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File: 216/ASA/G1

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Airborne Signals Association Members

THE AIRBORNE SIGNALS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER 2011

Foreword by the Squadron Commander Major A R Fawcett ROYAL SIGNALS

Welcome to this year's edition of the Airborne Signals Association Newsletter. Since the last edition the Squadron has been absorbed with Operation HERRICK 13, in either its preparation, execution, or support. In addition to this the Squadron has maintained its support to other Brigade and Corps activities.

Operation HERRICK 13 has seen the Squadron employed across the area of operations from providing the Task Force Helmand Headquarters in Lashkar Gah to supporting the infantry battlegroups with embedded Rear Link Detachments and including mentoring roles with Afghan National Security Forces. Our soldiers, once again, are demonstrating that they are flexible of mind and keen in spirit as they tackled demanding yet different challenges throughout the tour.

During an incident whilst working with 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment's battlegroup it is with great sadness that Corporal Steven Dunn was killed in action. He was the epitome of the Airborne Soldier and will be missed.

After a period of post operational tour leave the Squadron is uplifting to the latest evolution of Bowman and later in the year is shifting its focus back to the Contingency Operations role which will see it concentrating on core Airborne Task Force skills.

The Squadron's deployment period spanned last year's Caythorpe weekend and as a result its Rear Operations Group ran with the event, with the associated reduced capacity, however this year you will see the whole Squadron involved.

The Squadron continues to participate in Brigade and Corps sports with individuals competing at Corps and Army level. The Squadron is looking forward to the Lanyard Trophy competition this September with its goal being to return to its rightful home.

'Go to it'!



NEWS FROM THE TROOPS..... A Sample of Squadron life on and off Operations

Caythorpe Airborne Signals Remembrance Event 2010 by SSgt Russ Fyfe

With the majority of 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron deploying on Operation HERRICK 13, the Unit Rear Ops, under the Command of the Squadron Second in Command Capt Keith Dunwoody deployed to the village of Caythorpe in Lincolnshire over the period 2 – 5 Sep 10 to commemorate the 1st Airborne Division's deployment to Arnhem in 1944.

The build-up started many months before the event under the new Squadron MTO, Capt Paul Jordan. A 32 man Advance Party from the Squadron deployed to Caythorpe under SSgt Russ Fyfe and SSgt Buz Bury. The Advance Party's responsibilities were to assist the villagers of Caythorpe in setting up for the fete and aiding the Vicar of Caythorpe Church in the preparation of St Vincent's Church and the surrounding grounds for the commemorative service on Sunday 5 Sep 10.

Friday 3 Sep 10 saw the old comrades from the Airborne Signals Association and other associations as well as past members of the Squadron who are still serving within the Corps descend onto Caythorpe for a few drinks in the pubs around the village.

The village fete was held on Saturday 4 Sep 10 on the village sports fields. This year the Squadron had a limited part to play providing one stand in the form of the PRI shop. That evening the Officers, SNCOs and a selection of junior ranks joined the veterans and villagers in enjoying the annual Airborne Signals Association dinner night which was planned and organised by SSgt Niall Marshall. The meal was excellent and included entertainment from a Corps piper SSgt Niall Anderson and speeches by the Squadron Second in Command and the guest speaker, Maj Lewis Golden OBE JP FCA.

The weekend culminated with a church parade in the village. The parade, taken by WO2 (SSM) Paul Robertson marched through the streets of Caythorpe finishing at the village church with the salute being taken by Maj Lewis Golden. On completion of the service, wreaths were laid at the Falkland's Stone by Maj Lewis Golden and Capt Keith Dunwoody. With the commemorative events complete the Squadron members were invited to the village hall to join all the old comrades and the villagers to enjoy an afternoon buffet.

The weekend was an excellent event to remember our fallen comrades and to celebrate the colourful history of airborne forces. This is particularly poignant as the Squadron prepares to carry on this history on Op HERRICK 13.

