CAVALRY CLUB NEWSLETTER - AUTUMN 2016

In Memoriam.
On Tuesday, 09 Aug 2016, with deep sadness we informed Club members of the death of Comdt Michael (Mick) O’Byrne, Terenure, Dublin and late of Greenane, County Wicklow in Lisheen Nursing Home, Rathcoole, County Dublin aged 78 years.

He was a member of 31 Cadet Class and he was appointed as Comd B Tp, 1 Armd Car Sqn on commissioning in Dec 1958. Two of his classmates, Ray Leonard and Mick Murphy, were also appointed to the Cav Corps. During his service he served with 1 Mot Sqn, Dep Cav and he spent most of his career in 2 Mot Sqn. He had two terms as Sqn Comd 11 Mot Sqn/11 Cav Sqn in 1979 – 81 and in 1985 – 87.


We extend sympathy to his wife, Gerardine and to his children Patrick, Tara, Michael and Deirdre, to their families and to his comrades and friends.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

This photograph was taken in Jun 1973 and it shows the late Michael O’Byrne as a Capt 2 I/C 2 Mot Sqn standing to President Eamon de Valera’s left after the president’s last Escort of Honour at the end of his second and last term of office.
Retirements.

Three stalwarts of the Cavalry Club, who gave sterling service to the DF, retired during the summer months.

Col Tony Bracken BMC retired on 30 Jul 16. He joined the DF as a member of 53 Cadet Class in 1976 and he was commissioned and appointed to 4 Motor Squadron in December 1977. He served as the Club’s Honorary Secretary for a number of years and he was elected as an Honorary Member of the Club by members at the AGM in Feb 16.

Capt Mick Bohan retired on 04 Aug 16 after thirty nine years’ service in An FCA and the RDF with 5 Mot Sqn, 5 Cav Sqn, 54 Res Cav Sqn and the Cav Sch. He was commissioned in 1988 and he was Club President in 2009.

Capt Mark Morris retired on 13 Aug 16 after thirty years’ service with 11 Cav Sqn, 62 Res Cav Sqn and 2 Cav Sqn. He was Club President in 2004.

The committee wish, Tony, Mick and Mark long and happy retirements from the DF and we hope to see them at club events for many years to come.
Elders Lunch.

Twenty Elders of the Cav Corps attended the annual septuagenarians/octogenarians/nonagenarians lunch held in the Officers Mess The Military College on 07 Jul 16.

The Elders who attended were: Capt Paddy Aylward, Lt Col Niall Daly, Col Dick Heaslip, Comdt Ed Horgan, Comdt Larry Johnson, Lt Col Ken Kelly, Comdt Ken Lyons, Comdt Art Magennis BSD, Capt Tony Marshall, Col Brendan McCann, Lt Col Pearse McCorley, Comdt John Moriarty, Capt Mick Mulcahy, Lt Col Mick Murphy, Comdt Eamon Ó Briain, Capt Felix O’Callaghan, Capt Charles O’Rourke, Capt Jim Power, Comdt Brendan Smyth and Capt Noel Treacy.

The Club President, Lt Gen Seán McCann BSD welcomed the guests and the senior serving Cav officers and members of the committee. Col Brendan McCann was the after lunch speaker.

A group photograph of the Elders and members of the club after the lunch.

The National Day of Commemoration.

The Club President, Vice President and Honorary Secretary represented the Club at the National day of Commemoration at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham on Sunday 10 Jul 16.

President Michael D Higgins arriving on parade escorted by V Adm Mark Mellett BSD and Brig Gen Michael Beary GOC 2 Bde.

Basic Recce Course.

1 Bde Cav Sqn conducted a Basic Recce Techniques Course from 16-30 Jul 16. 11 Students from across the country participated with 6 Students from 1 Bde Cav Sqn and 1 student from 2 Bde Cav Sqn.

It was a robust and physically demanding course for the students who took part with a Combat Fitness Assessment taking place on the first day of the course leaving them in no doubt of the challenges which lay ahead.
Instructors and Support for the course came from both PDF and RDF members of 1 Bde Cav Sqn demonstrating the Single Force Concept in operation.

The first week of the course combined lectures covering map reading, CTR, signals and battlefield first aid with NAV FTXs conducted in the Kilworth area.

During the second week of the course, students had the opportunity of putting the skills learnt into practice culminating with a 72 hour FTX in the Knockmealdown Mountains.

The Basic Recce Techniques course successfully equipped all of the students who participated with the necessary skills to operate as part of a recce detachment.

