



TAKE POST - THE ARTILLERY CLUB'S NEWSLETTER 2/2020



INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Newsletter 1/2020 on 27 February, the Covid-19 pandemic has completely curtailed the Artillery Club's activities.

Stay Safe, Stay Well and Stay Connected.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this Newsletter is to inform the Club's membership of the situation regarding the 2020 activities.

Following an assessment of the evolving Covid-19 situation, prevailing Government advice, the Club's responsibilities for its members including serving personnel, and in partnership with the appropriate actors involved in the Field Trips, without hesitation, on 12 March, the Club's Committee decided to cancel the Field Trip to the Ordnance School and the National Stud, and the Field Trip to Fort Shannon, Foynes Flying Boat Museum, and deferred the events to 2021.

Likewise, for the same reasons, on 22 May, the Club's Committee deferred until 2021, the Decades' Reunion and the Foreign Field Trip to London. Currently, the 2020 Golf Outing remains under review.

The Committee apologises for any inconvenience caused to those members who intended to participate in the cancelled events. Hopefully, those who accrued travel and accommodation costs will be refunded by the providers.

Details of this Operational Pause are contained in the Activities Section of this Newsletter. On 22 May, the modified Diary of Events for 2020 was posted on the Club's website, and is attached as Annex A.

In addition to the Activities Section, Newsletter 2/2020 includes: Promotion of a Gunner Officer to the General rank, Joint Task Force for Covid-19, Governance, Activity Update, News from the Artillery Corps, and Looking into the Past. Photographs are credited to the Defence Forces Press Office and Club Membership.

Looking into the Past recalls Anti-Aircraft Searchlights 1939 – 1946, with an extract of an article written by Sergeant Jimmy Madden, and published in 1989 in a commemorative magazine marking the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of the 1 Air Defence Regiment.

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

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

PROMOTION to GENERAL RANK



All members of the Artillery Club salute and congratulate Brigadier-General Brian Cleary on his recent promotion to General Rank, and on his appointment by the Chief of Staff, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM, as Commander of the Joint Task Force, Defence Forces Headquarters, on 19 March.

A native of Athlone, Co. Westmeath, Brigadier-General Cleary enlisted in Permanent Defence Force in 1981 as a member of the 58 Cadet Class. He was commissioned in 1983, appointed to the Artillery Corps and posted to the 2 Field Artillery Regiment, garrisoned in McKee Barracks. He was Regimental Commander of both the 2 Field Artillery Regiment and the 7 Field Artillery Regiment (FCA, and the Commandant of the Artillery School.

Throughout his career, Brigadier-General Cleary has held a range of command and staff appointments in the Artillery Corps, the Army Ranger Wing, The Military College and in Defence Forces Headquarters. He has extensive overseas service with the United Nations, with EU and with NATO deploying to Lebanon, Western Sahara, East Timor, Cote D'Ivoire, Chad, and Afghanistan.

A graduate of The Military College, Brigadier-General Cleary holds a Master's Degree in Organisational Behaviour from Trinity College, Dublin and a Master's Degree in Leadership, Management & Defence Studies from NUI Maynooth.

Prior to his promotion, Brigadier-General Cleary was Director J3 / J5 Planning and Operations Branch.

A valued and active member of the Artillery Club, we wish both Brigadier-General Cleary and his wife Martina, continued success in the future.

Joint Task Force

Garrisoned in McKee Barracks, and under the command of Brigadier-General Brian Cleary, the Joint Task Force (JTF) was established on 19 March. Staffed by personnel from the three components of the Defence Forces, and both the Permanent Defence Force and Army Reserve, the JTF became fully operational on 26 March.



In addition to Brigadier-General Brian Cleary, members of the Artillery Club on the staff of the JTF include Lieutenant-Colonel Shane Bradley (J9), with both Commandant Lar Joye (AR) and Commandant Ronal Flood (AR) assigned to Information Management.

The JTF acts as the centre of gravity for all Defence Forces nationwide support to the civil authorities and principal response agencies throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, The JTF plans and coordinates the implementation of *Operation Fortitude*, utilising capabilities from the Army, Naval Service and Air Corps.