216 Parachute Signal Squadron Rear Party Parachute Jump - Sept 2010

At 0600hrs on 21 Sep 10, 7 members of rear party, Capt Jordan, WO2 (SSM) Robertson, SSgt Fyfe, SSgt Marshall (Niall), Cpl Dunseith (Bartez), Cpl Disney (Spanner) and Cpl Wood RV'd on the Merville Barracks parade square to board transport to RAF Brize Norton. After a short-ish journey around the M25 we arrived at 1000hrs ready to start ground training. Upon arrival we handed our Jumps record cards to the Parachute Jump Instructors (PJIs) and they had a quick check over our personal equipment to be carried on the jump (container).

Following this we were briefed on the aircraft we would be jumping from and the method of dispatch and exit, the plane we would be jumping from was the Skyvan, a pretty amazing piece of technology, amazing in the fact it looks like a caravan with wings but it can actually fly!!!

We then headed over to the flight swings to practice the drills we would need to carry out during our descent. For some this was just a formality but for others it had been a while and it proved quite funny to watch WO2 (SSM) Robertson attempting to kick out of 10 twists that SSgt Fyfe had put him in.

Once this was finished we headed over to the mats to quickly practice our landing rolls in various directions. We then received our jump brief, 800ft, Skyvan, sticks of 5, with equipment, Weston on the green DZ, P Hour 1400hrs, and began to collect and check our Low Level Parachutes and Reserves and loaded them along with our equipment onto the bus, we were then taken to the mess for lunch before a final head count at No 1 PTS before heading off to the DZ.

Once at Weston we lined everything up in our Sticks and waited for our turn to board the plane. WO2 (SSM) Robertson and Capt Jordan were to be Number 1 and 2 respectively on the first stick of the first lift.



Capt Paul Jordan & WO2(SSM) Robertson have quick chat on how it's done before emplaning

The rest of us were to be the first stick on the second lift and as it was to be Cpl Dunseith's final jump before posting, he was chosen to be number 1.

By now the sun was out and the weather was great so the second lift sat off to the side of the DZ to watch the first two sticks jump, at approx 1425hrs the SSM led the way and was followed by the rest of his stick. We fitted our chutes and were checked by the PJIs and once the plane landed we were led aboard and settled into our seats for the short flight ahead of us.

Once airborne we immediately prepared for action by removing seatbelts, stowing the seats and beginning to attach our equipment, we then fitted our equipment and checked it and were again checked by the PJIs and handed our static lines. The door was already open and the red light was on, we were just waiting for the Green Light and the thumbs up from the dispatcher....

GO! And with that Cpl Dunseith ducked to avoid hitting his head on the back of the plane and stepped out with the rest of us following shortly behind, after about three seconds I felt the tug of my chute opening and looked up to check everything was as it was meant to be, I pulled one of the risers to steer away from Cpl Disney and then checked below before operating the handle to release my kit so that it dropped away with a tug onto the 12ft of rope attached to me. As there wasn't much wind I didn't really need to adjust my drift so I spent the next 20 seconds enjoying the view and feeling grateful I was the last man out, therefore I had less distance to walk to get off the DZ! I kept my body tight and accepted the landing that came to me, this time a kind of-side right, and immediately carried out a roll. A quick check let me know all my body parts were where they should be so I quickly pulled in my kit, packed my chute away, chucked it on top of my Bergan and began to tab off the DZ to RV with everyone else at the top of the DZ.

Once everyone was into the RV, the Squadron blokes got together for a group photo and Cpl Dunseith (Bartez) was presented with a Squadron DZ marker flag by the SSM as a leaving present, for his hard work and effort during the last 3 years. After Cpl Dunseith (Bartez) wiped the tears from his eyes, he replied with a few words to thank the Squadron, for his second tour and the opportunities that he has had whilst being back home as he put it. Hopefully we will see him back as a SNCO in the near future.



Cpl Disney, WO2(SSM) Robertson, SSgt Russ Fyfe, Cpl Dunseith, Capt Jordan, Cpl Wood, SSgt Marshall on the DZ at Weston – Happy Landings!!

BRIGADE AIRBORNE INDUCTION COURSE AND PEGASUS COMPANY **By Signallers Harper and Meaden**

On the 11 Oct we departed from Merville Barracks Colchester to ATR Pirbright where we were to conduct a two and half week pre-selection course designed to condition ourselves physically and mentally in order to gain an insight into what was to be expected P Coy.

