

# THE BUGLE

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALTIC DEFENCE COLLEGE



December 2015 | Issue 22

## In this Issue:

Commandant's Foreword	1
JCGSC	3
Senior Leaders' Engagement	4
Roundtable Seminars	6
Electives	7
PME institutions	7
Russian (dis)information operations	8
Cyber Security Conference	9
FST	11
How to celebrate	13
'Ultimate-Frisbee'	14
Tartu Mountain-bike (xc)	
Marathon	15
Introducing Estonia	16
International Night	17
End of Year Reception	19
Baltgirls Activities	20

## THE BUGLE

Est. 2009

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## Commandant's foreword

As the year 2015 comes to a close, as is traditional I want to share some thoughts on our achievements and the way ahead for our college.

We had another challenging, dynamic, meaningful, rewarding and successful year. We continued developing our long term planning capabilities, strengthened our educational quality control and assurance system, and further improved our educational environment. We very successfully introduced a new design of the HCSC, and conducted a pilot project, the Senior Leaders' Engagement (SLE) to great acclaim. We further developed our electives programme and in-house exercises and achieved remarkable results while optimising both intellectual and material resources in the college. We continued our noble tradition of contributing to the social life of the Tartu community and for the third time we successfully raised funds for charity during our annual International Night. All of our accomplishments mentioned above were only possible because there has been real teamwork, a joint effort where every member of the

Baltic Defence College has been dedicated and committed to the further successful development of our unique educational institution. I would like to express my gratitude for all that you have done and all that you are doing. I thank all the permanent members of our team and our students who have greatly contributed to our success. A very special thanks goes to our wives and spouses, and all our family members for their active support and understanding.

After the Christmas break we will not only continue to further develop our college in line with our main lines of effort, mentioned above, but we will also face new challenges together. While implementing the Essential Guidelines for the development of the Baltic Defence College, the new Development Plan for the years 2017-2025 will be prepared. This will guide us for the next decade and lay the foundations for the further development of our institution. We will concentrate our efforts on the further implementation of the JCGSC; we will start the HCSC on 11th January, and additionally, our efforts will shift to developing a new

## Commandant's foreword

Civil Servants Course which will be organised during the first semester of the 2016-2017 Academic year.

To further establish our institution as a leader in regional security thought and strengthen cooperation with our partners, we will host the Second Annual Conference on Russia; the Seventh Baltic Military History Conference, Fourth Cyber Conference and the Baltic Defence Innovation Conference. Additionally, the college will host several other workshops, seminars and discussions. We will continue to define our internal planning and implementation processes to enhance education at the Baltic Defence College, an improvement supported by better knowledge management. We will further integrate our educational curricula and develop a progressive, modern model of individually tailored education for the benefit of the future military and civilian leaders from the Baltic States, and our allies and partners.

In addition, properly reflecting the realities of an ever-changing world, we will strengthen our ties with various national and multinational headquarters, educational and other security and defence related institutions. The challenges we face will require from us determination and a better orchestrated innovative approach. We will be successful by putting together our efforts, our knowledge and our experience. I have no doubt we will continue to develop the Baltic Defence College as a **Modern, Future Oriented, Attractive and Competitive** professional military educational institution.

In closing, Irena and I would like to wish each of you a very happy holiday season; indeed, may happiness during this Christmas be with you, and I hope the coming year will bring you health, satisfaction and peace.

Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras  
Commandant



### Joint Command and General Staff Course - Reflecting and moving ahead

By Colonel Mark Hollis, Course Director JCGSC



With Christmas fast approaching – only few days left – it is traditionally a great time to take a look back at the first semester. Until now students have been confronted with various and vital topics from 'Fundamentals and Components' to 'International Law' to 'International Security Environment' and other topics. The chance to experience and absorb the expertise of both the multinational student body and the faculty have promoted and helped to strengthen our students comprehensive quality of knowledge as well as provided a solid ground for their professional growth. I trust such an environment has pulled the students out from their „comfort zone“ culturally and educationally to enable them to learn, professionally develop, and to reach new limits.

