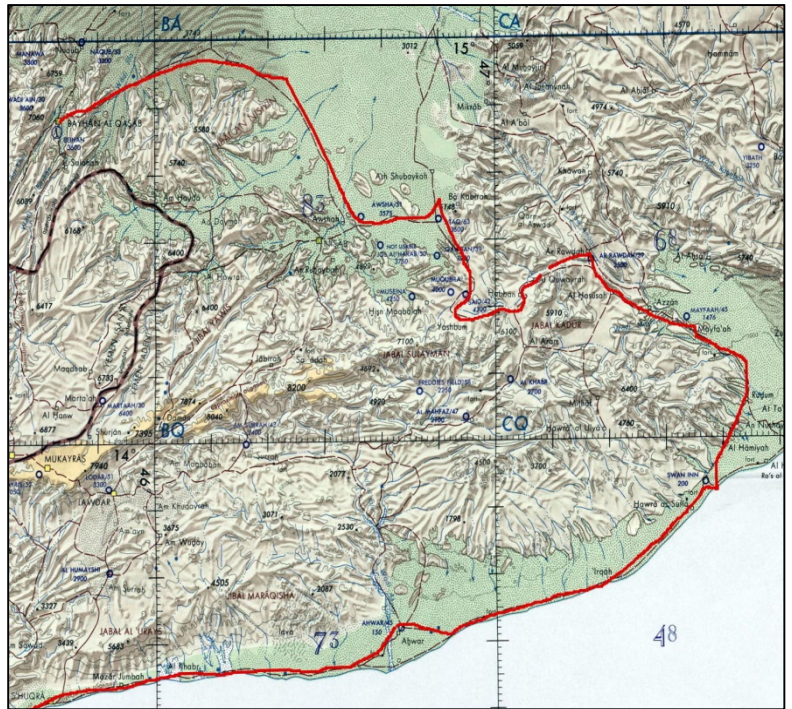


January 1962, back to Newbury where I had the job of being the admin Sgt. Major's general 'dogsbody'. After a few months I attended an AI Trig Course. After the course I was given the job of 'dogsbody' in the Field Survey Wing, helping equip courses and general running errands for the teaching staff. One job I enjoyed was certifying that anyone attending a Trig. Course could climb a Bilby Tower, after there had been some refusals in 14 Sqn, Germany.

In June 1963 I was called in to see the Admin OC and told that I was being posted to Aden, and promoted to Sgt. So in July 1963 I duly flew to Aden to join 19 Topographic. Sqn. There I became 2 Troops Admin Sgt, with Mark Maunder as Tech. Sgt, and Lt. Philip Robinson as Troop Officer. It was a steep learning curve for me; as I had never served in a 'proper' Field Troop.

I was greatly helped by Dave Herriott, who was in 1 Troop, and whom I knew from Fernhurst. We were mainly involved in Air Photo Annotation, and names collection.

In January 1964, 19 Topo Sqn returned to UK and was replaced by 13 Sqn. Most of my Troop stayed on in Aden, with some new members joining us. We continued on as before until a small war broke out in the Radfan, some 60 miles north of Aden. The mapping in the area was abysmal, mainly 1/100,000 scale, chocolate colour photo mosaics, made by the Directorate of Overseas Surveys (DOS).



Map of our epic trip in Aden - 3 Tp 19 Topo, Nov 1965 – Mar 1966.

The Sqn was tasked with producing updated mapping, and about half of 2 Troop, with Philip Robinson and myself, were sent up country to the airstrip at Thumier in the Radfan, where the emergency Brigade from Northern Ireland were based. We were attached to 3 Ind. Fd. Sqn. RE.

We spent a hectic, energetic – and at times for the field surveyors very dangerous - 4 months there. The surveyors spent 3 weeks out with Infantry Units in the front line collecting various data, then 10 days R&R back in Aden. It would not be possible for me to adequately express my admiration for the surveyors on this task. Apart from the danger, they usually spent 3 weeks without a shower or shave, patrolling with forward infantry units, and rarely a complaint. 13 Sqn. acquitted itself superbly, producing, I think, 4 editions of the mapping in 5 months, if my memory is correct. After that I worked in the Tech. Control Office, at Sqn. HQ.

In April 1965 I returned to Newbury for a Tech.I Course, and was then posted to 19 Topo, 42 Regt. at Barton Stacey, where I hoped to catch up with some many months leave due to me. I had only been on leave for about 3 weeks when I was called into the my OC and told I must forget the rest of my leave as I was to take a Troop out to Aden for 5 months, to try and help the finishing of the survey work before Aden got its independence. So with Lt. Jos Jocelyn as Troop Officer, and Pete Smith as the other Troop Sgt. off we went and spent 4 solid months up country. Back to UK and 42 Regt. in Apr. 1966. I now had about 4 months leave outstanding which I had been promised I could take on my return. In late June I was called to see the Colonel, and told I should report to the School at Newbury, as I was being seconded to DOS, as a civilian, and was going to go to Kenya. Bang went the rest of my leave.

In early July I flew to Kenya with my wife, Lovona, son Derek 5, and daughter Pelita 5, and was put in an Army Hiring in Nairobi. Most of the work was 2nd Order Tellurometer Traversing, putting Trig Points on top of large hills & small mountains, which meant going on almost continuous safari. Initially my wife stayed in Nairobi, and I managed to get home every couple of weeks. Then I changed the area I was working in and we moved to Machakos, 50 miles from Nairobi. Derek went into boarding school, and my wife and daughter came on safari with me. Initially I worked with DOS surveyors and was then paired up with Major Royce Clint. A really enjoyable time; hard work but then not many people get paid to spend 13 months on safari in Kenya.



