

Booklet No 23 - 13 Topographic Squadron RE - Diary Bosnia 1996



Cpl. Paul Brown, Lance Cpl. Harry Harris, Cpl. Micky Luff and Cpl. Paul Goble



Sapper Kevin Earle and his wife Belinda

Bosnia bound soldiers face minefield map danger job

SOLDIERS based in Hermitage have left for Bosnia on a vital mapping mission, much of it in mined territory.

Men from Newbury, Bucklebury and with Chieveley connections were joined by 30 more last weekend and another 38 here on Saturday.

They are led by former St. Bartholomew's School pupil Major Mark Burrows, Royal Engineers, and are from 42 Survey Engineer Group.

Major Burrows, whose parents are from Chieveley and who lives in Bucklebury, told how the group will be working up to 12 hours a day, seven days a week.

The squadron's job is to produce maps to enable troops to get around the country safely, and they will also be marking out boundaries between Bosnia and Yugoslavia.

Sgt Andrew Gray, a surveyor from Newbury, said the unit would be near sites of major confrontation and there were lots of mines there.

The men will also have to distribute and continuously update the maps to 60,000 international troops.

Captain Nick Collins from Newbury will be second in command and in charge of the day to day running of the squadron during a six month stay.

He will be leaving behind his wife, Ann, a doctor's dispenser, and his



Sgt Andy Gray with the GPS surveying system which the 42 Survey Engineer Group will use in Bosnia.

two sons.

He has been in the Army 26 years and served seven months in The Gulf.

The men will be based in a 400 square metre site around a devalued brick factory in Kiseljak, near Sarajevo.

There will be some outings into town, but only under armed guard.

They will sleep in portable buildings, outside the old factory, which will be used as squadron headquarters.

Major Burrows said

"Morale is important in a situation like this and we'll do our best to keep the men's spirits up. Letters and cards are an important part of this."

A video shop in Thatcham has donated videos and the British Legion has made a substantial donation.

They will be taking sophisticated mobile computer technology for their job, enabling them to simulate and practise helicopter landings safely in unfamiliar surroundings.

Berkshire lads in task to keep boundaries of peace intact

The area is mountainous, and has temperatures of more than 100C in summer and minus 20C in winter.

Its ability to operate in such conditions could save many lives, says Major Burrows.

Although the squadron will be sacrificing Christmas and New Year in Bosnia, they are said to be dedicated to the working of the Dayton Peace Accord.

Background

This booklet is intended to be complementary to the history of 13 Squadron which has been compiled in two volumes. The historic volumes could not be expected to show each major conflict in depth, so it is hoped that this will be covered in separate booklets and go towards helping form the complete history of the Squadrons of Military Survey. This booklet has been produced from information recorded in a diary/log kept by the unit whilst deployed. The views and/or opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the author/compiler.

Whilst this booklet focuses on 13 Topographic Squadron in Bosnia, it was felt that some form of introduction should be given to explain why 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) was involved in all aspects of the Balkans Conflict so after consultation with the author, it was agreed to directly plagiarize some of the excellent details provided in the article written by Lt Col (Retd) Stuart Fairnington RE, which was published in the Defence Ranger in 2010.

“WE MAY BE GONE SOME TIME”. 42 ENGINEER REGIMENT (GEOGRAPHIC) INVOLVEMENT IN THE BALKANS, 1992-2009

Introduction

A fact often discussed during Regimental Dinner Nights in the early 2000s, was the fact that personnel from within 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) had now been continually deployed on operations for over 20 years. Operations in the Balkans form a significant part of this period. The Regiment's initial involvement in the Balkans was the deployment of personnel to Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina (Bosnia) with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in 1992. Seventeen years of continuous geographic support, including the deployment of different size force elements providing a wide range of capability, ended in 2009 with the withdrawal of British forces, including the Geographic Detachment, from NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR). Figure 1 depicts the forces involved and the UK operation names for the period covered in this article.

Op Name	Macedonia / Kosovo								Op Agricola				Op Oculus					
	Bosnia		Op Grapple			Op Resolute	Op Loadstar					Op Oculus						
Force	Macedonia / Kosovo								KFOR									
	Bosnia	UNPROFOR			IFOR	SFOR					EUFOR (Althea)							
Date	Mar 92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09

Figure 1. Forces and operations within the Balkans in which Regiment/Military Survey personnel contributed from 1992 to 2009.

This article will concentrate on the involvement of Regimental personnel in the Balkans. However, there is reference to military personnel from other Defence Geographic / Military Survey units as their contribution was significant and intertwined with that of Regimental personnel. The 'Regiment' refers to 42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) and its predecessor 42 Survey Engineer Group. The political and military history of each phase of Balkans operations will be introduced before 13 Sqn's involvement is detailed.

It is acknowledged that various previous articles on geographic support to Balkans operations have been referred to and extracted in the compilation of this article.

Background

Croatia and Bosnia are two of six republics that made up the former Republic of Yugoslavia, the others being Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia. Additionally, there were two so-called autonomous provinces: Vojvodina and Kosovo. Whilst there were areas of Croatia with significant Serb communities, Bosnia was far more complex, being made up of 43% Muslims, 33% Serbs (Orthodox Christians) and 24% Croats (Roman Catholics). Naturally, Bosnian Serbs were allied to Serbia and Bosnian Croats to Croatia. Bosnian Muslims had no such local alliance. The cultural complexity is evident from Figure 2.

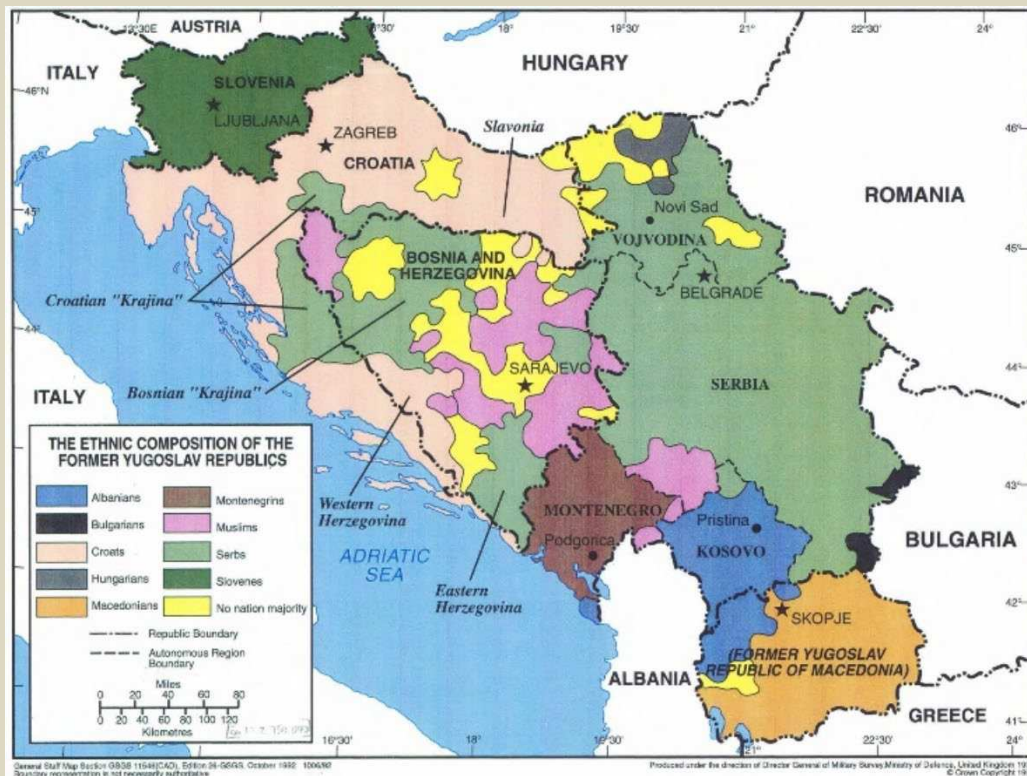


Figure 2. Former Yugoslav Republics Ethnicity Map 1992. Note the ethnic Serbs in Croatia, the complex mix in Bosnia and the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Relationships between Serbs, Croats and Muslims have been strained for centuries and this has led to various wars and massacres. The invasion of Yugoslavia by the Germans in World War 2 and the subsequent occupation of the majority of the republics by Axis forces further complicated matters. Marshall Tito's post war Communist government, which included representation from all parties, provided unity and relative stability in Yugoslavia until his death in 1980. Without his unifying leadership Yugoslavia threatened to implode and the situation was tense throughout the 1980s. Serbia, which considered itself the lead republic and the direct successor to the Republic of Yugoslavia, went to war with Slovenia and Croatia when the two republics declared independence in 1991. The conflict in Slovenia was quickly resolved. However, the conflict in Croatia proved more complex, as large Serb communities supported by the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) opposed independence. The fighting continued in Croatia and spread to Bosnia throughout the remainder of 1991. The United Nations became involved and adopted various resolutions in an attempt to find a solution to the crisis. UN resolutions 743(1991) and 749(1991) approved the establishment and authorized the deployment of the UNPROFOR for an initial period of 12 months.

UNPROFOR / Op GRAPPLE

UNPROFOR initially deployed a headquarters into Sarajevo and forces into three UN Protected Areas (UNPAs) in Croatia with the mandate to ensure demilitarization and the protection of the population. Monitoring functions were extended from the UNPAs into various 'pink zones', which had Serb communities and were controlled by the JNA. HQ UNPROFOR staff moved to Belgrade and then, due to intensified fighting in Bosnia and, specifically, around Sarajevo, to Zagreb in May 1992 (Figure 3).

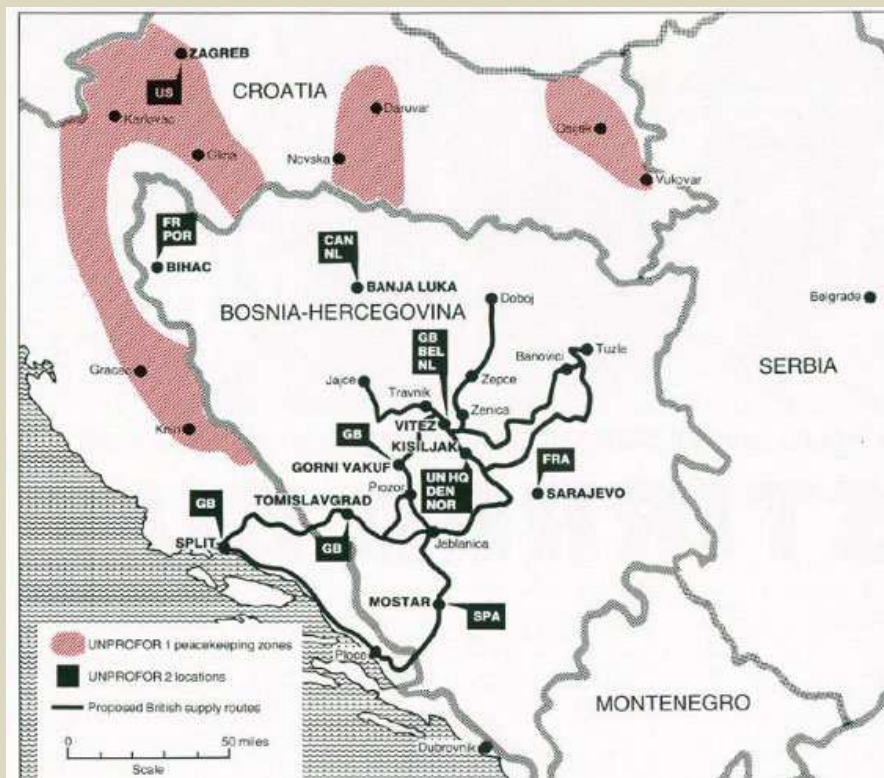


Figure 3. UNPROFOR peacekeeping zones in Croatia and locations in Bosnia in 1992.

The situation in Croatia was fairly simple in comparison to Bosnia, where Bosnian Serbs fought against a Bosnian Croat-Muslim alliance. The Bosnian Serbs, better equipped as successors of the JNA and supported by Serbia, controlled the east and west of Bosnia, connected by a stretch of land in the north. The Croat-Muslims, supported by Croatia, controlled the centre of the country, stretching north from the Dalmatian coast, and occupied Sarajevo.

Fighting intensified significantly in Bosnia throughout 1992, with the Serbs, who almost surrounded Sarajevo, mercilessly shelling the city. Elsewhere, there was fighting and ethnic cleansing, which caused significant destruction (Figure 4) and large numbers of refugees. UN resolution 776(1991) authorized the enlargement of UNPROFOR's mandate and strength in Bosnia, with the aim of supporting the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to deliver humanitarian relief and, in particular, to provide protection. UNPROFOR was to grow to a force strength of 41,000, drawn from over 35 nations.



Figure 4. Burnt out Bosnian houses – a result of ethnic cleansing.

Apart from providing staff officers to HQ UNPROFOR, Britain's contribution to the force, which totalled approximately 3,500 personnel, was in the form of a Brigade staff, infantry battalion, logistics battalion, reconnaissance squadron and an engineer squadron. Royal Navy Sea Kings provided helicopter support. Main bases included a headquarters (HQ British Forces (BRITFOR)) and logistics base at Split, with units being deployed throughout central Bosnia. The UK operation was designated Op GRAPPLE.

The Regiment's involvement in the Balkans begins here, in October 1992, with the deployment of Geographic Sections to the headquarters of the UN Bosnia Herzegovina (BH) Command in Kiseljak, 20km north east of Sarajevo, and to HQ BRITFOR.

A further Geo Section was established within HQ UNPROFOR in Zagreb in March 1993. Including an SO1 (manned by a full Colonel at times and provided by NATO), two WO2s (one provided from the Regiment) and two SNCOs, the section was equipped with GIS/graphics systems and provided geographic advice, terrain analysis and map supply capabilities. The Theatre Map Depot (TMD) held approximately 1300-line items, with stocks totalling some 350,000 sheets (Figure 5).



Figure 5. WO2s Paul Palmer and Ray Wilkinson handing over in the TMD (a converted stable block). New shelving was installed at a cost of \$19,000.

Four 19 STRE Field Survey sections deployed from 1993-1996 in support of the Artillery.

The United Nations Rapid Reaction Force deployed to Bosnia in July 1995, commanded by Maj Gen David Pennefather Royal Marines. As part of the Operations Staff, based in Kiseljak, a small Geo team consisting of two soldiers and an officer deployed, the officer also being responsible for mainstream engineering staff work. Initially this was Maj Mark Burrows, Cpl Rik Simmonds and LCpl Adam Dews, with Maj Ross Thurlow replacing Maj Burrows later in the deployment (a pattern which was to be followed in respect of commanding 13 Sqn in Bosnia). As the UN handed over to NATO in December 1995, Maj Thurlow changed berets and moved from Kiseljak to Split to join COMMZ Forward; the rest of the team redeployed back to the UK.

There had been seven rotations of personnel through the UNPROFOR Geographic sections from October 1992 until December 1995, with up to 32 military surveyors in each rotation, and the deployment of four Field Survey sections. In reality, the transfer of responsibility between the UNPROFOR and IFOR meant that the personnel already in theatre repainted their vehicles, removed their UN (light blue) berets, reverted to their navy-blue berets and 'cracked on' as normal.

Bosnia – IFOR

After six weeks of solid negotiation the Dayton Peace Accords were signed on 21 November 1995 by the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia to put an end to three and a half years of war in Bosnia. From a Geo perspective the negotiations were witnessed and assisted by the then Chief Geo, ARRC, Lt Col Nick Rigby RE. An Agreed Cease Fire Line (ACFL), which depicted the party's final front, and an Inter Entity Boundary Line (IEBL), depicting the line to which the parties would withdraw, were agreed. Both lines, and zones of separation, were overprinted onto Defence Mapping Agency (DMA) produced M709 mapping, to be known as the 'Golden mapping'. The agreement prompted the deployment of the NATO led Implementation Force (IFOR) on 20 December 1995 to take over from UNPROFOR.

IFOR, commanded by HQ ARRC, deployed in Bosnia with a one-year mandate to oversee implementation of the military aspects of the peace agreement, which were to bring an end to hostilities, separate the warring factions, to transfer territory between the two entities according to the peace agreement, and to monitor the movement of parties' forces and heavy weapons into approved storage sites. The ARRC commanded three Multi National Divisions (MNDs) (Figure 6). At its height, IFOR involved troops from 32 countries, with approximately 54,000 troops in Bosnia and 80,000 overall (support and reserve troops were based in Croatia, Hungary, Germany, Italy and on ships in the Adriatic Sea).



Figure 6. The IFOR (and SFOR) MND boundaries

On the Dayton accords being signed the Field Survey section moved from Gornji Vakuf to HQ MND(SW) in Banja Luka. A positive change was noted in the local Bosnian's approach to the foreign forces: "overnight, the locals changed from snowballing us with rocks to cheering us". With uncertainty over where the various lines had been drawn within the warring factions on the ground, the section had free run of the disputed areas and made good use of the opportunity, establishing more points during this period than the previous three deployments combined.

14 Indep Topo Sqn, commanded by Maj Jim Mitchell RE (followed by Maj John Kedar RE), deployed to Bosnia on 22 December 1995 and formed the basis of a Geographic Support Group (GSG), initially in Split and, from late January 1996, in the Brick Factory, Kiseljak (Figure 7). Its mission was to provide direct geographic support to the ARRC to assist in the conduct of unrestricted operations within Bosnia. Reinforcements were provided to the GSG from other Military Survey units and, significantly, 19 STRE attached for the period 8 January to 1 April 1996, with the fourth Field Survey section being brought back to the GSG (much to their displeasure!). Deploying before HQ ARRC Main and without formal command and control links, the GSG relied heavily on informal contacts developed during training in Germany. Indeed, arrangements for the Chief Engineer, ARRC, to take operational control were not confirmed until April 1996. Administrative control took longer to resolve, with Comd 1 Signal Brigade accepting responsibility in June 1996.



Figure 7. The Brick Factory, Kiseljak, home to the IFOR GSGs.

At this time, 129 of Military Survey's soldiers, approximately 40% of Military Survey's uniformed strength, were deployed within the IFOR Geographic organisation, with the GSG playing a key part (Figure 8). Many of the personnel had previously deployed on Op GRAPPLE and were destined to complete further tours in the Balkans.

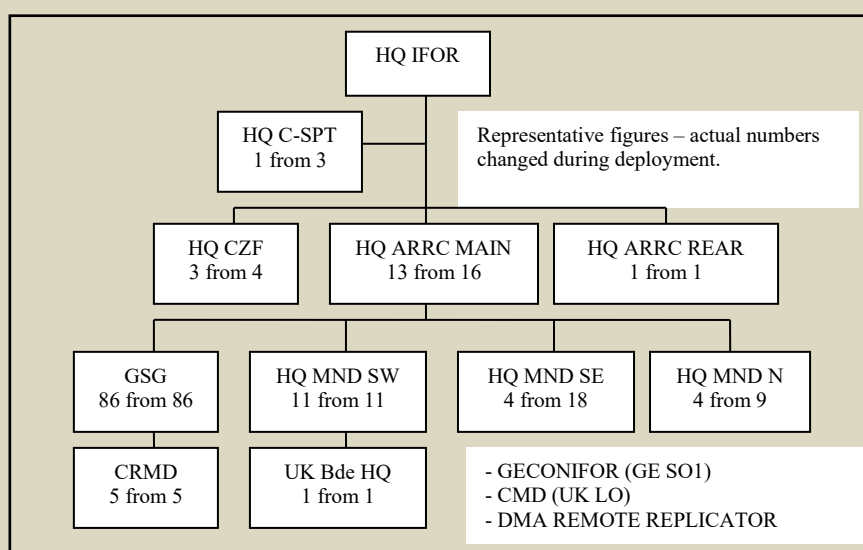


Figure 8. Military Survey representation amongst the ARRC Geographic organisation.

13 Topographic Squadron replaced 14 Squadron in the Brick Factory on 27 June 1996, with the key equipment being handed over between the two units. Both the 13 Squadron OC and SSM changed hands during the deployment, with Maj Ross Thurlow RE taking over from Maj Mark Burrows RE as OC and WO2 Al Easingwood RE taking over from WO2 Martin 'Arthur' Mann RE as SSM. 13 Squadron initially maintained a high level of tasking, with regular updates of route and

minefield mapping, and expanded the GSG's catalogue of products to include mine awareness posters in several languages and a Helicopter Landing Site (HLS) booklet (Figure 9). The collation of the booklet proved memorable in that it became a complete Squadron task, with chefs, mechanics, drivers, management as well as the Geo technicians not being able to pass the briefing area without collating a minimum of 10 booklets.

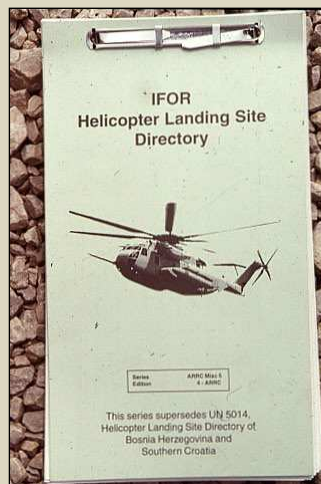


Figure 9. The Helicopter Landing Site booklet, produced by a contribution from all GSG personnel.

The survey of the IEBL finally came to fruition. The GSG Field Survey section was augmented by US and Canadian military surveyors, with the Canadians taking the lead in the conduct of the survey. Using the Brick Factory as their base, the survey teams travelled to various locations in the vicinity of the IEBL to conduct pre-arranged meetings with locals from the relevant factions. After the approximate (map accuracy) alignment of the IEBL had been confirmed by the survey team, it was then up to the local faction representatives to agree on the exact location for the boundary post. This was often, understandably, contentious. Once the position had been confirmed, the survey would be conducted and the marker post erected. The survey proved interesting but dangerous work, as the IEBL followed what was the frontline during the conflict and was strewn with minefields. Most of the minefields laid by the Serbs were found to have been correctly marked and recorded. However, this was not the case with the Bosniac minefields. The joint UK/US/Canadian teams conducted the survey in MND(SW) and MND(N), with the French operating more independently in MND(SE). A training package was also delivered over the period 23 September to 04 October 1996 to provide surveyors from all three Bosnian factions with the knowledge to conduct GPS surveys. Led by WO1 Mick James RE from the RSMS, SSgt Andy Gray RE and Sgts Taff Brighton RE and Mac McEvoy RE conducted the training from within HQ ARRC(Rear), Kiseljak (Figure 10).



Figure 10. The IEBL Survey Training Team with Bosnian Serb, Muslim and Croat surveyors.

