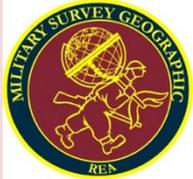




The Military Survey (Geographic) Branch

Royal Engineers Association

Summer Newsletter 2022 – issue 84



Military Survey (Geographic) Branch Royal Engineers Association



WARNING ORDER - MILITARY SURVEY (GEO) BRANCH REA REUNION

The Committee, with the kind permission of Commanding Officer, the RSM, and the President of the WOs' & Sgts' Mess, extend an invitation to members to attend this reunion in the **WOs' and Sgts' Mess, Hermitage Station** on:

Friday 9th September 2022 (1830hrs for 1900hrs)

Enjoy meeting old friends, with lots of benefits:

- **FREE entry.**
- **FREE Curry Supper for members.** Non-Members (£5 per person) (NB £5 pp cash back if you subsequently join the Branch)
- **FREE transport late to local hotels only - M4 Junction.**
- **FREE Branch lapel badge for first time members that attend** (Existing lapel badge holders are encouraged to wear them!)
- **Super Bar @ Mess Prices.**

Do note that we only meet once a year **SO PLEASE PLAN TO COME AND JOIN US**. We must vote in officers of the Branch and approve the accounts therefore we are compelled to hold an annual general meeting (AGM). Those interested in attending the AGM should note that this will take place on the same day at the same venue but at an earlier time of 17:00 for 17:30. It will not interfere with the opportunity for members attending the reunion to chew the cud, enjoy the food and, of course, the good beer.

Please note that due to a lack of availability there will be no accommodation available at Hermitage Station.

So please do try to attend with **wives/partners and support your Branch.**

RETURNS REQUIRED BY 26 August 2022
Please find Returns included below

**A Summary of the Birth Life and Death
of
SURVEY DIRECTORATE AFHQ ALGIERS
June 1942 to June 1945
together with
Some Startling Statistical Statements
of its
MORE ASTONISHING ACHIEVEMENTS**



*Back: Capt C Rostron, 1st/Lt R Dooley, Capt W Sands, Capt R Moore Lt R Parry, Capt F Mann, 1st/Lt H Graves, Capt C Stiles, Capt D Gardner, Capt O Reitz, Maj R Peel
Front: Capt E Meredith, Maj M Adams, Maj Dickerson, Lt Col Harrison-Williams, Brig R Ll Brown, Lt Col J Newman, Maj K Winiarski, Capt W Seymour, Comd E Whitfield*

ORIGIN AND EARLY GROWTH

The Survey Directorate AFHQ really started in the planning stages of Operation Torch. It was initially set up with two British and two American officers and a few other ranks. The American officers did not materialise for some time. In spite of this, and as indeed might have been expected, the great divergence between the American and British methods of staff control of the Survey (Topographic) Service quickly became apparent.

In the American army this is frequently considered one of the minor duties of Engineer staffs, and, at that early stage of their war experience, often delegated to a junior officer or to a non-com. Moreover, in the American forces, the topographic needs of the Army Air Force are looked after by the Air Force Engineers quite separately and independently of the Ground Force Engineers. In the British Army the Survey Service is a recognised and well-established service with an organised staff working under G Ops (G3) and having direct access to all necessary staff officers. Moreover, it has a joint and equal responsibility for the topographic needs of the RAF.

Such different methods could not easily be reconciled; so, with truly Anglo-Saxon compromise, the Survey Directorate AFHQ was set up as a part of the Engineer Section AFHQ, but with a British chief having direct access to the Chief of Staff and to all the necessary staff branches. This satisfied those who really minded and enabled those who had to do the work to get on with it.

The small size of the Directorate, as compared with those of other overseas theatres, was intentional and was quite adequate for the opening stages of the North African campaign. It had been foreseen that, should the operations develop successfully and quickly, a large increase would be necessary. What had not been foreseen was the delay in effecting such increases, and in consequence these often had to be made by various expedients such as attaching officers from units. By April 1943, the Directorate had four British and five American officers including those attached. It had under its direct control one Engineer Topo Bn, two Map Reproduction Sections, and one Field Survey Depot; whilst with armies or corps and base-sections there were two Field Survey Coy's, two Engineer Topo Coy's, three Map Depot Dets, and one Field Survey Depot.

There was also in the Theatre two Engineer Topo Coy's Aviation (later increased to three, and still later formed into a single battalion), but these operated entirely by the American Air Force, though they exchanged mutual aid and advice with the Directorate and relieved it of all target-chart duties.

ADOLESCENCE

Already it had become evident that the Directorate and Survey Service needed further reorganisation to meet a vastly increased survey commitment and to prepare for new intended operations. The search for skilled topographic officers within theatre was unproductive, since the shorter-term needs of other engineering necessarily took precedence, and accordingly a team of experts was gotten in from the States. The American quota was then six officers and four enlisted men, who for lack of regularisation were mostly held on an expedient basis, more commonly known as wangle. A sudden blanket order to return all unauthorised personnel to Replacement Centre's nearly lost these experts to Survey; and would have done so, had not strong representations to high authority saved them. This action on the contrary, not only established them firmly on the T/O of the Engineer Section for employment in the Survey Directorate, but also nearly established the Directorate itself as a legitimate undertaking. Meanwhile the Union of South Africa had come forward with generous and indefinite loan of four skilled Survey staff officers, and New Zealand lent a geodesist. The UK official ante was raised to ten officers and seventeen other ranks.

The Directorate has remained at about this strength till the present time, and (together with 1601 and 1718 Map Depot Dets, which function as an integral part of it) has operated throughout as a single integrated international special staff section on the British system, serving the topographic needs of all the Ground and air Forces irrespective of nationality. Why we have not all cut each other's throats can only be attributed to our all having too much else to do, but it must be recorded that one South African had his chest shaved for him – and enjoyed it.