August 1967 saw me back in UK, with 13 Sqn, newly returned from Aden. I managed to complete my leave, at last, and returned to duties. When I arrived back the two field troops had one officer, Capt. John Kennedy, and no Troop Sgts. Very little work for the surveyors, mostly breaking up crates from the move, and heaving coke & coal. We did a couple of small jobs at RAF Boscombe Down, and the Artillery Range at Larkhill.

In late 1967 I heard that my Troop was going to Northern Australia after Easter, for a 6 month trip, unaccompanied by families; and this was going to be the norm in future.

I discussed the situation with my wife, and decided that if I could find a suitable job, I would leave the army. I saw that a job was going in the Zambian Government, under a British Aid scheme; I applied for it, was selected for a post of Geodetic Survey Computer, bought myself out for £50, and flew to Zambia for a 2½ year contract. It was a very enjoyable office job; doing all the calculations for the Field HQ in Kabwe. After about a year, Ian Bradshaw ex-army came and joined us, I didn't know him, but we got on well. After 2½ years of computations, enough; I could have stayed on, but found there was a suitable job going in Malawi, on similar terms to my current contract.

I flew home on leave, via Malawi, and had an interview for the post of Chief Technical Officer in the Malawi Survey Dept., working on a World Bank Agricultural Project in Lilongwe. Shortly after arriving home I received confirmation that I had the post, and could I start in February. Somehow I managed to buy and furnish a house between Christmas and February 1971.

I had a super job, along with a couple of other surveyors, each running 3 teams of Malawian Technicians. In 20,000 acre blocks, my job was to put in survey control points, and supervise the work of my teams who surveyed the boundaries of small farms to enable them to get legal title.

I thoroughly enjoyed my work, but was quite annoyed that young graduate surveyors were earning a higher salary than me. I decided that I should stop moaning, and do something about. I wrote to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and asked if I could sit their Direct Final exams the next year.

I was accepted, swotted like mad, completed my Thesis and Practical Job, and sat the written exams in March 1973. I was willing to give it at least 3 tries before giving up. Much to my surprise, in June, I received a letter saying I had passed, complete with forms to apply to become a Professional Associate (ARICS). I spoke with the Director of Surveys, and asked if I could renew my contract after the 2½ years, and what increase in salary could I expect. He wanted me back, but could not offer me a satisfactory pay rise, so I decide to leave, and look around elsewhere.

We returned home in August 1973 and I contacted the Overseas Development Agency in London, to see if any suitable jobs were available. There were, in Seychelles, Botswana & Lesotho, so I asked for details. While I was considering which one to go for, I received a letter from Paul Wakelin, head of the Lesotho Survey Department; he was a friend of Ian Bradshaw, and I had met him when he visited Ian in Zambia.

He said he knew my ability and really wanted me to take up his vacancy. So we decided to go to Lesotho. I was elected ARICS in November 1973, and left for Lesotho in mid-December.

Paul, who was seconded from DOS, had spent the last 2 years getting a Government Survey Dept. off the ground, transforming the Roads Dept. Survey Section into a working unit with an establishment. My job was helping bring the technical side up to scratch, and train Basotho Technicians. The bulk of the work was Cadastral Surveys, with a DOS Team doing the Control Surveys, as I had done in Kenya. In February Paul went on leave and I was made Acting Chief Surveyor during his absence. In early April we heard that he was not returning, and my Minister (of Interior) promoted me to a substantive position; right place at the right time.

I talked the British Government, through DOS, to buy me a Hewlett-Packard Computer & Plotter, and set about computerising our Cadastral work, and production of Title Deed Plans. Although we had some benefit from my programming quite quickly, it took me about 2 years to complete the main development, although further development continued throughout my 5 years in post.

After about a year Ian Bradshaw joined me from Zambia, having become ARICS a year after me. In about another 18 months Jim McCulloch also joined me, Jim had become ARICS the year before me, having broken the RICS ban on ex NCOs being elected; something I was not aware of. Between us we built the Dept. into a fully functioning, modern, organisation. I was told by a senior DOS person, in the early 1980s, that Lesotho was the first computerised Govt. Survey Dept. in sub-Saharan Africa. I also helped draft the Land Survey Act for Parliament, legalising the Deed Plans we were producing.

Mainly under the instruction of Jim, we trained 8 excellent Basutho Technicians, 4 of them girls. This was, at first, against my better judgement, but I was proved completely wrong, and they outperformed their male colleagues. After I had been there about 2 years a young Basotho, Sello Mosissilli aka Zero, came into my office and told me he had just returned from UK, having completed his Survey Degree course at North East London Poly (NELP), getting a 2:1. He was a very charming, clever young man, and I had the pleasure over the next 3 years gaining him experience, and training him to take over my job. Having done my job it was time to move on, Zero had proved his worth, and the Govt. wished to localise posts where ever possible. So I happily left Lesotho, with Zero in charge, with Jim there as his No.2, to help him through his early years in charge.

I had heard that the Govt. of Bahrain had a vacancy for a Chief Land Surveyor in their newly formed Survey Directorate, so I flew home via Bahrain for an interview with the Director of a brand new Survey Directorate, and was offered the post after I had taken some leave.

In late 1978 I took up my post, also there was Joe Taylor as Chief Cadastral Surveyor (ex-Surveyor General, Zambia), both under a Bahraini Director Majid, ex Oil Company surveyor. I soon settled in, with a small team of ex-NELP surveyors, breaking down the major control points for use by the Cadastral Surveyors.

