



The Artillery Club – 31 Aug 17

TAKE POST - THE ARTILLERY CLUB's NEWSLETTER 3/2017



INTRODUCTION

Newsletter 2/2017 promulgated on 30 June, consisted of sections covering Governance, Activities, the Artillery Corps and Looking into the Past. The same format will be reflected in this Newsletter.

Since the publication of Newsletter 2/2017, through the medium of emails and website postings, members were provided with specific details for the Field Trip to the Glen, Wreath Laying Ceremony and the Golf Outing.

Particular issues within this Newsletter include the Club's Website, Activity Reports, Planned Activities, and finally News from the Regiments. Photographs are credited to the BBC, to Patrick Hugh Lynch and to the Club Membership.

The Newsletter's *Looking into the Past Section* contains an extract from an article written by "Chisel" titled "*Operation Chip Away*" on the establishment of Fort Shannon in 1942. The full article can be read on the Club's Website in the Publications Section.

The Director of Artillery, the Regimental Commanders and the School Commandant are requested to post this Newsletter on the Defence Forces IKON, circulate it to all PDF and AR Artillery officers under their command, and are encouraged to provide information for subsequent Newsletters.

Likewise, serving and retired personnel are encouraged to provide information, news and photographs, for publication in the Club's Newsletters.

Upcoming activities include the Decades' Reunion on 13 September in The Military College, the Foreign Field Trip to Lisbon from 01 to 05 October, and the Defence Forces Veterans Day on 08 October in the Defence Forces Training Centre.

The current version of the Club's Diary of Events for 2017 is attached as Annex A.

Once a Gunner – Always a Gunner

GOVERNANCE

2017 Outputs

To date, in addition to governance matters, the Committee approved three Newsletters before promulgation, significantly advanced the Website project, and executed or participated in eight activities.

Focus for 2017

Mindful of the objectives as prescribed in the Rules, the Club's focus remains on: executing appropriate activities, enhancing its Website, extending its Membership base, and participating in appropriate ceremonial and commemorative events.

Committee Outputs

Since the AGM, the Committee convened on four occasions: 26 January in McKee Barracks, on 23 February in Casement Aerodrome in Baldonnell, on 27 April in Collins Barracks Dublin, and on 29 June. The Committee will reconvene on 28 September in McKee Barracks.

To-date, the Committee has advanced the Club's Website, planned various activities, and successfully executed the visit to the Air Corps in Baldonnell on 23 February, the Lecture and Weapon Display in the National Museum of Ireland on 27 April, the Field Trip to Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa (5 Fd Arty Regt FCA) on 22 & 23 June, the Field Trip to the Glen on 13 July, the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the National Memorial on 22 July, and the Annual Golf Outing on 24 August in Glasson.

Communications

The circulation of Newsletters, Activity Information, Calling Notices and Death Notices is by means of posts on the Club's website and by email.

Going back to the first Newsletter, 1/2015 was distributed by email to 122 individuals. The Club's Email Contact List for this Newsletter is 228 individuals far exceeding the Membership strength of 155. Currently, 16 members are receiving Club information by means of normal post.

Web Site

The Club's Website is accessible through www.artilleryclub.ie. The Webmaster is Commandant Richard Armstrong (Retd).

Whereas the Website is now fully active, the posting of suitable material within various sections of the Menu, remains work in progress. Availing of the Website, the Club will endeavour to enhance awareness of its mission, objectives, governance and membership. The Website will provide information on a range of issues such as the Artillery Corps, Club Activities, Club Projects and Artillery Heritage.