OUR BALLS REFUSE TO DROP

From time to time there have been tentative proposals to legalise the de facto status, but on each occasion, it has been apparent that the thing, however impossible its paper constitution, actually works and works well, so sleeping dogs have been left to lie.

WE TRY TO FLY

One of the more vexed and vexing questions confronting the Survey Directorate was how to acquire air photographs for mapping prospective combat areas. This had already been hotly debated over long hours, and long miles, from Nairobi to Addis Ababa, from Khartoum to Keren, from Cairo to Teheran, and from Alamein to Mareth. It had been amply demonstrated, particularly by 60 Sqn, SAAF, that survey photography far into enemy territory and long in advance of requirements was a practicable operation of war, but it was equally clear that the priorities then ruling could not allow of that diversions of air effort to survey work, which alone would make possible the preparation of adequate maps in time for operations.

The American saw all this quite clearly, and with their greater air power plunged in in a big way. Unfortunately, just like the rest of us, they too had to learn the hard way. Nevertheless, ably backed by the RAF, who by now were beginning to reap the benefits of far-sighted production planning and of war experience, they tackled the job with fine enthusiasm and achieved unprecedented results. The whole of Italy was photographed; so was much of the south of France, most of which was in time to make maps vital to the Invasion. Some of Yugoslavia and much of Austria were covered. The greater part of this photography was taken in the face of intense enemy opposition. It was a fine, indeed a very remarkable achievement, by fine and very remarkable men.

BUT WE GO BY SEA

The access of so much survey photography, together with the fact that antecedent mapping in Europe was somewhat better (but not always much better) than that in Africa, eased many of the chronic headaches of the Survey Directorate. But it laid vastly increased labours upon it, which in turn produced the usual aches and pains.

The chief function of a GHQ Survey Directorate and its GHQ Survey troops is to prepare, prior to operations, maps and trig data, either new or revised, either as bulk stocks or as reproduction material, for the use during those operations of Army Survey organisations serving the armies and their supporting air forces; and to serve directly the strategic and independent air forces.

In operations upon land it is usually possible to complete this work, or at least stop it short, in time to hand it over to armies together with entire responsibility for mapping in their area of immediate and prospective operations. This is fact was done all the way up Italy. In amphibious operations, however, the GHQ Survey organisation is much more loosely concerned with the Assault Force and its intimate needs. The topo (survey) troops of the Assault Force, who may never have studied or even heard of the operation in prospect, while they are vitally interesting in what is being done and how, are more immediately concerned with getting ready to embark and with thinking what they will do when they disembark. Meanwhile the GHQ Survey organisation is able to place in support of the Assault Force, not only topo troops far in excess of its normal allotment, but also the results of any long-term planning and production that it has already done. Examples of such close working of GHQ Surveys with amphibious assault forces are the invasion of Sicily, which was mapped up by AFHQ and MEF Surveys working on a Coordinated plan; the Salerno landings; (Anzio was mapped up by Army); Sardinia, Corsica, and later Elba; the Invasion of the South of France, (all of which have been previously reported in some detail).

HORRIBLE EXAMPLES

But maps are not made in a moment. Even when you have the air photographs, the triangulations and other necessary data, the men and the machines, time is still needed in which to do the work. Two simple examples will suffice, one concrete, the other hypothetical and slightly ludicrous. There were 220 new 1/25,000 map sheets produced by ab initio air survey for the Invasion of the South of France – there should have been more. Each took, on the average, 105 man-days (of one 8-hour shift per day) to plot, fair-draw, reproduce and print in quantities. From which it at once follows - but the rest of the arithmetic is easy.

For the other example, there was calculated at one time in Middle East that to map the whole area of the command, on scales suitable for artillery, with the topographic troops then available, it would take six hundred years. From which it at once follows that to achieve anything useful for operations you must know where those operations are likely to be. But firm information on that point is seldom forthcoming until it is too late, and in consequence one must always start mapping before the information is firm. The Planners have been extremely good about giving us “the gen”, and more particularly about gazing on our behalf into the Crystal Ball and forecasting what the gen” was likely to be in the distant future.

Even so we too have had to gaze in our own boss-eyed way, and with much blunted pencils have made our own book on the side; for though we may not be expert turf-accountants yet it is our duty to damp out the oscillations of the general staff before they reach the toiling millions in the map-factory, so that the boys may keep their money steadily on the same horses. There is only one satisfactory answer, that is to map the world, though we usually express this in more acceptable terms as mapping all possible combat areas. It is the same thing really. It is not so impossible as it sounds. It has in fact been our aim ever since the war started, though we have not exactly shouted it from the house-tops lest we be locked in a lunatic asylum. But nevertheless, it is plain horse-sense, and we must do it before the next war – and more.

By way of concrete example, there were very few who believed, even as late as when we landed in North Africa, that we would ever fight in the mountains Italy; and some went so far as to state boldly that it would be folly to do so. And had we taken their advice we should indeed have been in the soup. But memories are short, and in the future, we must be content with nothing less than the Earth – which is NOT the Moon.

PAPA STEPS IN

In this matter of prior mapping we have been very dependent upon and are much indebted to the staffs and base survey installations in England and America, both for their long-term planning and steady unswerving production, as well as for much timely help in shorter term work. Without these we could certainly not have met our obligations.

WE MOVE HOUSE

Prior to the invasion of the South of France we were at about our peak strength, with seventeen officers in the Directorate; while under direct command we had 1800 technical troops, with a further 1200 in direct support in Middle East.