Our biggest problem was lack of enough equipment. I did get the latest HP desktop computer, and re-wrote my Lesotho software, and added the screen graphics that we did not have before. After a year I was still frustrated with lack of equipment, the Director seemed to think everyone was trying to cheat him. At the end of the financial year we still had some £60,000 unspent money in the equipment budget. I had been there about a year when an old friend called in to see me whilst visiting a client in the UAE. Dave Herriott was a close friend whom I had served with three times. He now had his own mainly Hydrographic Survey Company in UK. A couple of weeks later he rang me, offering me a job as his Chief Surveyor, at Tunbridge Wells. After some discussions with Lovona, we decided to take up his offer. I saw my Minister and gave him my resignation, saying I needed 6 weeks to finish my software development. He realised what my problem was, and accepted my resignation with grace. I returned to UK on 1 Jan 1980.

Dave Herriott's Company was relatively small mainly supplying 'bird dogging' Hydrographic surveyors to the likes of Shell & BP, ensuring that their Hydrographic survey contractors were doing a good job. They also specialised in Hydrographic Survey software, and bespoke interfacing electronic equipment for offshore survey instruments. I worked on the Hydro Svy software making modifications where necessary. The Company quickly expanded, becoming Hydrographic Services International Ltd., after opening our Australian office. In early 1980 I was persuaded to apply to the RICS for my Fellowship, and in December that year I became FRICS. I was told by Dennis Rushworth, ex RE survey officer, that I had only spent 6 years 1 month as an ARICS and he understood I was the fastest Land Surveyor to make Fellow, the minimum time in a senior position to qualify being 6 years. In 1984 I was also elected by the Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors to a Fellowship.

We were also agents for Hewlett-Packard (HP) technical computers, supply complete Hydro Survey systems to various companies. We also decided to re-write my Land Survey software to make a commercial package on the latest, much cheaper HP technical desktops. This went on the market as 'SURVPAK', and was one of the first two such packages available in UK at that time. The Hydro software was revamped and marketed as 'HYDROPAK, with its electronic interfacing system 'HYDROLINK'. Both these packages were quite successful, and we employed some 6 surveyor/programmers at one point. We also became the second largest HP dealer in UK. In 1977 we undertook a contact with Saddam Hussein's Iraq Govt. to train Hydrographic Surveyors to work on the Shatt al Arab waterway, locating ships sunk in their recent war with Iran.

Something that should have proved lucrative; however after more than a year's work, we had not been paid the considerable amount owed, our bank panicked, and pulled the plug on our overdraft. We collapsed and were bought out by two ex-Navy Hydrographers who formed The Resource Group Ltd., and we moved office to the Portsmouth area. Things continued on much as they had before, but I felt it was time for me to move on after 10 years in the job.

Towards the end of 1989 I saw an advert for the post of 'Technical Advisor' to the Qatar Govt. I applied and got the job. I went to Doha, Qatar, in January 1990 on a 3 year contract. One of the main things in my favour had been my experience with newly formed Survey Departments and computerisation experience. The Survey Section, as it was known had been going for some time, and there were a number of British expat, Professional surveyors in post. My job de-facto was 'Chief Surveyor', but it was not possible for non-Qatari to hold such a title. The Section was principally concerned with Cadastral surveys, something I was experienced in. The standard of work being done was excellent, but the output was quite low, due to most of the office work being done 'handrolically', there being only a very basic and simple computer program. I set to and managed to get, by hook or by crook, more survey equipment, and a couple of new IBM PC computers. I wrote a new suite of software specifically to meet our needs, with items like Deed Plans being produced by plotter, and later on a Laser Printer. Surveyors never had to type in a set of coordinates again, they were all extracted from databases; and all the old Cadastral surveys were checked, and/or recomputed, and loaded up. I then obtained the money for a Novell network, and had a system of over twenty terminals. With tremendous work and backing from my senior staff, we increased the output of work several fold. We made our software available to the local commercial survey companies, so that all the data submitted was compatible.

After three really enjoyable, productive, years I finished my contract and joined a relatively new local survey company, MTC Surveys, as Survey Manager. Although we did some Cadastral Survey work, we soon got into engineering surveys, mainly for the Roads Dept. We had managed to get the agency for selling Sokkia survey equipment, and software. Having their Topo/Engineering software enabled us to make large strides in modernising the local engineering companies into using digital mapping, rather than plotted. We expanded quite quickly and soon had half a dozen survey teams, and as much work as we could handle. We were also the first commercial company to have a GPS survey system in Qatar. After 2 years, mainly because I had crossed swords with a Director during my time in Government, and he had now become a Minister, I reluctantly had to leave or he threatened to stop my Company working for Government. So in April 1995, Lovona & I jumped in our car and drove 5,500 miles home, the journey of a life time.

What to do now, 58 years old, been there done that. I attended an RICS talk by ex-Military Surveyor David Powell, on Boundary Disputes, and their resolution. This interested me, so I decided to set up in private practice as a Boundary Dispute Specialist & Expert Witness. When I contacted my young ex-colleagues in The Resource Group, I found that they had morphed my old SURVPAK software into a much superior 'Landscape' system. They kindly gave me a copy for comment, and to keep. This stood me in good stead until I retired. I understand that there are still a few surveyors using Landscape! I spent the remaining 10 years of my career in this line, investigating many hundreds of Boundary Disputes, and undertaking numerous Court appearances.

In August 2005, age 68, I took down my board and tried to finally retire. However, as I had promised my clients that I would see their cases through to the bitter end, it was a while before I finally finished. I attended my last Court case some 5 years after I retired, 4½ hours in the witness box, it went to appeal, made the Daily Telegraph, we won, and I finally set out the boundary 2 years after my Court appearance. In 2005 I resigned from the RICS, their attitude concerning the unsuitably qualified people they allowed to-act in Boundary Disputes - to the detriment of the public - and their aborted takeover bid for the Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors, left me with a sour taste in my mouth.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my career as a Land Surveyor, but if it had not been for the marvellous training that I received during my army days, I would never have been able to have the wonderful experiences that I have had.