At ATR Pirbright we undertook two PT sessions a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This was meant to represent the three and a half week course we aimed to PASS! On the first day it was constant matter of mental will knowing that you were about to be thrashed for a total of six and a half weeks.

The first week was a gradual build up of long distance runs, tabs and circuit training. We were also shown how to pack a Bergan efficiently, stay on top of blisters, nutrition, swelling or any other injuries that may crop up within the course. Foot care was a main priority with the amount of miles we were about to undertake.

During the second week it started to become clear of the standards required as we were being monitored constantly throughout the physical and mental tests. We also visited Aldershot to be introduced to the trainasium although there were a few people who could not overcome reacting to words of command whilst at abnormal heights - this was to be expected as most people had not encountered this sort of confidence test.

The final period consisted of two test days in order to make sure you were up to the correct standard to arrive at P Company with the required determination and motivation to succeed.

P Company

After a couple of days recovery, we then reported to Pegasus Company, Helles Barracks, Catterick. This is where we were about to commence our two and half weeks preparation training before test week. After a day of initial screening, the first week consisted of extremely arduous tabs and runs designed to weed out the non-ferocious types not suited for service with Airborne Forces.

Week two followed pretty much in the same vein with increasingly arduous tabs including the notorious 'Land of Nod' and 'Reverse 10 miler'; the two day mil skills exercise 'Pegasus Dagger'; introductions to the assault course and burdens, such as the log and stretcher, and of course the odd beasting in the gymnasium to keep us busy.

Finally, Test Week was upon us. Over a five day period we undertook the following tests: Trainasium, 10 Miler, Log Race, Steeplechase, 2 Miler, 20 Miler, Stretcher Race and Milling, with the aim of attaining enough points to secure a pass and the privilege of wearing the coveted Maroon Beret.



Thankfully, due to the quality of the preparation training we progressed through Test Week taking one event at a time. Despite **Sig Harper** taking a beating in his mill, that if nothing else improved his good looks, we had finished Test Week and took our place on Helles Parade Square waiting to see if we had passed. OC P Coy called out our numbers individually and after what seemed like an eternity we were relieved to hear that we had passed and proudly received our maroon berets.



Outside special forces selection P Coy is widely regarded as one of the hardest military selection courses and it is testament to this that out of 110 students who started the course, only 42 finished Test Week, of which 36 achieved a pass. Thankfully, we were 2 of those 36.

Despite the very high attrition rate, P Coy did show that the men who pass are not 'superhuman' nor 'machines', but merely your average soldiers who with the correct application, determination and mental attitude proved they had what it takes. We both consider P Coy to be the highlight to date of what we hope will be a long and rewarding career and would recommend the course to any soldier in the Corps who fancies something different and a new challenge.

OP HERRICK 13

My time with the Viking/Warthog Group D SQN RDG - By Sig 'Hills' Hillary

I deployed to Afghanistan on the 11 Sep 10, where I attended the Category 2 RSOI package at Camp Bastion in order to deploy outside the Forward Operating Base (FOB) locations. On completion of the RSOI package **LCpl "Dougie" Douglas** and I made our way over to the Viking Group where we would spend the remainder of our time attached to D Squadron, Royal Dragoon Guards (RDG), or the "Yorkshire Cavalry" as they called themselves. Within a day or two of conducting our handover takeover with our 204 Signal Squadron predecessors I joined D Squadron in Patrol Base (PB) Nahidulla. I joined 3rd Troop and quickly got shown around and given a detailed brief on what was expected of me as Troop Signaller. This mainly involved working on communication faults that often cropped up on the Viking vehicles and providing specialist skills for any communication tasks.



D Squadron's task was to provide protection for the Route TRIDENT road build. As I was not a vehicle commander I was often asked to help out on various tasks and thrown into the BARMA team (which was an experience in itself). After four weeks of this task we received two corporals from the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment (2RTR) to provide continuity for when their unit replaced RDG.

On the 6 Nov 2RTR took over and Badger Squadron (replacing D Squadron) started using the new Warthog vehicle. This vehicle, which I had never seen before, was described to me at first as a Viking on steroids. After seeing the new vehicles in action this description proved accurate. It has

enhanced armour which I found reassuring as in my job I would spend a lot of time in the front left of the vehicle.