Unfortunately, the MND(SW) Guard Section left on the arrival of 13 Squadron and, once again, the squadron was to guard themselves until later in their tour a Section from the RAF Regiment covered duties for a two-month period. Force protection was a concern, with the squadron holding only small arms and the local QRF being a little too far away for comfort. Therefore, gathering information on how the GSG was perceived locally and fostering good local relationships was imperative. Various locals were employed on camp, and the local Catholic priest, Father Ivan, was befriended. All provided good intelligence on the local situation and any tensions.

No recollection of the Brick Factory could fail to mention what was 'probably the best bar in Bosnia'. Both Squadrons benefited from the conversion of a kiln into the squadron bar and the Kiseljak Kavern hosted many a morale boosting evening. During 13 Squadron's tenure, quite a reputation was developed for the fortnightly theme parties (Figure 11), with renowned and talented artists being flown in from across Europe (well, RSMS) to entertain the troops (Figure 12).



Figures 11 & 12. A Medieval Night in the Kiseljak Kavern. Paul (the Minstrel) Sleep entertaining.

The goals of IFOR were achieved by June 1996 and the NATO Stabilisation Force (SFOR) was formed with the aim of upholding the Dayton Peace Agreement. Subsequently, the 13 Squadron GSG was prepared and departed theatre in November 1996. Field defences and Hesco bastion were stripped out and the Brick Factory was handed back to its owners by the Squadron QM, Maj Ian Thurgate RE. The GSG's vehicles were delivered to the port in Split and personnel returned to UK either by ship, accompanying the vehicles, or by air, via Split airport. UK Geo support was drawn down considerably and provided thereafter by sections in HQ SFOR, Sarajevo, HQ MND(SW), Banja Luka, and by the UK Brigade's integral Geo staff.

Postscript to Lt Col S Fairnington's Article

42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic) continued to deploy personnel to the Balkans until March 2009, when the last UK Geo personnel on Op OCULUS in Kosovo, A/Sgt Cantwell, and LCpl Antoine, departed Theatre. It is hoped that parts of Stuart's article will be incorporated into 14 Sqn's history but, as already stated, his full article can be read in the Defence Ranger dated 2010.



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Figure 13 – Extract by kind permission of the Newbury Weekly News

13 TOPOGRAPHIC SQUADRON ROYAL ENGINEERS DIARY
27 June 1996 to 24 November 1996
THE BRICK FACTORY, KISELJAK, BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA (Figure 14)

It is not entirely clear how or who compiled the information for a Sqn diary which was recorded on a daily basis but it has given a very clear insight into life of 13 Sqn whilst on a tour of duty in Bosnia. This booklet has utilised extracts from this diary and photos kindly provided by numerous personnel. Some of the contributors to the diary appear to have been:

Maj MRH Burrows RE (OC 27 Jun 96 – 15 Oct 96), Maj RD Thurlow RE (OC 15 Oct 96 – 24 Nov 96), Capt NJ Collins RE (2IC 4 Jul 96 – 24 Nov 96), WO2 (SSM) M Mann RE (SSM 27 Jun 96 – 10 Aug 96, WO2 SSM A Easingwood RE (SSM 10 Aug 96 – 24 Nov 96) and Sgt M Shade AGC (Chief Clerk 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96).



*Figure 14. 13 Topographic Squadron RE occupied the Brick Factory in Kiseljak, Bosnia
from 27 June 1996 – 24 November 1996*

1. 27 Jun 96. The advance party of 13 Topo Sqn RE assumed command of the Geographic Support Group at the Brick Factory, Kiseljak, Bosnia-Herzegovina (Grid BP 643713). There was a short ceremony, involving both OCs and SSMs. 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE lowered their flag and some photographs were taken for P Info purposes. That evening, 14 Sqn celebrated the end of their tour in the Kiseljak Kavern (a brick kiln which had been converted into a bar and has a reputation for “being the best bar in Bosnia” - built originally by 26 Armd Engr Sqn RE and opened formally in Nov 95. The inside was decorated with a number of trophies which had been acquired over the previous 8 months.) The camp was guarded by a section of Royal Irish Regiment (Volunteers) (RIR(V)), soldiers on detachment from their regiment based in Split, Croatia.

2. 28 Jun 96. 14 Sqn were advised that their aircraft (an aged VC10) had been delayed for 24hrs in RAF Bruggen, Germany. The Sqn personnel were not best pleased but were kind enough to keep out of our way as we made some adjustments around the camp. There were a number of outstanding survey tasks which needed to be taken over and these included:

- A medium format 5 colour mines information map at 1: 600K
- A Routes and Bridges map for the Multinational Division (South West) (MND (SW)) - now located at Banja Luka.
- A mine awareness aide memoire.
- A series of meal tickets for Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC).

3. 29 Jun 96. WO2 (QMSI) G Caisley RE, the 13 Sqn Technical Control Warrant Officer (STCWO), re-arranged the GSG's filing system and started to plan future tasks. ARRC HQ Geo Branch had advised us that there were 2 major printing tasks ahead. The first was a helicopter overprint on a 1.250K JOG series of mapping (11 sheets) and the second was a 2 colour, 100K series depicting the polling stations for the elections. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has overall responsibility, and the election date has been set for 14 Sep 96. The initial estimate has indicated that we will need to produce approximately 1000 copies of 36 different sheets which should take 13 Sqn some 30 days to produce.

The Field Support Office continued to provide expert advice to all elements of the Sqn under the watchful eye of Capt Mike Cairns (Cdn Mil Engrs – Exchange Officer) (Figure 15)



Figure 15. The Field Support Office. Left: LCpl Tony Steel and Right: Cpl Rob Oliver

Cpls F Barnett REME and P Goble RE were driven off the road in their 4-tonne truck by a bus coming in the opposite direction. Their truck went into a ditch and both sustained minor cuts and bruises. The truck was recovered and taken to first line repair workshops at Zetra Stadium Sarajevo, (Torvill and Dean won their gold medals at the 1984 Winter Olympics at this stadium).

13 Sqn main party arrived, were briefed and settled in. Most were in good form and had spent the previous night in a 3-star hotel in Holland while their aircraft was repaired. 14 Sqn was delayed in Split, Croatia for a further night as their aircraft suffered another engine failure.

4. 30 Jun 96. Most of 13 Sqn was employed in assisting Capt I Thurgate RE (QM) and SSgt A Turley RE (SQMS) in unpacking the 5 x ISO containers worth of stores. 14 Sqn had identified a running circuit which was approximately 5kms long, in the local area, and was reasonably safe. Members of 13 Sqn who had recently arrived were shown the route that evening.

5. 1 Jul 96. Maj MRH Burrows RE (OC) visited 1 Mechanised Brigade (I Mech Bde) at Sipovo. The town is located in the 'Makonjic Grad Anvil' an area which was captured by the Croats and then returned to the Bosnia Serbs. Most of the houses and a church had been destroyed and daubed with Croat graffiti. (Figures 16 and 17) Some Bosnian Serbs had returned and a few police in their characteristic purple pyjama suits patrolled the streets. One or two stalls had set-up and were selling some miscellaneous items at grossly inflated prices.



Figures 16. and 17.

Sgt S Batey RE, the Bde Geo Sgt, stated that he would like to have the Silicon Graphics Drawland system by late Jul 96, at the latest. Capt Short, Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment (RGBW) S03 G2, was extremely pro-Geo and had put Sgt Batey and his technical skills to good use. In particular, the Point Information Graphic System (PIG System) with the MUSE programme had proven to be popular with the local Bn Int Offrs and the Tactical Air Control Parties (TACPs). The TACPs had carried out exercises in country and had found that the MUSE was a useful guide in planning their Ops.

The Topo Sect deployed to both MND (N) and MND (SE) Area of Responsibilities (AORs) to establish a tighter control on the existing network. Sgt A Gray RE had his Landrover break down, but he managed to limp it back to Kiseljak.

6. 2 Jul 96. The Sqn completed the 1:600K mines map (5 colour) and produced 5000 copies.

The QM discovered that the contracts for the local cleaners and kitchen staff had expired, and he spent most of the day liaising with Bud Fin personnel in HQ ARRC (Rear) to draw up further contracts for the next 3 months. The contract for sewage removal from the camp's septic tank was not being implemented. There was a foul stench in the area of the septic tank and one of our

Bosnian civilian neighbours complained that her chickens were ill. Once again, the QM took to speaking with personnel in HQ ARRC (Rear).

Map Supply Tp started to make up and issue Unit Basic Loads (UBLs) to units en-roulement. The Topo Det occupied a further 2 points in MND (N) AOR.

7. 3 Jul 96. WO2 (SSM) M Mann RE started his camp improvement programme and had a small works team making a wooden path. The QM continued to pursue the sewage issue.

The 1:600K Mines map was catch-released at HQ ARRC (Main) and a proof of the Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) 1:500K map (5 colour) was dispatched to HQ ARRC (Main). Production Tp under the guidance of SSgt B Miller RE, Production Tp Comd, continued to work on the 3 colour overprints depicting helicopter information on 11 x Joint Operations Graphic (JOG) (1:250K) map sheets. Manual TERA Sect worked on the HLS Directory. Photo Sect processed 5 x Black/White (B/W) film strips for the Inter Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) survey. The Topo Sect computed the results of their survey, and the result was satisfactory.

The Sqn received a visit from the SO2 G2/3 1 Sig Bde and SO2 Int from the UKNIC. The former suggested that we should have the up-to-date "Blue Cards" which explain, 'what has to be done if we come across an indicted war criminal'. The latter is responsible for providing us with imagery from the IJK.

8. 4 Jul 96. The sewage issue continued.

Sgt Hadfield REME fixed the plate developer on the new Mk III TACIPRINT. Essentially, he stripped out the working parts from a broken Mk II and replaced the faulty equipment in the Mk III.

Capt N J Collins RE, the Sqn 2IC, arrived with 5 other personnel and started to take over his responsibilities. Capt Collins was late into theatre due to the fact that he was serving in the RSMS, however due to a short notice posting situation he was summoned to leave his Assistant Instructor's office and deploy with 13 Sqn. His key priorities were to be: Sqn's crypto and security issues, open the Imprest Account and produce a Rest and Recuperation (R&R) plot.

Production Tp continued with cartographic work on the 11 sheets of the JOG series helicopter mapping and prepared plates for the road safety poster. Road safety is one of the major IFOR concerns because there are several accidents each day in theatre and Road Traffic Accidents (RTAs) are currently the most common cause of death and injury.

Capt Cairns and Sgt Gray deployed to Banja Luka to sort administrative details for the IEBL Svy. The remainder of the Topo Sect was on guard.

9. 5 Jul 96. The SSM started to make some improvements to the camp's infrastructure. Cartographic work continued on the JOG helicopter overprints (these depicted Helicopter Landing Sites (HLS) way points and danger areas). Work was also started on the HLS Directory. The road safety poster is printed and dispatched to the Master Driver.

10. 6 Jul 96. The SSM continued to improve the camp infrastructure with a small works party. In particular he improved the areas around the front gate. Spr J Dykes spent most of his time building a wooden footpath and is now the expert on the Sqn's chain saw. The QM continues to try and solve the septic tank issue as the air is now redolent with the odour of human detritus. Work

stopped at 1600hrs and about 15 personnel went to the local school's gym to play 5 aside football. That evening Sgt G Pocock RE and LCpl S Harris organised an entertainment evening "At the Races" in the Kiseljak Brick Factory. Two large dice had been made from blocks of wood and the TACISYS had been put to good effect to produce bookies' tickets. The evening was a major success and the OC even managed to make a modest gain on the "Tote".

11. 7 Jul 96. The Sqn took a half day rest, more or less, although most personnel worked on until about 1600hrs. Work included printing the MND (SE) AOR map and a proof was made of the JOG series map.

Maj D Swan RE arrived and the Sqn enjoyed a BBQ in the evening.

12. 8 Jul 96. The OC, STCWO and Production Tp Comd went to HQ ARRC (Main) to meet Lt Col RN Rigby RE the Chief Geo, et al. Issues discussed included: IEBL survey, polling station maps, map supply in general, the impending GOC's visit, promotions from Spr to LCpl, the guard force, the Geo Bulletin, additional US personnel and the possibility of getting hold of an Interim ARRC Info system (IARRCIS).

Brig J Moore-Bick also stated that he wished to be present when the GOC visited. The SSM deployed to Tuzla with one of the new TACIPRINTs. 2 x TERA Dets deployed to MND (SW) AOR to carry out some field checks on 3 town plans. Essentially, the personnel were tasked to find out a number of street names and identify the use of some buildings which appear on imagery.

13. 9 Jul 96. It rained all day.

Halfway through the morning it was discovered that the information for the JOG helicopter overprint mapping was inaccurate. The air information had been produced on TACYSIS and adjusted for a best mean fit. This fit was only accurate to about plus or minus 4mm which equates to approximately 1Km on the ground (at 250K scale). Plans were then made to check and redraw some of the overlays manually. The printers, however, were not idle and started to make some repmat for the new M709 Series mapping. Samples were needed for the impending Chief Geo's Conference at Sarajevo.

Sgt S Crewe RE arrived on loan for 2 weeks from the SMS and started an Arc View/Arc Info course which he ran in the Kiln. Sgt S Batey RE from 1 Mech Bde and a contingent from MND (SE) joined the course.

The 2IC submitted the Sqn's requests for R&R to HQ ARRC (Rear).

14. 10 Jul 96. The weather was still damp and cold, in fact very similar to a bad summer's day in Scotland.

The OC sorted out some vu-foils for the Geo Conference which was due to take place the next day.

The sewage saga continued.

The BELgium, LUXembourg, Greece and Austria Engineer Battalion (BELUGA Engr Bn) started work on preparing the plinths for the 2 print containers.

The TERA Dets returned with their information but in one town the streets were all being renamed as the territory had recently been ceded by the VRS to the BH Federation. Production Tp continued with the 1:250K Helicopter overprints.

15. 11 Jul 96. The OC, WOI J Starbuck RE (Map Tp Comd) and the STCWO all attended the Geo Conference at HQ ARRC (Main). Minutes for the meeting were produced so attendees could take action where necessary.

The remainder of the Sqn continued to work on the JOG 1:250K helicopter overprints and the HLS Directory.

Volleyball seemed to be catching on as a post dinner activity and the Geo Sp Offr is considering a league system. The regular run around the hill also seems to be popular and now some personnel run around the course twice! Spr Elliot was promoted to LCpl by the CRE in Banja Luka.

16. 12 Jul 96. The main event for the day was a promotion parade to SSgt for Sgt Crewe who was on temporary attachment from SMS. The Chief Geo came for the evening and made the presentation to SSgt Crewe (Figure 18). Later that evening, the last members of the Sqn arrived in Kiseljak which brought our total strength to 90 personnel. Sprs N Grand (right) and W Walker (left) were promoted to LCpls in the bar later that evening (Figure 19).



Figure 18. Lt Col Nick Rigby RE promotes Sgt Simon Crewe RE to SSgt, whilst the OC looks on.



Figure 19. Maj Mark Burrows RE promotes Sprs Walker and Grand to LCpls

17. 13 Jul 96. The first of the mapping to support the elections came into work: These were the Motorola and Opstina/Electoral Boundary maps. In addition, the Sqn was also tasked to update the unit dispositions and the routes map. As a consequence, it was decided that most of the Sqn would have to work on Sunday, particularly those in the "Cartographic Bottleneck".

The SSM had a large works party and carried out a number of camp maintenance tasks.

The SQMS attended an SQMS' convention in Divulje Barracks, Split, Croatia.

18. 14 Jul 96. It was a Sunday! The Sqn enjoyed a psychological 'lie-in' of half an hour and then continued work as normal. Those not on the critical path for production helped the SSM with his works parties. Most took part of the afternoon off. During this time the 2IC edited the "Wives video". The OC read a book, played volleyball and then promptly fell asleep in the sun.

19. 15 Jul 96. The Sqn had its first major visit. Maj Gen Kiszely, Comd MND (SW) / Comd Brit Forces visited from Banja Luka. Brig J Moore-Bick and the Chief Geo were in attendance to provide "top cover." The Comd was impressed with what he saw at the Brick Factory and was well briefed on our tour interval length. He was aware that we had no clear end of tour date and indicated that he would take up this issue through the chain of command. He also had not seen the anaglyph mapping and put in a request for some to be sent to him. LCpl D Grace ACC made some excellent "fat boy" Chelsea buns, which proved to be a major success at coffee time.

Sgt Hadfield REME deployed to Banja Luka by helicopter to fix the UTAX plain paper copiers.

20. 16 Jul 96. It was generally a quiet but productive day. A proof was made of the Election Boundary map, this is a complicated 1:500K map which shows the Opstina and IEB Lines and an attempt has been made to rationalise them both. The details were put together by the OSCE and HQ ARRC; whether the product will actually work, remains to be seen. Maj Wessler (NL) from HQ ARRC Heli Ops visited to check the latest edition of the HLS Directory.

21. 17 Jul 96. A productive day with representatives from Engineer Support Services coming to look at the sewage system.

The Topo Dets deployed to MND (SW) to carry out the precise survey on the IEBL - accuracy of less than + or -1 metre was needed. The main difficulty however is not the survey itself, but the co-ordination needed to get representatives from both the Federation and the VRS to agree to the exact position on the ground. The VRS tends to be more efficient.

22. 18 Jul 96. The OC and Fd Tp Comd went to Zagreb, Croatia to see Lt Col Hacker (GE) of the Mines Action Centre and to visit LCpl Burkes who ran the map store. In addition, Fd Tp Comd had to visit Zagreb University to obtain transformation data (Hermanskogel/WGS 84). The meeting with Lt Col Hacker (GE) was relatively simple and he asked the Sqn to produce mine mapping at 1:50K for Croatia which would be coordinated through HQ ARRC (Main). The meeting at Zagreb University resulted in a proposal to carry out a joint project with the Croats to obtain the transformation data.

23. 19 Jul 96. The OC returned from Zagreb, Croatia. Work continued on the amendments to the HLS Directory and the Motorola mapping. The latter is designed for the OSCE to help them use the correct frequency when operating in a particular area.

24. 20 Jul 96. The SSM had a works parade for all those not on the critical path for production. The OC attended Comd ARRC's cocktail party while the rest of the Sqn had a bottle walking competition. LCpl Woodrow won the men's singles; the doubles version of bottle walking got slightly out-of-hand and had to be stopped.

25. 21 Jul 96. Most of the Sqn took a day off. A game of football took place on the Kiseljak sports pitch. There was no rental charge as from now on, we agreed to buy beer for the Sqn from a shop owned by the town's football coach. Spr M Arlow broke his leg and was taken to HQ ARRC (Rear).

In the afternoon a section from 2 Sqn RAF Regt arrived as the new Guard Force for the security of the Brick Factory. The personnel were already known to members of the Sqn because they had attended the same Combined Arms Training Centre (CATC) training package in the UK.

There were a number of difficulties with the two guillotines. REME managed to repair both of them, but the guillotines are in need of a good servicing.

26. 22 Jul 96. Work restarted on the helicopter series of JOG 1:250K mapping, the IFOR Routes map and an elevation overlay. A Terrain Analysis recce team deployed to gather information on four towns in NW Bosnia. MND (N) requested help with their TACIPRINT because it had developed some teething problems, so Sgt Hall REME and Cpl M Luff were dispatched to Tuzla. Fd Tp Comd rang from Zagreb stating that local businesses were unwilling to accept his American Express card. He had acquired 1500 DM worth of computer equipment for the GSG but was unable to pay.

27. 23 Jul 96. Cfn Roberts departed, one of the last members of 14 Sqn.

SHQ made the sad decision that due to old age and sickness, "Village", the camp dog would have to be euthanized and "Wedge" would be promoted to camp dog. Spr C Adams was tasked to humanely dispatch the animal.

Later in the day, the BELUGA Engr Bn arrived with a crane to lift the print containers onto concrete plinths. (Figure 20)



Figure 20. The BELUGA Engineer Battalion at work

The Helio Sect had to work late to produce some reproduction material (repmat) for HQ MND (SW).

28. 24 Jul 96. The IFOR Routes map was completed and released.

The main difficulty with the Roland print machine in MND (N) (see 22 Jul) was that the font solution was insufficiently acidic, and the printing press was too hot (the air conditioning unit had failed and temperatures hit the high 40 degrees Celsius).

29. 25 Jul 96. The OC, SSM, Sgt S Shores RE (Sigs Sgt) and Spr Rawlinson departed for Divulje Barracks, Split, via Mostar in Bosnia. As the team arrived in Mostar at lunchtime all was quiet. The lunch was of poor quality and this problem exacerbated the hunger of the team because Spr Rawlinson had forgotten to collect the packed lunches before they left the Brick Factory. Cpl A Beeton and Spr S Faulkner, part of the Geo Sect in HQ MND (SE), were in good spirits and were busy with production work. The journey from Mostar to Split was hot and rather tedious but after 6 hours on the road the team eventually arrived in Divulje Barracks.

30. 26 Jul 96. Work continued on the JOG series of mapping and repmat duplication. While in Split the OC had meetings with the Mine Engineers, the Adv Trg Officer and the AGC (SPS) branch in the UK national support element HQ MND (SE) (Rear). During the afternoon the OC conducted a number of interviews with individuals from Map Supply Tp (Figure 21) in the Dalma Warehouse. (Figure 22) . Later that evening the visiting team and all the Geo personnel in Divulje Barracks retired to the swimming pool in the Palace Hotel.



Figure 21. Map Sp Tp – LtoR Sprs Grand, Harrison, Walker, WO2 Furness (HQ CSF), Cpl Wilson, Spr Ryder, WO2 Winship IC



Figure 22. The Map Depot, Dalma Warehouse, Split, Croatia

The Topo Sects arrived back from the IEBL in MND (SW). The personnel were facing difficulties at the present time with getting agreement from the Former Warring Factions (FWF) rather than the survey work itself. (Figure 23)



Figure 23. Sgt Andy Gray

31. 27 Jul 96. While en-route back to Kiseljak, an RMP detachment stopped Sgt Shores for speeding (Could this be a sign that normality must be returning?!)

In the evening, the Sqn held a Toga party and the “best dressed” individual was WO1 J Starbuck RE. The OC and the Colonial Officers of the Sqn went to HQ ARRC (Main) to dine out Capt Clavel (Fr), the SO3 Geo.

32. 28 Jul 96. Most of the unit stood down apart from those on the critical path for production, who did get to work in civilian clothes (which made a psychological difference!). LCpl A Dews took a small party around the old part of Sarajevo on a sightseeing excursion. Other personnel either played volleyball, wrote “blueys”, read books or simply slept.