But the preparations for this South of France operation had kept the Directorate with AFHQ in North Africa, and this was much too far from the scene of operations in Italy. Much additional work, therefore, including supplying the Strategic Air Force, was thrown upon AAI (Allied Army Italy). However, as soon as Seventh Army HQ moved to Naples, we sent a liaison detachment with it; and the Survey Directorate itself shortly followed to Caserta with the general move of AFHQ in time for the Invasion. The GHQ survey units also moved to Italy, with the exception of the 30th Engineer Topo Bn which was redeployed to the Pacific Ocean Areas, and the 649th Engineers Topo Bn which had joined the Seventh Army. At Caserta we were on the Fifth Floor. There was no elevator (lift). "This is the Fifth Floor."



The Royal Palace of Caserta is a former royal residence in Caserta, Southern Italy, constructed for the Bourbon Kings of Naples. From December 1943 until September 1945, it served as a headquarters for the Allies Forces in Italy. Here they constructed most of the plans for amphibious operations. The Palace also served as an army hospital. Later on, it became a venue, where German forces signed unconditional capitulation in Italy. The surrender agreement covered the handover between 600.000 and 900.000 troops along Italian front.

ONE BALL DROPS

But we were in the same building as the Mediterranean Allied Air Force (MAAF), and very much nearer to their operational formations and units. A much clearer watch upon their needs was possible, and, though they were never neglected before, it was now possible to spoon-feed them. And from all accounts they certainly liked it. (A most generous commendation was sent in by the Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force, which is reproduced herewith)

Whilst never troubled over their map supply, MAAF were yet sufficiently interested to see how it was done, which was certainly not according to the book. In full agreement with the AAF Engineer, MAAF finally issued a directive laying upon Survey Directorate AFHQ full responsibility for procurement, publishing, storage and distribution of all maps and aeronautical charts (except target-charts) within the Mediterranean Theatre for the use of all Allied Air Forces operating in this theatre. Thus, was regularised our de facto status, at least in respect of air forces.

THE REMAKABLE CONSEQUENCES OF MATURITY

The real achievements of the Survey Directorate AFHQ lie in such dull and undistinguished things as forethought, maintenance of the objective, concentration of effort, economy of force, security, aggressive action, and coordination (blessed vehicle of thought!); but the more spectacular trappings of normal operation are more amusing. The area of the Directorates mapping responsibility, apart from Africa, which in spite of the assurances of our South African friends remains in the public imagination as a waterless waste inhabited only by Beau Geste, sheiks, and gazelle-eyed mythical maidens, apart from Africa it is 880,000 square miles. That is about 1000 square miles per topographic field surveyor in the theatre. But yet they still want to go home.

The number of individual map sheets for which the Survey Directorate holds and maintains reproduction material is 17,600. This bears so close a decimal relation to the number of yards in a mile that something ought to be done with it. Seventeen kilo-yards anyway.

The number of maps produced for the theatre, believe it or not was over 134 million. This is more than four times the total number of maps produced for World War I. They weigh 7,175 tons, and we could do with some of that shipping space for beer – if we had any beer. They were procured as follows: -

Maps provided after landing in North Africa till VE Day

Procured from USA and UK	55,950,000
Provided by agency of MEF (excludes Sicily)	10,101,000
Printed by AFHQ units	36,163,000
Printed by Army Group and Army units	31,887,000

Total	<u>134,101,000</u>

And that is quite a lot of maps. If you placed them one on top of the other and climbed to the top of the pile, you could pee into the crater of Vesuvius from an altitude much greater than that of Everest. But this is not thought to be a practical operation of war. There are, however, several other interesting things you can do with them.

Anyway, that is quite a lot of maps – but were they the right maps, and were they in the right place, at the right time? We wonder; and believe that some at least were.

WE DIE AND ARE TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN

And now the Integrated Survey Directorate AFHQ is disintegrating. The body is dissolving. But the spirit which animated it will be carried far and wide by its members. To all of these, wherever they may be and whatever their assignment in the war against Japan or in the struggle for peace and reconstruction, Good Luck. And thanks a lot for all we have learnt from one another.

“When we go out we always shout - we’re buggered if we’ll be buggered about “.

FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
Office of the Commanding General
A. P. O 520

24 May 1945

201.22

SUBJECT: Commendation

THRU: Commander in Chief
Mediterranean Allied Air Forces
APO 650, U. S. Army

TO: Supreme Allied Commander
Mediterranean Theater of Operations
APO 512, U. S. Army

1. It is my desire to express appreciation of the continued and valuable assistance received by this Command, throughout its operations, from the Survey Directorate of Allied Force Headquarters.

2. The numerous and varied map requirements of our strategic air operations have been met fully and promptly at all times. In many instances the maps have been unique to this theater, or have been new in type, based on our changing experience and techniques.

3. The admirable efficiency of the Survey Directorate, so far as this Command has been concerned, has been due in large measure to the vigorous interest of Brigadier R. Ll. Brown in air requirements, and to the excellent direct liaison maintained with our operational and intelligence staffs by Major C. R. Hunter. I desire to commend these two officers.

4. The service rendered by the Survey Directorate is an outstanding example of the excellence of professional and technical military staff work which can be achieved by British and American officers serving together under competent leadership. I shall be glad if you will convey to Brigadier Brown, Commanding Officer of the Directorate, my commendation of the superior performance of his organization.

N. F. Twining
N. F. TWINING
Major General, USA
Commanding



Fourth row: Sjt W Collins, Sjt H Myers, Sjt M Cliver, Spr H Allen, Spr A Jones Cpl D Kenward, Spr G Neal, Spr W Davies, Pte E Wackett, Spr J Hodge Spr C Almond, L/Cpl G Gough, Pfc J Rounsefell Spr G Sizer, Spr R McKechnie
Third row: Capt C Rostron, 1st/Lt Dooley, Capt W Sands, Capt R Moore Lt R Parry, Capt F Mann, 1st/Lt H Graves, Capt C Stiles, Capt D Gardner, Capt O Reitz, Maj R Peel
Second row: Capt Meredith, Maj Adams, Maj Dickerson, LtCol Harrison-Williams, Brig R Brown, LtCol Newman, Maj K Winiarski, Capt W Seymour, Comd E Whitfield
Front row: Cpl L Boyle, Spr M Lyons, Spr E Fielding QMS J McKenzie, Sjt E Rumens, Spr S Markendale, Spr F Lipscombe

Sources:

TNA File WO 402.100 – which includes the War Diaries for January to September 1944.