2RTR soon deployed on an eight day operation to disrupt and limit the insurgent's freedom of movement within Combined Force Lashkar Gah (CF LKG) area. One of our main tasks was to provide protection for a wadi build in the area. My role on this deployment was as the Troop Commander's Signaller where I had to ensure that all the communication systems were functioning correctly within the patrol. Following this deployment Badger Squadron were then re-tasked to assist another operation to the east.

My time in the Viking and Warhog group was exciting and it provided me with numerous challenging experiences because I deployed not as a Signaller but also utilised in the infantry role when required. My experiences allowed me to see what Afghanistan is really like as I spent a majority of my time deployed roaming around Helmand Province and seeing how the Afghanistan population lived and worked day in day out.

5 SCOTS Rear Link Detachment (RLD) – Operational Coordination Command Centre (Helmand) District (OCCD) GERESHK Afghan National Police (ANP) HQ by Cpl Davidson

Working and living with the ANP has been a very challenging and testing experience. The cultural and language barriers have never been easy, and as the training of the police is deemed highly important to the handover of Afghanistan's future security, time is against us too.

My role as part of the OCCD team attached to the 5 SCOTS Police Advisory Team (PAT), is to provide patrol and joint Ops Room communications to enable the mission to succeed. The PAT and OCCD team consist of 25 ISAF personal, and we live and work out of the ANP station Gereshk. Trust is a very big factor in our work and day to day living. I work in a joint Ops Room with two Afghan National Army (ANA) signallers, and one ANP radio operator. Generally the working environment is good, and the passage of information between ISAF and Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) works well. The OCCD team has a duty to educate and instruct the ANSF on a full range of basic skills from standards of dress and time keeping, all the way through to map reading, and basic voice procedure. If required we will patrol with the PAT to reassure the ANP checkpoints, train the police on the ground, and respond to any incidents.

Life at the police station is good, and very interesting. We have done what we can to improve living conditions. The gym is outdoors and is fully equipped with basic equipment, food is generally ORP, but we have managed to get stocked on British, Danish and American rations. The ANP have a working kitchen in the police station to cater for resident personnel, we are offered the food on a daily basis, but as the kitchen is in desperate need of a spring clean, we politely decline.



Overall my work here has been a valuable experience as the training of the police is the main mission. The standard of policing varies greatly between each officer but I have witnessed loyalty, bravery and diligence. There is still work to be done to ensure that the ANP can provide the security the Afghan people need but they are getting there through hard work and dedication.

Airborne Officers' Dinner Night – 25 Nov 10 by Capt E A Shale R SIGNALS (Ops Offr Rear)



Continuing in the long established tradition, the Royal Signals Airborne Officers gathered together at the Headquarters Mess in Blandford to both celebrate and reminisce. Unfortunately due to the Squadron's current deployment in Afghanistan a number of faces were missing from the table, however a "message from the front", penned by **Maj Al Fawcett**, ensured that our fellow officers were there in spirit. After a number of drinks for them and excellent entertainment from the Corps Band, we retired to discuss the finer points of life over a G & T or several.

A good night was had by all, and an important tradition kept alive despite other pressing concerns. The Squadron extends its thanks to the staff of the Headquarters Mess in Blandford for excellent food and service, the Corps Band for providing the entertainment, and finally to **Lt Col Jim Forrest** and **Maj Jase Gunning** for their assistance in the organisation of the event.

216 (Para) Sig Sqn Educational Visit – Houses of Parliament

The Sqn Officers and SNCOs RV'd at 0700hrs 7 Dec 10 to deploy into London to attend an education day to broaden their horizons. The train in to London from Colchester was far from simple with the amount of snow that had fallen on the space of three days; after a 40 minute delay that seemed like 8hrs the team, consisting of Capt Paul Jordan, SSM Paul "Robbo" Robertson, SSgt "Buz" Bury, SSgt "Jezza" Springett and Sgt "Griff" Griffiths, eventually arrived at Liverpool Street Station.