*As the philosopher Lao-Tzu once said: „A scholar who cherishes the love of comfort is not fit to be deemed a scholar.“*

As I reflect upon your accomplishments during this current semester, I am pleased with the results of your performance, which have met or exceeded my expectations. I am certain that the studies given during the course so far - have been a challenge not only due to the various assessments – essays and exams – but also because of geographical separation from families and the language requirement. These factors require resilience from you as well as families but sometimes different environments can assist in crossing unforeseen benefits. The relationships you are building with your fellow classmates and the residual learning that is occurring – sharing experience from multiple cultures will last a life time.

Besides keeping mentally busy, the Course has also kept you physically busy. From August until December five syndicates have been jumping, struggling and twisting in frisbee and volleyball tournaments and developed various strategies to achieve victory. Against the other syndicates, Gediminas had the most wins and was announced the undisputed winner of both tournaments. The success of the Joint Course would not be possible without the tireless work and efforts of the Syndicate Guiding

Officers (SGO), departmental instructors, and support staff. Such ongoing collaboration will ensure that the Baltic Defence College provides our students with high-quality education for many years. The effort of these tireless members, incorporating the quality feedback from students is helping to shape future courses and create a better product.

Our partnership with the Estonian National Defence College has also been equally important. I am indebted to the members of the ENDC language school Triinu, Aigi and Katri who found ways to improve our officers' language skills through the first semester. Special thanks to them.

#### Way ahead

So, looking ahead to January 2016 and the spring semester, I request that you maintain your positive attitude, resolve, persistence and capitalize on your education. The second semester will be full of new challenges and we will face them together. The intensive semester is full of exercises and study trips where you will elaborate and apply the knowledge you gained during the first semester.

*Here is the short review of what to expect – 07 JAN 2014, New Years Reception, 14 JAN 2016 start of M13: Planning and Execution of Operations, 25 MAR 2016 Easter break, 05 APR 2016 the Argumentative Essay is due, 15 APR 2016 SWEDEX, 09 MAY 2016 the International Study Tour, 30 MAY 2016 the Baltic Defence Study Tour and 16 JUN 2016 GRADUATION. So, stay focused!*

I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas / Happy Holiday break with your family, loved ones and friends. Have a good rest and come back refreshed and with a great thirst for knowledge. Stay safe and I look forward to seeing you in the New Year- eager to face new challenges – together.



JCGSC 2015/2016

## Senior Leaders' Engagement

By James Rogers, Director, Department of Political and Strategic Studies

*The changing strategic environment of the 'Wider Baltic' region*

On 2nd-6th November, the Baltic Defence College hosted – for the first time – a pilot initiative called the 'Senior Leaders' Engagement' (SLE).

The concept was developed during 2015 to provide an additional educational layer at the pinnacle of the Baltic states' system of professional military education, i.e. one coming after the Higher Command Studies Course. The SLE therefore sought to attract flag officers and civilian executives from the defence and security sector from the Baltic states and their allies and partners, with a general aim to further develop the strategic thinking, leadership skills and managerial techniques of its participants.

*The Senior Leaders' Engagement will prepare senior leaders for future challenges by improving their strategic vision and enhancing their capacity to better lead and manage their respective institutions*

*It will provide a forum for creating and exchanging new ideas and facilitate the establishment*

With this in mind, the Baltic Defence College developed an academic programme for the SLE, which merged political and strategic issues with leadership and managerial techniques, creating a balanced curriculum for the week. Overall, given the deterioration of the strategic situation in the 'Wider Baltic' region, in light of Russian provocation and activity, it was decided that it would add value if the SLE's focus was on strategic changes in the 'Wider Baltic', a region understood to include the Baltic and Nordic states, but also including important stakeholders like Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom. In

addition, SLE participants discussed and debated topics such as NATO's future, strategic leadership, strategic management, mission command and prospects for cooperation within the 'Wider Baltic' region. COL Igors Rajevs acted as Director for the SLE, while the Department of Political and Strategic Studies undertook the academic planning. The academic programme was taught using a combination of college faculty and esteemed guest speakers.