(Transcribed and compiled by Noel Grimmett on 13 August 2020)

Allied Force Headquarters (AFHQ)



AFHQ was the headquarters that controlled all Allied operational forces in the Mediterranean Theatre of World War II from August 1942 until the end of the war in Europe in May 1945.

AFHQ was established in United Kingdom on 14 August 1942 under Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower in order to command the forces committed to *Operation Torch*, the Allied invasion of French North Africa, set for November. Eisenhower had the title Commander-in-Chief, Allied Expeditionary Force. Shortly after the establishment of the headquarters, "Expeditionary" was deleted from its title, for reasons of operational security. Eisenhower thus became Commander-in-Chief, Allied Force. The HQ was moved to Gibraltar on 5 November 1942, and then on to Algiers on 28 November 1942.

Towards the end of 1942, there was a need to unify command of the Allied Forces in North Africa, since those from the west, the British First Army, under the command of Lieutenant-General Kenneth Anderson, landed during *Operation Torch*, and those from the east, the British Eighth Army, commanded by Lieutenant-General Bernard Montgomery, that had fought and won the Second Battle of El Alamein, were now close enough together to need coordination. Therefore, on 10 February 1943, AFHQ assumed control of the Eighth Army advancing from the east as well.

In March 1943 AFHQ supervised Mediterranean Air Command; 18th Army Group; the Royal Navy Commander-in-Chief, of the Mediterranean Fleet, acting as the Allied naval commander, and the Fifth United States Army.

Eisenhower remained in command of AFHQ until 16 January 1944, overseeing the Allied invasion of Sicily (with the codename of *Operation Husky*), which began on 10 July 1943 and the Allied invasion of the Italian mainland (codenamed *Operation Baytown* and *Operation Avalanche*), on 3 September 1943. Eisenhower then a full general, returned to the United Kingdom on 14 January 1944 to assume command 2 days later of the Allied forces assembling for Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Normandy, scheduled for the spring of 1944. He was succeeded by General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson. Wilson's title became Supreme Commander, Mediterranean Theatre of Operations.

Wilson was in command for just under a year, until he was sent to Washington, D.C., in December 1944 to replace Field Marshal Sir John Dill of the British Joint Staff Mission who had died suddenly. Wilson was succeeded by Field Marshal Sir Harold Alexander who was Supreme Commander and Commander of AFHQ until the end of the war. After the war AFHQ became a small interallied staff responsible for combined command liquidation activities and commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir William Duthie Morgan as Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean AFHQ was abolished, effective 17 September 1947, by General Order 24, AFHQ, on 16 September 1947.

Mediterranean Theatre of Operations, United States Army (MTO) was originally called the North African Theatre of Operations (NATO) and was the United States Army organisation fighting the Axis powers in North Africa and Italy during World War II.

(Compiled by Noel Grimmitt from Wikipedia Sources)

Anguilla plane-table map revision 1971

by John (Paddy) Hughes

Anguilla island was invaded by a force of 331 paratroopers and 30 Metropolitan police officers on 19 March 1969. In the rear guard a couple of years later were three surveyors from 42 Regt tasked with revising and updating the map of the island. This is their story. Anguilla is a small Caribbean Island total area of 91 km² situated relatively close to South America. The population of approximately 6,000 wanted their independence from the larger colony of St Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla. Not a shot was fired, and the laid-back islanders didn't organise any sort of major resistance – not least because there was no telephone system on the island and communication was poor.



Anguillan Cavalry

Alan Gordon listed Anguilla as one of the countries where surveyors from 42 Regt had operated but his book contained no other information on the deployment, and this has stimulated me to write this account. I was a sergeant at the time and led the team from 13 Field Survey Sqn who used plane-tableing survey techniques to revise the map of the island. My assistant surveyors were Sappers Drew White and Jim Steger. Fifty years on, my memory is hazy, but my red "Certificate of Service" booklet shows that I served in Anguilla between 14 June and 13 July 1971 and photographs in my scrap book have helped to jog my memory.

We flew to Anguilla in an RAF Hercules aircraft. The first leg of the journey took us to Gander in Newfoundland where we spent the night in a transit hotel. I was wakened at 2 am by the fire alarm set off by my two lads who had fallen asleep while smoking in bed and had set fire to their room. Not the best start to the job. We re-fueled at Patrick Air Force base in Florida before landing in St Maarten a neighboring island and catching the ferry to Anguilla.

The first and last time I used plane-tableing was on Anguilla. Plane-tableing is one of the survey techniques I learnt during my survey apprenticeship at the Army Apprentice College, Chepstow 1962-65.

The apprentices, Fred Clarke, Dutch Holland, Stan Evans, Colin Evans, and I in 62B group practiced the technique along the Wye Valley under the watchful eyes of Frank Wilkinson. The valley was not the best location to learn the technique as plane tableing is more suited to open country such as on Anguilla. Plane-tableing is long established graphical method of survey in which the map is rough drawn in the field as the survey proceeds. The equipment we used were a plane-table board with tripod, trough compass, spirit level, alidade and Indian clinometer which were all easily carried by one man. We only needed one set of equipment but took two just in case.