SSgt "Jezza" Springett was IC trains and devised the quickest route in relation to the amount of delays that were on the different lines. Having done a good estimate we soon made up the 40 minute delay and made it to Westminster in good time. After the security checks knocked us back

another five minutes we were finally inside central lobby awaiting our tour. Our guide was Claire Beedall who works for our local MP in Colchester Bob Russell. She soon took us around the House of Commons where we all had a go at being the Prime Minister. We then moved down the corridor to the House of Lords, the contrast between the two houses proving quite striking, with the House of Commons being more simple in colour and design.

After we completed our tour of Parliament we were taken to Big Ben for another tour; after climbing what felt like 10,000 stairs we eventually arrived up by the bells and got eyes and hands on Big Ben himself. SSgt "Jezza" Springett, who is not keen on heights, insisted on holding on to his colleagues arms whilst we stood looking over London from the top (he has been fined a bottle of port for his actions). This tour lasted around 1hr 20 minutes and was very interesting indeed.

The elderly woman that takes the tour informed us that she climbs these stairs three times a day and normally beats all the personnel who partake in the tour - I am glad to say that we all beat her with plenty of time to spare. Once we had all eaten in the Houses of Parliament canteen, we redeployed to 10 Downing Street where we would have a photograph or two taken in front of the famous door. We later entered the house and had a cup of tea with the Prime Minister. After a successful return journey we all arrived back in Colchester in time to catch up with our emails. All in all this day was a great success, and it certainly broadened our knowledge of politics in Great Britain and of key venues within our Government.



WO2(SSM) Robertson, Capt Paul Jordan, Sgt Griff Griffiths and SSgt Jerry Springett outside No 10

AFGHAN RELAY SEES BUCKS PASSED TO MILITARY CHARITY

On a cold and damp morning, British, American and Afghan soldiers and civil servants raced each other and the elements to raise \$2,000 (£1,228) for Help for Heroes.

Personnel from Head Quarters Task Force Helmand (HQ TFH), the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (HPRT), the United States Marines Corps (USMC) and the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) took part in a Half Marathon Relay Race around their base in Lashkar Gah.

HQ TFH is formed predominantly by members of the Colchester-based 16 Air Assault Brigade. The HQ's role is to provide coordination and assistance for units across TFH's area of operations. As such, it is a busy place with staff working hard to ensure that all the brigade's regiments are fully supported. Therefore, when an opportunity comes to enjoy themselves the staff take it with both hands!

The HPRT is responsible for running and coordinating reconstruction and development projects throughout Helmand.

The race was run by teams of four, who paid an entry fee to Help for Heroes. Each individual ran two laps of the base before handing over to the next runner, a process that was repeated three times to complete the distance. Prolog, the company responsible for infrastructure within theatre, donated t-shirts for all runners and Naafi donated prizes.

Today's event was **won by a team from Colchester-based 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron** in a time of **1 hour, 9 minutes and 20 seconds**.

Corporal Sean O'Connor, a member of the winning team, said: "The run itself was quite tricky to gauge as it was just over a mile and trying to pace it was hard, as there was a lot of good competition. I enjoyed the race as it was well organised and was run in good spirits. It was an added bonus to helping to raise money for Help for Heroes that we won."

The race was organised by **Lieutenant Ross Arnold and Corporal Prabeen Gurung** from 216 (PARA) Sig Sqn.

Lt Arnold said: "The event was organised back in December with the idea that it would be glorious summer sun by March and a great way to finish the tour. Needless to say it was performed in true British weather – fog and mud puddles! We choose to do a half marathon as the base is pretty tight for space and it also inspired a bit of departmental rivalry."

TFH Deputy Commander Colonel Andrew Jackson, said: "It was fantastic to see so many teams turn out at 7am to race round a rather muddy circuit of the camp. A cross section of our community were represented: the PRT, HQ TFH, the United States Marines Corps and our Afghan partners all running to raise around \$2,000 for Help for Heroes."



SSgt Marshall(Centre front) leads the Parachute Signals team from the start!

RLD BASTION NOTES - By SSgt Dougie Porter

The first report from Bastion comes just as we are starting the R and R phase of Op HERRICK 13, we have now settled into a steady rhythm of moving both personnel and stores throughout the Province. And a welcome addition to the team comes in the form of Sgt Mike Wilson who has joined us from Lashkar Gah. All the Rear Link Detachments are now in place with their respective Battalions and are very busy forging strong working relationships with their peers in the relative Signal Platoons.