General (ret.) Knud Bartels -  
Former Chairman of the  
NATO Military Committee



Major General (ret.) M. Melvin –  
Royal United Services Institute



GEN (ret.) S. Diesen – Former  
Norwegian Chief of Defence



Professor G. Prins – Emeritus Research Professor,  
London School of Economics



### Senior Leaders' Engagement

The SLE opened in the Dorpat Conference Centre in Central Tartu with an icebreaker reception hosted by the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College, Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras. Formal academic activities got underway the following day with lectures and plenary discussions from Prof. Gwythian Prins, Emeritus Professor from the London School of Economics, and General (ret.) Sverre Diesen, a former Norwegian Chief of Defence, which aimed to infuse a refreshed dose of advanced strategic thinking into the participants. Other guest speakers included General (ret.) Knud Bartels, former Chairman of the NATO Military Committee; Major General (ret.) Mungo Melvin, Senior Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute; Brigadier (ret.) Dr. Bryan Watters, Senior Lecturer in Leadership at Cranfield University; and Mr. Janis Sarts, Director of NATO's Strategic Communication Centre of Excellence. The SLE also included two panel discussions: one 'Night Owl' panel, hosted by Prof. Andres Kasekamp, Professor of Baltic Studies, University of Tartu; and the other covering prospects for future cooperation within the 'Wider Baltic' region, with a number of speakers from the three Baltic states.



Lieutenant General (ret.) J. Bornemann, a former Director-General of NATO's International Military Staff

Lieutenant General (ret.) Jürgen Bornemann, a former Director-General of NATO's International Military Staff, acted as Visiting Senior Mentor for the SLE, providing participants with an additional layer of insight.

The SLE said farewell to its participants with a lunch hosted in Tartu city centre by the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College, Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras. During lunch, the Baltic Defence College was delighted to welcome



Participants of SLE 2015

Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia, H.E. Mr. Christopher Holtby OBE, to provide some farewell remarks relating to future cooperation within the Northern Group of countries, especially in the area of foreign, security and defence policy.



Opening speech by the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College, Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras during the Night Owl Session called "The Future of Russia"



Farewell remarks by Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia, H.E. Mr. Christopher Holtby OBE

*Given the success of the SLE, the Baltic Defence College hopes to run another similar engagement in 2016.*

### Roundtable Seminars at the Baltic Defence College in Autumn 2015

By Mr Hannes Möllits and Dr Andriy Tyushka

*In late October and early November, the Baltic Defence College faculty and students had several great opportunities to have discussions on topics ranging from Cyber and Energy Security to Allied Assurance measures after events in Ukraine. Since all the issues were very much relevant to the current global security situation and to the Wider Baltic region security in particular, each seminar was well attended. From the speakers' point of view, the discussions were lively, with students asking the bulk of the questions and highlighting valid topical nuances of respective seminars.*

#### *Cyber in International Relations*

First up, was a roundtable seminar on 'Cyber in International Relations'. The presenter concentrated on the recent meetings between US and Chinese presidents, and what the potential effect of those was on other nations and actors in the world. The focus widened after the presentation as the discussion moved to recent cyber attacks, then to legal aspects of cyberspace and eventually to the potential positioning of cyber tools or weapons in a military environment. Students showed good understanding of the importance of cyberspace on their future command and staff positions and demonstrated deep interest in having even more knowledge about cyber.



#### *After the Wales Summit: assurance in light of Ukraine*

Later on in October, the Department of Political and Strategic Studies, in co-operation with the Department of Operations, organised a roundtable seminar on allied assurance in



light of Ukraine. The speakers addressed the nature and challenges of the 'Ukraine crisis' for international security, Russian motives and strategies of its engagement in Ukraine, as well as NATO's assurance measures in the context of the implementation of its 2014 Wales Summit Declaration. Dr Andriy Tyushka deconstructed the 'Ukraine crisis' from intersecting rational, irrational and populist politics' perspectives and revealed Russia's inherent stakes therein. Mr James Rogers assessed Russia's aggression in Ukraine as a manifestation of an 'area denial' geostrategy by which the Kremlin seeks to prevent the West's growing presence in Eastern Europe, an area deemed to represent Russia's sphere of influence. LtCol (rtd.) Ugis Romanovs evaluated the challenges that are posed by Moscow's geopolitical revisionism for the security of NATO allies, first of all in the Wider Baltic region. Allied assurance measures have been reconsidered in the context of both the Russian challenge and the Alliance's defence capabilities development as agreed by its member states during last year's NATO Summit in Newport, Wales.