The map we revised was the Directorate of Overseas Surveys series 343, Lesser Antilles 1:25,000 Anguilla with Dog Island and Scrub Island sheet. The map was enlarged and mounted on the plane table board, additions and deletions were added as we traversed the island. I decided that there was no need to visit Dog and Scrub Island because they were uninhabited and had no infrastructure.

Despite the political problems we found the locals friendly. There was no public transport on the island and very few vehicles and the young children were forever begging for a lift in our short wheelbase Land Rover.



We fed on local cuisine that included lobsters, red snapper fish and iced prickly pears.

Lobsters for lunch



I remember my time on Anguilla fondly but regret my decision not to visit Dog Island while I had the chance. I have been obsessed by tropical seabirds for the last 30 years and Dog Island has recently been recognized as one of the most important bird islands in the Caribbean.

HMS Echo says farewell after two decades of discovery

Twenty years as a survey ship for the Senior Service have come to an end for HMS *Echo* in Portsmouth.

Tom Sables 1st July 2022 at 7:10am



HMS Echo in Portsmouth (Picture: Royal Navy).

HMS *Echo's* 20-year career as a Royal Navy survey ship has formally ended, marked with a decommissioning ceremony at Portsmouth Naval Base where the journey began.

The first of two Echo-class survey ships alongside HMS *Enterprise*, the 5,000-tonne vessel was designed for global hydrographic and oceanographic missions.

Although she commissioned in Portsmouth, HMS *Echo* was based at Devonport Naval Base and over the past two decades has been deployed far and wide.

Off the Yemen coast around 2010, she discovered an uncharted sea mountain and found the wreck of a Second World War cargo ship near Libya on the same two-year voyage.

Crew also helped create superior images of the Firth of Clyde and took 3-D images of Second World War aircraft carrier HMS *Dasher*, which sank off the Ayrshire coast.



The decommissioning ceremony for HMS Echo in Portsmouth, where the ship first entered the Navy (Picture: Royal Navy).

Echo recently deployed to the Baltic and Arctic in search of the wreck of a sunken Second World War cruiser and holding a service of remembrance over the wreck of another – HMS *Edinburgh*.

Bidding farewell to HMS *Echo*, the Navy welcomed in a new, more autonomous approach to its role.

Under the Future Military Data Gathering programme, more modern equipment and the introduction of a new survey craft will arrive later this year, hydrographers and meteorological experts working in smaller teams and closer with the UK Hydrographic Office.

At the decommissioning ceremony, HMS *Echo's* Commanding Officer, Commander Adam Coles, said: "Being trusted with the final command of HMS *Echo* is a real honour, and I feel privileged to have served in her."

(BFBS, Chalfont Grove, Narcot Lane, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 8TN)

THE STORY OF 84 Squadrons OWN POP GROUP THE HELLIONS



*The Hellions publicity photo from l to r - Ian, Nobby, Mick, Dave, Sam (taken by Bill 'Jock' Brown)
Fashion note: See tab collar shirts, Mick's Beatle haircut and waistcoats, we also had Cuban heel boots.*

Dave Jordan was posted to 84 Svy Sqn arriving on 11 February 1964 as a 19-year-old print technician, right in the middle of "The Swinging Sixties". 1963 had seen the birth of *The Beatles* on the music scene in U.K, closely followed by "beat groups" as they were originally known, such as *The Rolling Stones*, *The Kinks*, *The Troggs*, etc. Much to young Jordan's dismay most of the popular music in Singapore was still guitar-based music made popular some years earlier by the likes of *The Shadows*, *The Ventures* et al. He decided that things should change.

As luck would have it, Dave shared a barrack room with John (Sam) Smart. Sam owned an acoustic guitar and enjoyed mostly American Rhythm and Blues (R'n'B) music which he had heard whilst serving on Christmas Island. Dave had also picked up much of the same music, which was also the basis for most of the U.K beat group's music. Liberally borrowing from the likes of *Muddy Waters*, *The Isley Brothers*, *Bo Diddley* and many more. From this meeting of like-minded souls, the idea of forming an R'n'B group was born.

Hugh (Nobby) Clark had been playing lead guitar with *The Blackhawks* from a Royal Signals unit. They were playing the guitar-based music of *The Shadows*, but Nobby was persuaded to jump ship and join Sam and Dave, with the added bonus of him having an amplifier! Dave Hughes lent Sam his (electric) Hofner and initially we all used the same amp.

Michael (Mick) Ludlow, like Dave, had performed in Skiffle groups whilst at school. His small hands were a handicap for playing bass guitar, but he found a Framus bass with a slim neck and fret board that suited him. Ian Smith had played drums whilst at Apprentice College, so he too joined the group. One of Sam's favourite films was *The Hellions* which was thought to be a good name for the group, and thus the band was formed. To keep the 84 Svy connection Gilly Gilmore was recruited as their first manager, later replaced by Mick Toop an RAOC printer friend of Gilly's.

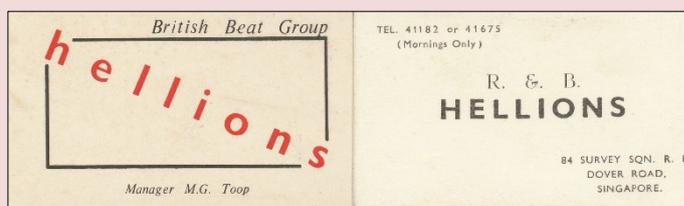
Again, lady luck smiled, Gillman Youth Club (Gillman Barracks was where the 84 singlees lived) were looking for a band to play at their Friday night dance nights and so let the embryonic Hellions practice there on the proviso they performed on dance nights. This venue really helped as the Squadron personnel were getting fed up with the band rehearsing on the floor below their sleeping accommodation!