The Survey of London 1848 -1850



With a view to establish a system for the sanitary improvement of the drainage of London, a survey of the metropolis under the auspices of the Commissioners of Sewers was commenced in January 1848. It continued with a fluctuating detachment from as many as 43 strong to as few as two until January 1850.

Captain Yolland RE¹ directed the work and Colour-Sergeant Joseph Smith RS&M was first appointed in executive charge, but as he was soon after discharged, it then fell to Sergeant Andrew Bay RS&M². With this survey was connected the relative levels of all parts of London.

The initial operation was a great triangulation and in order to achieve this, an observation station was built around the ball and cross of St Paul's Cathedral. From here the summits of Primrose and other hills, church towers and steeples, parapets or terraces of public buildings, could be observed. They were made available for signal-staffs, visible from each other and from St Paul's. From this observations could be made to establish not only the position of the principal streets and squares but also the minutiae of alleys and single buildings.

The slope or ascent of every street was ascertained and also the exact height of every spot above the assumed datum or base-line. The bench mark to show the permanent points of the survey and levels were cut in stone, or on prominent objects by the sappers who although not trained as masons became expert with mallet and chisel.

At least 12 parties were scattered with twelve-inch instruments to the most conspicuous parts of London to complete the observations. Sgt Donelan RS&M, with the great three-foot instrument, visited some of the old stations celebrated by the labours of General Roy and other officers, to check the smaller triangles formed by the operation of the twelve-inch instruments.



Some of those stations were at Hanger's Hill near Twyford, Banstead Downs, Severndroog Castle on Shooters Hill and others. The survey including the city extended a distance of eight miles in every direction from St Paul's.

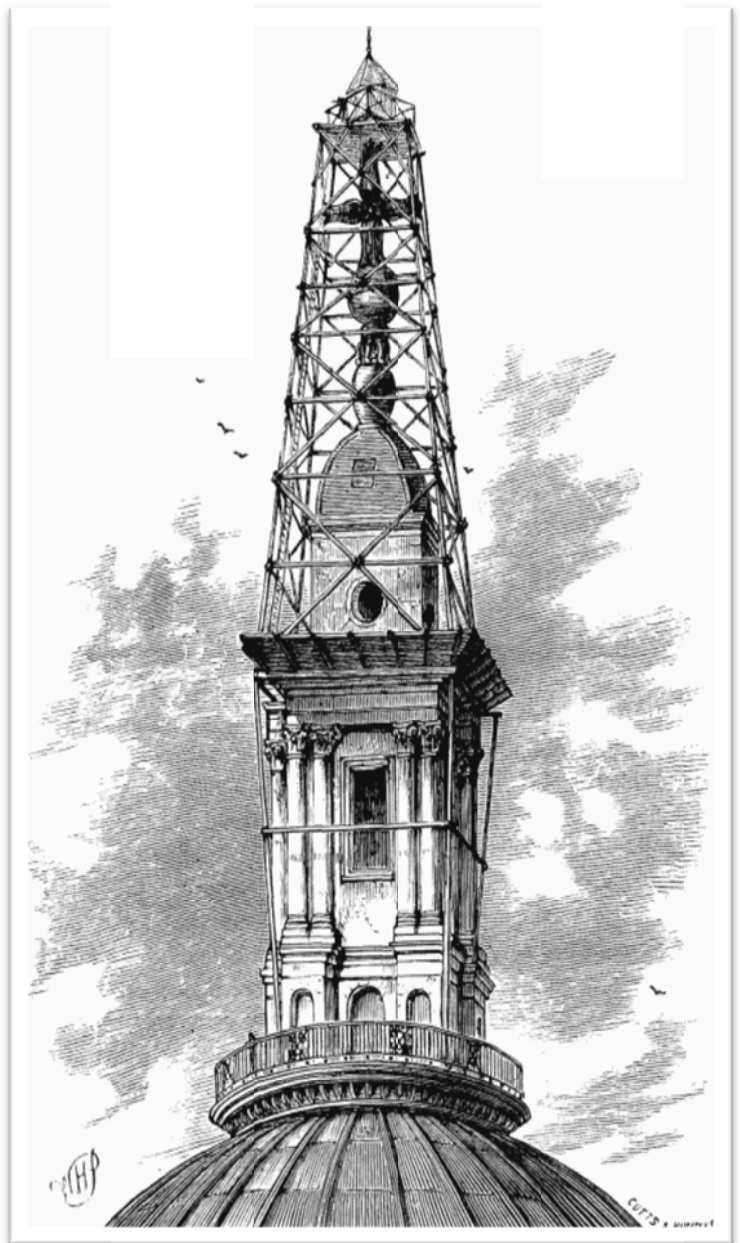
London was unaccustomed to seeing soldiers employed in so important work, and much excitement was caused by their unobtrusive and peaceful operations. The jealousy of the civilian class of surveyors was at once called into angry activity forming a body called the "Associated Civil Surveyors" and opposed by meeting, petition and remonstrance the continuance of the sappers on this duty. The Metropolitan Commissioners did the Association the honour of calmly to investigate their grievance; but from the clear and truthful statements of Mr Edwin Chadwick and others the continuance of the sappers on the duty was confirmed and justified. This was not only on the score of competency but also the disciplined experience of the men and the high standards of the Ordnance system of responsibility and resource.

What drew most public attention were the observations from the north-west tower of Westminster Abbey and above the cross of St Paul's. The latter, from the dexterity with which the construction of the cradle at the dizzy height was pursued, supported only by the architectural ornaments of the structure, excited much curiosity and wonder.