Back Row L to R: Tpr O’Cronin, Lt Leahy, Tpr Smyth, Cpl Tobin, Tpr Lyons, Cpl Healy, Cpl Corkery, Tpr McCarthy, Tpr Fanning, Cpl Kidney, Sgt McLoughlin, Cpl Fanning, Tpr Shanahan,

Front Row: Tpr Pratt, Cpl Morrissey, Comdt Laura Lafferty (Sqn Comd 1 Bde Cav Sqn), Lt Joanne McCarthy, Sgt Hughes.

**Merrion Square Guard Mounting Ceremony.**

1 Armd Cav Sqn and 3 Inf Bn were the units involved in the guard-mounting ceremony at the National Memorial to Members of the Defence Forces who died in the Service of the State at Merrion Square on Saturday 13 Aug 16.

The Guard at rest on reversed arms.
Cavalry Corps Memorial Day 2016.

Intermittent heavy rain failed to dampen the Corps annual commemoration held at the Curragh on Saturday 03 Sep 16.

This year was the sixtieth anniversary of Cavalry Day.

The Mass at St Brigid’s Garrison was celebrated by Fr Fergus O’Connor PP, a member of 41 Cadet Class and Club President in 1982.

The fourteen cavalrymen who died while on UN service along with Cav Corps personnel who died during the year were remembered – among the recently deceased are three officers: Lt Col Pat Fingleton, Capt John Chadwick and Comdt Mick O’Byrne.

After the Mass, Col Jim Burns EO & 2/IC DFTC and Lt Gen Sean McCann BMS laid wreaths at the Memorial Garden.

Comdt Art Magennis BSD and Sgt Tim Carey who served with the Armd Car Gp 35 Inf Bn ONUC in the Congo in 196 at Cav Day.

Cavalry YOs Barbeque.

On Thursday 01 Sep 16, the annual Cavalry Club Young Officer’s barbeque was held in Cathal Brugha Barracks’ Officers’ Mess. It was a thoroughly enjoyable night and the event allowed Cavalry officers from across the Defence Forces an opportunity to catch up over food and drinks.

The barbecue also served to welcome in the newest Cavalry officers to the Corps, where they were afforded the chance to meet and greet their peers.

2/Lt David Kelly of 2 Cav Sqn, one of our newest members, celebrated his 23rd birthday on the night and this only further augmented what was a jovial atmosphere!

The service provided by the staff of Cathal Brugha Officers’ Mess was superb, as was the food. Many of the YOs are looking forward to next year’s barbeque with anticipation!

Many thanks to 2/Lt Mike Connelly for organising such a successful event.
Some of the YOs at the Mess.

70th Anniversary of Commissioning.

On Monday 12 Sep 16, the club hosted a special coffee morning in the Officers Mess Collins Bks Cork to mark the 70th anniversary the commissioning of Lt Col Sean Hennessy (Retd).

He was commissioned on 12 Sep 1946 into the Construction Corps and he transferred into the Cav Corps in 1948.

Former colleagues from 1 Mot Sqn and HQ S Comd joined with officers from 1 Cav Sqn and club members for this historic celebration.

Col Brian Monahan welcomed the guests to the mess and Col Peter Marron presented Lt Col Hennessy with a plaque on behalf of the club.

The committee thanks Comdt Niall Cremen (Retd) and Capt Andrew O’Shaughnessy A/Sqn Comd 1 Cav Sqn for their help in organising the event.

Lt Col Hennessy with serving and retired officers.
Historical Cavalry Photographs.

In this newsletter we have photographs depicting Escorts of Honour from horse-mounted escorts in the 1920s and 1930s to the era of the motorcycle along with a farewell presentation in 1957 for one of the founders of the Club, memories of Cav Days in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and a photograph of the officers in Plunkett Bks in 1991.

1920s.

01 Feb 1928.

Most accounts of the tradition of providing DF Escorts of Honour incorrectly state that the first horse-mounted EOH appeared in public for the ceremonies for the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in Jun 1932.

Later this ad hoc unit, which included personnel from the Arty Corps and the Eq Sch, was known as the “The Blue Hussars”.

This photograph shows a horse-mounted EOH five years before the Eucharistic Congress. It was provided on Wednesday 01 Feb 1928 when James MacNeill was installed as Governor-General of Saorstát Éireann.

The swearing-in ceremony was in Leinster House and after the ceremony he was escorted by horse-mounted personnel through the city to his residence in the Phoenix Park. He was the brother of Professor Eoin MacNeill, President of the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood who ordered the cancellation of activities on Easter Sunday in 1916.

James McNeill had served in a high ranking position in the Indian Civil Service in Calcutta. He was a member of the committee under Michael Collins, the chairman of the Provisional Government which drafted the Constitution of the Irish Free State.