With three chords and a lot of balls *The Hellions* first appeared at the youth club in the summer of 1964, with a repertoire of perhaps six songs, they extended the middle breaks and played the same songs both before and after a break. Dave recalls going “on tour” when the youth club had a beach party somewhere in the north of the island. As a result, the word soon spread and *The Hellions* were being invited to play at military school dances, mess do’s, and other venues.



Saturday night dance at St. Johns School. Hellions I to R, Mick, Nobby, Dave, Ian on drums, and Sam

The *Golden Venus* was a jazz cellar in the basement of *The Orchard Hotel* and *The Hellions* were soon playing there regularly, on the back of which they were invited to play in a production of *Cinderella* at the Victoria Theatre from 12 to 19 December 1964. In one scene they had to “black-up” as minstrels, very un-PC now but extremely popular back then. By then the repertoire, and the musicality had improved, but not enough to endear them to the RAMC’s folk club. Having taken the R’n’B from their business cards literally they were expecting songs from the likes of *Leadbelly* and *Hank Williams* not the renditions of “Johnny Be Good “and” You Really Got Me”, which were *The Hellions* staple output.





As minstrels in the Singapore Christmas panto 1964 at the Victoria Theatre

All good things come to an end and, with Sam being posted back to U.K, in late May 1965. *The Hellion's* farewell was on Friday 9 March 1965 at Gillman Pool where the Gillman Youth Club leaders presented The Hellions members with inscribed beer mugs. A fond farewell.



Farewell to The Hellions. Mugs presented by Gillman Youth Club. l to r Mick, Sam & Dave. March 1965

After Sam, Mick, Ian and Nobby were posted. Dave then helped form another band, *Point Five*, with some friends from HQ FARELF and then Peter Wood arrived in the Sqn and joined them, but that is a whole new different story.



The Hellions playing at an 84 Sqn dance. Sadly, two of our late colleagues 'Gilly' Gilmore (on left) and Bill "Jock" Brown (nearest centre, back to camera) and are shown dancing in the photo.

Postscript. Sam, Mick, Dave, and Ian are still in contact with each other and have had some reunions since 1965 but have, sadly, lost touch with Nobby. It was rumoured Nobby had joined the church and moved to Scotland, but research came up blank. Nobby was an ex-Apprentice and trained as a machine minder, and in his youth had red hair. If anyone knows of his whereabouts, please contact the Editor so he can pass on the details.

Dave wishes to thank his band mates Ian, Mick, and Sam for their contributions in producing the history of **The Hellions**.

13 Squadron History - 1986 to 2020 - Appeal for Material

As reported previously, the 200th Anniversary of the formation of 13th Survey Company, Royal Sappers and Miners will take place on 1 December 2024, and plans are afoot to update the Squadron's history from its current record date of 1986. Contributions have been promised from ex-OCs, but the aim is for the history to be representative of everyone's experiences and memories thus, **input from all ranks, arms, and services (and nationalities) who served with 13 Squadron between 1986 and 2020 will be welcomed and greatly appreciated.** Even, if you would like to make a contribution about your involvement in an event that occurred prior to 1986, please feel free to do so.

We are currently looking for expressions of interest and more information will be provided on the scope/aim/etc if you feel you can contribute. Contributions can be anything from a short paragraph to several pages; nothing is too little or too much. To express your interest please contact the Editor at 13Sqn.History.Editor@gmail.com.



	Spr John 30348555	Spr Wallace 30339803	Spr Carr 30342778	Spr Faulkner 30350254		
WO2 (QMSI) J Gardner QMSI Class 2s	Spr Dunleavy 30342699	Spr MacLennan 30342713	Spr Bennett 30348408	Spr Onukafor 30349025	Spr Bateson 237 30197237	Cpl R Lowe Course 54 Mentor
	Spr Gabbay 30268504	Spr Bateson 574 30345574	Spr Whalley 30334854	Spr Phillips Davies 30312850	Spr Chang 30323923	

Postings of course members to 42 Engineer (Geographic) Regiment showing Sqn allocation

- Spr John – 13
- Spr Carr – 13
- Spr Wallace – 14
- Spr Chang – 13
- Spr Faulkner – 13
- Spr Dunleavy – 13
- Spr MacLennan – 13
- Spr Bennett – 14
- Spr Onukafor – 14
- Spr Bateson (Male) – to be allocated
- Spr Bateson (Female) – 13
- Spr Gabbay – 13
- Spr Whalley – 14
- Spr Phillips-Davies – 14

WO (QMSI) J Gardner RE
Cpl R Lowe RE Course 54 Mentor.

WO1 (SMI) Ollie Teasdale MSc RE
Sergeant Major Instructor – Royal School of Military Survey (RSMS)
Defence School of Geospatial Intelligence (DSGI) –
Defence Intelligence Training Group (DITG)

Soldiers' Soldier Award - No 54 Military Engineer Geographic Technician Class 2 Course

Working with RSMS, the Branch is very pleased to announce the re-introduction of the Soldiers' Soldier Award made to the student on ME Geo Tech Class 2 courses. The award is made to the student who best epitomises the REA motto of "Service not Self" and is decided by the students themselves.

No 54 ME Geo Tech Class 2 course was the first to receive the award for two or three years. RSMS staff felt that No 54 had a very good course spirit and that was evidenced by 5 members receiving nominations. However, the clear winner was Sapper Sam MacLennan who received an award certificate, a copy of Alan Gordon's Book "The Regiment that Mapped the World", and a prize of £25.



Sapper Sam MacLennan receiving his "Soldiers' Soldier" Award from the Branch Secretary, Ian Thurgate.

135 Geographic Squadron



We were delighted that our Honorary Colonel Vanessa Lawrence CB presented the following:

- 5 - Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medals
 - 3 - Cpl - Sgt promotions
 - 1 - Sgt - SSgt promotion
 - 1 - Commanding Officer's Coin
 - 1 - Royal Engineers commendation
- Congratulations to all!