#### *Baltic states' energy security: from dependence on Russia to interdependence within the European Union*



The 2015 roundtable seminar series was concluded by the session on the Baltic States' energy security in Moscow's shadow. This seminar featured a renowned guest expert, Mr Emmet Tuohy from the International Centre for Defence and Security (ICDS) in Tallinn, who engaged the audience in lively debates about the Baltic States' energy (in)security, their dependence on Russia in terms of gas and other energy goods supply. The active discussion revealed several ways in which the Baltic States could loosen the Russian energy grip. Among them, the diversification of energy sources and consolidation of EU-level efforts towards a fully-functioning Energy Union have been evaluated as the most promising options.

### Electives at the Baltic Defence College

By Dr. Augustine Meaher, Dean

*The Commandant of the Baltic Defence College introduced electives to the Joint Command and General Staff Course two years ago.*

Electives have proven extremely popular and successful with faculty and students alike. Furthermore, electives are a key component of Baltic Defence College's ambition to remain a modern and forward looking institution that believes that our students own their education.



Electives are wide, deep or focused depending on the elective period. Each student chooses the elective in the subject they are most interested in.

The way to disable the Russian (dis)information campaigns should mainly include the strengthening of Western values within the society and a dedication to critical thinking, therefore the Baltic Defence College, with its ever increasing emphasis on development of critical thinking skills in the officers of the three Baltic states, may be considered one of the main institutions in this battlestudy in depth. Electives also allow BALTDEFCOL to offer teaching in niche areas that would not be suitable for an entire course. Electives allow officers and civil servants to explore a variety of interesting topics that will make them better officers and civil servants.

The Baltic Defence College plans to expand its elective programme in the coming year, with electives already planned for the first time for the High Command Studies Course, and a more robust elective programme for the next Joint Command and General Staff Course.

Working visits to and from the Baltic Defence College to our partner PME institutions during the first part of the academic year

The Commandant of the Baltic Defence College together with the Director of Joint Command and General Staff Course and his Military Assistant, paid a return visit to the Croatian Defence Academy (CDA) in Zagreb from 27th-29th OCT 2015. The Croatian delegation was led by LTG Slavko Barić, Ph.D., the Commandant of the Academy.



BALTDEFCOL delegation visits the Croatian Defence Academy



Visit by the Rector of the Finnish National Defence University



Visit by the President of Italian CASD

On NOV 25, 2015, the Rector of Finnish National Defence University (FNDU), RADM Veijo Taipalus; Finnish Defence Attaché to Estonia, CDR Jussi Voutilainen and LTC Mika Piironen paid a visit to the College.

On NOV 9, 2015, the College hosted a visit by the President of Italian CASD (Centro Alti Studi per la Difesa) Lieutenant General Massimiliano Del Casale, Italian Defence Attaché to Estonia Brigadier General Filippo Camporesi and Ai-de-camp to the President of CASD LTC Nicola Piscicelli.

### Russian (dis)information operations. Workshop at the Baltic Defence College

By Dr. Asta Maskaliūnaitė, Lecturer, War and Conflict Studies

Since the start of the crisis in Ukraine and especially the bloodless takeover of the Crimean peninsula, Russian information campaigns have been followed with attention and alarm in the Baltic States. Analysis of the situation and doctrines provided by Russian generals that allocate the information campaign an important role in the development of military engagement make this aspect of any potential confrontation with the Eastern neighbour particularly interesting also for the military. Having this in mind, the Baltic Defence College organised a workshop on Russian (dis)information operations and their potential impact in the Baltic States.