33. 29 Jul 96. The pigeons in the rafters have taken to defecating over the table tennis table and in and around the general area of the drying machines. The SSM was tasked to resolve this problem and will attempt to order/purchase an air rifle, but he was also seen carrying a bucket of rat poison. (The need for an air rifle was to be addressed by the OC at a later date!)

Production work continued and the Sqn was tasked with a short notice job which kept Sgt Fitzgerald RE occupied until the early hours of the morning.

A document arrived at SHQ which suggested that the UK might be invited to pay the UN for the CORIMECs (sleeping accommodation) and the kitchen accommodation. The total amounted to 300,000 US Dollars!

34. 30 Jul 96. The sewage difficulties continue and once again the Sqn had a visit from the Engineer Support Services. The pigeons also continue to make a mess and it appears that they have probably moved into the building to avoid the worst of the heat. Temperatures in the sunshine now are well into the 40 degrees Celsius.

The air conditioning system broke down in one of the press containers and temperatures inside soared into the high 40s. Production Tp moved onto shift work in the container where the air conditioning was working whilst the other’s air conditioning system was repaired.

The SSM organised a Sqn photograph and time was spent preparing for the visit the following day.

Production work continues and the Topo Sect carried out some post-processing of some of their observations.

35. 31 Jul 96. A delegation from the Italian Military Geographic Institute visited the Sqn and were impressed with the Intermediate Geographic Support System (IGSS). In fact, they were so impressed that they wanted the manufacturer’s details. Chief Geo and Maj J Day RE came for a meeting to discuss plans for the election mapping and to work through the memorandum of understanding between ourselves and the Croatian Geodetic Institute concerning a project to help work out transformation parameters between WGS 84 and Hermansskugel ellipsoids.

Production work continued with most effort being placed on completing the JOG series mapping. The OC and SSM carried out a recce of a swimming pool at Kresevo and had a coffee with the owner who stated, through our interpreter, that he would be delighted to see UK troops spend money in his swimming pool bar.

36. 1 Aug 96. The “Sapper Video” team visited the Sqn for 5 hours to take some footage for a documentary on Sappers in peace and war. (Afternote: It would appear that the video was never produced). A ‘Repro’ orientated Terrain Analysis team (gifted amateurs!) travelled to carry out some terrain analysis work in the Vitez area. They returned unharmed (!) but with only a limited amount of information, so are due to complete their work next week.

37. 2 Aug 96. Nothing To Report – All Quiet

38. 3 Aug 96. The OC spent most of the day trying to get an interview with the somewhat elusive local Catholic Priest to discuss charity issues. The meeting finally took place at 1600 hrs. On his arrival back in Kiseljak the OC found the GSG was awash with rumours about Polling Station mapping, shift work reprints and cancellations. One of the causes of this was that the “B” team in HQ ARRC (Main) had taken over because the Chief Geo and WO2 C Saunders RE were away.

Festivities that night in the Kiseljak Kavern (Figure 24) included arm wrestling which saw Cpl A Sharman win the over 13 stone heavy weight competition and Cpl S Nicholls our reservist REME fitter won the lightweight. A representative from the 2 Sqn RAF Regt Guard Force won the middle weight.



*Figure 24. The Kiseljak Kavern at The Brick Factory, Kiseljak, Bosnia
(‘Probably The Best Bar in Bosnia’)*

SHQ spent part of the evening planning the production of mapping for the following day.

39. 4 Aug 96. Production Tp went onto 24-hour manning. Bottlenecks appear to be occurring in the Helio/Platemaking stage. One task, known as the “Pizza” map, was increased from a 10,000 run to a 14,000 run halfway through the process, which clearly tested the printers’ sense of humour. The map was called the “Pizza” map because a mixture of information was depicted on the sheet face, and it resembled a pizza. The map clearly had been designed by a committee and, like the camel, was not aesthetically attractive.

40. 5 Aug 96. Production work continued with Sgts on the presses. There was some talk of setting up an all-officers shift but, luckily things were not quite that desperate.

41. 6 Aug 96. The OC departed for Banja Luka with the Topo Sect. The convoy took Route Clog, which was named after the Dutch Bn located at approximately the midway point. Much of the route was along the IEBL through a narrow gorge. There was very little traffic and almost no indigenous population living in the area of the IEBL. Nearly all the houses had been destroyed but the fish in the river seemed to be thriving! The Topo Sect found a box of old small arms ammunition, so they marked the area and reported the find to the EOD.

The Geo Sect in MND (SW) (Banja Luka) had good morale and were in the process of producing Polling Station mapping, independently from HQ ARRC. Col Mantell the CRE seemed to be very pleased with their progress. The Topo Sect prepared to carry out a task at Banja Luka airfield. WO2 (SSM) A Easingwood RE arrived at the Brick Factory to take over from WO2 (SSM) M Mann RE.

42. 7 Aug 96. The OC returned from Banja Luka with Sqn Sigs Sgt, but they came back via the T shirt shop at Vitez.

The "Pizza" map and a number of other election related products were completed and catch delivered to HQ ARRC (Main). Sgt B Paterson AGC ran over a series of colthrop spikes at HQ ARRC (Rear) and burst a tyre on the OC's Landrover (OC not on-board). Sgt Paterson was hence forth banned from driving the OC's Landrover.

The Cpls and below dined out WO2 (SSM) M Mann RE.

43. 8 Aug 96. The OC started annual confidential report (ACR) writing on the SNCOs in earnest. The Sqn waited on decisions, whether or not, HQ ARRC (Main) wanted them to produce the Polling Station map series at 1:100K.

The SSM's continued with their handover programme.

Total number of impressions produced to date is 358,500.

44. 9 Aug 96. WO1 Starbuck organised a Sergeants' Mess type dinner to dine out WO2 (SSM) Mann and the result was excellent (Figure 25). A number of volunteers acted as waiters. The TACISYS was put to good use and produced a tablecloth and table mats in Corps colours. A picture of Her Majesty the Queen was also produced by scanning a £10 note and expanding the image. The menu was the traditional beef wellington, and the stock of wine and port were brought up country from Split. The OC rang the bell in the bar after the dinner.

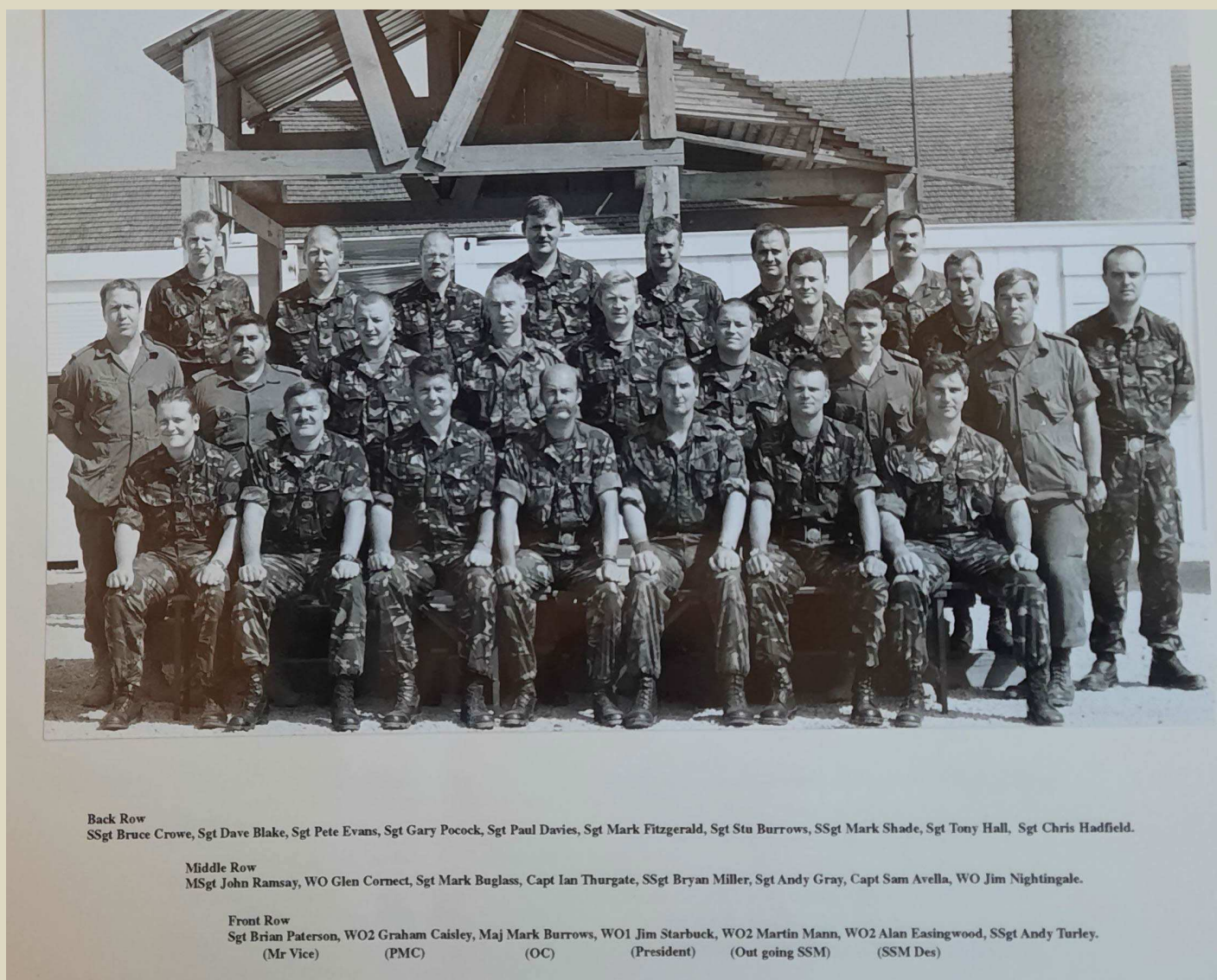


Figure 25. Geographic Support Group Warrant Officers and Sergeants with Guests on the occasion of the Dining Out of WO2 (SSM) MR Mann RE

Sgt Gray and his team deployed to Banja Luka to carry out an inertial navigation and path obstruction survey.

45. 10 Aug 96. WO2 Easingwood formally took post at 0830hrs. He started in earnest by controlling a works party and a number of camp maintenance tasks were carried out.

Production work continued; most of which was related to the HLS Directory and accompanying mapping.

46. 11 Aug 96. Chief Geo held a conference at HQ ARRC (Main) in Sarajevo in attendance was Lt Col Brubaker, Chief Geo AFSOUTH along with representatives from the Divs. The meeting itself was not especially exciting and there were no new initiatives on the Polling Station mapping. Also in attendance were two personnel from the Remote Replicating Centre based in Tzar, Hungary. They offered an open invitation for Geo personnel to visit.

The reminder of the Sqn was still at the Brick Factory but was stood down.

47. 12 Aug 96. Maj Cardon (US) and Maj R Dash RE from LANDCENT visited the Brick Factory and were suitably impressed with our activities and worried that they would find it difficult to replace the capability with any follow-on force.

Routine production work continued on 1:250K JOG helicopter map series. The 2IC and new SSM liaised, and they spent most of the day catching up on current issues.

48. 13 Aug 96. SHQ spent much of the day pursuing a number of administrative issues.

The QM was still heavily occupied in the sewage saga. The Sqn now has a new cesspit which is open at present, but now seems to fill up too frequently. The local farmer is now removing some 10 - 15 tractor loads a day at a cost of 35 DMs per day.

A delegation from the Austrian Contingent visited the Sqn and were suitably impressed. As a token of their appreciation, they presented us with a small badge.

49. 14 Aug 96. A productive day at the GSG with work being carried out on the HLS Directory, ARRC Dispositions maps and the Motorola mapping. The OSCE need the Motorola series mapping for the election process.

Sgt A Gray RE departed for the NATO Terminal Procedures (TERPS) Cell in Kaufbueren in Southern Germany along with the results of his surveys on Banja Luka and Mostar airfields.

50. 15 Aug 96. Sgt Gray was supposed to return from Southern Germany, but he appeared to have missed his flight and therefore had to stay for a further 3 days. He was given the benefit of the doubt on his return and was not charged with desertion!

51. 16 Aug 96. The OC, SSM, Sigs Sgt and Sgt Paterson departed for Tuzla. On their arrival they found that Cpl R Meakins and his team had excellent morale and they had carved out a valuable niche for themselves and were well respected by all those who the OC met. Although the US Forces were "dry" the visitors were able to have an excellent barbecue, with beer, at the Geo Sect's site. American personnel who walked past simply had to watch with envy. The visitors were particularly interested in the US Terrain Analysis Cell because they had recently produced a Polling Station map on Arc View and had plotted it using an AO printer. The quality was good and Sgt D Blake RE was subsequently tasked to produce a similar map within the GSG back at the Brick Factory.

52. 17 Aug 96. The OC and his entourage returned from Tuzla, stopping briefly for a Meal Ready Everywhere (MRE) lunch and to assist a local remove his wheel from his van near Olovo.

The Sqn held a "Cowboy Evening". Production Tp made a "saloon" in the corner of their compound and "bucking bronco" from an old oil drum. The Chefs provided a cowboy style barbecue and almost everybody (OC included) donned western style rig. The QM was concerned over the amount of map boxes and black masking tape that was used to make the costumes, but a good time was had by all (Figures 26, 27, 28, 29).



Figure 26. The Cowboy Night



Figure 27.



Figure 28. The Buckin' Bronco



Figure 29. Cowboys: Sgt Shores, Cpl Goble, SSgt Miller and Spr Gough

53. 18 Aug 96. Maj Eagles from the Canadian Survey Department came to stay for a night.

The Sqn had a day's standdown. Most personnel needed the day off to recover from the Cowboy evening! Cpl R Bowers REME was asked by the 2IC if he was okay because he was sat outside his CORIMEC looking rather forlorn. The 2IC was surprised when Cpl Bowers said "Sir, Last night I was Billy the Kid and now I am back to being Cpl Rod Bowers, which is all so sad!" A few personnel went on a tourist visit to Sarajevo.

54. 19 Aug 96. It was a useful day at the GSG because Production Tp worked on the GECONIFOR mapping which depicted main supply routes in Croatia. Sgt Gray deployed to Banja Luka airfield to carry out a large-scale field survey task for the TERPS cell.

The OC, 2IC and QM visited SO2 Geo HQ ARRC (Main) for a 2-hour update meeting. 1 Sig Bde agreed to adopt us for redeployment purposes (repatriation back to the UK).

55. 20 Aug 96. There was a visit from Lt Col Moore and Capt Dixon from the Defence Mapping Agency. They were both impressed with the GSG set-up and appreciated a cup of tea out of china cups (with saucers) at the end of their visit.

The sewage issue re-emerged, and a decision was taken to connect the Brick Factory to the mains sewage in the road. UK Bud Fin provided DM 6,000 for the task.

56. 21 Aug 96. The OC visited HQ ARRC (Rear) to enquire about the possibility of using Hotel Dalmacija (in Kiseljak) as a venue to train the VRS and Federation surveyors. G4 staff at HQ were generally happy but needed direction from higher up the chain of command. The OC had a haircut at a cost of 4 DM and therefore not to be out manoeuvred the SSM asked Cpl A Sharman (aka Vidal Baboon) to cut his.

Most of the production work centred on the mines maps for MND (SW)

57. 22 Aug 96. The main event of the day was Col Mantell's (CRE) visit. He spent much of his time talking to the JNCOs and in particular to Cpl Nicholls our REME TA Vehicle electrician. Cpl Nicholls had been a prison warder during the Strangeway riots and the CRE seemed to be most interested in the conditions of service of a prison officer. The Sqn had lunch outside the kitchen under a cam net and once again Cpl D Grace ACC produced some excellent Chelsea buns. The CRE eventually left at 1530hrs.

Sgt Gray deployed to the Anvil area for a party compliance meeting to confirm positions of the IEBL markers.

58. 23 Aug 96. The whole of the Sqn was involved in putting together the HLS Directory- over 550 copies were put together and each had 180 pages. The task was completed in 3 hours. It was the Ops Offr's birthday, and some cake appeared, eating it provided a good break from the mundane collation task.

The OC was locked in his CORIMEC to write ACRs while the 2IC continued with the day-to-day Sqn business. That evening a small number of personnel went to the Hotel Dalmacija to listen to a US Forces blues band. The band in fact proved to be of a remarkably high standard.

Production Tp worked on a IFOR ID Card poster, specifically for the election.

59. 24 Aug 96. The OC continued with the ACR process. The SSM had a number of works parties, and they carried out a number of maintenance tasks around camp.

The Topo Sect continued with writing reports for Artillery Bearing Picket Information. Maps Tp, in conjunction with the BELUGA Engr Bn, out loaded a substantial quantity of mapping to the OSCE offices throughout theatre.

In the evening the Sqn tried its new Karaoke machine which was sent out by the RBL Newbury. The 2 Sqn RAF Regiment personnel gave a good account of themselves.

60. 25 Aug 96. The Sqn had standdown day. The SNCOs had their interviews and ACRs. The OC joined in a game of volleyball after lunch.

61. 26 Aug 96. After a farewell handshake and a tear in his eye the OC handed over command of the Sqn to the 2IC so he could leave theatre for some well-earned R&R. He is due to return on 11 Sep 96. Despite his absence, the Sqn has had a busy day in production and the REME section hosted Col Ferguson, the Comd ES MND (SW). He enjoyed his visit and was amazed at the high-tech equipment. Sgt Pocock produced the Wives Club brief for their meeting on Wednesday, hopefully it will tie in nicely with Video No2, which the OC has taken back with him to the UK. Preparations have started for a grand gala evening which will be held on 2 Oct at the GSG, it will be organised by WOI Starbuck and the guest list will be a “who’s who” of personnel serving in theatre.

62. 27 Aug 96. The Comd 5 Canadian Multinational Brigade visited the GSG, primarily to see the Canadian surveyors. He received the normal introductory brief and then spent time with Capt S Avella talking about the IEBL survey and then joined all the Canadians along with the Sqn 2IC, Ops Offr, QM, Maps Tp Comd and the SSM for lunch. He thoroughly enjoyed his visit and particularly remarked about the excellent food well done (again) the Master Chef Sgt Evans and his staff.

In the afternoon the Sqn received an inspection visit from the “QMs of all QMs” Lt Col Powell the QM of ARRC Sp Bn, all went well.

Late afternoon the UK Topo Teams departed for Tuzla with the Americans. In the evening Cpl C Metcalfe arrived en route to Zargreb to replace LCpl Burke as the map storeman. Cpl Metcalfe was heard to remark that he was having a busy life as he had only just finished a six-month tour of the Falklands.

63. 28 Aug 96. It was announced in theatre today that the Municipal Elections have been postponed and obviously this has led to a variety of comments from the different political parties. The National Elections are still scheduled for the 14 Sep 96 and as yet there is no sign of this being affected in any way. Spr T Large returned to the GSG after working at MND (N) for just over a week, he brought with him seven Polling Station maps/town plans which required printing.

The stand-in OC travelled to Sarajevo (Figure 30 and 31) and had a visit to G3 Geo to discuss a variety of topics with the SO2 Geo. On completion of his meeting, he visited Zetra Stadium (Figure 32) and was given a full guided tour by QM ARRC Sp Bn. All of the visitors found it difficult to believe that this wrecked stadium was the scene of Torvill and Dean’s gold success in the winter Olympics in 1984. (Figure 33). The tour included a look at the athletics stadium next door to Zetra and there were literally over 100 workers busy plastering/painting/repairing in preparation of a Grand Prix Athletics meeting in Sep 96 (Life goes on!). Turf has been flown in from Italy and a superb new running track is being laid. In some ways it appears strange that they are spending so much money on a project like this when the country currently has so many other problems. Throughout the day the stand-in OC was accompanied by the SSM, SQMS, and Sgt Davies MT SNCO. The last stage of the trip was to recce the old town of Sarajevo (Figures 34 and 35) to see if it was suitable to allow Sqn personnel to take sightseeing visits.... (After note: Provided the alert state is “Grey” it was deemed to be a good idea).



*Figure 30. The Holiday Inn, Sarajevo
with bomb damage on the right-side*



*Figure 31. The bombed
Press Centre*



*Figure 32. Zetra Stadium, Sarajevo –
Now a military base*



*Figure 33. WO2 (SSM) Easingwood, SSgt (SQMS) Turley
and Sgt Davies (MT Sgt) at Zetra Stadium, Sarajevo*



*Figure 34. WO2 Easingwood, SSgt Turley,
and Sgt Davies in the Market in Sarajevo*



*Figure 35. Capt Collins, WO2 Easingwood
and SSgt Turley in the Market in Sarajevo*

The day ended with the “Kiseljak Handicap”, a running event which allowed the slower Sqn personnel to set off first and then the faster members who were handicapped to a variety of start times, obviously the aim was to overtake the slower man in front. The course was over one circuit of the normal running loop and the fastest time of the day was 17 minutes and 14 seconds from Cpl Goble.

64. 29 Aug 96. The tasks for MND (N) have progressed well and are now complete.

The day's affairs have been extremely routine and quite mundane. Capt C Frew, Royal Australian Survey Corps (RA Svy Corps), the Ops Offr, appeared to be the only one with an extremely important task.... she had produced Topo Sitrep 35.

During the evening the Sqn had its first security incident at the main gate. A man came to the gate and peered through. He was immediately challenged by the Guard, but made no reply, he did however raise his hand. The Guard therefore went to ground and cocked their weapons and this had an immediate effect, as the man ran away. All Sqn personnel have now been reminded to be very vigilant.

65. 30 Aug 96. The stand-in OC, SSM, Sigs Sgt and Spr T Wilson travelled to Mostar to visit the Geo Cell at MND (SE) (Figure 36). Spr Wilson was to remain at Mostar as a replacement for Spr S Faulkner. The conditions at Mostar are fairly spartan because the French prefer to rough it, when on operations, and the food is generally awful. (Any fool can be uncomfortable!!) The French normally have one choice at each mealtime and the food is not that well prepared. They have squat toilets; the language difference poses problems and the climate in Mostar is very hot and sticky. All in all, our personnel are earning their pay! The trip down was eye opening with some spectacular scenery, beautiful passes, rivers and lakes with tunnels and roads carved out of the mountains. (Figures 37 and 38).