Since the circulation of Newsletter 2/2017 on 30 June, the following postings were made on the Club's Website:

- **Posts – Homepage (5):** Newsletter 2/2017, Calling Notice Glen, Comdt Thomas P. Wickham 1919 - 1967, Wreath Laying and Golf Outing.
- **Field Trips – Homepage (1):** Glen Imaal.
- **Artillery Heritage - Homepage (1):** Revised Soldiers and Chiefs Exhibition.
- **Photo Gallery (3):** Glen Imaal, Wreath Laying and Golf Outing.
- **Publications – Information Section (6):**
 - **Artillery Corps:** An Cosantóir January 1974, and An Cosantóir September 1991.
 - **Artillery Units:** 5 Fd Arty Regt 21st Anniversary Review 1959 – 1980, 40th Anniversary 4 Fd Arty Regt – An Conantóir July 1983, Nominal Roll 4 Fd Arty Regt 1923 – 1983, 2 Fd Arty Regt Open Day 19 September 1992.
- **Links.** Activated links to external institutions and associations.

In due course, the procedures whereby the Club's membership can be involved in the provision of material, including photographs, will be circulated. In the interim, observations on the Website will be welcomed.

Committee's Short Term Priorities

The Club's short term priorities are: Website Enhancement, Decades' Reunion, finalising the Coordinating Instructions for Lisbon, and the Annual General Meeting scheduled for Friday, 02 December, in McKee Barracks.

ACTIVITIES

Diary of Events - 2017

The Club's activities are of an Artillery nature, hopefully appealing to a large number of members. Members are encouraged to offer recommendations for Club activities. The current version of the 2017 Diary of Events is attached as Annex A. The Diary remains iterative in nature and outlines activities which are associated with the Club's objectives.

The Club acknowledges the support provided by GOC Air Corps, GOC Defence Forces Training Centre, Commandant Lar Joye, Officers Commanding Custume Barracks and Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa, Regimental Commander 2 Artillery Regiment, School Commandant and the Glasson Hotel and Golf Club for events implemented during the first eight months of 2017.

Reports on Club Activities executed since the last Newsletter (2/2017), and information on future activities are outlined below.

National Day of Commemoration – 09 July



Members of the Club attended the Annual Remembrance Service and Wreath Laying Ceremony in the National Memorial Gardens, Islandbridge, on Saturday, 08 July, and the National Day of Commemoration in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, on Sunday, 09 July, 2017.

The Minute Gun for the ceremony on the National Day of Commemoration was fired by Gunners of the 2 Artillery Regiment.

Field Trip Glen Imaal – 13 July

An Artillery Corps Concentration took place in Glen Imaal, from 10 to 13 July, involving 320 gunners approx, fulfilling a number of training and operational requirements for 2017. The School Commandant, Lieutenant-Colonel Mervyn Farrell extended an invitation to the Artillery Club to attend the Live Firing Practices on Thursday, 13 July. Personnel of the 2 Field Artillery Regiment Association were also in attendance.



The Firing Parties were drawn from the 1 Arty Regt (120mm, deployed at Coan), the 2 Arty Regt (105mm deployed at Stranahely), and a Gunners / BTA Course (105mm deployed at Brennan's Farm). Fire Support Teams were deployed at Leitrim OP, Ogham Stone & Keogh's House.



Assembling at Leitrim OP, thirty serving and retired members of the Artillery Club participated in the Field Trip. Following a light lunch, Regimental Sergeant-Major John Morris provided an extensive brief on Fire Support Teams. Commandant Greg Burnes was the Club's host at Stranahely Gun Position. Attendees witnessed Empty Guns, with BQMS Godkin, RQMS Whelan and RQMS Wade firing their Last Round.



Following the day's Live Firing Practices, all Artillery Corps personnel paraded in Coolmoney Camp, and were addressed by the Director of Training Colonel Ray Yorke, who also formally opened the Brown Hall, in the presence of the late Commandant Dave Brown's wife Mary, daughter Laura and mother.



Brigadier-General Paul Pakenham (Retd), Club President, presented the Captain Jack Jones (RIP) Perpetual Trophies to the Best Students from the recent Young Officers Course namely Lieutenant Alex Quigley, 2 Arty Regt, and Gun Detachment Commanders Courses, namely and Corporal Wiggins, 1 Arty Regt (2017) and Corporal O'Donoghue, 2 Arty Regt (2016).

Thereafter, all attendees availed of an enjoyable BBQ kindly hosted by the Artillery School.