The technicians of the Field Repair Team under the leadership of Sgt Keith Deans and Sgt Mike Atherton have their work cut out for them with the steady stream of broken kit coming through the workshops both from the battle groups and repairing the plethora of broken equipment that has come back to us from Sangin now it has closed down. The guys have all deployed to the outstations to repair equipment in situ with the Team Leader Cpl Nick Grayhurst heading up a team consisting of Cpl Joe Lewis, A/Cpl "Red One" Stewart and LCpl "Lego Head" Fern (I think that's all the Techs crated!).

The power repair and response team under Sgt Dale Thompson continues to try and look busy by opening up generator covers every morning and looking at them until at least Naafi Break, it is normally around this time Cpl Stevie "Professional Scouser" Stopforth comes round and hits them with a tool and then disappears off to the gym. However on a serious note the Guys are working very hard with Generators spread all over the province at every Patrol Base, Checkpoint and Forward Operating Base so you can imagine the scale of the task in hand. The two youngest members of the team Sigs Aaron Mills and Adam Watson continue to earn their spurs as Royal Signals Electricians under the watchful eyes of the management and initial reports are all good.

Meanwhile in the Theatre distribution agency SSgt (YofS) Steve Crutchley heads up a team of degenerates consisting of Sgt Graham Nolan, Pete "Peter Griffin" Boothby and Cpl Scotty De Gernier. Apart from facilitating the secure communications in our area the Yeoman's transformation into Raffles

the Gentleman Thug is almost complete as you will be able to see in the attached photograph pipe smoking jacket and dastardly tache to the fore.



SSgt (YofS) Crutchley hard at work in Camp Bastion refining his "Raffles" look

HELICOPTER LANDING SITE LASHKAR GAH – by Sgt Fitzsimmons

Well we are into our third month of the tour now and we are just as busy as ever, with this being the month before Christmas we have had uplift for mail coming into the MOB. This has brought some happy faces and some not so happy faces as some of the lads are not getting much mail and some are getting loads.

In addition, we got Cpl Sean O'Connor on RSOI after he asked to go out on patrol with 2 SCOTS, but he still awaits his first outing, however, he did get a jolly down to Fob Price to drop off some equipment which made him a little happier; he got to look ally flying in a Blackhawk hanging out of the side. This was probably due to FOB Price actually being re-named FOB Nice by the RSM, apparently there are lots of nice female Danish soldiers there and the food is better!

We have also had our change over of lads from JHF(A), LCpl Danny Daniels and AirTpr "Seagull" Hugill left but they left kicking and screaming because they didn't want to go back to ATR Bastion, and we say a warm well come to LCpl "Smudge" Smith who lived up to JHF(A) on going record of going sick and ATpr "Sicknote" Opperman, from JHF(A).

We also has a visit from the big man himself, DC the Prime Minster who had a nice ride on the Chinooks taking him around Helmand.

Also a Merry Christmas from the team on the HLS, have a good Christmas I'm sure we all will. With that, we will be losing Cpl Sean O'Connor so he can have a good Christmas back in the UK.



USMC Osprey Aircraft on the pan HLS TFH HQ Lashkar Gah



U.S.M.C Osprey delivering vital stores for re-supply



Cpl Sean O'Connor coming back from MOB Price



Rigging loads for back loading

Smokey Ops Lashkar Gah HLS – by Cpl O Connor

The HLS has been much the same since the last update. The only notable change has been in the increase in under slung loads that we are sending out across Helmand. The loads vary greatly from fuel cans to massive generators to food and supplies for the ANP in Kajaki and Sangin.

Christmas was not missed out on completely as each of the lads had their own stocking to open on Christmas morning. The gifts ranged from ear buds to toys and many crossword puzzles and soduku. Not sure if people are trying to tell us something! Either way Sgt Fitzsimmons struggled with the basic levels and threw most of them out. New Years Eve passed without notice as the lads were hard at work on a tasking by the time they realised it was 0015hrs. So a quick celebration of downing a Rip It (American energy drink packed with sugar and caffeine) the lads tried their best to get their beauty sleep.