Figure 36. Geo Cell MND (SE), Mostar: French Geo, Spr Ryder, Spr S Faulkner, Spr T Wilson, French Geo, French Geo, Cpl M Luff, LCpl J Palmer



Figure 37. Mostar

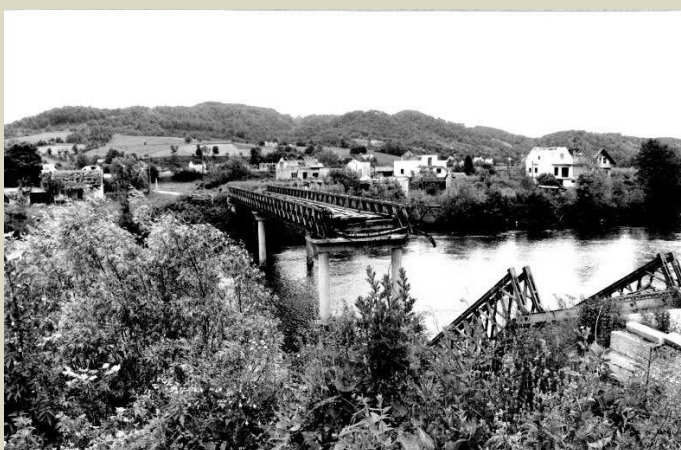


Figure 38. Damaged bridge on the road near Mostar

The Ops Offr travelled to Sarajevo to hold talks with the SO2 Geo at HQ ARRC (Main) regarding GPS training for the locals, the withdrawal consequences and TERA research.

The weather took a severe turn with torrential rain, thunder and lightning, even the hardest of runners remained indoors!

66. 31 Aug 96. The SSM's camp maintenance programme continued with personnel working on improving the gates defences, improving the barbed wire defences, preparation of cam nets and equipment for the Topo Teams and the filling sandbags for future projects. With the elections coming up we want to ensure the Sqn security is at its best because it is believed that there could be a prolonged period of high alert.

Four personnel were dispatched to Tuzla to deliver paper and map stocks at the same time they collected some MREs for the personnel at Mostar (food is on its way!)

Once again, the weather has broken and it's pouring down, fortunately all the outside works parties had finished for the day.

67. 1 Sep 96. Considering this was supposed to be a rest day it has turned out to be fairly busy. ARRC Sp Bn had decided to organise a six aside football competition and the Sqn had entered three teams (Figure 39). The participants were up and away by 0800hrs.

At 0945hrs the Sqn received a visit from the Op BO. P.E.E.P. Team (Bosnian Peace Keepers Encouragement Packs) who came to distribute "goodie bags" which contained soap, flannels, biscuits and magazines. The lads had a laugh afterwards when it was discovered that the majority of magazines were either for women, bird watchers or fishermen, still it was the thought that counted.

The football teams returned at varying times of the day dependent upon their footballing skills. The "A" team actually made it to the semi-finals and, according to the SSM, were extremely unlucky to lose. Spr J Fife was unfortunately injured during the event and is now resident in the Italian Field Hospital in Sarajevo, he may have broken his leg.



*Figure 39. Back Row LtoR: WO1 Jim Starbuck, Sgt Brian Paterson, SSgt Bryan Miller, Sgt Fitz Fitzgerald, Sgt Tony Hall, Sgt Steve Shore
Centre Row LtoR: WO Glen Cornect (Cdn Mil Engrs), Sgt Shaun Harkness, WO2 Graham Caisley, Sgt Paul Davies, Sgt Mark Buglass
Front Row LtoR: Sgt Stu Burrows, Sgt Gary Pocock, Sgt Dave Blake, Sgt Pete Evans*

At 1730hrs we received an unscheduled visit from Col Buglar Comd Log Sp UKSC(G), he was at the football and apparently after being invited to visit the Sqn by the SSM, he had decided to do exactly that. Col Buglar enjoyed his visit and took away the MND (SE) calendar girl poster and a selection of Road Safety posters (he is responsible for road safety in Germany).

We must close the diary today with the fact that the Sqn has had its second security scare during the evening. The Guard reported hearing shots and seeing a man running away. Everything was carefully checked out and the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) reacted promptly and perfectly. The Guard and QRF observed the area for some considerable time and fortunately nothing else was heard or seen.

68. 2 Sep 96. The regular changeover of 2 Sqn RAF Regt personnel took place, and it would appear that we have been fortunate enough to secure their assistance as a Guard Force until 1 Oct 96.

The GPS training preparations took yet another twist when Maj Davis G1 Coord, HQ ARRC turned up to view our facilities as it appears that HQ ARRC (Rear) are not content to hold the training at their location because they too are worried about the security implications! The Sqn are now to face a special security review, by a neutral team, to see if the training (security wise) should take place at the Brick Factory or at HQ ARRC (Rear).

The laundry run returned and it would appear that the stand-in OC's run of bad luck continues because his washing is missing!

69. 3 Sep 96. The Fd Tp Comd, SSM and SQMS visited the local Kiseljak Elementary School to see if the Sqn could offer any assistance. The headmaster, Mr Stanislav, was thrilled with the offer and has asked for a supply of pens, pencils, paper and any other stationary items; the Sqn will endeavour to help.

The stand-in OC, Ops Offr and QM spent several hours discussing drawdown options towards an "irreducible minimum", which would still allow the Sqn to function as a viable entity. The findings

are to be presented at a meeting on 5 Sep 96 to Geo Branch, HQ ARRC (Main), so they can start planning to see if reductions can be made.

Cfn Rose REME arrived today as a replacement vehicle mechanic but will only stay about seven weeks because he has to go back to the UK for his class two course.

70. 4 Sep 96. The stand-in OC, Fd Tp Comd, SSM and SQMS went to visit the local Roman Catholic priest who appears to “run” most activities in Kiseljak. He was dressed in jeans, a casual shirt and quilt jacket, had an unshaven appearance and quite honestly looked more like a bandit than a priest. He offered the party drinks and they all had to sample some of his locally “cured” herb brandy called Loza!!! He requested that he became the centre for all contact and that he could deal with any assistance to schools and the local community. This request was met with some concern and later that concern was proved because items of clothing donated by the Wives and families were actually being sorted and sold rather than being offered out to those in need. Needless to say, after this revelation, our relationship with the priest was classed as ‘careful’. The visiting personnel did say the Sqn’s next task would be to try to raise children’s winter clothing, shoes boots and toys in addition to the school items but did not commit to the priest’s request. The SSM’s wife (Celia Easingwood) and the new OC, Maj RD Thurlow RE (whilst he is in the UK before deployment) will endeavour to have a project raiser so that the Sqn can get a quick response before the cold weather sets in.

The Mobile News Team “Bravo” arrived at the Sqn today to carry out interviews, with those that want to, so they can produce local boy stories for newspapers back in the UK. The team consists of Capt C Kinsville-Heine RE (ex 135 Indep Topo Sqn RE) and Capt J Gallagher RLC. Some excellent interviews were held, and some wonderful photos were taken.

71. 5 Sep 96. The UK Geographic Support Handover policy meeting was held at HQ ARRC (Main) and was chaired by Maj J Roberts RE from the Ops Room at D Mil Svy, Feltham. The majority of the business centred around policy between HQ ARRC and D Mil Svy, the stand-in OC and QM attended, but their input was minimal. The GSG will eventually have to interpret and implement the policy but at the present time there are numerous changes required to the draft document. Whilst at HQ ARRC (Main) the stand-in OC and QM presented their “irreducible minimum” figures and were told to present them upon the return to the Chief Geo, but the document should show three levels; as the Sqn is currently manned; reducing the Sqn to a minimum, but still being located at the Brick Factory; or reducing to the Sqn to a minimum but moving to a supporting admin unit.

The Media Team and WOI Starbuck flew up to Tuzla to visit our Geo Cell.

72. 6 Sep 96. The background work being carried out by the Chief Clerk, Sgt Shade continued. (Figure 40)



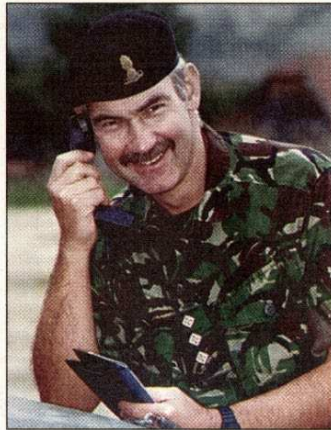
Figure 40. Sgt Mark Shade (AGC) Chief Clerk in his office

The Media Team left the Sqn to return to Split with the promise of a few extra photographs of each individual, they were an excellent pair and hopefully gathered enough information for some good “copy” (Figure 41). Their article appeared in a local newspaper – The Newbury and Thatcham Chronicle on the 6 Dec 1996.

NEWS



David Fullstone, who is surveying everything from minefields to supply routes in Bosnia.



Capt Nick Collins, whose wife Ann is back at home in Thatcham while he helps map out the peace in Bosnia.



Cooking up a treat. David Grace is hard at work in the kitchens of Bosnia.

Their mission: To map out peace in Bosnia

Thatcham-based Royal Engineers' surveying role

A TRIO of Newbury soldiers have become a vital part of the task of bringing peace to Bosnia - their job is telling people where they are.

The three, all members of the Royal Engineers survey group based in Thatcham, have to produce highly accurate maps of the region, ranging from warning people of minefields, to pinpointing the location of polling stations.

Former Park House School pupil, Captain Nicholas Collins, is heading up the team which also includes Lance Corporals David Fullstone and David Grace.

Capt Collins, who joined the army in 1971 and worked his way up through the

By Joe Wise

ranks before being commissioned three years ago, is married and lives in Thatcham. He revealed the huge scale of the task being undertaken by the team. "The unit is appreciated by everyone in Bosnia - to date they have supplied some 6.6 million maps, weighing 75 tonnes."

David Fullstone is a specialist surveyor who is on his second tour in Bosnia. Last year he had to pinpoint Serb trenches and gun positions so that British troops would avoid hitting hospitals if they returned fire.

This time he is using satellite technology to keep the peace.

He said: "We are training Serbs, Muslims and Croats to use the Global Positioning System so they can keep accurate records of their own borders."

Chef David Grace, whose wife Silke is back at home in Thatcham with their children Leslie Ann and Justin, is the third of the local team. His parents, Ronald and Geraldine, still live in the town.

It is also his second tour of Bosnia, and he has to help make sure the members of the peacekeeping force have lip-smacking meals to look forward to.

He said: "We have theme nights which we do once a month - fish and chips, Italian, Greek - which go down well with the lads."



A Litho printing press operated by soldiers of 13 (UK) Topographical Squadron, Royal Engineers, in Kiseljak, central Bosnia.

Figure 41. Newspaper article from the Newbury and Thatcham Chronicle

The weather has turned particularly nasty and cold which meant everyone has had to turn to their heaters and put on another couple of layers of clothing is this winter in Sep 96!!!

42 Survey Engineer Group (42 Svy Engr Gp) at Hermitage have requested vehicle information from the QM because there may be a change to the container improvement programme which is currently being undertaken by Marshalls of Cambridge (the conversion of IGSS to GSS). It is now being proposed that the 13 Sqn containers, which are nearing conversion at Cambridge, are sent to 14 Sqn in Germany and the 14 Sqn containers currently being used by 13 Sqn in Bosnia become 13 Sqn's permanently and they will get converted by Marshalls early next year, whilst the Sqn is on R & R. This option seems far more sensible and will allow both Sqns to be ineffective for a minimal time period.

73. 7 Sep 96. It was an extremely quiet day however the weather continues to be cold and extremely wet.

In the evening we had a "Nam" night where all personnel made a great effort to dress up in fancy dress suited to the Vietnam War. During the course of the evening Mr Paul Sleep, HIO Photo at the School of Military Survey arrived, he is here for a week to gain operational production experiences so he can relate his teaching practices to an operational environment. Unfortunately, Mr Sleep had a delayed arrival at the Sqn because stand-in OC had forgotten to send transport to Sarajevo airport. Mr Sleep used his initiative and hitched a lift from Sarajevo and turned up at the front gate of the Brick Factory. (Sorry Paul!).

74. 8 Sep 96. In the early hours of the morning the stand-in OC was awoken by the Ops Offr and informed that all units within a 20 kms radius of Sarajevo were on red alert due to the shooting of a Ukrainian soldier who was guarding the OSCE building in Sarajevo. The Sqn remained at "RED" until 1030hrs. It was later announced that it was not an attack against IFOR, and the warring factions were not involved. Investigations were continuing but it later transpired that the injury occurred through a negligent discharge (ND) from another Ukrainian soldier's weapon. Sadly, the injured soldier subsequently died.

Disciplinary action was taken for a negligent discharge at the Brick Factory.

Sunday continued with its normal ease whilst the Sqn personnel carried out their washing, ironing and CORIMEC cleaning (It's a good job the wives can't see us!!!).

75. 9 Sep 96. Group 5 departed for R&R and this meant that the OC was having his last day in 'Blighty' before returning to the Sqn. Col Anderson, Chief Engr Ops LANDCENT/IFOR turned up on a surprise visit to view the real estate, with a mind to keeping it for the follow-on force, The stand-in OC and QM gave him a full guided tour of the real estate and the Sqn. He thoroughly enjoyed his tour and did comment that he would try to bring in LANDCENT as soon as it was possible (we all hoped this will be before Christmas?). The stand-in OC, Capt S Avella and Fd Tp Comd (both Canadian Military Engineers attached to the Sqn) attended a meeting at ARRC (Rear) to discuss what was required for the GPS training. Contrary to the belief of many within the Sqn, we won the fight to hold the training at ARRC (Rear). Cpl P Brown took a team of TERA Techs up to the north of Prijedor on the border of Croatia and Bosnia, they had to recce several bridge sites and gather information and photographs.

76. 10 Sep 96. It has been a busy day with Production Tp having printed 5,000 more copies of the Polling Station Crossing Points map, due to its popularity. This task started as a 1,500 run and the Sqn has now produced in excess of 18,000 copies. Maj Hicklin, G1 HQ 1 Sig Bde visited the Sqn to discuss with the stand-in OC and QM the dates for the planning of the withdrawal and the use of the camp as a staging stop for all the vehicles during the redeployment phase. He gave the

Sqn a planning window of 28 Nov - 3 Dec 96 and this was relayed to Col A P Walker, Comd 42 Svy Engr Gp at Hermitage. It was, of course, stressed that this was a planning date and could change due to the election results and a hundred other things. The Comd 42 Svy Engr Gp decided to announce this at the Wives' meeting and the stand-in OC made a simultaneous announcement to all the members of the Sqn at the Brick Factory. Needless to say, the morale, despite already being high, took a massive leap and everyone is now hoping and praying that these dates will become a reality.

Thanks to the great news and at extremely short notice, the Kiseljak Kavern threw a sing-along party where we were entertained by Mr P Sleep. It should be pointed out that Paul is an accomplished singer and guitar player, and everyone had a superb evening (Figure 42 and 43). However, after his concert, and with the assistance of the Bulgarian Police, Paul was arrested the following day and forcibly evicted from the GSG! (Figure 44)

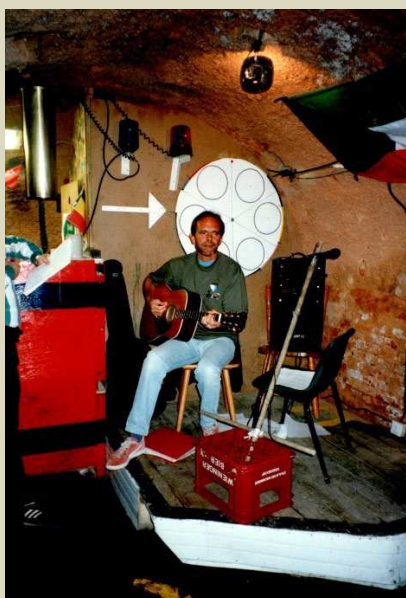


Figure 42. One Night with Paul



Figure 43. Inside the Kavern – Front table LtoR: Spr Trevor Large, Cpl Kev Schofield, Spr Rawlinson, LCpl Campbell. Rear table LtoR: Sgt Pete Evans, LCpl Jason Gill, Pte Oz Hickling, Sgt Tony Hall, Sgt Steve Shores, Sgt Paul Davies



Figure 44. The Arrest



Figures 45 and 46. The Kiseljak Kavern sweat shirt

The GSG sweat shirts (Figures 45 and 46) had arrived in the post and the design has turned out a great deal better than many of the older members of the GSG thought it would!

The Sqn has been informed that the OC is back in theatre and will overnight in Split, so it would appear that this may well be the last entry in the Sqn diary with Capt Collins as the stand-in OC.

77. 11 Sep 96. The OC returned to 13 Sqn at the Brick Factory, laden with mail and parcels on an earlier than scheduled flight (German CI30) into Sarajevo. The handover/take-over between the OC and stand-in OC took place that evening.

The weather was distinctly cooler and wetter, but everyone had excellent morale.

There was less technical work outstanding but sufficient to keep most people occupied. The Topo Teams were working in MND (SW) AOR and hoped to complete the work before the weekend.

78. 12 Sep 96. News arrived from the UK that the request for pay of higher rank (POHR) for a number of personnel has been approved. WO1 M James RE arrived from the School of Military Survey to prepare for a 12-day GPS training course. The course is aimed at teaching local surveyors how to use GPS and will be attended by 8 x Bosnian Serbs, 4 x Bosnian Muslims and 4 x Bosnian Coats. The course is due to start on 23 Sep 96.

In the evening 8 x US Topo personnel (5 x male and 3 x female) arrived at the Sqn and they plan to spend 5 days in our location. The US team had recently formed up and was a little lacking in experience so hoped to spend time working with the British and Canadian personnel at the GSG.

79. 13 Sep 96. The OC went to HQ ARRC (Main) to discuss general matters with Chief Geo. Much of the discussion centred on a possible withdrawal date of around 28 Nov 96. The “fly in the ointment” would be the Municipal Elections and currently the date they take place is unknown, possibilities include mid-Nov 96, mid-Dec 96 or even late Spring 97. The Chief Geo went on to say that he would aim to stop tasking the GSG with medium format work after 17 Nov 96, but this initiative would, however, need to be cleared through the HQ ARRC (Main).

During the afternoon the OC, Capt Avella and WO1 James made a liaison visit to HQ ARRC (Rear) to talk about accommodation requirements for the Bosnian GPS course. The staff seemed to be most helpful although the matter of interpreters had yet to be resolved,

80. 14 Sep 96. Election Day! There were queues of people waiting to vote at the post office in Kiseljak. All non-essential traffic was kept off the roads to minimise traffic jams and give everyone the best possible opportunity to vote.

The SSM had his normal Saturday morning parade, and the emphasis was on roof repairs. Cpl Groves and LCpl A Dews took a lead role in this task and used the SSM's climbing equipment to scale the roof.

The SSM coordinated a Sqn photograph. (Figure 47)

In the evening the Sqn enjoyed a successful Bingo session in the Kiseljak Kavern. Sprs T Large and P Gough won the Jackpot prize of 142 DM.



Figure 47. 13 Topographic Squadron – Commanded by Maj Mark Burrows RE - 27 Jun – 15 Oct 1996

81. 15 Sep 96. It was a quiet Sunday, and most personnel took a well-earned rest by staying in bed until about 1000hrs! In the afternoon the sun shone, and a number of personnel played volleyball and the OC completed 13 laps of the Brick Factory (3+miles). (Figure 48). Owing to the elections, movement outside camp was severely restricted; running and walking out were temporarily forbidden.



Figure 48. The OC exhausted after his thirteen-lap run

82. 16 Sep 96. The pressure on production work seemed to be easing with the elections out of the way. The Sqn was however, tasked with a number of Road Safety posters and Cold Injury aid memoires. The Topo Sect deployed with the US Topo Team to MND (N) AOR. Sgt Gray remained at the Sqn to catch up on the paperwork. Whilst work in the Ops room never stopped (Figure 49).



Figure 49. WO1 Jim Starbuck and WO2 (SSM) Al Easingwood hard at work in the Ops Room

The OC visited Chief Geo at HQ ARRC (Main) for an update/briefing.

That evening the OC held a lengthy “O” Group and the outline plans for the final withdrawal were discussed. One of the key factors was the date for the Municipal Elections. These elections should have taken place on the 14 Sep 96, with the National and Regional elections, but it was too difficult, because of security, for the OSCE to organise them in the time that they had available.

83. 17 Sep 96. The hot topic today was whether or not the 2IC would/could take his R&R. Finally, Fd Tp Comd agreed that he could temporarily cover the posts of 2IC, Ops Offr and Fd Tp Comd for a short period of time. The OC and QM also agreed that they would take on some of the routine tasks normally handled by the 2IC.

That evening the OC visited the HQ of the French Brigade in Railovac Barracks, primarily to meet an old acquaintance, but also to enquire about the possibility of them providing a temporary Guard Force for the GSG at the Brick Factory. The evening meal was typically French and somewhat lacking in nourishment, but the ‘issue’ wine was apparently pretty good.

84. 18 Sep 96. Chief Geo visited the Brick Factory to continue discussions on how Geographic support might be provided after Transfer of Authority (TOA). At present, HQ LANDCENT does not have a Geographic Concept of Ops so planning is a little vacuous, all that the Chief Geo was able to offer, at this stage, was a series of options. That afternoon there was a Sqn catch release meeting and unfortunately the “Damaged Bridges map” failed. It was felt that the base map was too light and the overprint which depicted the IEBL was out of date.

Maj Thorack, an Australian Officer on exchange with 7 Sig Regt, visited the Brick Factory and promoted Sig Bysouth to LCpl. LCpl Bysouth may now find it more difficult to transfer to RE Svy as he had previously planned.

The OC, SSM and WO1 James passed their BFT.

85. 19 Sep 96. Fd Sp Comd visited HQ ARRC (Main) to fix some of their GIS equipment. The 2IC, SSM and Production Tp Comd spent the morning waiting for a helicopter to Tuzla. Bad weather prevented the flight from taking off and they returned later that afternoon. Redeployment planning continued.

The US Topo Team redeployed to carry out some further IEBL Surveys because some of their previous results were unsatisfactory. Production work continued with emphasis being placed on completing the "Damaged Bridges" map.

86. 20 Sep 96. This was the third consecutive day of rain at the Brick Factory. The OC visited the Public Information (P info) Office in the Holiday Inn in Sarajevo. The aim was to brief the P info Staff (Capt's Dawson and Peterson who were both TA) about the GSG. After the briefing they indicated that they would send a video team and a journalist to do a feature on the GSG. On his return to the Brick Factory the OC called in at HQ ARRC (Rear) and found that Cpl Barrett had moved into the map store successfully and picked up some fax paper - the QM had run out! The 2IC worked hard on the Comd's visit programme.

Production Tp completed the G5 work for the local school - a colouring book with numbers and some lined paper.