Wreath Laying – National Memorial Merrion Square – Saturday 22 July



By kind permission of the military authorities, and a formal invitation from Lieutenant-Colonel Dermot Hanifin, the Club's President laid a wreath at the National Memorial, on Saturday, 22 July. The Military Guard was mounted by the 2 Artillery Regiment during the period 1200hrs to 1300hrs. Major-General Kevin Cotter, Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) and Brigadier-General Howard Berney, GOC 2 Brigade were present. The Master of Ceremonies was Lieutenant Sarah O'Donnell, 2 Artillery Regiment and Lieutenant Alex Quigley was OIC of the Military Guard drawn from the 2 Artillery Regiment.



The event was well attended by the Club's membership and relatives of those Gunners who died in service at home and on peacekeeping duties. Attendance included Lieutenant-Colonel Brian Wickham (Retd) who laid a wreath on behalf of his father Commandant Thomas Wickham RIP who was killed in action on 07 June 1967 on the Golan Heights – see Newsletter 2/2017. The 2 Field Artillery Regiment Association, IUNVA and ONET were also in attendance.



The National Memorial was unveiled by President Mary McAleese in November 2008 and is the National Memorial to members of the Defence Forces, Óglaigh na hÉireann, who died in the service of the State. It is a place of contemplation and remembrance, where families, relatives and members of the public can reflect on the sacrifice our fallen comrades have made for Ireland.



The pyramid shape of the memorial, which was designed by Brian King, captures references to burial and is a standing testament to the dead. It also reflects the shape of a military tent. Within the pyramid, four bronze figures, representing all elements of the Defence Forces, stand guard over the eternal flame that emanates from the badge of the Defence Forces. The flame burns in perpetual memory of those members of the Defence Forces who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Golf Competition – Glasson Hotel and Golf Club - Thursday 24 August



The Artillery Club's Annual Golf Outing took place on 24 August, at the Glasson Hotel and Golf Club, Killinure Cottage, Glasson, Athlone, County Westmeath. Club members, spouses, partners and guests participated in the golf competition, and later were joined by non-golfers for an enjoyable dinner in the Hotel. 23 attended the event.

Thankfully, the weather was conducive for enjoyable rounds of golf.

A total of 17 golfers took part in the Single Stapleford competition, including 3 lady visitors.

Confined to serving and retired members of the Artillery Corps, the Captain Jack Jones Perpetual Trophy was won by Captain Tom Nolan (Retd), a previous winner of the trophy, with a score of 33 points. Mrs Rosemarie Twomey won the Ladies' Visitors Prize with a score of 31 points.



Commandant Frank and Joan Cavanagh of Biocycle Ltd sponsored the Mens' prize fund, with and Commandant Michael and Ita Flood sponsoring the Ladies' prize fund.

The Committee acknowledges the Club's Golf Organiser, Commandant Chris O'Flanagan (Retd) and the support provided by the Glasson Country House Hotel and Golf Club. A sincere thank you to Lieutenant-Colonel Ray Twomey (Retd), who liaised with the Hotel and coordinated the successful event.

We look forward to next year's outing which will be fifteenth year of competition for the Captain Jack Jones Perpetual Trophy.

Artillery Decades' Reunion - Anniversary of PDF, FCA and AR Commissioning 1947-2017, Visit to Cadet School and Lunch in Mil Col – Wednesday 13 September – Coordinator: Colonel Mick Smyth (Retd)

The Committee remains grateful for the support of Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Byrne DSM, Commandant The Cadet School, for supporting this annual event now in its second year.

Attendees will RV in the Cadet's Mess for coffee at 1100hrs and will be received by the Class Officers and Cadets currently in training. Attendees will be provided an opportunity of reviewing their respective class photograph albums, will visit Cadet accommodation and view the personal kit issued to Cadets.

Thereafter, attendees will move to Pearse Hall where they will receive a brief from Lieutenant-Colonel Byrne, which will be followed by lunch in the Officers' Mess. The cost of the lunch is in the region of €15, including a glass of wine.