It has come to that time of the month again for the JHFA lads to swap over. We will be saying goodbye to LCpl Collins and AirTrp Tompsett. They are to be replace by a familiar face in LCpl Smith and new boy Sig Smith, both from 21 Sig Regt (AS).

We have also decided to take on Call Signs to replace our names. Sgt Fitzsimmons is Dragon, Cpl O'Connor is Preacher, LCpl Pilkington is Granddad, LCpl Collins is Bear, AirTpr Waddington is Goose Throbber. Some of the call signs are a more obvious choice like LCpl Pilkington as Granddad because he looks a lot older than his 30 years but others are a bit more elaborate.

Many of the keys have started to look brand new as AirTrp Waddington has a thing for putting keys in his pocket and then sticking them in the laundry.

After all his moaning about Cpl O'Connor's R and R, Sgt Fitzsimmons has departed on his. We wish him a speedy travel home and a very enjoyable R and R.



Helping the med centre with a local national casualty.



Making sure we don't lose precious mail.

The Drummond Historical Room

Maj Gen Deane-Drummond opened the historical room within the new Squadron Headquarters, Merville Barracks in July 2007. The room consists of photographs and memorabilia dating throughout the history of Airborne Signals from its inception in 1941 right up to the recent deployment to Afghanistan. Any former Squadron member wishing to have a look around the room is more than welcome to do so and should contact Capt Paul Jordan on the following number, 01206 815527, to arrange a visit.

Airborne Signals Association Membership

Membership to the Association is open to all ex members (and their wives/husbands) who have ever served with Airborne or Air Assault Signals, irrespective of rank or age and is free of charge. The Association is keen to increase its membership and it is usually the ex members of the Squadron who spread the word on its behalf as to what is happening. If you meet anyone who qualifies to become a member of the Association please pass on my details and encourage them to get in touch.

Although the Association is not resourced as the Royal Signals Association there is a lot we can do with regard to members seeking advice and information. We can act as a signpost to point members in the direction of the relevant agencies who will be able help with any queries of problems they may have.

One of the Associations main aims remains the annual pilgrimage to Caythorpe village in Lincolnshire where a weekend of events with the former and current soldiers of the Squadron and the villagers culminates with a service of remembrance in the village church of St Vincent's.

Please ensure that you keep me informed of any changes in contact details so that you are not missed off our mailing lists. Also, if you no longer wish to receive our newsletters please let me know.

Caythorpe Weekend 2011 (Friday 9 September - Sunday 11 September 2011)

With the Squadron reconstituted post Operations there will be a larger contingent from the Squadron with the Squadron Commander's intent being to hold the dinner on Sat 10 Sep 11 and the church service on Sun 11 Sep 11. Full details of the weekend have yet to be confirmed but a full outline on the weekends program will be available on arrival and promulgated in due course.

PGL Adventure Activities have once again made a number of rooms available in Caythorpe Manor where the majority of you have stayed previously. After negotiation, this year the price has to cover PGL's costs and VAT and is set at £20.00 per person. A slight reduction on last year! When compared with standard B & B in the area this is still a very competitive price.

Accommodation with the villagers is now well established as those of you who billet with them do most years. However should you wish to stay with one of the villagers please indicate on the attached return so the appropriate arrangements can be made. The camping site will still be available for those of you who wish to pitch your tents or use a campervan.

Transport will be provided over the weekend and is also available from the local railway stations (pre-book please) on the Friday and Sunday. Please have the enclosed returns along with cheques for accommodation and the dinner night returned to be by 1 July 11. Unfortunately only 130 places are available at the dinner so please send your returns promptly to avoid disappointment and indicate clearly who you would wish to sit with. I will try and cater for your preferences. I and all the Squadron membership look forward to seeing you in September.

PRI Shop

The PRI shop will be available throughout the weekend and will be selling a large array of Shirts, Plaques, Tankards, and Berets etc at very competitive prices. Contact details for the shop are listed below. If you would like any specific items please do not hesitate to get in touch with Margaret. We offer a sales service over the phone and items will incur P&P should you wish to acquire goods from the shop in that way.

Mrs Margaret Watson on Civil 01206 815505 or Mil 94660 5505