The scaffolding was of rough poles; the stage, ten feet square, formed of planks, which supported the observatory, rested on the golden gallery on the top of the great cone. The four lower posts, twenty-nine feet long, stood upon short planks bedded on the stone footway; and the top supported the angles of four horizontal planks, each twenty-three feet long, bolted together at the angles. From these planks a screen of boards was erected to prevent materials from falling. The base of the four upper posts, fifty-three feet long, rested on the angles of the above planks; and the scaffold, in addition to these posts, consisted of four sets of horizontal and four sets of transverse braces on each of the four sides, the whole being fastened together with spikes and ropes. Fifty six of the uprights were double poles, placed base and point and bound together with hoop iron and wedges, and with bolts and hoop iron at the splices. The height from base to floor was eighty-two feet, and to the extreme top of the observatory ninety-two feet. A railing, roughly but securely put up, surrounded the "crow's nest."

The ascent was by the inside of the tower or lantern to the circular opening, then to the outside of the foot ladders set at the north-east corner, parallel to the north-east principal post inside the scaffold. The whole of the material was drawn up from the floor by a permanent windlass erected in the tower, to the golden gallery, and then passed to the outside horizontally through an aperture thirty-two inches wide and then finally put into position.

The whole construction weighed about 5 tons and although designed by Sergeant James Steel³ was erected by Sergeant James Beaton, the most successful builder of these aerial fabrics assisted by privates Richard Pemble and John Porteous, plus some civil labourers and under the direction of Captain Yolland. The time occupied in going up the ladder was about seven minutes, but the descent required only four or five.

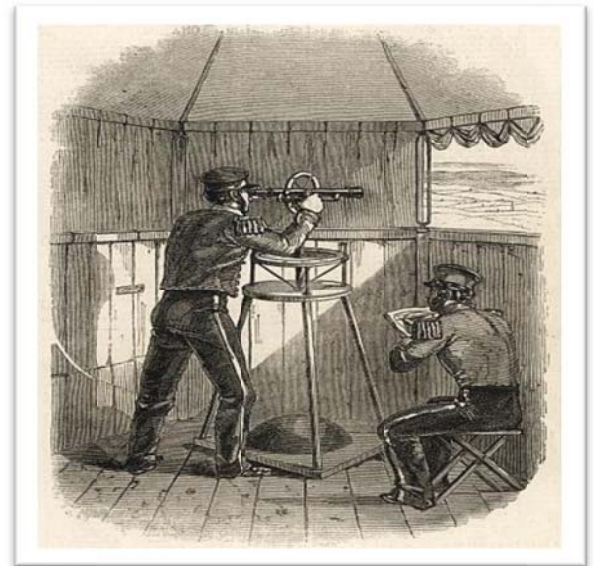


On the 2nd November 1848 the last piece of scaffolding was removed and carted away. In the hazardous and intricate operation of building and dismantling it, no accidents occurred nor the breaking of a single pane of glass.

The observations were taken by Sergeant James Steel with an eighteen-inch theodolite, both at Westminster Abbey and St Paul's. When not prevented by haze, the sergeant attended to his duty even when the breeze shook his small location to a perilous degree, with a coolness, perseverance, and accuracy that were highly praiseworthy. Sometimes he and his assistant sapper – Private John Wotherspoon – ascended to the St Paul's observatory as often as three times a day, and this was for a period of 4 months, between 17th June and 16th October. They became the object of much interest and of curious and anxious inquiry.

The observations taken from St Paul's totaled between 8,000 and 10,000. In many instances the subject was gone over at least six times, none less than three or four, and the utmost distance obtained was twenty-six miles.

To carry on the survey during the day in crowded streets with an unbroken stream of vehicles in double transit was an extremely difficult and irksome operation. To be free of interruption the sappers went to work every morning at daybreak, and pushed the survey while the metropolis was still at rest. The Survey was completed in January 1850, and the mapping finished at Southampton. Hostility from commercial map publishers led by James Wyld Jr, who was also a Member of Parliament and who was toying with the idea of producing yet another version of Horwood's map prevented the Ordnance for many years from providing anything more than the 'Skeleton' outlines of London at the scale of Five Feet to one Statute Mile.



For the merit and talent with which the work was conducted, the periodical press frequently expressed its admiration. Sir Henry de la Beche and Mr Edwin Chadwick – two of the Commissioners of the highest authority – praised the survey as being one of extreme success.

¹ **Captain William Yolland RE** – He was one of the most accomplished officers ever to work for the Ordnance Survey. Born in Plympton St Mary, Devon in March 1810 was the son of a land surveyor and educated at RMA Woolwich. He obtained a commission in the RE's in 1828 and was later stationed in Canada (1831-35) and Dublin. Appointed to the Ordnance Survey in May 1838 he served at the Tower of London before moving to Southampton in December 1841. He was executive officer with charge of the triangulation of the whole of the country and effectively deputy to Col Colby. He was promoted from First Lieutenant to Second Captain in December 1843. On his retirement Colby recommended Yolland as his successor although only in his mid-thirties. However Sir John Burgoyne (Inspector General of Fortifications) appointed an outsider Lt/Col Hall. Yolland stayed at the Ordnance Survey for another seven years, and in 1852 was transferred to the Irish Survey. In 1854 he left Survey and was appointed Inspector of Railways. A mathematical genius and an expert in geodesy he was elected a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1840 and a fellow of the Royal Society in 1859. In 1877 he became the Chief Inspector of Railways a post which he retained until his death in 1885.

² **Sergeant Andrew Bay RS&M** – He was regarded as one of the best and quickest surveyors in the Ordnance. In his early career in Ireland he walked twenty-two miles to work – surveyed twelve miles of lines – and then returned that evening to his quarters walking the same distance. He was also an expert observer with the two-foot theodolite and the accuracy of his arcs was so rigidly faithful, that an officer visited him especially to watch his work, and test the value of his services. He took part in the national surveys for twenty-one years and had the local superintendence for many years of large parties dispersed over extensive districts. He also assisted with much credit in boundary disputes in North America. He received his LS&GC silver medal with gratuity. He was discharged from the corps in 1851 and left England for Canada soon after.