The College Commandant Colonel Michael Dawson and Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Byrne will be the Club's guests at the lunch. The Club is also sponsoring Lieutenant Brian Clarke, 2 Artillery Regiment and 2/Lieutenant Patrick Fitzgerald, 1 Artillery Regiment, commissioned in 2017.

Gunner Officers of the Permanent Defence Force, An Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúil and the Army Reserve officers commissioned in 1947, 57, 67, 77, 87, 97, 07, 17, who have yet to indicate their attendance are requested to contact President (ppakenham@eircom.net) and / or the Event Coordinator (michaelsmyth007@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

Dress: Serving Officers: SD2, Retired Officers: Jacket and Tie.

**Field Trip – Portuguese Artillery School – 01 through 05 October – Coordinator:
Commandant Michael Flood (Retd)**



As reported in previous Newsletters, the Club's 2017 Foreign Field Trip takes place from Sunday, 01 October to Thursday, 05 October visiting Lisbon, Portugal. See posting on Website. The trip centralises on a visit to the Portuguese School of Arms, which includes The Artillery School, in Mafra, on Tuesday 03 October. The programme is as follows:

- **Sunday 01 October:** Travel Day,
- **Monday 02 October:** Free Day,
- **Tuesday 03 October:** Visit to School of Arms (with lunch in the Mess) and guided tour of the National Palace of Mafra,
- **Wednesday 04 May:** Visit to the Military Museum of Lisbon and to the Castle of São Jorge,
- **Thursday 05 October:** Travel Day.



A visit to Sintra on Monday is being explored. The School of Arms is kindly providing transport on Tuesday for the visit to Mafra.

Brigadier-General João Manuel de Sousa Ormonde Mendes is the Commandant of the School of Arms. From 2000 to 2003, he was Military Advisor at the NATO's Portuguese Delegation and at the Portuguese Permanent Representation in the European Union. In 2004, he was a National Expert Deployed at the European Defence Agency.

Participation in the Field Trip remains open to members of the Artillery Club and their spouses, or partners. Currently, 30 individuals are taking part in the Field Trip.

ARTILLERY CORPS

Recent Appointments

The Committee conveys its best wishes to the following Gunner Officers on their recent appointments:

- Col Ray Yorke, D J7
- Col Brian Cleary, D Combat Support, ISTAR and D Arty, on return from UNIFIL
- Col Tom O’Callaghan, Sch Comdt, C&S Sch
- Col Tim Daly, D MP
- Lt Col Pat Moore, Sch Comdt Mil Admin Sch, on return from UNIFIL
- Lt Col Daragh McKevitt, former OC 1 Arty Regt now EO J4
- Lt Col Karl O’Sullivan, OC 1 Arty Regt, on return from EU Battlegroup
- Lt Col Shane Bradley, HQ DFTC on return from UNIFIL
- Lt Col Niall. Verling, HQ 1 Bde, on promotion
- Lt Col John Prendergast, Sch Comdt Arty Sch, on return from Irish Mil Rep Brussels
- Lt Col Mervin Farrell, OC 2 Arty Regt
- Comdt Derek Hanley, HQ DFTC on return from UNIFIL

Overseas Appointments

The Committee wishes successful tours and safe return journey home to the following Artillery Corps officers who are currently serving overseas, or due to deploy on overseas duty in the coming months:

- Col Paul Whelan, Irish Mil Rep Staff Brussels
- Lt Col John MacCrann, Irish Mil Rep Staff Brussels
- Lt Col Dermot Hanifin OC 2 Arty Regt, and designated OC 56 Inf Gp, UNDOF

Commemoration – Battle of Passchendaele 30 / 31 July



Between the 31 July and 10 November 1917, an estimated 320,000 allied and between 260,000 and 400,000 German casualties resulted from heavy fighting for a movement of the front line of only 8 kilometres in the West Flanders region of Belgium.

On 30 and 31 July, ceremonies were held marking the centenary of Passchendaele, the Third Battle of Ypres. Photographs are of Colonel Paul Whelan and Lieutenant-Colonel Johnny McCrann from the Irish Military Representative in Brussels, participating in the ceremonies.