87. 21 Sep 96. It rained again all day at the Brick Factory. The SSM's work party connected a new toilet and shower unit CORIMEC, while the rest of the Sqn seemed to be preparing their costumes for the fancy dress "Medieval Evening". Two old printing plates seemed to make a suit of armour and many personnel attended in some sort of medieval military attire. Some came as jailers; black death; Robin Hood; castles; peasants and Spr M Arlow came as Maid Marion. Spookily, to some he/she seemed to be attractive with his/her makeup....at least from a distance! The 2IC's armour was not a success but he achieved 7 out of 10 for effort. LCpl Elliot and two of his friends attended the evening from Banja Luka (Figures 50 and 51)



Figure 50.



Figure 51.

88. 22 Sep 96. Sunday, a day of rest and most seemed to spend the morning in bed. The afternoon was spent on personal administration, reading and more sleeping. Many personnel seemed to be tired, and some had seasonal coughs and colds, so the rest was most welcome. Some keen individuals (including the OC) went for a short run.

The chefs prepared their normal Sunday night roast and the day ended drinking Beck's beer by the fire in the Kiseljak Kavern.

89. 23 Sep 96. The main event of the day was a visit from the local priest, 'Uncle Ivan', and he joined the Sqn for lunch. He kindly brought with him a bottle of yellow liquid called "Loza" which was fairly strong herbal mixture which he said he made himself. He was genuinely impressed with the GSG, and we arranged another meeting for the following Thursday along with Mr Stanislav the local Headmaster at Kiseljak Elementary School

WOI M James RE and his Topo Team started to teach the FWF surveyors at HQ ARRC (Rear). (Figure 52)



Figure 52. The IEBL Survey Training Team with Bosnian Serb, Muslim and Croat surveyors.

90. 24 Sep 96. The Topo training continued, and the OC had lunch with the students at HQ ARRC (Rear). Most of the students seemed keen to learn, although they had a limited understanding of computers and found the Windows System quite baffling. The students had a limited command of the English language but one of the interpreters was particularly good, which was certainly a big bonus.

In the evening we had a short notice visit from Col St John the senior Canadian Officer in theatre and Deputy Chief Engr. He was accompanied by Lt Col (Retd) Focsianau from the Mine Action Centre and both of them enjoyed their visit.

The Canadian Topo Team deployed to survey the Gorazde Road.

Capt C Cowan RE and WOI M Aspray RE arrived from Sipovo. It had taken them 9 hours to complete a 3-hour journey apparently through navigation blunders!

91. 25 Sep 96. Brig Moore-Bick came at 0800hrs for an 0830hrs parade to present Sgt G Pocock RE his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal (LS&GC). Afterwards the Sqn had a "Fatboys" breakfast with a "strong drink". The rest of the day was spent on personal administration.

The production work ticked over with emphasis on the Slav Brod image map and G5 related products. It rained for most of the day, and everything seemed to get damp and cold. This, however, paled into insignificance when we heard that the Ops Room in HQ MND (SW) was flooded and that a number of camps throughout the AOR were under approximately a metre of water. Capt C Cowan RE and WO1 M Aspray RE departed the Brick Factory.

The OC, Sgt S Burrows RE and LCpl A Steel had a haircut.

92. 26 Sep 96. The OC, SSM, Fd Tp Comd and LCpl Dews went to see the priest to arrange a date with the Kiseljak Elementary School's headmaster to deliver books and paper. The visitors had some more of the 'Loza'. The priest then asked if it was possible to reprint his hymn sheets and it was provisionally agreed. After another round of 'Loza', the SSM 'luckily' reminded us that we needed to run a BFT, so the visitors left the priest before a third round occurred.

The OC went on to HQ ARRC (Rear) to try and "scrounge" a Guard Force for the Brick Factory. Unfortunately, there were no volunteers although one of the SO2s from 1 Sig Bde said that he would look at possibilities.

93. 27 Sep 96. 2Lt Davis and Master Sgt Bass USAF from the Combat Camera Team visited the Sqn to discuss producing a series of videos on behalf of Military Survey. They both seemed to be keen and receptive to the request.

In the evening the OC, 2IC, QM and OC Maps Tp went for a meeting at HQ ARRC (Main) with the Chief Geo to discuss follow on forces and withdrawals. The 2IC attended the HQ ARRC (Main) conference and then the OC, 2IC, Capt's Tournet and Guittard (The French S03 Geo officers) enjoyed supper together.

The OC submitted 4 x citations for high quality service above and beyond their normal call of duty! We wait to see if any will get through the screening process.

The Sqn was informed that on this day at the Regiment in Hermitage there had been a visit from the Prime Minister, John Major and his wife Norma. Several of the wives and families were invited in to meet the Prime Minister and he was given a memento of the day in the form of an image map. (Figures 53 and 54)



Figure 53. LtoR: Mrs Lynne Walker, Mrs Felicity Burrows, Mrs Ann Collins, Prime Minister John Major



Figure 54. LtoR: Mrs Ann Collins, Prime Minister John Major, Col Peter Walker

94. 28 Sep 96. It was a cold and wet morning at the Brick Factory. The Chief Geo came at 1200hrs to make a presentation to Capt S Avella the OC Canadians and the Project Officer for the IEBL. Drinks were served in the Kiseljak Kavern after the presentation and the event was covered by the Combat Camera Team.

That evening the 2IC and OC plugged away at a number of admin matters into the small hours of the morning. The 2IC was essentially trying to clear his desk prior to going on R&R.

95. 29 Sep 96. It was another Sunday in the Brick Factory but there was confusion over the correct time. HQ 1 Sig Bde said that we should lose an hour but the local Croat community said that they were not changing their clocks.

During the morning the OC chaired a Regimental Inquiry into the negligent discharge.

The Sqn was visited by the Pay and Documents Inspection Team (PDIT). The results of the inspection proved to be first class and the team left just before lunch.

Just after the departure of the PDIT, Capt Guittard and his successor for HQ LANDCENT arrived. Maps Tp Comd briefed them and then they all enjoyed a Sunday sandwich lunch.

The Guard Force from 2 Sqn RAF Regt sadly left today after providing the Sqn with superb security over many weeks. This onerous task will now fall directly to the Sqn, and it is one we are not looking forward to (Figure 55).



*Figure 55. Presentation of a 13 Sqn plaque to 2 Sqn RAF Regt.
LtoR: SSM 13 Sqn, 2IC 13 Sqn, OC 2 Sqn and SNCO IC Kiseljak Detachment*

96. 30 Sep 96. The 2IC departed on his R&R and when he left the sun emerged for the first time in 2 weeks (coincidence!). Before he left, he was tasked by the OC to collect and bring back to the Brick Factory, an air rifle from the armoury at Hermitage. The 2IC was assured that the paperwork and clearance would be arranged, and that RAF Brize Norton would be informed, so the rifle could be carried on the aircraft.

The Sqn bade farewell to the Canadian Topo Team whilst the Topo Teaching Team continued training the students at HQ ARRC (Rear).

The QM (Maj I Thurgate RE) put on his major's rank slides for the first time and promised to ring the bar bell (a 132mm shell case) in the evening (Figure 56)



Figure 56. The Quartermaster – Maj Ian Thurgate RE – Hard at work

In the afternoon a number of personnel passed their BFT with Sgt Pocock managing 8 mins 32 Secs. Sgt Shores will attempt to pass his BFT next week.

97. 1 Oct 96. A busy day started with the arrival of the Comd 42 Svy Engr Gp, Hermitage, Col A P Walker at 1030hrs.

At 1045hrs, Master Sgt Bass arrived from the Combat Camera Team to start producing a video of the GSG. Soldier Magazine turned up at 1100hrs to interview personnel from the Sqn so they could produce a feature article. During the afternoon, the OC and the Comd visited WOI James at the Hotel Dalmacija in Kiseljak to see the GPS training. At 1600hrs Sgt Gray gave a presentation to the Comd about the Topo Surveys in Bosnia and from 1800hrs onwards the Comd interviewed the SNCOs with their ACRs. At 2100hrs all personnel, less the Guard Force, retired to the bar where they sat down by the fire and had a beer or two.

98. 2 Oct 96. Capt Avella and WO G Cornect Cdn Mil Engrs departed the Brick Factory leaving a void in the Topo Section. The GPS training continued at HQ ARRC (Rear); Master Sgt Bass continued his video work and the Comd spent most of the day speaking to individuals at their place of work and generally absorbing the general atmosphere of the Brick Factory.

In the evening, the Sqn had a reception for those personnel who had helped the unit while it had been in theatre. HQ 1 Sig Bde staff were present, including Brig Shaws, and the Geo staff from HQ ARRC (Main).

99. 3 Oct 96. It rained all day at the Brick Factory, but the highlight was delivering the exercise books to the local Elementary School. LCpl A Dews and Spr D Earle assisted in delivering

the books to the classes and Master Sgt Bass videoed proceedings. The headmaster, Mr Stanislav then provided brandy refreshments and he talked about the situation in Bosnia. Alma, the interpreter found the going difficult and seemed to get confused and tired. Mr Stanislav then asked if the Sqn could produce another task of reproducing some A4 textbooks. (Figure 57)



Figure 57. The children from Kiseljak Elementary School receive their stationery

The Comd 42 Svy Engr Gp departed for Tuzla in the morning and that evening the Chief Geo presented attendance certificates to the students on the GPS course.

100. 4 Oct 96. It was a relatively peaceful day at the Brick Factory apart from the fact that Master Sgt Bass wanted to complete his work on the video. He spent most of the day trying to catch up with his programme and then returned to the 'Residency' in Sarajevo.

On the production front most of the effort was centred on producing an Op overlay on the Gorazde Road map. The PLGR survey had shown that a part of the road had been constructed in the Zone of Separation. When this was discovered, HQ ARRC Engrs were at odds as to what to do. Map production of the product was put on hold.

101. 5 Oct 96. The SSM had his normal works party parade. During the afternoon the Sqn had a presentation about mines from Terry Osborne the ex SSM 25 Fd Sqn RE.

In the evening there was a quiz night in the bar and the theme was films, television and drama. The business was conducted by Cpl P Brown and Cpl R Oliver and first prize went to Sgt Pocock and the QM's team (which included the OC!).

The weather was still autumnal.

102. 6 Oct 96. Capt Cairns standing-in as Ops Offr was on duty whilst the OC was actively involved in producing Officer and Soldier Insert Slips with the Chief Clerk. The STCWO was heavily involved with checking the details of the "ARRC Engineers' News Book". The rest of the Sqn had a

day to “make and mend”. Sgt Evans and his team of chefs provided us with the usual Sunday roast for us all in the evening (Figure 58)



Figure 58. – Sgt Pete Evans, Cpl Anita Cowley and LCpl Dave Grace feed the Sqn

103. 7 Oct 96. The OC completed the SNCO's Insert Slips so that the Chief Clerk could take them back with him on his R&R. Production Tp continued with a number of G5 related tasks, including a School Mines Book in both Cyrillic and Roman Serbo Croat. The Topo Sect was essentially put on guard as both Production and Maps Tp were particularly busy.

The Comd 42 Gp returned in the evening from Tuzla.

104. 8 Oct 96. The Comd 42 Gp and OC called in at HQ ARRC (Main) G3 Geo at Ilidza and spoke with Maj Day, Capt Guittard and WO2 C Saunders RE. The main topic of conversation was the plan for a follow-on force, which was accepted. A decision was made to withdraw the TACIPRINT cells from MND (SE) and MND (SW), noting that as yet the formations have to be informed and there may be objections. The Comd reiterated that Geo Branch would need to be robust and the GSG would have to take on responsibility for the Mines maps.

That afternoon the OC visited Raijlovic Barracks (HQ FR Bde) and the Comd 42 Gp completed his recce report.

In the evening a group of officers and seniors visited the local pizza restaurant where the specialty seemed to be raw garlic and draught beer.

105. 9 Oct 96. The Comd 42 Gp departed the GSG for Split in the morning and met WO2 N Furness RE, with a view to meeting GeCon IFOR the following day. The numbers in the GSG were particularly low due to the R&R plot so production continued at a relatively slow pace. Most of the effort was directed towards producing Croatian Mine maps and some of the G5 miscellaneous products. The OC continued with Insert Slips and then went for a run with Sgt Gray.

106. 10 Oct 96. It was a cloudy day with mist at the Brick Factory. SSgt Miller and other Sqn personnel arrived back from R&R.

The SSM went to recce an alternative running route but was less than successful.

SSgt Crowe and Cpl Oliver went to Split to strip out all the IT equipment from the office in HQ CZF which was used by WO2 Furness.

The Sqn had the normal weekly Tech 'O' Gp and later that evening, the Cpls and below decided to host the OC in the bar for a farewell session of Guinness - Cpl A Sharman seemed to take a lead.

107. 11 Oct 96. The OC had a bad head (!) and the weather at the Brick Factory was particularly grey.

The SSM and Sgt Shores were involved in a number of minor projects all related to the Dinner Night scheduled for the 12 Oct 96 where the OC would be dined out of the Sqn. For example, wine glasses needed to be collected from HQ ARRC (Main) and sundry presentation objects needed to be framed.

In the evening the new OC, Major R D Thurlow RE arrived at the GSG. After he had flown in from the UK, he arrived in Kiseljak at approximately 2130hrs. From the minute he arrived at the GSG the OC's Handover Programme began.

108. 12 Oct 96. The SSM had his normal works party and carried out the usual camp maintenance tasks.

The OC and OC Designated (des) visited HQ ARRC (Rear) and both came to the conclusion that the place was beginning to shut down.

In the evening the Sqn dined out the OC, Maj Burrows in style: REME had made some candelabras; TACISYS produced more tablecloths and table mats; and 'proper' cutlery and crockery had been loaned from HQ ARRC (Main). Guests at the dining out included Lt Col Croayne from Rijlovic Barracks (An ex-member of the Rapid Reaction Operations Staff), Maj C Cowan RE from Banja Luka, SSgt D Winship RE from Split and the 2IC 2 Sqn RAF Regt. The QM acted as Master of Ceremonies and a very good time was had by all. (Figures 59, 60, 61)

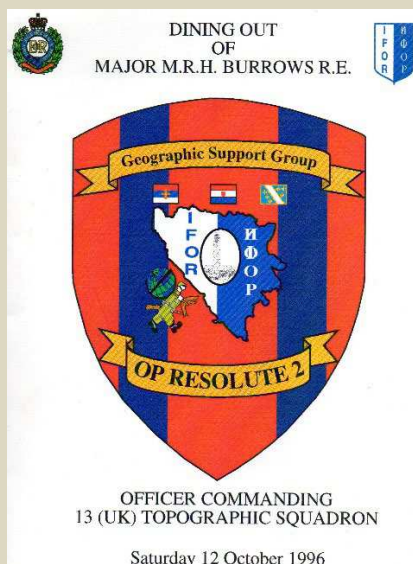


Figure 59. The Dining Out Menu

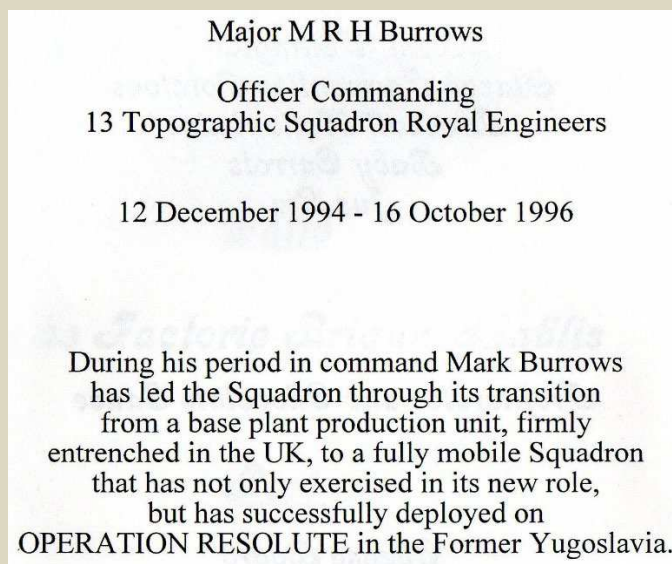


Figure 60. Dining Out Citation

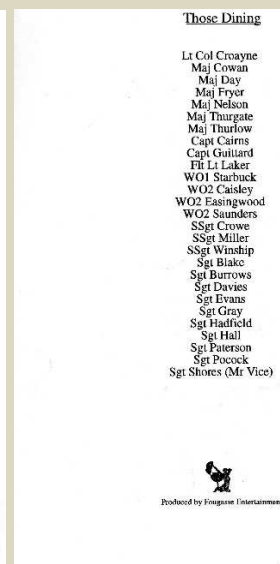


Figure 61. The Diners

109. 13 Oct 96. Sunday – fortunately a day of rest and recovery. In the morning, the OC and OC (des) discussed personnel at the GSG and their Insert Slips. In the afternoon they visited Capt Dawson and Capt Peterson in the Coalition Public Information Centre - based in the Holiday Inn in Sarajevo. After brief introductions Capt Dawson took them to Pale for a cup of coffee (Pale town became the nominal administrative headquarters of the Bosnian Serb Government). Both OCs returned to the GSG very tired and still recovering from the night before.

The 2IC arrived back after his R&R and was in a very unhappy mood. As requested by the OC he had collected the air rifle from the armoury at Hermitage and carried it to RAF Brize Norton. The weapon was packed in hessian and upon his arrival at the Mounting Centre he declared his baggage and the weapon. He was told to take a seat and shortly afterwards he was arrested by two RAF Military Policemen for illegally carrying a weapon. After a long session of questions and getting the driver back from Hermitage, the weapon was returned to the armoury and the 2IC was allowed to board his flight. Apparently, everyone wasn't sure whether it was the engines moaning or the 2IC as the plane took off! Oh! to be a fly on the wall of the OCs/2ICs CORIMEC wall and to be able to listen to the conversation about the air rifle!!

110. 14 Oct 96. The OC and OC (des) visited HQ ARRC (Main) in the morning and spent the lunch hour eating some substandard food. In the afternoon they visited the priest at the Catholic Church in Kiseljak and he presented the outgoing OC with a bottle of "Loza" and some of the herbal roots to make more "Loza". Alma interpreted the discussions and the priest, Father Ivan, promised to take the OC (des) around a distillery sometime in the future.

Disciplinary action was taken for a breach of military discipline at the Brick Factory.

111. 15 Oct 96. The main event today was the formal OC's handover parade between Maj Burrows and Maj Thurlow. It was more a ceremony for Media Ops purposes and Sgt Pocock operated the video. Spr J Dykes, the youngest soldier in the unit, presented the outgoing OC with his NATO medal and managed to stick the spike/pin into the old OC's chest. The retiring OC spent the rest of the day cleaning the OCs office and packing.

112. 16 Oct 96. Maj Gen Cabigiosu Dep Comd ARRC visited the Sqn and was appreciative for all that the Sqn had done over the past few months. Cpl Cowley provided the usual buns and coffee and then the General was given a major tour around Production Tp, he took a particular interest in both the equipment and the men.

In the afternoon, Maj Burrows visited ARRC (Main) for the last time and said farewell to the Chief Geo and his staff. He then travelled to the Residency and collected some video tapes from the Combat Camera Team. At 1700hrs the OC relinquished command, and the new OC, Maj RD Thurlow RE, took command of 13 Topographic Squadron Royal Engineers.

113. 17 Oct 96. It was hoped that today would see, hopefully, the penultimate Geo Conference and again it was held at HQ ARRC (Main), Sarajevo and chaired by the Chief Geo. As the meeting was fairly lengthy, it allowed the new OC to meet the relevant personalities and to gain an understanding of the recent "Geo" events in Theatre.

The retiring OC departed the Brick Factory, no doubt with a tear in his eye (Figure 62, 63, 64 and 65). He visited for the last time MND (SE) and the Corps Reserve Map Depot (CRMD) in Split. When he left the Brick Factory, he was waved off by all the Sqn personnel, who undoubtedly will miss his individual style of leadership.

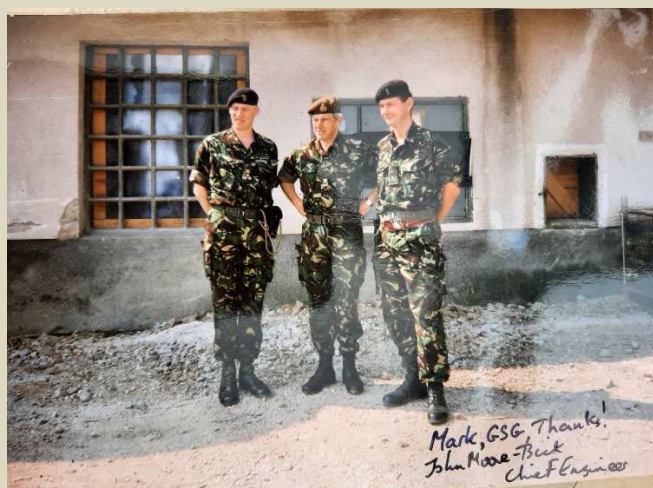


Figure 62. Thanks, from Brig Moore-Bick for the GSG and the OC



Figure 63. Maj Mark Burrows says a fond farewell to the GSG.

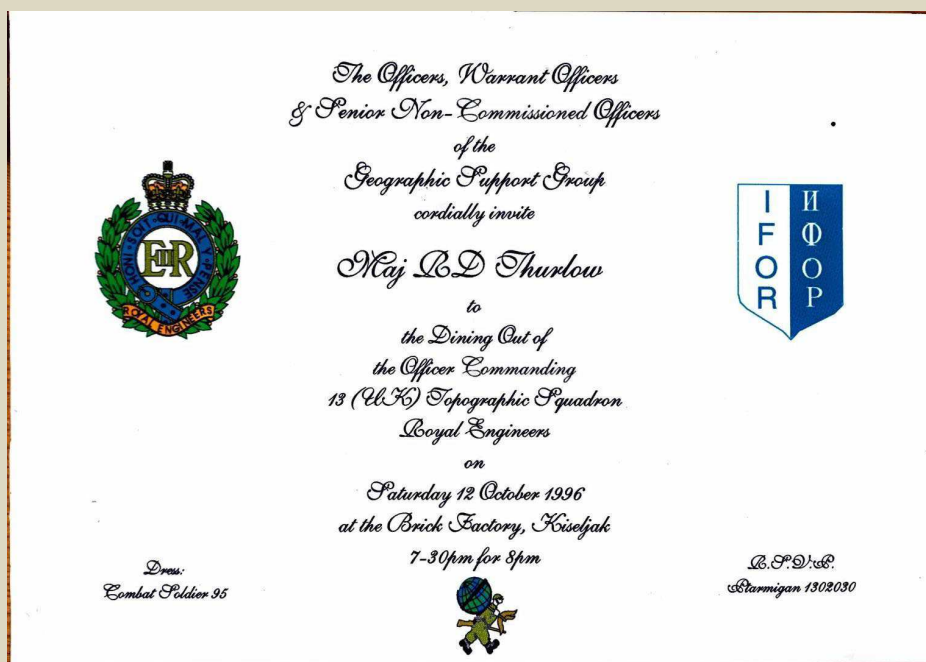


Figure 64. Personal invitation to Maj Thurlow to attend the Dining Out of Maj Burrows.