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CO 42 Engr Regt (Geo)

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WO1 (SMI) Ollie Teasdale RE

DGC Representative

Colin Wright

Notices

Grants from the Branch

It's been a busy time for the Branch grant-wise with a number of requests. We have already given almost £1150 to support two exercises in the Regiment and are considering others. We hope to have pictures and some articles from the recipients in our next edition.

Obituaries

Death is a sensitive subject. Most people shy away from the thought of their demise and therefore will give little thought to preparing their own obituary. Even those that are "organised" will rarely think of writing one.

However, when the need arises, it can be difficult for family or friends to recall details that, for the individual at least, were important and should be recorded for present and future generations to read about.

It is standard practice to publish obituaries of deceased branch members in the Newsletter, and other ex-Military Surveyors if notified, but it can be difficult for the Editor to gather information, and in a timely manner. So, with this in mind, it is suggested that members give consideration to preparing their own obituaries to make sure the varied details of their life are properly and accurately recorded.

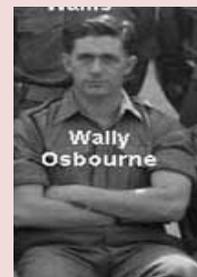
When written, the obituary can be forwarded to the Hon Sec or Newsletter Editor where it will be safely stored – in compliance with GDPR - until required. It may be added to, amended, or retracted by the individual at any time. Alternatively, a copy of the obituary might be attached to the member's Will with instructions to send a copy to the Branch Hon Sec in the event of the member's death.

A guide to what might be included in the obituary, and the terms under which it is kept and published, will be available on the Branch Website.

Notification of Deaths

Mike S J (Wally) Osborn

Jennifer Osborn the granddaughter of Michael Osborn has informed us that he passed away peacefully in his sleep in May following a long period of illness. His wife, Waltraud Osborn cared for him every day and was supported by her son, Peter Osborn.



Brian Garlick

Brian Garlick passed away at his home on Tuesday 5 July, his funeral was held at Thatcham Crematorium on 25 July at 11.00 am.



Chris Moorhouse

We have heard that Chris Moorhouse passed away on Saturday evening 9 July. No further details as yet



Dave Hurd

Dave Hurd died suddenly on 11 July 2022, whilst sitting in his garden. His wife Shelagh contacted Len Gooding to impart the sad news. There will be a Post Morton because of the circumstances.

My knowledge of David Hurd's time with the colours is a little wanting despite the fact we remained great friends throughout his life. So, this is a rather brief resume of what I remember:

Dave was one of the 'old school' who started his Military Survey career, in 1955, as a Lithographic Draughtsman and a Photo Writer who later became a Lithographic Artist (maps). Again, after another consolidation of the various Survey trades, he re-mustered eventually as a Cartographic Technician.

Amongst his numerous postings he saw service in 13 Field Survey Sqn at Fernhurst Camp in Surrey, 84 Survey Sqn. in Singapore from 11/63 to 4/66, 22 Lithographic Sqn at Barton Stacey and then another posting to 13 Sqn, which was then residing in 'B' camp at the same location. Dave retired from the Army as a Sergeant in 1970.

An amical person with a happy disposition, he was a very talented artist, and this manifested itself in many ways including set designing and painting at the local theatre companies wherever he was residing.

He was married to Eva (1963) with whom he had a son Steven, and daughter Susan who he adored. Eva unfortunately passed away (1991) and he remarried his second wife, Shelagh (1994) with whom he spent the rest of his life. After leaving the Royal Engineers he continued to apply his artistic talents whenever the opportunity arose during his ensuing civilian career. Dave's funeral took place on Thursday 28 July at Carlisle Crematorium.

Peter Wood



Reverend Mike Eaman.

Alex Johnstone has advised us that Rev Mike Eaman (known to some as 'Mick'), ex-Field Surveyor, passed away in hospital on 4 May after a short illness.

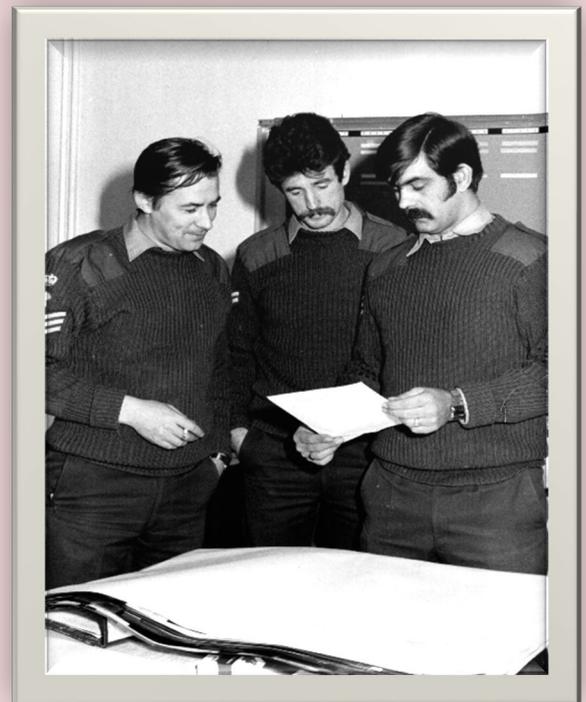


Jack Burnham

From Steve Clarke - Just heard from Jack Burnham's daughter. Jack passed away on 23 May.



WO2 Derek (Taff) Raymond Edghill
8 October 1944 – 29 June 2022



Derek was born in Swansea, West Glamorgan, Wales. He remained intensely proud of his Welsh heritage, and this was amplified when he met and married Joyce his wife of 57 years. Derek joined the Royal Engineers on the 26th of February 1964 and after his basic Combat Engineer Training at Cove was selected to train as a Lithographic Machine Minder within Military Survey. He later successfully passed all his trade tests to become a Survey Print Technician.