In the case of coronavirus pandemic, the JTF provides, within means and capabilities, Aid to the Civil Authorities with priority to the Department of Health and the Health Service Executive.

Army, Air Corps and Naval Service capabilities, combined for the purpose of conducting operations, are placed under command to Brigadier-General Cleary for the duration of their contribution to the Public Health emergency.

Additionally, the JTF has an ‘inter-agency’ capacity and, if requested, can host Government officials, agencies, and authorities, in its Headquarters in McKee Barracks.

GOVERNANCE

Focus for 2020

Mindful of the Club’s objectives as prescribed in the Rules, and the prevailing coronavirus environment, the short to medium term focus is to provide appropriate material and social support to our retired comrades, and the families of those serving personnel who require assistance in these challenging times.

2020 Committee

Since the 2019 AGM, the Committee convened on two occasions: 16 January and 19 February. The Committee’s meetings scheduled for 23 April and 25 June were cancelled on account of Covid-19. Hopefully, the Committee will reconvene on 24 September in McKee Barracks.

To-date, the Committee has developed the diary of events for 2020, conducted initial planning for the various activities, and successfully executed the Field Trip to Collins Barracks, Dublin on 19 February. Communicating by means of collective emails, and on the basis of Government advice on Covid-19, the Committee, availing of “silence procedure”, made decisions such as the planned activities for 2020.

Communications

In addition to posting information on the Club’s Web site, the circulation of Newsletters, Activity Information, Calling Notices and Death Notices is primarily by means of email.

Newsletter 1/2015 was distributed by email to 122 individuals. The Club’s Email Contact List for this Newsletter is 331 individuals, far exceeding the Membership strength of 181. Currently, 15 members are receiving Club information by means of normal post.

Membership

Membership of the Artillery Club is open to all serving and retired commissioned Artillery officers of the Permanent Defence Force, An Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúil and the Army Reserve.

As of 31 May, the membership is 181, compared with 96 in October 2014.

Potential members are requested to contact the Membership Secretary Colonel McDermott (Retd), Woodenbridge, Ballybrittas, Co Laois, or email: seamus.mcdermott@gmail.com.

Membership Subscriptions

Subscriptions for the current year were due on 01 November, 2019. The preferred option of paying Membership Subscription (€10) is by Standing Order. The Committee is grateful of those members who are continue to pay their subscriptions by Standing Order.

Web Site

The Club's Website is accessible through www.artilleryclub.ie. The Website provides a library of relative information on the Artillery Corps and the Artillery Club. The Website remains the primary communications instrument for the Artillery Club. Since the circulation of Newsletter 2/2020, the following postings were made on the Club's Website:

- **Posts – Homepage (4):** Newsletter 1/2020, Covid-19, Calling Notice Defence Forces Review, and Modified Calendar of Events.
- **Events:** Modified 2020 Calendar.
- **Publications – Information Section (1):**
 - **Artillery Units:** Origins of 2 Fd Arty Regt, 1943 – 1948, Comdt W. Donnelly

Currently, the Picture Gallery contains 29 albums reflecting the Artillery Corps, and 42 Albums covering the activities of the Artillery Club.

Only a small portion of the restructured Website requires text population including *Artillery Corps Disposition and History*, and *Corps Units' Disposition and History*.

Members are invited to provide material, including photographs and videos, for inclusion in the Website. In the interim, observations on the Website are always welcomed.

Artillery Wing Curragh Military Museum

The Artillery Club's Working Group continues to actively engage with the Museum Curator Lt Col Des Healy. The Working Group is in the process of collecting a comprehensive range of Artillery artifacts from a benefactor in Cork. The Club retains an over-watch posture regarding the restoration of the Civil War 18-pounder QF Field Gun.



In 1986, the Swedish Erickson Giraffe PSS-70 (also referred to as the Giraffe 40) was delivered to the 1 Air Defence Regiment, in order to provide automated target acquisition and tracking for the RBS 70 systems. The Giraffe 40 was mounted on a MAN 20:280 DFAEG 6

x 6 truck. In 2008, the single truck mounted Giraffe 40 was replaced by a number of enhanced Giraffe G 50 radars, mounted on Swedish Bv 206 tracked vehicles.