Ongoing workshop at the Baltic Defence College's Baltic Way room

The participants of the workshop included researchers from the Universities of the region, members of the defence establishment dealing with the topics of strategic communication, representatives of the media, the NATO STRATCOM Centre of Excellence and the ministries of defence and foreign affairs of Estonia. This half a day event aimed to discuss the current advances of research in the area and to evaluate the implications of these issues for military education. It served as a platform for sharing research results of academics from the three

Baltic States, and for sharing practical experience in tackling issues of strategic communication. Though coming from diverse research areas and with different experience, some fundamental issues emerged in most of the talks. First of all, the Russian information campaigns present 'alternative' views of the world and 'alternative' interpretations of events to such a degree that societies stop trusting any source of media. Secondly, the aim of these campaigns is to drive a wedge between the state and society, increasing the mistrust of the existing institutions and even questioning the existence of the states themselves through continuous attempts to undermine national interpretations of historic events. Finally, this domain presents serious difficulties for researchers as it is very complicated to assess the impacts of information campaigns and discern clear links between the (dis)information strategy and the results on the ground.

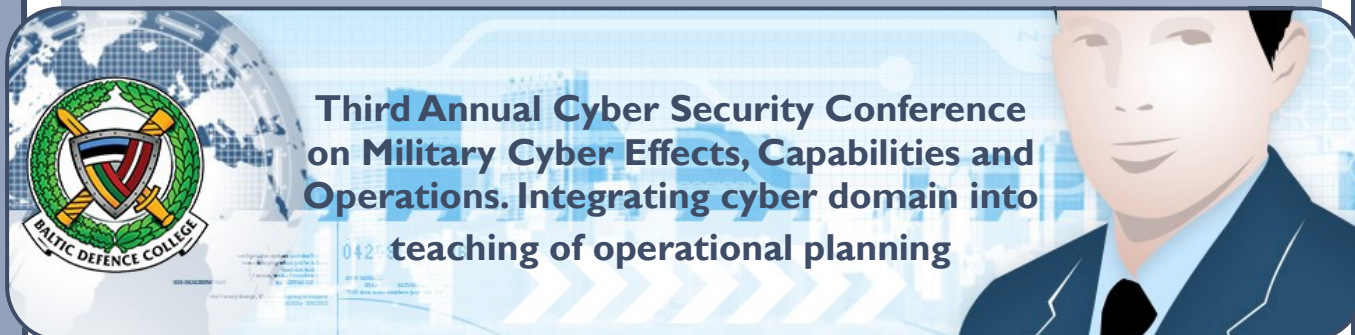
*The way to disable the Russian (dis)information campaigns should mainly include the strengthening of Western values within the society and a dedication to critical thinking, therefore the Baltic Defence College, with its ever increasing emphasis on development of critical thinking skills in the officers of the three Baltic states, may be considered one of the main institutions in this battle.*



Participants of the Russian (dis)information operations - workshop at the Baltic Defence College

### Third Annual Cyber Security Conference on Military Cyber Effects, Capabilities and Operations. Integrating cyber domain into teaching of operational planning

By Dr. Asta Maskaliūnaitė, Lecturer, War and Conflict Studies



*In a world ever more integrated by technology, the cyber domain has become as important a space for human societies as land, sea or air. This has also been acknowledged in the armed forces where the cyber domain has come to be treated as an important part of both the functioning of the military as an institution and as an integral part of military operations. At the same time, the newness of the topic and lack of expertise in many nations has resulted in significant gaps in the education of military officers.*

As a professional military education institution, the Baltic Defence College is working to develop academic excellence in teaching and researching the military utility of contemporary information and communication technologies with the special emphasis on their implications for military operations and leadership. Seeking to become a hub of research on teaching methodologies and educational quality in the education of military officers, on 11-13 November 2015, the Baltic Defence College held its annual cyber security conference on military cyber effects, capabilities and operations in Vilnius, Lithuania.

This year's conference focused on the topic of integration of the cyber domain into the teaching of operational planning.