³ **Sergeant James Steel RS&M** – A very able man who had a taste for investigation of science and philosophy with strong powers of application with a fund of knowledge and information not commonly possessed by men in his sphere of life. As a mathematician he held a fair reputation for proficiency and accuracy but it was with the work of triangulation and astronomy he most distinguished himself. His early work was passed on the hill stations of *Ben Auler* and *Creach Ben* with a round of hardships and dangers peculiar to a trig camp. At *Creach Ben* he learnt the use of the instrument and succeeded Lieutenant Hamley RE in its charge in 1841. He was the first non-commissioned officer of the corps to use one of the larger instruments.

At Boston Lincolnshire he obtained the greatest number of points and angles that had *then* ever been observed at any one station. At Norwich Cathedral his observatory rested on a scaffolding 315 feet from the floor of the building – nearly the height of St Paul’s but without the advantages of a dome at the base. The oscillations of the structure were frequently very violent, but the observer cool and fearless, continued to complete his arcs and to record the movement of the stars. At *Beachey Head* the sergeant spent a winter season, where he was exposed to the cold the bitterest he had ever experienced. This was March 1845, and at midnight, when the temperature was 25 degrees below freezing, he observed the pole stars protected only by the canvas sides of his frail observatory. Soon after this he was instructed by his officers in the use of transit and zenith sector instruments and undertook a series of astronomical observations with Airy’s zenith sector for the determination of various trigonometrical stations used in the Ordnance survey of the British Isles. Out of the 26 sector stations he visited seventeen, at fifteen of which he took the whole of the observations except for a few at *Balta* and about one half of *Southampton*, which were made by Corporal William Jenkins. The record of his observations, comprising about 700m quarto pages of closely-printed matter; attest both his industry under difficulties and his talents. His most important work was that of the triangulation of London for the Sewers’ Commissioners. Another important work superintended by Sergeant Steel was the base line on Salisbury Plain by means of the compensation apparatus. So important a charge as this was never before entrusted to the responsibility of a non-commissioned officer, for previously the base lines were measured only by general officers of great scientific merit and experience. That on Salisbury Plain was executed by General Mudge in 1794, and its measurement was in operation and its results, fully equal, in point of skill and correctness of execution, to any of its predecessors. Sergeants Steel’s services and attainments have always been of the highest class for usefulness and integrity and his attention to the public economy was marked by a penetrative species of calculation, which made him more than a match for the griping cupidity and cunning stratagems of such contractors as it was occasionally his duty to engage. In 1855 Sergeant Steel was the chief non-commissioned officer of the corps on the survey, and was stationed at Southampton.

Noel Grimmett

Sources

Connolly, TWJ Quartermaster-Sergeant *The History of the Corps of Royal Sappers and Miners Vol 2* Longman London 1855
Barker F & Jackson P *The History of LONDON IN MAPS*. Barrie & Jenkins London 1990
Barber P *LONDON A History in Maps* Publication No 173 of the London Topographical Society & British Library 2012.

Wanted: Photos of Zyyi and two Answers!

Whilst there is no shortage of photographs in the image archive of field surveyors’ ‘deeds of daring do’ there are none showing the interiors of the technical buildings at Zyyi or Barton Stacey for that matter. Equally, there are no photographs of anyone other than field surveyors doing anything technical be it air survey, carto, photo or print let alone a storeman guillotining or ‘stacking’ maps!

The story of 42 Survey Engineer Regiment is currently being written as part of the project to produce the story of Military Survey and the Zyyi years has just reached the end of the first draft. There are ample photographs to illustrate Zyyi camp and 19 Squadron’s exploits in Iraq, Oman and Aden but none to show what the technical accommodation at Zyyi was like or show people actually working.

If you have any photographs that might help to fill this gap please contact Alan Gordon at alan.gordon67@btinternet.com or write to 1 Majorca Avenue, Andover, SP10 1JW. Any original photographs sent will be scanned and promptly returned.

And the first answer wanted! Can anyone confirm that the last two National Servicemen to leave Zyyi were Tony Banks and an unknown other? It is believed that they left the Regiment in early 1963 – confirmation or otherwise of this would be appreciated as would any other information.

And the other information needed is regarding the leaving of Zyyi Camp – any descriptions of the last days would help complete the story such as – who did the QM hand the camp over to and what happened to it. Did the main party leave as a single group and who was last out? Can you help?



Military Survey (Geographic) Branch **A member of the Royal Engineers Association**



MINUTES OF THE 16th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **held at the** **WOs' & Sgts' Mess, Denison Barracks, Hermitage** **on** **Friday 27th March 2015, at 1900hrs**

In Attendance:

Chairman:	Angus Cross
Secretary/ Welfare Officer:	Rod Siggs
Treasurer:	Alf Isherwood
Military Representative:	WO1 (SMI) Mark Keiras RE
Function Co-ordinator:	Mick Perry
Editor:	Noel Grimmett
Webmaster:	Dave Johnson

18 Members were present. *A list is attached with the unabridged version on the website.*

The presentation of the **Branch Annual Award** was made prior to the commencement of the meeting by the Chairman, Angus Cross, to **Spr Samuel Bradshaw RE**. (See separate article later in this newsletter) The CO of 42 Engr Regt (Geo), **Lt Col Richard Blunt**, then presented a very comprehensive **Military Geographic update** to the members.

ITEM 1 – CHAIRMAN’S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked Lt Col Blunt for his presentation and then welcomed those present, commenting that this was a small turnout possibly due to the proximity of Easter, but he thanked those who had turned out.

ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES

The names of those members who had tendered their apologies were listed on the notice board *and will be included on the website with the full AGM minutes.*

ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF THE 15th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) 2014

There were no action points outstanding from the previous AGM so the Chairman asked if there were any comments, errors or omissions from the floor and as there were none, he asked for a proposer that they be accepted as a true record of that meeting:

Proposed: Dave Johnson
Seconded by: Peter Trimble

Carried unanimously

ITEM 4 – ANNUAL REPORT ON 2014/2015

The Chairman reported that we have lost Branch 7 members during the last 12 months and a further 9 well known colleagues and friends. Their names were on the notice board but particularly poignant was the death of our President, Bob Avenell. He said that we have yet to appoint a replacement for him.

The Chairman then spoke on the following: The Treasurer's report would show that our finances were in good shape despite having given the Regt a considerable sum toward the farewell to Hermitage weekend, last summer, which was quite well attended by Branch members.

However, he said, the Svy soldiers' love of parading was reflected in the turnout for the Freedom of Newbury Parade on the Sunday. In fact we only had a couple plus the Standard Bearer who expressed his frustration in his report which will be read out later in the meeting.

Last year's discussion about the creation of a photo archive, accessible to the membership, but made up from individuals' pictures and the Group's photo albums was proceeding slowly. Digitising and uploading photos was just about to start but holdups had been caused because we are trying to do this in partnership with the DSA who have been looking for certain safeguards and resolution of various points before going ahead. It is hoped that we will be able to host the database upon the RE Museum system which should both save us money and give the database a long term future.

Mick Perry was investigating a visit to Wyton to see the Regt in their new location sometime in September this year. Mick gave an outline of what a possible visit might include and this would be outlined in the next Newsletter.

ITEM 5 - STANDARD BEARERS REPORT

The Chairman then asked the Secretary to read out Mike Payne's report following which he asked if there were any comments. There were none but he then asked that a record of thanks be made to Mike and Jack Crompton for always turning out immaculately when officiating on our behalf and thanked them for their efforts which were truly appreciated, even if it was not always apparent. *The report will be included on the website with the full AGM minutes.*

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL STATUS

The Treasurer, Alf Isherwood then gave a résumé of the Audited Accounts of the Branch that had been examined by two independent auditors. Alf said their comments, which were favorable, had been displayed on the noticeboard prior to the meeting.

The headline statistics of the accounts were as follows:

Financial support was given towards the AGM and the Regt's Farewell to Newbury, for which we offered £2000.00, although an under-spend of £638.83 had been returned.

An allocation of £2000.00 toward the costs of digitising the historic photos was made, and is being held by the DSA, to meet future costs. Any underspend would of course be returned to the Branch.

Other costs:

Newsletter production and mailing - £910.21. The Branch Annual Award - £150.00

A donation was made to Marie Curie of £25.00 instead of floral tribute at Taff Richards funeral.

Long outstanding unpaid subs - £216.00 was written off.

Income:

Branch subs - £2092.00 had been received.

Sale of RSMS Course Photo CD's raised a further - £110.00

Alf said this was the last time he would be presenting the accounts as he had asked to be replaced due to health reasons. There were no questions about the accounts and so he asked that the accounts be accepted.

Proposed by: Peter Wood
Seconded by: Mike Vickers

Carried unanimously

ITEM 7 - ELECTION OF INDEPENDENT AUDITORS/EXAMINERS 2015/2016

The Chairman explained that Maj A Keeley (Retd) has volunteered, together with Mike Gowlett, to undertake the duties of independent examiners of the accounts on behalf of the Branch for FY 2015/16 and he therefore proposed that they be re-elected and asked for a seconder.

Proposed by: Angus Cross
Seconded by: Noel Grimmett

Carried unanimously

ITEM 8 – COMMITTEE

The Chairman said as he had reported earlier, we had lost our President in February and Alf had told us all of his intentions to finish as treasurer. If the Committee doesn't get fresh blood onto it soon the Branch is in danger of withering on the vine, he said. The Branch should not assume the Committee will carry on forever. They do a cracking good job, just look at the quality of the newsletter and the website. And irrespective of turnout the organisational time is the same for Mick or Rod who keep it all ticking over smoothly. The treasurer, like the secretary, has to keep on top of things throughout the year, irrespective of whether we are organising any events or not. He said the Branch is very much indebted to the Committee and they had his heartfelt thanks. He then asked the members again to consider if they knew someone who might take on some duty for the Branch or could relieve one or two of the Committee members themselves to make it be known.

He then asked that a vote of thanks be recorded to the Committee which was then:

Proposed by: Mike Vickers
Seconded by: Charlie Marks

Carried unanimously

The Chairman said that in accordance with our TOR the three Officers of the Committee, himself, Treasurer and Secretary, had to be elected each year. All three had agreed to carry on in the likely event of no further volunteers appearing, but he asked that if there were no volunteers from the floor would the membership re-elect the 3 en bloc and accordingly asked for a proposer and seconder:

Proposed by: Charlie Marks
Seconded by: Mike Vickers

Carried unanimously

ITEM 9 – TOR

The Chairman spoke of his promise last year to review the Branch TOR which had been done. They had been reduced quite significantly by cutting out repetition of the REA rules, mainly in the area of membership; otherwise they are fundamentally the same. He said the members had the Committee's assurance that there was nothing untoward in them and that they had been published on the website prior to the meeting, but he asked if anyone wished to go through them in detail he would or, if the Branch was willing, to propose that they be accepted.

Proposed by: Mike Gowlett
Seconded by: Mick Perry

Carried unanimously

ITEM 10 – AOB

Mick Perry spoke briefly about the various regrets he had received; many from wives making the return on behalf of their husbands who were possibly incapacitated but still thoroughly enjoyed reading the newsletters and keeping in touch. These included the wives of some of our senior retired officers.

DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

No date has been fixed at the moment but the next meeting will take place in spring, 2016, at Hermitage.

ITEM 11 – CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman thanked all for attending and hoped they would all enjoy the curry buffet and the remainder of the evening.

The meeting closed at approximately 2026 hrs.

Rod Siggs

Honorary Secretary
Military Survey (Geographic) Branch



The branch secretary Rod Siggs reads the citation and award to Spr Samuel Bradshaw RE



Citation of the 2015 Annual Award of the
MILITARY SURVEY (GEOGRAPHIC) ASSOCIATION
A member of the
ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION

To

SPR S. BRADSHAW ROYAL ENGINEERS

“Spirit of Good Fellowship Beyond Normal Expectations”

Sapper Samuel Bradshaw - For selfless commitment, diligence and demonstrating the highest professional standards throughout 2014.

Within the Squadron, Spr Bradshaw will consistently put others before himself. At short notice and without question he will happily cover additional duties and is always the first to volunteer to lend assistance. Spr Bradshaw has taken on responsibilities not only to help others around him but also to develop himself in support of others. This year he has completed the TRiM – Trauma Risk Management practitioners’ course and runs the Squadron welfare facility. His example is an inspiration to his peers.

In November 2014, Spr Bradshaw deployed with 14 Geographic Squadron to the Falkland Islands to carry out survey work of key installations. He was part of a small team that was tasked to a remote area of West Falkland where they embedded with the local islanders. Despite having no survey qualifications, Spr Bradshaw stepped up to the role of section 2IC and carried out his duties with complete professionalism. He took ownership of tasks and was integral in the smooth running of the team. Dependent on support from the inhabitants of a small settlement, Spr Bradshaw was the key player in the teams’ integration within the community. Proactive and polite, he engaged with the local senior councillor on numerous occasions where he was an excellent ambassador for the Squadron and the Regiment.

During subsequent military training he demonstrated his robust and determined nature, supported his peers and commanders well, and was voted by both section commanders as the top Sapper.

The Association Award is presented annually, to the individual who has given outstanding and loyal support to the Regiment; whilst participating and contributing in a variety of activities throughout the training year.

The fact that Spr Bradshaw has been selected for this honour, demonstrates the significance of his outstanding contribution to unit life, during this period.

Kenneth James Hall FRICS FCICES

4 September 1946 – 24 April 2015

Secretary of the Military Survey (GEO) Branch REA 2008 – 2010



Ken was born on 4th September 1946 in Gravesend, Kent and the family moved to Dartford, where he was educated.

He joined the Army Apprentices College Chepstow in 1963 and achieved the rank of Apprentice Tradesman - Regimental Sergeant Major. Ken also played football and rugby at the college.

After a period at the Royal School of Military Survey he worked in Scotland and then overseas in Libya, Singapore and Malaysia. This was followed by a year in Washington (512), with time in South Georgia, Northern Queensland and Vanuatu.

Ken also worked with the Australian School of Military Survey before a final assignment leading a survey party undertaking geodetic control connections across North Wales in support of the Ordnance Survey.

In the summer of 1968 Ken met Norma on a blind date in Blackpool; they married in May 1971 and settled in Andover. In 1974 Ken and Norma moved to East Huntspill Somerset, and then to the next village of West Huntspill in 1983.

On leaving the army in 1973 Ken joined Simmons & Partners a small West Country survey firm. He established standard operating procedures for the firm and by the time he left in 1985 the firm was executing surveys in UK, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. These including engineering projects for North Sea Oil Production Platforms, Navigation surveys and channel clearance on the White Nile in Sudan and Survey control rationalisation in Northern Oman.

In 1986 Ken set up his own firm K J Hall Chartered Surveyors. The range of work was from general topographic surveys for architects and developers to more specialist areas such as dispute resolution, assistance in contesting planning decisions, and advising rural surveyors and solicitors in boundary matters. Ken also specialised within the engineering surveying arena, and regularly worked with railway design engineers and those of the nuclear power industry.

Some of Ken's major projects were: - Surveys for the refurbishment of the Severn and Humber suspension bridges, Boundary demarcations for DoT major trunk - road schemes, Preparation of site plans of part of the Palace of Westminster and "Whole site" surveys of Bradwell, Hinkley Point and Dungeness nuclear power stations.

Ken was an active member of many professional bodies and he was particularly proud to be President of the Society of Surveying Technicians (1994-1996); President of the Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors (2009-2011), and also a member of RICS Knowledge Board and of the RICS Governing Council from 2011. Closer to home he was Chairman of the West Huntspill Parish Council.

James Kavanagh MRICS friend and colleague recalls a favourite anecdote of his related to the time he turned up at a client's site meeting in his much loved BWM looking as dapper as always. A 'fleece wearing' surveyor asked Ken why he was showing up looking like he had 'money'. Ken responded that was exactly what he wanted the client to think so they wouldn't be surprised when they got his bill!

Norma wishes to thank all friends and colleagues that attended Ken's funeral.

Current Financial Status

Bank accounts from statements as at 22 May 2015

Current account	£4,625.29	
Reserve Account	£4,467.23	
Total		£9,092.52
Cheques to clear	£117.30	
Combined bank accounts		£8,975.22
Geo Soldiers' Fund	£1,660.23	
Grand Total		£10,635.45

Commitments

Geo Soldiers' Fund	£1,660.23	
Other*	£2,370.00	
Total		£4,030.23

Working Capital £6,605.22

£2,000 deposited with DSA to assist with the Digitisation program

*Contingencies, standard bearers, awards, John Stevens Award, AGM and functions.

Alf Isherwood: Hon Treasurer

VISIT - www.militarysurvey.org

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