During the month of May, the Artillery School facilitated the transfer of the decommissioned Giraffe 40 for permanent display in the Museum (pictured above). Any assistance in securing 1 Air Defence Regiment transport decals for the truck mounted Giraffe 40 will be appreciated by the Museum Curator.

The Museum's recently launched Twitter account is highly recommended, and can be accessed: @CurraghMuseum

Committee's Short Term Priorities

The Club's short-term priorities are: COVID-19 support for our retired colleagues, monitoring Government advice in the context of Committee meetings, the Annual Golf Outing, the 2020 AGM and St Barbara's Day Lunch.

ACTIVITIES

Diary of Events – 2020 – Operation Pause

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. As already mentioned in the Introduction, on account of COVID-19, most of the 2020 activities have been cancelled, the majority of which are deferred to 2021. Planning files have been retained for a more favourable opportunity.

The modified 2020 Diary of Events reflects this situation, was posted on the Club's Website on 22 May, and is attached as Annex A.

Field Trip to Ordnance School and The National Stud: 23 April



On account of COVID-19, on 12 March, the Committee cancelled this Field Trip, with the likelihood of including it in the 2021 calendar of events. The Committee acknowledges the significant work conducted by the event coordinators Colonel Tom Carter (Retd) and Colonel Seamus McDermott (Retd), and the support pledged by GOC DFTC Brigadier-General Dave Dignam, by Lieutenant-Colonel Neil Kelly OC Ordnance School, and by the management and staff of the Irish National Stud.

Field Trip to Fort Shannon & Foynes: 28/29 May



On account of COVID-19, on 12 March, the Committee cancelled this Field Trip, with the likelihood of including it in the 2021 calendar of events. The Committee acknowledges the trojan work conducted by the event coordinator Captain Pete Murray (Retd), and the support pledged by Lieutenant-Colonel Pat Murnane OC 12 Infantry Battalion & Sarsfield Barracks, by the management and staff of Foynes Flying Boat Museum, the Bridwell Visitor Centre, Bunratty House Hotel, Bunratty Castle Folk Park's Corn Barn, the ESB's Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme at Árd na Crusha, and St John's Castle in Limerick.

In particular, the Committee acknowledges the advice and support for the planned visit to Fort Shannon (Coast Defence Artillery), kindly provided by Commandant Tom Martin (AR) and Mr T.J. McCarron of the Ballybunion Coast Guard.

For an aerial view of Fort Shannon, courtesy of Irish Military Story, please click link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/Irelandsmilitarystory/videos/1265842880182232/>

Annual Golf Competition & Dinner - Birr: 20 August (Comdt Chris O'Flanagan Retd & Comdt Michael Flood Retd).



Should it fall within Government guidelines, and in the best interests of potential participants, the Committee will issue a Calling Notice later. Arrangements are in place with Dooleys Hotel and Birr Golf Club.

Arty Decades' Reunion - Anniversary of PDF, FCA and AR Commissioning 1940 - 2020, 09 September (Col Mick Smyth Retd).



This annual event in The Military College, now in its fifth year, have been deferred to 2021.

Foreign Field Trip London: 04 – 08 October



On account of COVID-19, on 22 May, the Committee cancelled this Foreign Field Trip, with the likelihood of including it in the 2021 calendar of events during the month of October.

The Committee acknowledges the exceptional and much appreciated work conducted by the event coordinator Commandant Michael Flood (Retd), the advice and support provided by the UK's Defence Attaché Colonel Darren Doherty, and the cooperation received from Captain Henry Redshaw of the King's Troop RHA, Major Ned Shanklyn of the Honourable Artillery Company, the National Army Museum, and the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

The Committee is mindful of financial outlays and inconvenience caused to some of the participants, and understands that the recommended hotel (Premier Inn, Tower Hill London), will honour the refunding of all booked accommodation if cancelled 30 days before date of arrival.