Amongst Derek's postings he served at 14 Field Survey Squadron in Ratingen Germany (1965-1968); the School of Military Survey (1968); 42 Survey Regt Barton Stacey (1968-1973); Army Apprentice College Beachley Permanent Staff (1974-1976); the School of Military Survey Instructional Staff (1976-1979); 14 Topographic Squadron, Ratingen (1973-1983); Viersen Depot, Germany (1983 -1985); and RAF Cranwell (1985-1986). Derek retired from the Army on the 28 February 1986 after 22 years of dedicated Service with the Royal Engineers. He was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct medal.

Derek was an excellent printer and was renowned for always producing high quality work. He did, however, have a clear aptitude for teaching the lithographic print trade to young apprentices and young soldiers who benefitted from his superb trade expertise. He was always calm and extremely approachable. He was particularly adept at imbuing young apprentices with the trade and life skills they needed to carry them through Military Service. He was an excellent communicator, and this clearly helped in later life with his civilian employment.

Derek had a keen sense of humour and was very quick witted. He was always an optimist and would try to show the lighter side of life when things got tough. He was a true role model for all those he taught at trade.

Derek always had a flair for art, crafts, and modelling. He enjoyed all aspects of Military life and was a very keen and active member of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. At Beachley he successfully organised the Christmas Draw and was extremely proud of the full-sized cartoon character cut-outs which he produced.

After his Military Service, Derek held a diverse variety of employments which included Night Manager for the NAAFI; Insurance Salesman for Chapel-Ash; Debt Collector for Provident; Salesman for Staybright and Salesman for Warmahome. He loved working but finally retired in 2020 at the age of 76.

Despite his passion for work Derek loved gardening; railway modelling, collecting, and assembling Lego sculptures and stamp collecting.

Derek enjoyed 59 years together with Joyce which included 57 years as a married couple. Derek and Joyce had three children: Wendy, (the late) Brendon and Delaine. Sadly, after a difficult battle with prostate cancer Derek died at home surrounded by his family. *Nick Collins*

Nick Collins recalls:

I knew Derek initially as 'Sergeant Edghill' when he was one of the instructional team at the Army Apprentice College Chepstow, when I was an apprentice. Derek was a superb mentor and an excellent technician. He was always approachable and ready to offer advice and guidance when it was needed.

I later served with Derek in 14 Squadron in Germany and that's where I met his wife Joyce and their three, lovely, children. Derek was the Squadron Technical Control Officer, and nothing would ever get past him if it wasn't of the highest standard. He was always full of life and was an inspiration for any young soldier, especially those within the print trade. It was a privilege to know and serve with Derek, and I know that that will be a sentiment shared by all those who knew him.





Joyce Edghill and WO2 Nick Wood RE at the Lincoln Crematorium on 28 July 2022

Joyce wishes to thank Nick Collins and 42 Regimental Officers, Capt Dom Andrew RE (2IC 16 Sqn) and WO1 (RSM) Lucy Read RE for their assistance in arranging for WO2 Nick Wood RE to act as the Branch Standard bearer at Taff's funeral. A vote of thanks also goes to Sue Hetzke, Regimental Welfare Office for transporting the Standard to Wyton.

For Nick this was a first, but he was very pleased to support Joyce and her family at such a sad time. Nick has had an interesting career since joining the Royal Engineers in 2004 having been an Apprentice Tradesman at Arborfield. As a Terrain Analyst, he worked in Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, and the USA. Tours in Afghanistan, Mali and Iraq followed. As the Cartographer with UN Force in Cyprus he met UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson MP. Nick is currently employed as part of Field Support Troop within 16 Geographic Squadron Royal Engineers. He has a keen interest in ultramarathons, skiing, and spending time outdoors with his wife Jenni, son Elliot, and daughter Norah.



Military Survey (Geographic) Branch Royal Engineers Association



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MILITARY SURVEY (GEO) BRANCH REA REUNION - RETURN

Friday 9th September 2022 (1830hrs for 1900hrs)

PRECEDED BY AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1700hrs FRIDAY THE 9th OF SEPTEMBER 2022

Timings. Please note that the bar will be open before 1830hrs. Food will be served at about 2000hrs.

Accommodation. Due to the increased manning at Hermitage Station, no rooms are available. Hotel facilities are available at junction 13 of the M4 motorway and at Chieveley too; we will however provide FREE transport back to these locations late evening.

Dress. Smart casual or better if you wish!

Security. Hermitage has become a high security Barracks. **ENTRY WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED** to those who have returned this entry form with their details. **IDENTITY CHECKS WILL BE REQUIRED TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE CAMP.**

It is vital to establish firm attendance figures early and so once again we would request that you return this form as soon as you can.

PLEASE SEND RETURNS BEFORE THE 26th AUGUST 2022

Please send return (or any queries and questions) to Mark Kieras via the contact details above.

From: Forename:Surname:I am a member – YES//NO

Non-members £5 pp. cheque payable to “Military Survey Branch REA”

Address: -

Tel No: -

E-mail: -

Type & Make of transport: Registration No:

I ***shall/*shall not** be attending the Reunion on Friday 9th September 2022.

I ***wish to/*will be unable to:** - attend the AGM beforehand.

Guests: Wives/partners are welcome.

1 2.....

DO PLEASE REMEMBER THE GEO SOLDIERS SUPPORT FUND

I enclose a cheque for £..... payable to “Military Survey Branch REA”

If you have any special dietary needs or require disabled access, please detail these below and every attempt will be made to accommodate them. Please note - Military units do not cater for severely disabled conditions (for obvious reasons) and we apologise in advance for any shortcomings that might cause individual inconvenience.