Figure 65. The handover of OC's which was recorded in the Times newspaper.

114. 18 Oct 96. This morning saw the first OC's 'O' Group under Maj Thurlow (Figure 66) The main topic for discussion was the return of the Sqn to the UK. Although no date has been set for TOA from ARRC to LANDCENT, the planning had to be started and all possible problems discussed.



Figure 66. The new OC – Maj Ross Thurlow – Hard at work at the Brick Factory

115. 19 Oct 96. A meeting was held at the Brick Factory this morning to define the priorities for training and the plans for the Sqn next year, after any embarkation leave. Dates for exercises and the types of exercises were planned.

The afternoon saw first aid training being carried out by LCpl Steele and Spr Scott and it was enjoyed by all personnel in attendance.

Being Saturday there was a bingo night in the bar which was FIXED! Cpl M Luff won just about everything however he did ring the bell and spread some of his winnings.

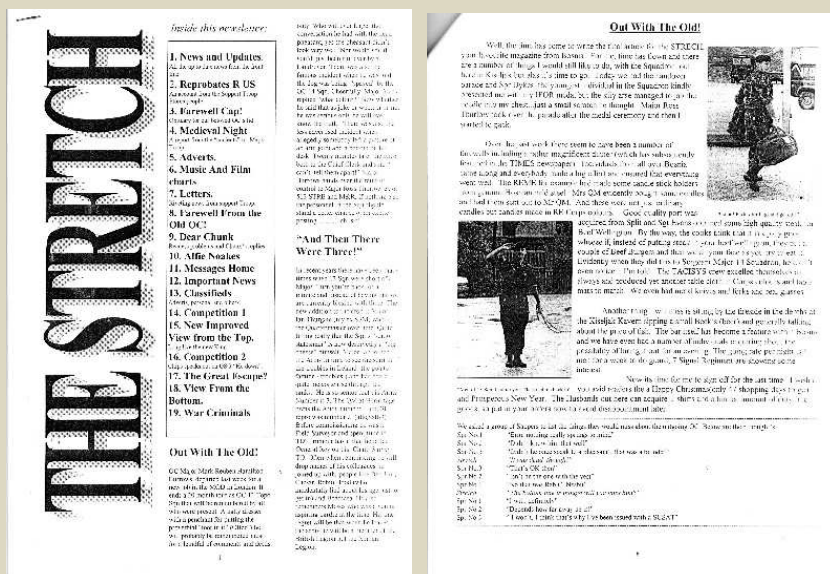
116. 20 Oct 96. Day Off.

117. 21 Oct 96. The SSM and Maps Tp Comd departed the GSG on R&R. Before they left the management team of the Sqn held a meeting about the use of the PRI money. It was decided that it would initially be used to provide all personnel with a memento of the tour (e.g., a T-shirt, engraved mug, or something suitably similar). Secondly it would pay for a function when the Sqn returned to Hermitage which would include the wives/girlfriends of all personnel, this would hopefully be held on the 25 Jan 97.

118. 22 Oct 96. The OC travelled to Tuzla where he would be spending a few days visiting the Geo Dets at MND (N), MND (SW), 20 Bde, CRMD and MND (SE). Travelling with the OC were representatives from the FSO who would be undertaking a check of all IT equipment in theatre.

All Geo personnel at Tuzla seemed very happy with life and they had been very well received. All the relevant personalities were met and the Battle Update Brief (BUB) was attended by the OC and Cpl Meakins. The evening saw Cpl Meakins introducing everyone to the LO Bar (The US personnel are forbidden to drink so the bar is empty of Americans and American beer).

119. 23 Oct 96. Today saw the OC's entourage visiting MND (SW). Another excellent edition of the Squadron magazine (The Stretch) was edited and produced by Sgt Pocock. (Figure 67 and 68)



Figures 67 and 68. The Stretch magazine – edited by Sgt ‘Frank’ Pocock

Capt S Hoffmann RA Svy Corps arrived in Theatre today. He is the new Australian Exchange Officer at 42 Gp and whilst in Bosnia will cover the post of Ops Offr. He will be joining Sgt G Hales (RA Svy Corps) who is on Ex LONGLOOK and was attached to 13 Sqn from 14 Sqn (Figure 69)



Figure 69. The 2IC, Capt Nick Collins briefs the two Australians from the Royal Australian Survey Corps – Left: Capt Shaun Hoffmann (New Sqn Ops Offr) and (centre) Sgt Graham Hales (Attached to FSO)

The new Ops Offr, on arrival at the Brick Factory was the subject of a “2IC’s wind-up” when it was arranged for the International Police Task Force (IPTF) to arrest him for driving illegally. The ‘incident’ had taken some very clever coordination and the new Ops Offr fell for it hook, line and sinker. (Copies of the incident on video tape are available from the PRI).

Due to the amount of work coming into the Sqn the decision was made to work on the Sunday. This is something that has been avoided in the past so that personnel can get at least one day off to undertake personal admin (Figure 70)



Figure 70. Production Troop, 13 Sqn, GSG, The Brick Factory

120. 24 Oct 96. The OC and his team of travellers arrived at the CRMD today. They also visited 20 Armd Bde in Sipovo.

In the Sqn things were relatively quiet with routine technical and administrative work being undertaken.

121. 25 Oct 96. The OC returned to the Sqn today having stopped at MND (SE).

On the technical work front several sheets were catch released by the 2IC.

Disciplinary action was taken for a breach of security at the Brick Factory.

Mr Alan Gatley, the Map Supply HIO from SMS, and SSgt P Murray RE from Maps Supply Branch, D Mil Svy, arrived in Theatre today. Mr Gatley’s visit is firstly to look at the Theatre map supply operations and compare them to the SMS syllabus and then determine if the training delivered at SMS meets operational requirements. SSgt P Murray RE is here for a liaison visit which will assist him in map supply co-ordination in Theatre (Figure 71)

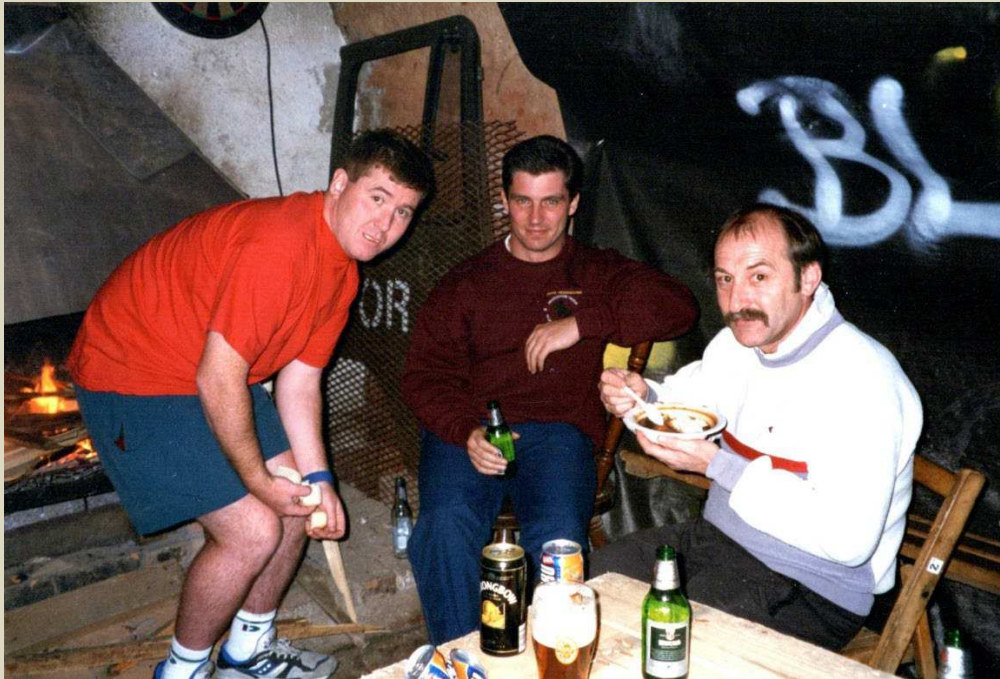


Figure 71. Three Old Map Stackers – SSgt Paul Murray, SSgt Andy Turley and Mr Alan Gatley

122. 26 Oct 96. Since his return from R&R the 2IC had also carried out the role of Ops Offr. However, today he finally handed over those duties to the new Ops Offr, Capt Hoffmann. The Sqn conducted normal technical operational duties as well as camp maintenance.

The highlight of the day was the 'Halloween Night' bash which began at 2000hrs and concluded at 2200hrs. The Sqn turned out to the Kiseljak Kavern in an array of bizarre home-made costumes and an excellent night was had by all (Figures 72 and 73)



Figure 72. The OC prepares



Figure 73. The OC and 2IC

123. 27 Oct 96. Most of the Sqn enjoyed stand down with some members of Production Tp working a shift to complete outstanding tasks. In the evening the Offrs and WOs were invited to ARRC (Main) for a “Geo Dinner” (Figure 74)



Figure 74. Geo Branch Dinner – Including (Right side of table): Lt Col Nick Rigby, Maj Ross Thurlow, Capt Shaun Hoffmann and WO2 Al Easingwood

124. 28 Oct 96. The 2IC and SQMS attended the Technical Withdrawal Meeting at HQ ARRC (Main). The meeting proved to be very valuable as it clarified issues on equipment, manpower, the withdrawal plan, shipping, ammunition and rations. The TOA date, however, was not confirmed.

125. 29 Oct 96. The OC announced today that two soldiers from 19 Specialist Team Royal Engineers (19 STRE), who were part of a team conducting survey tasks in Cyprus, were shot at by Turkish Border Guards. Fortunately, there were no injuries.

Production work continued with no significant problems.

The SSM tried to hold a surprise fire drill at 1330hrs today. Unfortunately, the fire alarm proved to be faulty and for the remainder of the day it was continually checked and tested.

Sgt S Deakins RE from LANDCENT, Heidelberg, Germany and Capt P Ladds RE from Hermitage arrived in theatre today.

126. 30 Oct 96. Capt M Cairns completed his hand over to Capt P Ladds RE as the new FSO while the OC, 2IC and SQMS attended a withdrawal meeting at HQ ARRC (Main). After the meeting the OC then briefed key members of the Sqn at his ‘O’ Group. On the technical front it was a quiet day.

127. 31 Oct 96. The Sqn commenced in earnest working towards TOA. Works parties were allocated tasks, under the direction of the SSM and SQMS, to start the clean-up of the Brick Factory. Everyone worked extremely well and an enormous amount was achieved.

On the production front a number of jobs were completed and it appear that Production Tp is ahead of schedule.

128. 1 Nov 96. The 2IC and Ops Offr met with the local Catholic priest to arrange for the delivery of clothing which was donated by the wives of the soldiers and officers back in the UK. The meeting was successful, and it was arranged that the handover of the goods would take place on the 4 Nov 96.

The Sqn continued with the clean-up of the camp and production work progressed well.

129. 2 Nov 96. A meeting was held at the Brick Factory to ascertain the procedures for dismantling and handing over the site. In attendance were: DCOS MND (SW), DCOS 1 Sig Bde, Maj Burns, Mr R Jones (Fin ARRC (Rear)) OC 13 Sqn, QM 13 Sqn, 2IC 13 Sqn and SQMS 13 Sqn. The outline dates are:

16 Nov 96 Personnel move out of CORIMECs and a field kitchen is set up.

18 Nov 96 The CORIMECs and kitchen dismantling would be started.

22 Nov 96 The GSG would depart the Brick Factory for Split, Croatia

23 Nov 96 A Board of Officers would convene for the handover of site.

Many other decisions were made but amongst them was the fact that the BELUGA Engrs would dismantle the Hesco bastion and the GSG will dismantle the razor wire. Once these items are removed this will obviously present a security problem which would result in enhanced/increased security patrolling.

130. 3 Nov 96. The weather was excellent, and the Sqn enjoyed a well-earned stand down day.

Cpl Beeton and his team arrived back from Mostar.

131. 4 Nov 96. The OC attempted to travel to Gorazde to inspect the stretch of road constructed by the Engrs earlier this year. The trip was however halted by the French at the Gorazde Road entrench because written permission for IFOR vehicles to travel along the route was needed. Unfortunately, this important point was not mentioned by Movements at ARRC (Rear) when permission was granted for the trip.

132. 5 Nov 96. The OC, 2IC and several Sqn personnel delivered boxes and bags of clothing to the local Catholic priest which was to be distributed among the many needy families of the local area. The clothing was donated/collected by the wives of the GSG soldiers and officers and was certainly appreciated by the local community (Figures 75, 76, 77, 78)



Figure 75. The Roman Catholic Church, Kiseljak



Figure 76. 13 Sqn deliver



Figure 77. Cpl Shaun Parnell and Maj Ross Thurlow unload the clothing



Figure 78. The clothing delivered to the crypt in the church

133. 6 Nov 96. In the morning the OC and several Sqn personnel delivered school books and stationery to Kiseljak Elementary Primary School. (Figure 79)



Figure 79. More supplies for Kiseljak Elementary School. Maj Ross Thurlow and Cpl Shaun Parnell can be seen unloading the boxes.

The SSM, Maps Tp Comd and five other soldiers returned from R&R.

In the afternoon Teddies for Tragedies were handed out locally to the children of Kiseljak by the 2IC, SSM and STCWO. The team distributed the Teddies whilst taking a run around the local area (Figure 80 and 81) The Teddies had been donated by a charity in Hungerford and were collected and dispatched by the 2IC's wife (Ann Collins). Each Teddy came complete inside a 'security' carry bag so a child could store small items in the bag whilst Teddies would act as a guardian to keep the child's treasures safe and secure. This charity had made and distributed to numerous countries around the world.



Figure 80. and 81. The STCO WO2 Graham Caisley, the SSM WO2 Al Easingwood and the 2IC Capt Nick Collins - Deliver Teddies for Tragedies

134. 7 Nov 96. On the works front the GSG Forecast of Events was distributed to all relevant parties. The Sqn continued work as normal with nothing significant to report.

135. 8 Nov 96. The OC and 2IC attended the Bde 'O' Gp at ARRC (Main) to discuss the concept of operations for withdrawal. This meeting should give the 2IC enough information to begin the administrative instruction for the withdrawal.

Six days of brilliant weather finally ended today with wet and windy conditions prevailing.

136. 9 Nov 96. The OC, 2IC, SSM, Production Tp Comd, SQMS, Chief Clerk and Sgt Gray were escorted by G5 Civil Affairs to the Pazaric Mental Institution for adults/children, to hand out Teddies for Tragedies and some more donated clothing from the UK. This was not a task for the fainthearted and was a tremendously emotionally charged visit (Figures 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87 and 88)



Figure 82. Patients at the Pazaric Mental Institution for adults and children



Figure 83. Patients of the Institution and personnel of the Sqn



Figure 84. – Maj Ross Thurlow with a young patient



Figure 85. Beds for the children in the hospital



Figure 86. Cots for the young and infirm children in the hospital



Figure 87. Capt Shaun Hoffmann passing out teddies



Figure 88. SSgt Bryan Miller passing out teddies

At 1500hrs the OC briefed the officers and seniors on the OpO for the re-deployment of the GSG from the Brick Factory back to the UK. TOA was announced as 20 Nov 96.

The GSG delivered a TACIPRINT and a 40KW Generator to LANDCENT along with Cpl P Willis, who would be remaining in Theatre. There should also be a mention for the RE Sigs Section of Sgt Steve Shores and Cpl Shaun Parnell who have performed sterling work in ensuring our communications with the outside world (Figure 89)



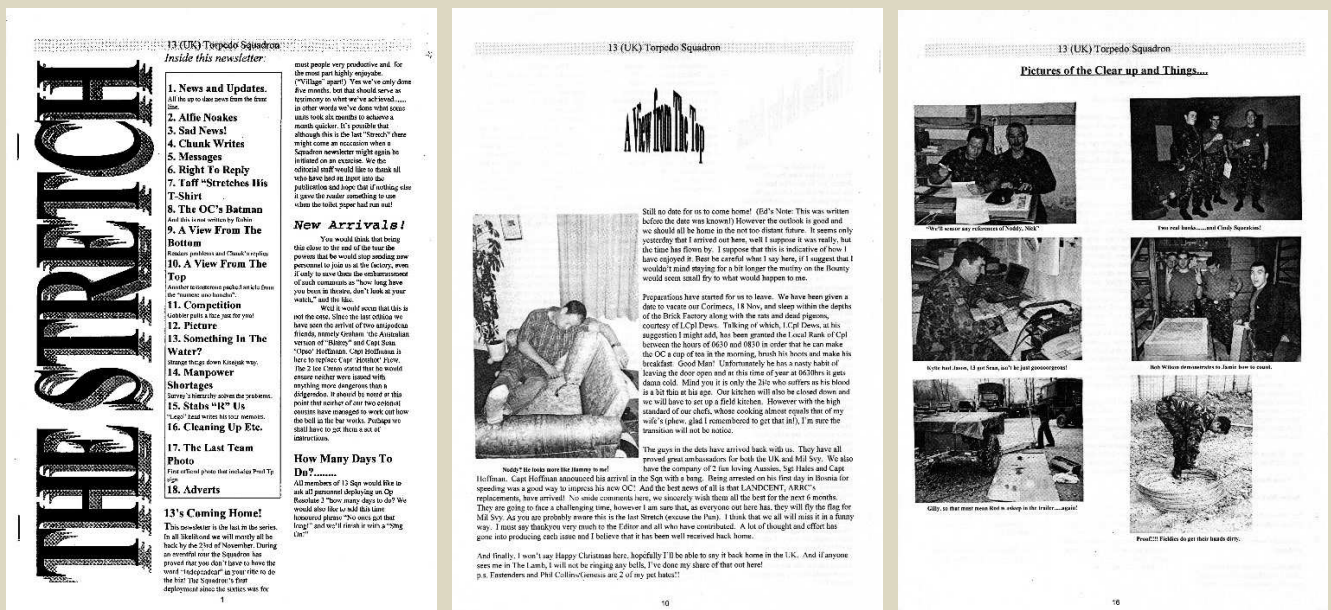
Figure 89. Cpl Shaun Parnell (left) carries his Action Man, 'John', wherever he travels and sends back photos to his family so they can plot his progress. Also pictured is Capt Collins, Sqn 2IC

A function was organised for the soldiers tonight, where the officers and seniors served their meals and drinks during dinner. The seniors then worked behind the bar in the Kiseljak Kavern.

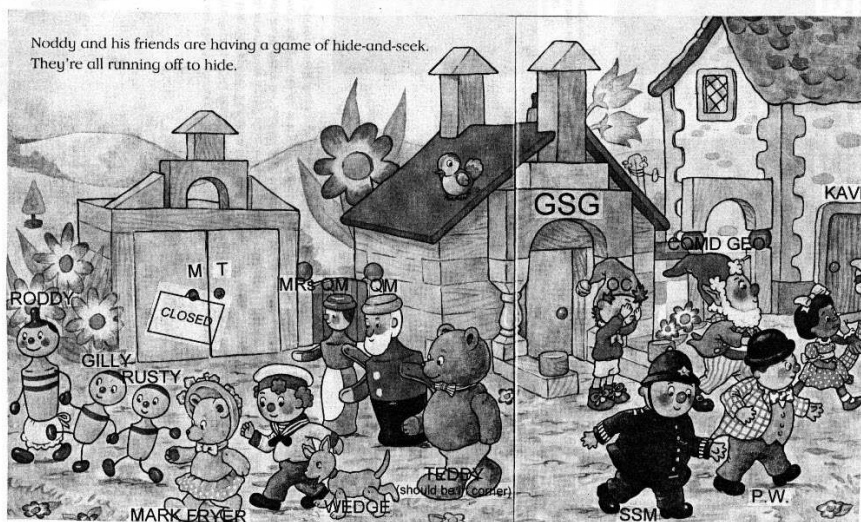
Production work also stopped for an hour and a half today so all Sqn personnel could watch the football match between England and Georgia and witnessed England win 2 - 0. Scotland also played Australia afterwards in Rugby Union and despite Australia playing an average game they still managed to give Scotland a hiding (the Ops Offr was a happy man).

137. 10 Nov 96. As it was a Sunday the Sqn commenced work at 1000hrs. The late start also aided the recovery of personnel from the previous night's function.