ARTILLERY CORPS

Promotions. The Committee joins all members of the Artillery Club in congratulating the following Gunner Officers who have been promoted to the rank of Commandant, and wish them continued success in their respective military careers:

- Commandant Ronan Flood (AR), 2 Cavalry Squadron (Formally 2 Air Defence Battery) and
- Commandant Fitzpatrick (AR) Battery Commander 5 Battery, 2 Artillery Regiment

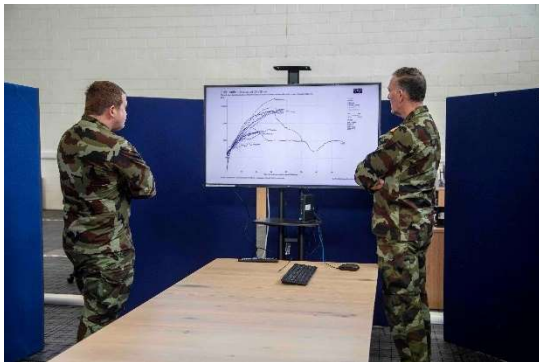
Appointments. The Committee joins all members of the Artillery Club in congratulating the following Gunner Officers on recent appointments

- Colonel Tom O’Callaghan: Military Advisor at Ireland’s Permanent Mission to the OSCE (Vienna), and
- Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrann (P): Military Advisor at Ireland’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations (New York).

Operation Fortitude

The Artillery Club commends the significant Defence Forces support provided to the Government and Civil Authorities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Likewise, we salute the valuable material and social support provided by ONE, IUNVA, and ARCO to vulnerable Veterans, and to the families of some serving personnel who find themselves in need at this difficult time.

The Defence Forces, including the Artillery School and Artillery Regiments, have deployed a broad range of capabilities supporting the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, the National Ambulance Service, the Department of Housing Planning & Local Government, and Civil Authorities to counter COVID-19.



By the 31 May, an average of 446 personnel were deployed daily by the Defence Forces nationwide. In addition to COVID-19-related taskings, routine Defence & Security Operations are being conducted at vital installations, and at sea and in the air protecting our national maritime domain.

Deployed capabilities include: Testing, Medical Triage Call Centre, Construction and Maintenance of Tented Triage facilities and Test Centres, Security and Marshalling, Production and Assembly of PPE and Sanitising Equipment, and Convoy Transfer of PPE Supplies.



The Front-Line Providers include a significant number of Army Reserve personnel such as Corporal Michael Kelly (above), who is an Advanced Paramedic based in Roscommon covering the Western / Midlands area, and serves with 5 Battery, 2 Artillery Regiment. His Regimental colleagues can be seen above loading PPE for the HSE in Dublin Airport.

Overseas pre-deployment training, deployment and repatriation challenges for all Defence Forces overseas troop commitments, which are impacted by COVID-19, remain a key Defence Forces priority.

The following is a link to a You Tube video, in which the Chief of Staff, Vice-Admiral Mark Mellett DSM pays tribute to personnel of the Defence Forces in supporting the Government and HSE in the fight against COVID-19:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hfr4RaeP85s&feature=share>

116 Infantry Battalion



On 04 March, personnel of the 1 Artillery Regiment and 2 Artillery Regiment conducted a mortar shoot in Glen Imaal as part of the pre-deployment training for UNIFIL.

55th Artillery Young Officers Course



On 02 March, Young Officers Course commenced with basic artillery training conducted in the 1 and 2 Artillery Regiments. Students are the 10 officers of the 95 Cadet Class posted to the Artillery Corps on 20 February. The duration of the course is 25 weeks.

NATO Workshop: Women - Peace and Security



Brigadier-General Ger Buckley, Military Representative to the EU Military Committee and NATO PfP, and Colonel Paul Whelan participated in a NATO hosted workshop in Brussels on 02 March on Women – Peace and Security.

UN Security Council Resolution (October 2000) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) was hailed as a turning point for women involved in Peace Support Operations.

LOOKING INTO THE PAST

Anti-Aircraft Searchlights 1939 – 1946, an extract of an article written by Sergeant Jimmy Madden, and published in 1989 in a commemorative magazine marking the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of the 1 Air Defence Regiment.