He was subsequently appointed as Irish High Commissioner (Ambassador) to London. When the first Governor-General of the Free State, Timothy Michael Healy retired in December 1927, James McNeill was proposed as his replacement and he was duly appointed by King George V.

![Governor-General's cavalcade crossing O'Connell Bridge](image)

This photograph shows the Governor-General’s cavalcade crossing O’Connell Bridge with Mr McNeill in the second of two motorcars and the mounted personnel are riding four abreast carrying rifles in the right hand. Two officers with drawn swords are on each side of the car. All personnel are wearing normal service dress.

1930s.

26 Jun 1938.

Douglas Hyde was inaugurated as the first President of Ireland on 26 June 1938, in the first inaugural ceremony in the nation's history at Dublin Castle where the seal of office were handed over by the Chief Justice Mr Kennedy.
Two hundred guests attended the ceremony and they included members of the Oireachtas, the Judiciary and the chief dignitaries of the Churches.

After the ceremony, President Hyde drove in procession through the city, the procession halted for two minutes outside the General Post Office to pay respect to the memory of the men who died in the Easter Week rebellion in 1916.

Large crowds lined the streets from Dublin Castle to the Vice-Regal Lodge in the Phoenix Park, since then known as Áras an Uachtaráin.

![The Mounted EOH and the GOH at Dublin Castle.](image)

**1940s.**

**1948.**

In 1948 it was decided to replace the Presidential horse-drawn coach by a limousine and the Blue Hussars were replaced by motorcyclists.

D Cav was instructed to organise a motorcycle escort, as horses could not keep pace with vehicular traffic.

At the time 2 Mot Sqn had no trained motorcyclists so the task fell to 4 Mot Sqn based at that time in Plunkett Bks in the Curragh Camp.

4 Mot Sqn was augmented by motorcyclists mainly from Dep Cav and 1 Armd Car Sqn and occasionally by personnel from both 1 Mot Sqn and 2 Mot Sqn.

![Members of an early motorcycle EOH in training photographed on Plunkett Square in late 1948.](image)
1950s.

Oct 1957.

This photograph was taken in Oct 1957 at the farewell presentation for Capt Robert (Bob) Collier (a founder member of the Club and Club President 1956) held in the ante room Plunkett Officers Mess Curragh Camp prior to his emigration to the USA.

He served as 2 I/C 1 Armoured Squadron, Workshops Officer, OIC Workshops and as Tp Offr B Tp 1 Armoured Car Squadron.

![Image of group of people in military uniform]

This photograph shows Capt Collier in the suit with Col J V Lawless (D Cav Jan 1955 to Oct 1958 and Club President 1950) on his left.

1960s.

Sep 1969.

On 06 Oct 1963, the Cavalry Corps Memorial Garden was unveiled by the Chief of Staff Lt Gen Seán McKeown BSD in Plunkett Barracks at the Curragh Camp.

Almost three years later on 05 Nov 1966, the inaugural Remembrance Day for Cavalry personnel who died while serving with the United Nations in the Congo and Cyprus was held.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first Cavalry Memorial Day when retired and serving personnel remember our comrades on the first Saturday in September.
Comdt Denis Quinn, OC 1 Tk Sqn leads the parade from Plunkett Square to St Brigid’s Garrison Church at the Curragh Camp on Cavalry Memorial Day 1969.

1970s.

Sep 1978.

Four Cav officers at the Annual Cavalry Memorial Day at the Curragh Camp.


1980s.


Thirty years ago the Cav Corps Memorial Garden was renovated and new stones were erected.
This photograph shows Engr Corps personnel placing the Congo stone in the garden. Cav personnel L to R: Lt Col Dermod Coffey OC Dep Cav & Plunkett Bks, RSM Tommy Power, Comdt Larry Coughlan EO Dep Cav (with brush), Capt Gay Darcy and Sgt Jack Jones.

1990s.


This photograph was taken almost a quarter of a century and it shows the garrison officers of Plunkett Bks at the Officers Mess before the Christmas Dinner.

Front Row L to R: Capt _, Comdt Liam O’Flaherty, Comdt Lester Costello, Comdt John Moriarty, Lt Col Tony Carr OC Dep Cav & Plunkett Bks, Comdt Eamonn Smyth, Comdt Ray O’Shea.
Back Row: Capt Sean O’Keeffe, Capt Jonathan de Renzy Pim, Capt Tony Bracken BMC, Capt Brian Cleary, Capt Tommy O’Brien, 2/Lt Tommy McGrath, Lt Willie Nugent, and Lt Brian Hughes.

Carpe diem.