On the production front, work continued as per normal whilst the final reports from MAPSP's were received by GSG and HQ ARRC (Main). Sgt Pocock produced the last edition of the Stretch magazine. (Figures 90, 91, 92 and 93)

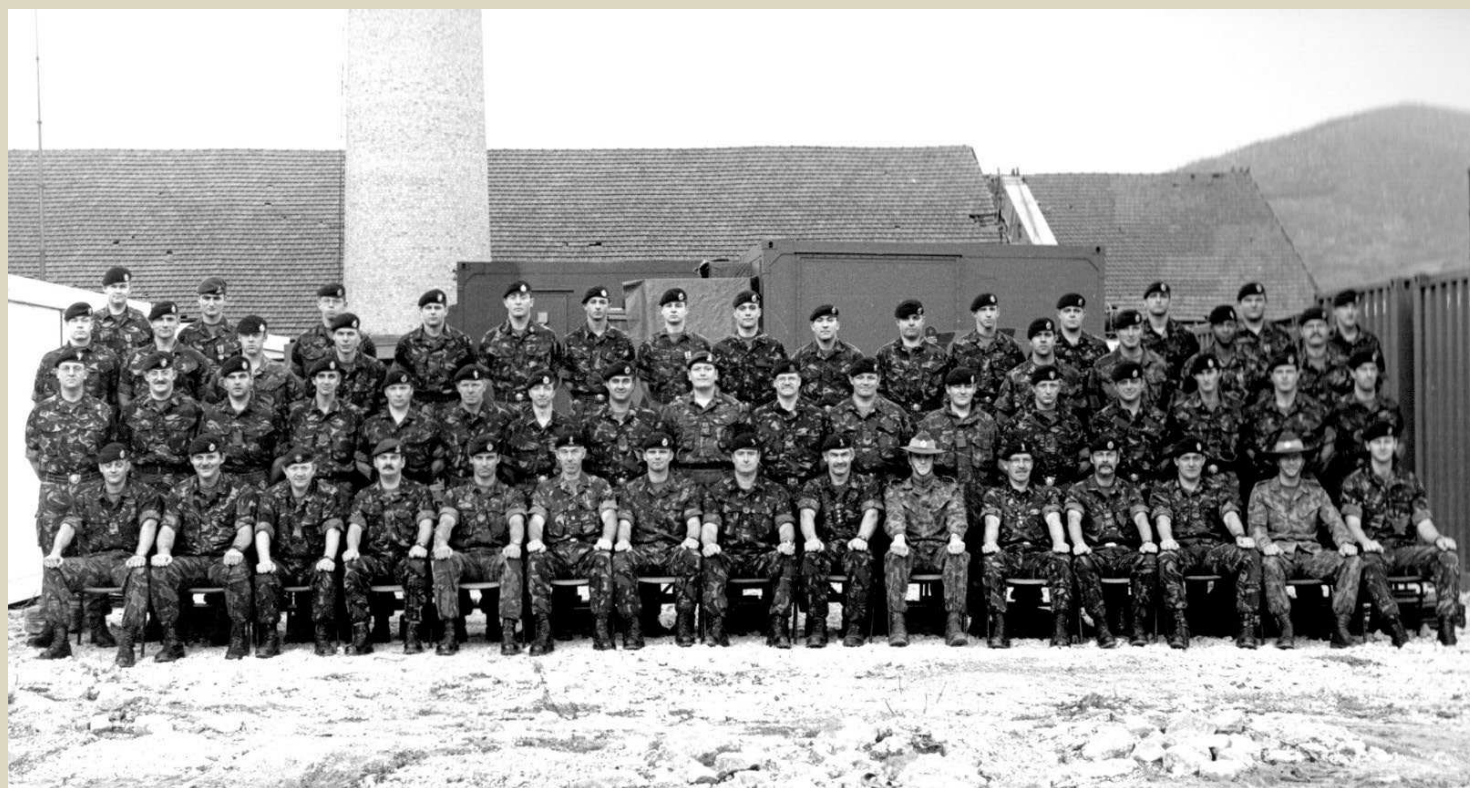


Another Day In Paradise? Or Are We Hurrying Love!



Figures 90, 91, 92 and 93. The last edition of the Stretch edited by Sgt 'Frank' Pocock

138. 11 Nov 96. A Remembrance Day parade was conducted at 1040hrs in the area next to the Cookhouse. All GSG personnel, less those on essential duty, attended. After the service a number of personnel were presented with the IFOR NATO Medal. Following this, a photograph (Figure 94) was taken of all GSG personnel currently serving in Theatre.



BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT

Spr Douglas, Pte Ward, Spr King, Pte Hicklin, Spr Earle, Spr Rawlinson, Spr Sergeant, Spr Chapman, Spr Mullins, Spr Large, Spr Piper, Spr Gough, Spr Faulkner, Spr Richards, Cpl Goble.

THIRD ROW

Spr Garbett, Cpl Sharman, Cpl Meakins, LCpl Walker, Cpl Somerville, Cpl Beeton, Cpl Barnett, Cpl Humphries.

SECOND ROW

Cpl Bowers, LCpl Grace, Cpl Wilson, LCpl Brighton, Cpl Brown, Cpl Nicholls, LCpl Dews, Sgt Fitzgerald, Sgt Paterson, Sgt Evans, Sgt Gray, LCpl Coleman, LCpl Gill, LCpl Blake, LCpl Horne, LCpl Fullstone, LCpl Harris.

FRONT ROW

Sgt Davies, Sgt Pocock, SSgt Miller, SSgt Shade, SSgt Turley, Maj Thurgate, WO2(SSM) Easingwood, Maj Thurlow, Capt Collins, Capt Hoffmann, Capt Ladds, WO1 Starbuck, WO2 Caisley, Sgt Hales, Sgt Burrows.

Figure 94. 13 Topographic Squadron RE – Commanded by Maj Ross Thurlow RE - 15 Oct – 24 Nov 96

A number of activities began today towards the closure of the GSG. Firstly, a crane arrived to transfer three CORIMECs off site and to load the two press containers onto their vehicles. At the same time the BELUGA Engrs arrived to commence stripping out the Hesco bastion and sangas (a small, protected structure used for observing or firing from, which is built up from the ground). Finally, the Corps Map Distribution Point (CMDP) also commenced stripping out map stocks in order to close its account and transfer stock to the CRMD in Split. The Chief Geo and SO2 Geo from HQ ARRC (Main) also paid a visit to the GSG to see what progress was being made.

139. 12 Nov 96. The day began with the BELUGA Engrs continuing in earnest with the stripping out of the Hesco bastion whilst the GSG personnel continued the stripping out of defence wire from around the perimeter of the camp. Two 14 tonne vehicles moved the map stocks from the closed CMDP to the CRMD. The CRMD is also in the process of changing its name to the Theatre Map Depot (TMD).

140. 13 Nov 96. One of the main highlights of the day/tour was the last production day for the GSG. Work completed today included:

- Repmat reproduction for LANDCENT
- 2 x Mine maps for MND (N)
- Revision of ARRC Misc products
- 78 Mines Routes and IFOR Locations maps (based on the Mine Contamination map)
- 1 x M709 overprint of the Gorazde Road map
- 4 x Survey Control maps for MND (SE)

All future production will fall to HQ LANDCENT and its production assets.

One of the most emotionally difficult tasks to be faced throughout the tour was undertaken by the Sqn personnel who went to deliver Teddies for Tragedies to the orphan/unwanted disabled children of Drin Mental Hospital at Fojnica (Figures 95, 96, 97, 98, 99 and 100)



Figure 95. Drin Mental Hospital for children



Figure 96. SSgt Bryan Miller passing out teddies



Figure 97. The cots at the children's hospital



Figure 98. The Doctor's rounds at the hospital



Figure 99. This child was left on the steps of the hospital



Figure 100. Capt Shaun Hoffmann comforting a child

Sqn personnel, under the direction of the QM, SSM and SQMS continued stripping out the camp.

In the evening a dinner was held at HQ ARRC (Main) for all Geo officers in Theatre.

Cpl P Brown and the TACISYS with its generator deployed to HQ ARRC (Main) ready for onward transfer to LANDCENT.

141. 14 Nov 96. The Geo conference was held at Ilidza today and was attended by the OC, Ops Offr, FSO, Maps Tp Comd and STCWO. In the evening there was an Offr's Mess style dinner hosted by the Comd Geo

Three personnel from MND (SW) arrived at the Brick Factory with a 4-tonne truck and trailer which is to be loaded with stores and then returned by GSG personnel tomorrow.

Sqn personnel continue to pack stores and equipment into tri-walls for the impending arrival of the 40-foot low loader which is expected to arrive today or tomorrow.

The FSO and his team completed the shutting down of the GSG network and the final pack of the IT equipment.

142. 15 Nov 96. The 2IC and Sigs Sgt returned all the crypto items to ADA in Sarajevo.

The 40-foot low loader arrived late in the afternoon for the removal of the tri-walls back to the UK.

Four GSG personnel departed with the TACITRIM, TACICAM, a generator and the 4-tonne vehicle and trailer full of stores and they are bound for LANDCENT in Banja Luka.

143. 16 Nov 96. Brig Whitley and the Chief Geo arrived at the Brick Factory at 1030hrs for a quick visit and were hosted by the OC.

The 2IC attended a Movement 'O' Gp at 1 Sig Bde.

The RMP arrived to check the MFO boxes, as well as other items, which were being returned to the UK. The RMP were checking for all forms of contraband, including arms and ammunition, being taken back into the UK. A seal was put on all checked boxes and containers.

The field kitchen was set up on site at the Brick Factory in preparation for the closure of the cookhouse.

144. 17 Nov 96. Personnel from the GSG moved out of the CORIMECs and into the Brick Factory. The CORIMECs were then emptied and cleaned ready for their removal on Monday.

Sqn personnel continued with the stripping out and cleaning up of the Brick Factory site.

The Movement Order was issued, and the Cookhouse closed.

145. 18 Nov 96. 28 Gurkha Tpt Regt arrived on site at the Brick Factory to remove the remaining CORIMECs and four TCUs. The Cookhouse was also stripped out and the disconnection and removal of the Braithwaite tank was started (Figure 101)



Figure 101. 28 Gurkha Tpt Regt at work

The BELUGA Engrs returned to the Brick Factory, after being away yesterday, to continue the removal of the Hesco bastion.

The OC announced the difficult news that the flight home to the UK for the Sqn had been postponed until Sun 24 Nov 96, due to flight unavailability (Figure 102)



Figure 102. The OC exhausted after giving bad news

Sgt G Hales RA Svy Corps, the Australian Ex LONG LOOK candidate, was farewelled at the Kiseljak Kavern. Sgt Hales presented a 1 Topo Svy Sqn plaque and slouch hat to the OC, who in turn presented the first GSG plaque to him.

146. 19 Nov 96. 28 Gurkha Tpt Regt began removing the CORIMECs from site. Unfortunately, a CORIMEC, on route through Sarajevo clipped a tree and disintegrated on impact. The vehicle and driver escaped the accident unscathed.

The UN Civil Communications Unit dismantled the VSAT communication system and removed it from site.

Sgt Hales departed the GSG on route back to 14 Sqn in Germany.

The Sqn continued to dismantle the camp in earnest with the main focus centred around stripping out the razor wire and moving the perimeter defences back into the Brick Factory buildings once all the CORIMECs had been removed.

Security patrols and checks have now been stepped up because of the lack of physical protection around the GSG at the Brick Factory.

147. 20 Nov 96. Col Burns, Maj Burns and Capt Acornley from HQ 1 Sig Bde arrived at the Brick Factory to inspect the site given its imminent closure and they were content with the progress the Sqn had made.

Work continued to progress well throughout the day with the main focus directed towards the removal of the remaining CORIMECs and the Cookhouse which were now unguarded and outside the Sqn's perimeter security.

The BELUGA Engrs finished the dismantling of the Hesco bastion and continued the general clean-up and re-grading of the site using their plant machinery. They also provided some light relief when they managed to bog their front-end loader in a drain whilst attempting to remove a disused industrial waste container. Fortunately, the GSG's MT and REME Sect came to the rescue as the piece of plant was never going to move under its own steam. The BELUGA Engrs were also presented with a plaque and two crates of beer in appreciation of their excellent work throughout the week. The OIC was genuinely appreciative of the gesture.

Concerns were raised when Spr D Giles did not arrive at Sarajevo Airport after his R&R. It was later established that his flight had been cancelled and he had remained in Split overnight.

The Kiseljak Kavern was patronised for the last time in the evening The end of 'Probably the Best Bar in Bosnia'.

148. 21 Nov 96. The BELUGA Engrs and the GSG completed all their tasks. The Brick Factory site was improved by 100% over its original condition. A detailed briefing on tomorrow's movements was held at 1835hrs and lights out was announced by the SSM as 2100hrs.

149. 22 Nov 96. The road convoy from the Brick factory site was broken up into two packets which departed at 0645hrs and 0715hrs respectively. It was estimated the road trip to Split would take about 5 hours.

Afternote: The weather on the way to Split was horrendous and the Sqn had to drive through thick and deep snow. Road conditions were extremely dangerous and at one point the convoy even faced the scary sight of a generator becoming detached from its prime mover. After the initial panic and concern for those behind the generator the REME were called to see what had happened, it was suspected to be driver error through not hitching up correctly. This was found to be far from the mark because the tow hook had snapped and therefore the generator had become completely detached from its prime mover. Thank goodness that everyone in the road convoys eventually arrived safe and sound in Split (Figures 103 and 104) The vehicles and trailers were then corralled within Divulje Barracks ready for the RCT to send them back to the UK by sea.



Figure 103. The road convoy to Split



Figure 104. The Sqn 2IC and Ops Offr, all smiles after arriving in Croatia safely

Meanwhile, the rear party waited in vain for a German unit to collect the last few CORIMECs. The Brick Factory, our home for 5 months, seemed a sad and forlorn place.

150. 23 Nov 96. A Board of Officers was conducted by HQ 1 Sig Bde and our Sqn QM, and his rear party successfully handed back the Brick factory site in Kiseljak before departing for Split, to re-join the Sqn main party.

151. 24 Nov 96. 13 Topographic Squadron Royal Engineers departed Split and arrived back in the UK at Gatwick Airport at 1835hrs. There was a resounding cheer as the aircraft touched down. All personnel should have felt an immense sense of pride in “a job well done!”

Geographic Support Group Equipment

Throughout the tour in Bosnia both 13 and 14 Sqns utilised a range of technical equipment fitted into 14 and 20 foot containers to provide a field deployable system. The containers were transported on standard 10 and 8 tonne flatbed trucks. The air-conditioned containers could be carried by vehicle, were air transportable or could be ground dumped (Figures 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115 and 116)



Figure 105. Geographic Support System based upon a container carried on a 10-tonne flatbed truck



Figure 106. TACIPRINT based upon a container carried on a 8-tonne flatbed truck

The Tactical Information Printer (TACIPRINT) (Figure 106) was a 14-foot container mounted on a 8 tonne vehicle and contained a small format printing press (Roland) and a plain paper copier. It was capable of producing small format colour and monochrome lithographic printing or film overlays.



Figure 107. Squadron Technical Control container



Figure 108. TACISYS container (LtoR: Sgt D Blake and Capt M Cairns)

The Squadron Technical Control Office (STCO) (Figure 107) was the control container for all technical tasks which entered and left the Sqn.

The Tactical Information System (TACISYS) (Figure 108) consisted of a diverse range of computer equipment in a 14-foot container mounted on a DAF 4 tonne vehicle. TACISYS was capable of producing the following: Overprints, TACIMAPS, Town/camp plans, training area maps, Terrain analysis in support of Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB), line of sight/intervisibility studies and terrain visualization.

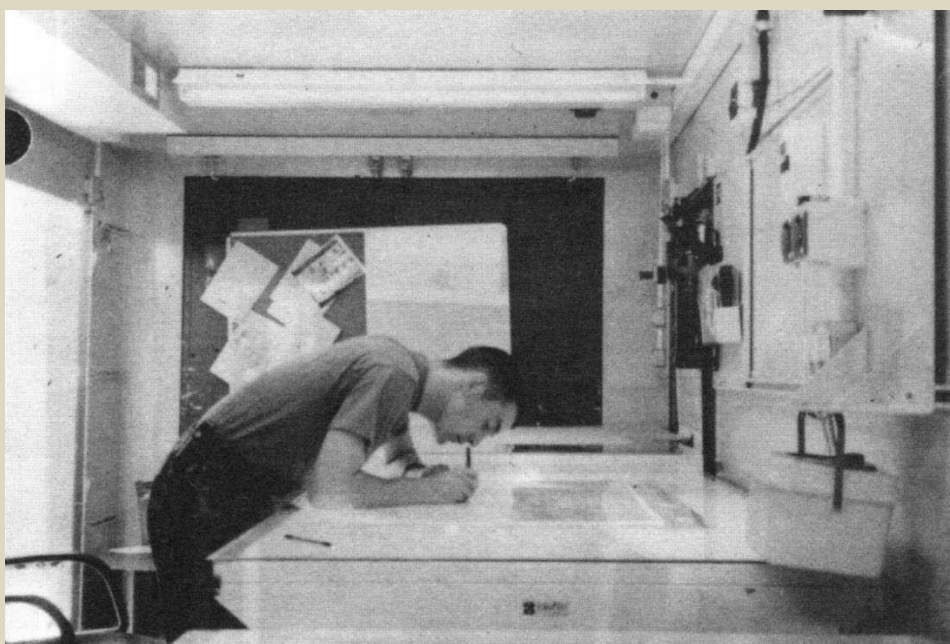


Figure 109. Pre-Press container



Figure 110. TACICAM container with Agfa vertical camera

The Pre-Press container (Figure 109) was where most Geographic products start life. The container housed Terrain Analysts who are responsible for all cartographic work. It also has the capability to produce limited graphics for presentations.

Tactical Information Camera (TACICAM) (Figure 110) was a container which housed the camera support for the GSS and TACIPRINT. It contained a small format camera which was capable of reductions and enlargements up to a maximum size of A2. It was mainly used for the production of photographic film in support of the Pre-Press vehicle. It also has the ability to process 35mm black and white and colour slide film.



Figure 111. Helio container with printing plate exposure frames and printing plate developing sink

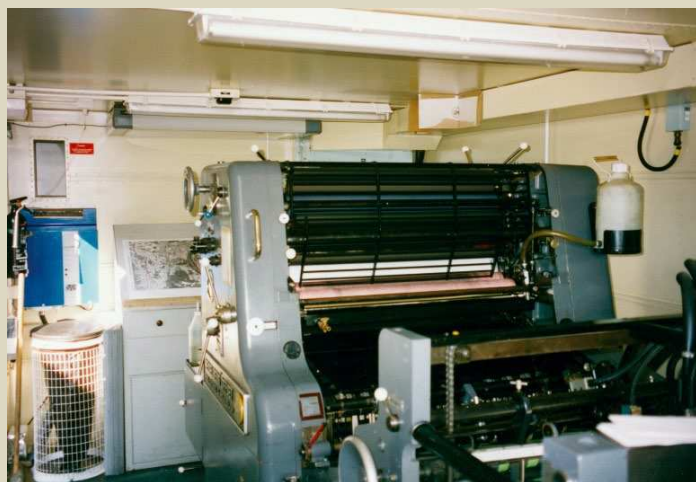


Figure 112. Print container with Heidelberg SORDZ printing machine (single colour)

The HELIO container (Figure 111) comprised photomechanical equipment and provided support to the Pre-Press vehicle by producing negatives/positives from drawings made in the Pre-Press

container. After retouching these negatives and positives were used to produce either a proof for final checking or a printing plate for the printing presses.

The GSS print container (Figure 112) was mounted on a 14-tonne vehicle and contains a medium format printing press (Heidelberg SORDZ). The press was capable of producing colour and monochrome lithographic products to a size of 89 x 62 cm at a speed of up to 9000 sheets per hour. The container also housed an automatic print damper scrubber machine (Figure 113)



Figure 113. Print container with print machine damper scrubber machine



Figure 114. TACITRIM container with powered guillotine

Tactical Information Trimmer (TACITRIM) (Figure 114) included a small format guillotine which was capable of trimming stock up to and including 76 x 45 cms.

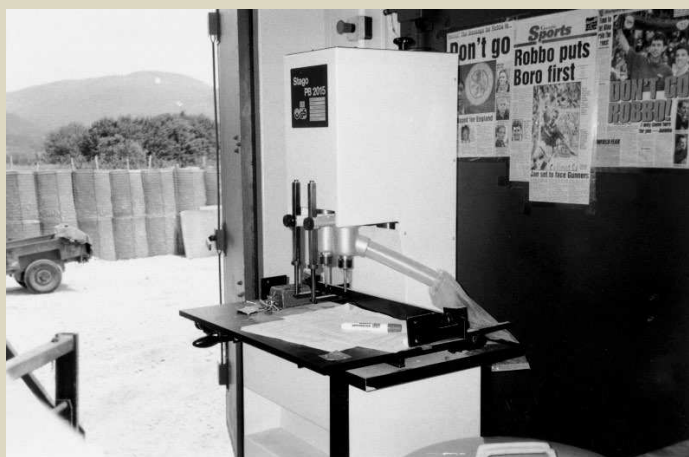


Figure 115. Paper store and expendable stores container



Figure 116. Paper store container with Stayo PB 2015 twin head adjustable two-hole paper drill



Figure 117. Map Supply Point (MAPSP)

THE MAPSP vehicle (Figure 117) was a 4x4 GS cargo truck fitted with modular racking. The canopy and side of the truck were designed so that they could be dropped out to provide a walkway around the racking. The MAPSP was capable of carrying 70,000 copies of NATO standard series mapping.

Production Products

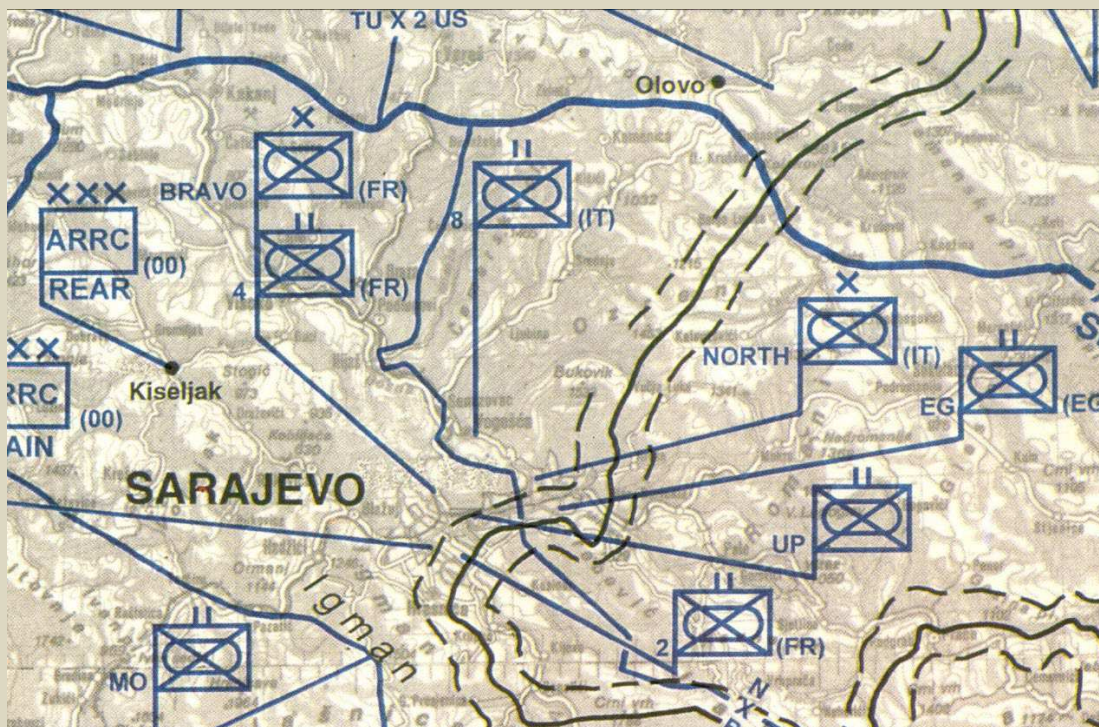


Figure 118. ARRC Dispositions map produced by 13 Sqn whilst on deployment. The product is a basic TACIMAP that is to say, a monochrome base map with a single colour tactical overprint. This particular product, due to its size, was produced on the medium format printing press.