Searchlights were first introduced in the Defence Forces in 1939 when the first Searchlight Cadre was formed. The cadre was composed of regular army personnel drawn from various infantry units and were billeted in Ceannt Barracks, Curragh Camp. The cadre who were now members of the Corps of Engineers under the command of Lt J.N. Kilcullen did their searchlight training in Hare Park. The equipment used in training was the Searchlight Lamp, Mk111 sound locator and a GOY lorry. The lorry was specifically designed for Searchlight work. It had a crew compartment, a large generator, and switchboard. After initial training the cadre moved to McKee Barracks Dublin. The cadre was augmented with

members of the volunteer force, and with an Engineer officer Lt M.J. McLoughin who died tragically in the Glen Imaal mine explosion in September 1941.

The cadre moved to Gormanston Camp for night exercises with Air Corps aircraft and AA Artillery units. On completion of these exercises, the cadre was transferred into the AA Artillery Corps. In 1940, six Searchlight outposts were set up around Dublin City:

- *Howth Summit,*
- *Bull Wall,*
- *Pidgeon House,*
- *Blackrock Park,*
- *Sandycove, and*
- *Sorento Park, Dalkey.*

In 1941, following the bombing of South Circular Road, a mobile outpost operated at night in the Phoenix Park. The same year the unit moved to Ballsbridge and from there a mobile unit operated from Herbert Park. Around the coast were what was known as “Lookout Posts” manned by personnel from Coast Watching Service. Reports were passed to Air Defence Command in Dublin Castle which had a direct line to the Searchlight and Gun outposts.

As Britain was under constant aerial bombardment, it was understandable that the sound of aircraft was constantly being reported to Air Defence Command, resulting in the Searchlight and Gun outposts being continually called into action stations day and night. There were several isolated engagements with beligerant aircraft, but the most serious was the North Strand bombing on 31 May 1941 in which 36 people were killed and hundreds injured and left homeless.

The Searchlight outpost consisted of two NCOs and twelve men. In 1946 all Gun and Searchlight had been vacated, troops and equipment returned to barracks and the outposts dismantled.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

Serving and retired personnel are encouraged to provide information, news and photographs, for publication in the Club’s Newsletters.

Once a Gunner – Always a Gunner

THE ARTILLERY CLUB

05 June 2020

Annex A: Diary of Events (V 22 May 20)



ARTILLERY CLUB's DIARY of Events – 2020

(Changes since previous iteration highlighted in yellow)

Date	Event	Coordinator	Remarks
16 January	Committee Meeting: McKee Barracks	Secretary	Minutes Circulated
19 February	Field Trip: Irish Wars 1919 - 1923, Collins Barracks, Dublin	Comdt Lar Joye	25 Attendees. Photos on website
19 February	Committee Meeting:	Secretary	Minutes Circulated
23 April	Field Trip: Ordnance School and National Stud	Col Tom Carter (Retd) Col S. McDermott (Retd)	Deferred to 2021 on 11 March
23 April	Committee Meeting: Officers' Mess, McKee Barracks	Secretary	Cancelled 11 March
09 May	Defence Forces Veterans' Day: Collins Bks, Dublin	Secretary	Cancelled 18 March
28/29 May	Field Trip: Fort Shannon, Foynes Flying Boat Museum, Bunnratty, Árd na Crusha and St John's Castle	Capt Pete Murray (Retd)	Deferred to 2021 on 11 March
TBA	Arty Shoot – Glen Imaal	Col S. McDermott (Retd)	
25 June	Committee Meeting: McKee Barracks	Secretary	Cancelled on 22 May 20
11 July	Commemoration - Islandbridge	President	
12 July	National Day of Commemoration	President	
20 August	Annual Golf Competition & Dinner: Birr	Comdt O'Flanagan (Retd) Comdt M. Flood (Retd)	Under Review, Go/NoGo Later
09 September	Arty Decades' Reunion - Anniversary of PDF, FCA and AR Commissioning 1950-2020, Visit to Cadet School and Lunch in Military College	Col M. Smyth (Retd)	Deferred to 2021 on 22 May
24 September	Committee Meeting: McKee Barracks	Secretary	
04 – 08 Oct	Foreign Field Trip: Artillery Installations, London	Comdt M. Flood (Retd)	Deferred to 2021 on 22 May
TBA Nov	Annual Mass & Wreath Laying &: McKee Barracks	Secretary	
04 December	AGM and St Barbara's Day Lunch: McKee Barracks	Secretary	