56 Infantry Group – UNDOF



The 2 Artillery Regiment is the lead unit for the 56 Infantry Group deploying to the Golan Heights in September. As part of its initial training, the Regiment conducted an APC Commander's and Dismount Course with Lieutenant Alex Quigley and Corporal Fergal McLoughlin as the Chief Instructors. Mission Readiness Exercise takes place in September.

LOOKING INTO THE PAST

Extract from An Cosaintoir January 1974

Operation “Chip Away”

“Early in 1942, Maj. Gen. M. J. Costello, G.O.C. First Division, the anchor man of the Wartime Army and an avuncular figure to all officers of his formation, directed that a coast defence installation would be established on the R. Shannon.

In May of that year the Corps of Engineers was thus committed to construct the first major seaward defence to be planned and executed by Irishmen in their own country. In that context it was to be a unique and historic undertaking.

The location near Tarbert, on the Shannon Estuary, had been decided not without considerable argument on the relative tactical merits of Tarbert Island and Ardmore Point, the eventual site.

The concept provided for six inch gun emplacements, with magazines and connecting tunnels together with search light emplacements, engine rooms, directing station, electricity supply station and living accommodation with associated services including water supply and roads.

Except for the living accommodation all the installations involved a major rock blasting programme to ensure adequate overhead cover for guns, search lights and engines.

The main armament to be installed was two six inch naval guns salvaged, the author believes, from H.M.S. Sydney which had seen action in W.W.I. The defence scheme provided for installing these guns in reinforced concrete emplacements.

The size of the project required a work force of two companies and a section of field engineers diluted with an infantry company and a company of the Construction Corps.”

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Serving and retired Gunner Officers are encouraged to provide information, news and photographs, for publication in the Club's Newsletters.

Once a Gunner – Always a Gunner.

THE ARTILLERY CLUB

August 2017

Annex A: Diary of Events (V 31 Aug 17)



ARTILLERY CLUB's DIARY of Events – 2017

(Changes since previous iteration highlighted in yellow)

Date	Event	Coordinator	Remarks
26 January	Committee Meeting – McKee Barracks	Secretary	Minutes circulated on 13 February
23 Feb	Field Trip – Air Corps, Casement Aerodrome	Col S. McDermott (Retd)	27 Attendees including 4 Guests
23 February	Committee Meeting – Casement Aerodrome – 1500hrs	Secretary	Minutes circulated on 23 February
27 April	National Museum Ireland, Collins Bks, Dublin	Comdt Lar Joye	18 attendees including 1 Guest
27 April	Committee Meeting – Collins Barracks	Secretary	Minutes Circulated 23 May
22/23 June	Field Trip – Dún Uí Mhaoilíosa (5 Fd Arty Regt FCA).	Col C. Fitzsimons (Retd)	17 Attendees including 3 Guests
29 June	Committee Meeting – McKee Barracks	Secretary	Minutes Circulated
08 July	Commemoration - Islandbridge	President	Club Represented
09 July	National Day of Commemoration - RHK	President	Club Represented
13 July	Arty Shoot – Glen Imaal	Col S. McDermott (Retd)	30 Attendees (Serving & Retired)
22 July	Wreath Laying, National Memorial, Merrion Square	President	Club Represented
24 August	Annual Golf Competition & Dinner – Glasson Hotel Golf Club	Comdt C. O'Flanagan (Retd) Lt Col R. Twomey (Retd)	23 Attendees
13 September	Arty Decades' Reunion - Anniversary of PDF, FCA and AR Commissioning 1947-2017, Visit to Cadet School and Lunch in Military College	Col M. Smyth (Retd)	
08 October	Defence Forces Veterans' Day - DFTC	Secretary	
28 September	Committee Meeting – McKee Barracks	Secretary	
01 – 05 Oct	Field Trip – Portuguese Artillery School, Lisbon	Comdt M. Flood (Retd)	
11 November	Wreath Laying & Annual Mass – McKee Barracks	Secretary	
01 December	AGM and St Barbara's Day Lunch – McKee Bks	Secretary	