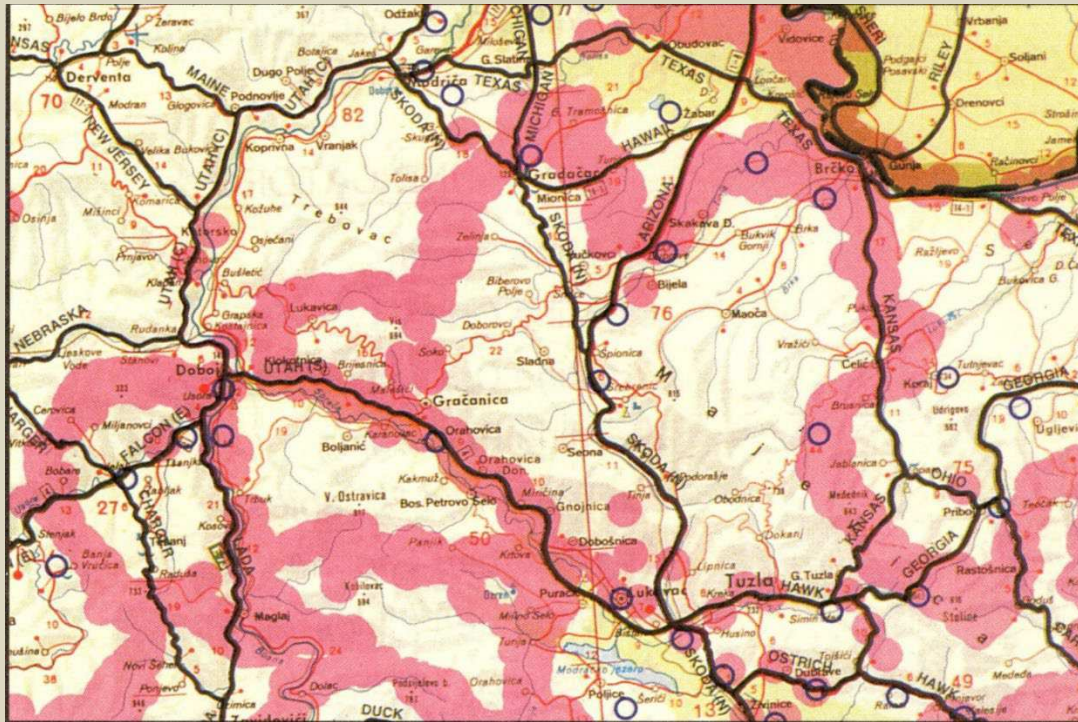


Figure 119. Mines, Routes and ARRC Dispositions map is a full colour product produced by 13 Sqn whilst on deployment. Due to the complexity of this task and the fact that the GSS does not have a scanner the reproduction material was produced remotely back at the Geographic base plant facilities in the UK.

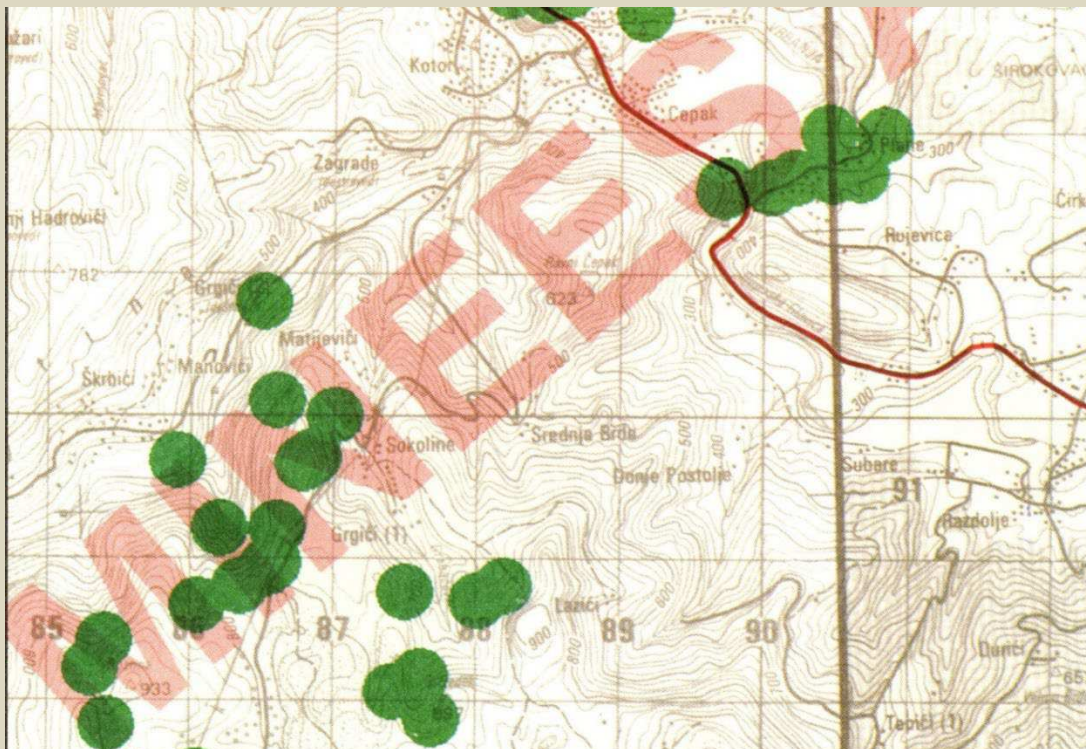
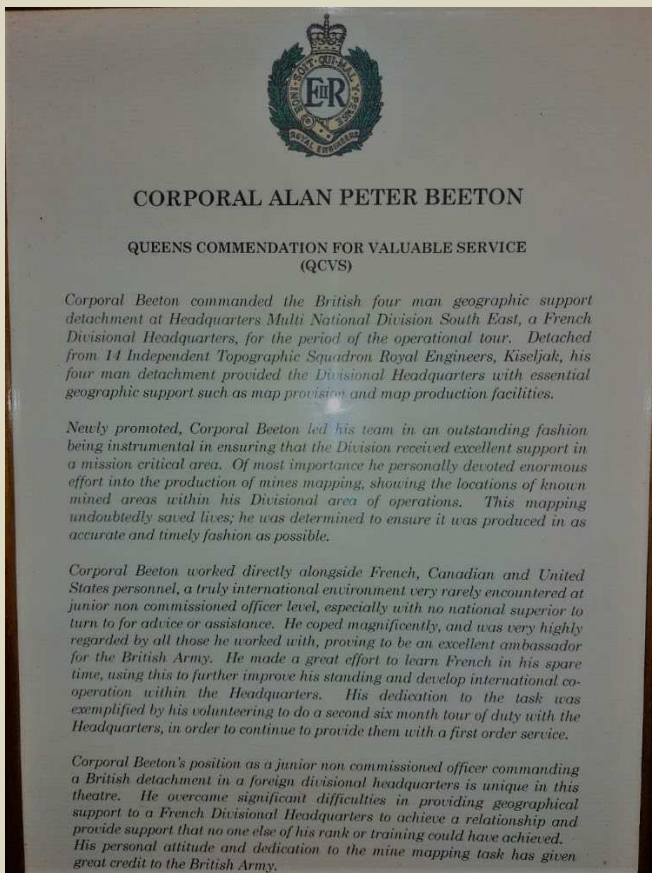


Figure 120. ARRC Misc 9 Mines maps are produced throughout theatre by TACIPRINT. The products are standard TACIMAPs with a 3 colour overprint showing known mined areas. These products are constantly updated with new information

Citations/Awards

Cpl Beeton (Alan) RE – Cpl Beeton initially deployed to Bosnia in Feb 96 with 14 Sqn on completion of his Class One course at the Royal School of Military Survey. He took over from Cpl Thompson (John) RE as Geo Det Comd within the French HQ in Sarajevo. In Mar 96 the French moved from Sarajevo to Mostar within the MND (SE) AOR so Cpl Beeton and his crew moved with them. At some point in Jun 96 Cpl Beeton actually completed a three-year tour of duty with 14 Sqn and was posted directly to 13 Sqn which allowed technical continuity for the French. Cpl Beeton never actually received a posting order, but the transfer was implemented by both 13 and 14 Sqns. For his service in Bosnia Cpl Beeton was awarded a Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS). (Figures 123/124) This award, which was published in The London Gazette, allows him to wear a silver oak leaf with the NATO Former Yugoslavia Medal.



Figures 123 and 124. Sgt A Beeton RE - The Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Sgt Simmonds (Rik) RE – Sgt Simmonds initially deployed Op GRAPPLE as a Cpl on the 17 Jul 95 but was promoted to Acting Sgt by the Royal Marines in Sep 95. He remained as a Sgt for the remainder of his tour in Kiseljak which ended on the 17 Jul 96. He was awarded a Commander British Forces Commendation for Meritorious Service in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia by Brig ARD Pringle CBE, Commander British Forces, Op GRAPPLE 6. The award was a commendation for his service with the Rapid Reaction Forces Operations Staff (RRFOS), which was a joint UK Royal Marines and French Foreign Legion HQ running the operation to break the siege of Sarajevo. The operation ran from Jul to Dec 95 when HQ ARRC arrived in theatre as part of the change from a UN Operation (Op GRAPPLE) to Implementation Force (IFOR) under a NATO banner so Sgt Simmonds transferred in theatre and served with this new formation until Jul 96 and

in consequence he served 13 months in theatre. Throughout his tour in Bosnia Sgt Simmonds was detached from 13 Sqn.

Nominal Roll:

Personnel who served with 13 Topographic Squadron Royal Engineers (with sincere apologies to those I have missed) during the period of the Sqn's deployment in Bosnia- Herzegovina:

Maj Burrows MRH (Mark) RE (OC - 27 Jun 96 – 15 Oct 96)

Maj Thurgate I (Ian) RE (QM - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96) (Promoted from Capt, whilst on tour)

Maj Thurlow RD (Ross) RE (OC - 15 Oct 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Capt Avella S (Sam) Cdn Mil Engrs (Cdn Fd Tp – 26 Aug 96 – 2 Oct 96)

Capt Cairns M (Mike) Cdn Mil Engrs (Fd Tp Comd, Field Support Officer (FSO), Stand in Ops Offr,
Stand in 2IC – 27 Jun 96 – 30 Oct 96)

Capt Collins NJ (Nick) RE (2IC - 4 Jul 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Capt Frew C (Chris) RA Svy Corps (Ops Offr - 27 Jun 96 – 8 Sep 96)

Capt Hoffmann S (Shaun) RA Svy Corps (Ops Offr - 23 Oct 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Capt Ladds P (Peter) RE (FSO 30 Oct 96 – 24 Nov 96)

WO1 Starbuck J (Jim) RE (Fd) (Maps Tp Comd - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

WO2 Caisley G (Graham) RE (Print) (STCWO - 27 Jun 96 - 24 Nov 96)

WO2 (SSM) Easingwood A (Alan) RE (Carto) (SSM - 10 Aug 96 – 24 Nov 96)

WO2 (SSM) Mann M (Martin – 'Arthur') RE (Carto) (SSM - 27 Jun 96 – 10 Aug 96)

WO Cornect G (Glen) Cdn Mil Engrs (Cdn Fd Tp – 26 Aug 96 – 2 Oct 96)

SSgt Crowe B (Bruce) RE (Carto) (Field Sp Tp)

SSgt Miller B (Bryan – 'Chips') RE (Print) (Production Tp Comd - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

SSgt Turley A (Andy) RE (Cbt Svyr) (SQMS - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Sgt Blake D (Dave) RE (Carto)

Sgt Burrows S (Stuart) RE (Tera)

Sgt Davies P (Paul – 'Taff') RE (MT)

Sgt Evans P (Pete) ACC

Sgt Fitzgerald ('Fitz') RE (Tera)

Sgt Gray A (Andy) RE (Fd) (Topo Sect SNCO - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Sgt Hadfield C (Chris) REME

Sgt Hall T (Tony) REME

Sgt Paterson B (Brian) AGC (Promoted from Cpl, whilst on tour)

Sgt Pocock G (Gary – 'Frank') RE (Print) (Print Sect IC - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Sgt Ramsey J (John) Cdn Mil Engrs

Sgt Shade M (Mark) AGC (Chief Clerk - 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Sgt Shores S (Steve) RE (Sigs Sgt – 27 Jun 96 – 24 Nov 96)

Cpl Barnett F (Frank) REME

Cpl Beeton A (Alan - Al) RE (Print) – Attached to the French – MND (SE)

Cpl Bowers R (Rod) REME

Cpl Brown P (Paul) RE (Air)

Cpl Cowley A (Anita) ACC
Cpl Goble P (Paul) RE (Photo)
Cpl Groves B (Ben) RE (Air)
Cpl Humphries R (Richard – ‘Rich’) RE (Print)
Cpl Lowes (Stuart – ‘Stu’) RE (Print)
Cpl Luff M (Mick) RE (Print)
Cpl Meakins R (Rob) RE (Tera) - Attached to the Americans – MND (N)
Cpl Nicholls S (Steve) REME
Cpl Oliver R (Rob) RE (Tera)
Cpl Sharman A (Andy) RE (Tera)
Cpl Schofield K (Kev) RE (Maps)
Cpl Somerville I (Ian) RE (Fd)

LCpl Bain M (Matthew – ‘Kaff’) RE (Fd)
LCpl Blake J (Justin) RE (Fd)
LCpl Brighton S (Stephen – ‘Taff’) RE (Fd)
LCpl BySouth R Sigs
LCpl Coleman R (Rob - ‘Paddy’) RE
LCpl Dews A (Adam) RE (Air)
LCpl Fullstone D (Dave) RE (Fd)
LCpl Grace D (Dave) ACC
LCpl Gill J (Jason – ‘Gilly’) REME
LCpl Grand N (Neil) RE (Photo) (Promoted from Spr, whilst on tour)
LCpl Harris S (Stuart – ‘Harry’) RE (Photo)
LCpl Horne G (Guy) RE (MT)
LCpl Palmer J (Jason - ‘Jas’) RE
LCpl Steele A (Antony – ‘Tony’) RE (Fd)
LCpl Walker W (Wesley – ‘Wez’) RE (Print) (Promoted from Spr, whilst on tour) (Also deployed to CRMD, Split)
LCpl Woodrow RE

Spr Adams C (Carl) RE (MT)
Spr Arlow M (Matt) RE (Tera)
Spr Chapman B (Brad) RE (Print)
Spr Douglas (‘Doogie’) RE (Print)
Spr Dykes J (‘Jas’) RE (Tera)
Spr Earle K (Kevin – ‘Kev’) RE (Tera)
Spr Faulkner S (Spencer – ‘Spen’) RE (Fd) (Also deployed to CRMD, Split, Croatia and MND (SE))

Spr Fife J (Jason) RE (Print)
Spr Garbett D (Darren) RE (Print)
Spr Giles A (Anthony) RE (Tera)
Spr Gough P (Paul – ‘Goughy’) RE (Print)
Spr King (‘Shink’) RE (Attached from 135 Indep Topo Sqn RE (V)) (Maps)
Spr Large T (Trevor) RE (Print)
Spr McEvoy M (Michael) RE (Fd)
Spr Mullins J (Jamie) RE (Tera)
Spr Piper D (Danny) RE
Spr Rawlinson RE (Print)
Spr Richards P (Peter) RE (Photo)

Spr Ryder RE
Spr Sergeant A (Andy) RE (Tera)
Spr Sharpe C (Chris) RE (Tera)
Spr Wilson R (Robert – ‘Bob’) (Maps) (Also deployed at CRMD, Split, Croatia)
Spr Wilson T (Thomas – ‘Tommy’) RE (Print)

Cfn Rose REME (3 Sep 96 – 29 Oct 96)

Pte Hicklin ACC
Pte Ward AGC

Visiting/Attached Personnel:

Col Walker A P (Peter) (Comd 42 Svy Engr Gp, Hermitage – 26 Sep 96 – 10 Oct 96)

Capt J (Jim) Gallagher RLC (The Mobile News Team “Bravo” – 4 Sep 96 – 6 Sep 96)
Capt C (Chris) Kinsville-Heine RE (The Mobile News Team “Bravo” – 4 Sep 96 – 6 Sep 96)

2Lt Martin M (Meddie) US Army Engrs

WO1 James M (Mick) RE (Fd) SMS (Bosnian GPS Trainer – 12 Sep 96 – 10 Oct 96)

SSgt Crewe S (Simon) RE (Tera) (SMS)
SSgt Murray P (Paul – ‘Scouse’) RE (Cbt Svyr) (Map Supply Branch, D Mil Svy (25 Oct 96 – 1 Nov 96)

Sgt Hales G (Graham) RA Svy Corps (Exercise Long Look - 23 Oct 96 – 18 Nov 96)

Mr Sleep P (Paul) Photo HIO, SMS (7 Sep 96 – 12 Sep 96)
Mr Gatley A (Alan) Map Supply HIO, SMS (25 Oct 96 – 1 Nov 96)

Other Geographic Personnel:

Lt Col Rigby RN (Nick) RE (Chief Geo, HQ ARRC (Main)

Maj Day J (John) RE (SO2Geo, HQ ARRC (Main)

Capt C (Craig) Cowans RE

WO1 M (Mick) Aspray RE

WO2 Furness N (Nigel) RE (Air) (CMD Fz, Split, Croatia)
WO2 Saunders C (Carl) RE (Print) (Geo Branch HQ ARRC (Main))

SSgt Winship D (Dave) RE (Carto) (CRMD, Delma 2 Warehouse, Split, Croatia)

Sgt Batey S (Stuart) RE (Air) (Bde Geo Sgt)
Sgt Simmonds R (Rik) (Tera) (RRFOS/HQ ARRC)

Cpl Barrett (‘Baz’) RE – Map Store HQ ARRC (Rear)

Cpl Metcalfe C (Chris) RE (Print) (Map Store, Zagreb, Croatia – (29 Aug 96 -)

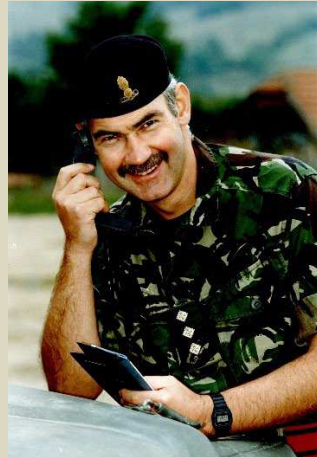
LCpl Burke C (Carl) RE (Fd) (Map Store, Zagreb, Croatia – (? – 30 Aug 96)

LCpl Elliott J (Jonathan - 'Paddy') RE (Fd) (Banja Luka) (Promoted from Spr, whilst on tour)

Spr Evans RE (CMD Fz, Split, Croatia)

Spr Harrison R (Richard – 'George') RE (Print) (CRMD, Delma 2 Warehouse, Split, Croatia)

Postscript: From Captain N J Collins RE



Once settled into a routine, the Squadron also looked to provide some humanitarian assistance to the local populace. The Squadron became heavily involved in various welfare ventures. On being introduced to the local priest, it was brought to our attention that the local school had very limited resources. Well, what's the point in being a map production unit if you can't divert a few expendables for a good cause? Colouring books, the collation of which proved to be the bane of everyone's life, were produced and gifted. Families back in Hermitage had got wind of our efforts and organised a collection of clothing and toys from the Newbury area. We were amazed at their efforts when the first 10 tri-wall containers arrived. The contents were gifted to the Kiseljak Roman Catholic Church, again on the advice of the local priest. However, we later found out to our dismay that the priest's friends and colleagues had first pick at the gifts. This forced a period of consolidation and research before we were confident to attempt more assistance.

We learned about a mental asylum in Pazaric and, after gaining clearance, a team carried out a visit. On what proved to be a difficult and emotional day, we found twelve staff looking after over 200 in-patients. Adults and children were treated in appalling conditions, and we were stunned by the sights and smells that we encountered. In particular, we will always remember the child who was picked up by the OC, Maj Ross Thurlow. The child had been continually banging his head against a wall and was subsequently bleeding from a wound. He acknowledged Ross with the broadest of smiles and hung on for a hug as if his life depended on it (Figure 84).

Again and again, the families back home rallied around and forwarded toys and clothes. In addition, on R&R, I was lucky to make the acquaintance of a lady in Hungerford who was responsible for coordinating the production of 'Teddies for Tragedies'. The idea was simple, we would give a needy child one teddy (in a draw string bag) so the bear was theirs to love, and the bear would protect whatever 'treasures' the child put inside the bag.

We handed the teddies out personally and brought smiles to all the children we encountered (Figures 80,81, 87 and 88). Finally, we travelled to an orphanage in Gromiljak and, again, witnessed some horrendous scenes. We explained the theory behind the teddies and were invited to deliver them, resulting in smiles from the younger children as they clutched their new possession (Figure 96). Unfortunately, the staff seemed to have different ideas on how the teddies would be used, pinning them to the walls for the children to watch. We insisted that this was not the intention, and, after much discussion, the bears were returned – one teddy, one child.

So, what did we learn from our experiences? In a conflict the meek, mild, and disabled appeared to suffer more than most. We felt that, with the assistance of families and friends in UK, we made a small difference to the lives of some adults and many children. In this case 'Welfare not Warfare' was an apt phrase.

Acknowledgements:

1. Lt Col (Retd) Stuart Fairnington RE for allowing the direct plagiarize of the excellent detail provided in his article, which was published in the Defence Ranger in 2010.
2. Newbury Weekly News for their kind permission to use the news article on the front cover and page 12.
3. Newbury and Thatcham Chronicle - Extensive research was carried out to try and locate the owners of the Newbury and Thatcham Chronicle, which stopped being published several years ago. Despite telephoning, leaving answer machine messages and email texts to a variety of organisations including the Reading Chronicle and Newquest we have never been able to contact anyone who can give permission to utilise the news article on page 36. The photographs and written text were generated by the Military Mobile News Team "Bravo" who carried out interviews so they could produce local boy stories for newspapers back in the UK.
4. Lt Col (Retd) Ian Thurgate RE for his expertise in proof reading and adding important content to the booklet.
5. Col (Retd) Ross Thurlow OBE (Late RE) for his expertise in proof reading and adding important content to the booklet.

The information for this booklet has been researched and compiled by Nick Collins (nickcllns7@aol.com) and Noel Grimmett (noel@burwells1.co.uk) in 2022/2023. We apologise for any personnel who have been omitted from this booklet because we did attempt to identify all those personnel who served and visited the GSG during the tenure of 13 Topo Sqn RE. Should anyone identify any errors, omissions or wish to suggest amendments please contact us at our email addresses.