The conference was attended by speakers and participants from nine countries and a number of institutions, including Cyber Mission Force Readiness at the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Office of the Principal Cyber Advisor, the Swedish Defence University, the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, PfP Consortium, Saint-Cyr Military Academy Research Centre, University of Vilnius and Tallinn Technical University, Cyber Unit of the Estonian Defence League.



Opening remarks, by Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras, the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College

### Third Annual Cyber Security Conference on Military Cyber Effects, Capabilities and Operations

Integrating cyber domain into teaching of operational planning

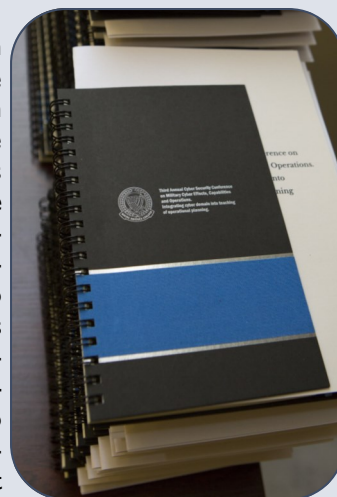
The conference aimed to explore the doctrinal and operational aspects of deploying 'cyber' into the full range of military operations and the implications thereof on operational decision-making and military planning, with particular emphasis on the implications these developments impose on military thought and officer and senior civil servant education.

*By bringing together experts with political, operational and military educational backgrounds, the conference led to an exchange of ideas and the development of a shared understanding of the problems that military planners and cyber experts face.*

It was agreed that until now there has been little emphasis on integrating the cyber domain into operational planning. The cyber experts had difficulties getting their message through to the planners and the planners were reluctant to consider the issues of the cyber domain, often viewing it as something mysterious and to be kept out of sight.

It has thus been emphasised that more understanding of both sides is needed: the cyber domain experts need to gain more insights into operational planning in order to be able to support the process with concrete suggestions and the operational planners need to understand the possibilities and threats that can arise from the cyber domain and, consequently, be able to ask for more precise advice and recommendations. The potential for cooperation with civilian institutions in this area was also discussed, with the Cyber defence unit of the Estonian Defence League being presented as a good example of such cooperation.

In addition to an intensive working schedule and heated discussions, the guests of the conference could also enjoy a tour of Vilnius by night, which was highly appreciated by the participants of the conference.



Participants of the Third Annual Cyber Security Conference on Military Cyber Effects, Capabilities and Operations. Integrating cyber domain into teaching of operational planning

### Field Study Trip to Saaremaa, Ämari and Tallinn

By Major Steven Grimshaw, Public Affairs Officer JCGSC 2015-2016

*On 27<sup>th</sup> September, the Joint Command and General Staff Course (JCGSC) together with members of the directing staff set off for the annual Field Study Trip (FST) to the island of Saaremaa, the Ämari Air Force Base and the Estonian capital.*

The FST to Saaremaa is a fundamental part of the JCGSC 2015/2016. On the basis of the historical joint Operation Albion during World War I, where the Germans landed on the island of Saaremaa and defeated its Russian occupiers, the students ought to understand the origins of joint operational warfare. By going to the actual theatres of battle, the trip aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Thus on midday of 27<sup>th</sup> September, the students and directing staff members departed with two busses from Tartu via Pärnu to Saaremaa.

Apart from the necessary stop in the harbour of Virtsu, the first discussion spot was on the causeway between Saaremaa and Muhu. Approaching the historical events in reverse order, the review and thinking points at this point focussed on the operational importance of the significant causeway between the two island. With a short stop at a remarkable meteor crater and a possibility to focus also on the exquisite nature of the island, the official programme of the day was concluded. A hotel in the city of Kuresaare was chosen as a point of departure for the following days.

The second day was all about seeing and setting foot on the historical grounds. Starting with the ancient castle of Kuresaare, which was used in those times by the Russians as headquarters, the different Syndicates were introduced to and had to develop important matters regarding operational art, campaign design and command and control. Thereby the specifics of the different services were brought into focus. After a trip to the southernmost destination of the island, maritime concepts of sea control and sea denial were discussed. Additionally, Tagga Bay in the Northwest of Saaremaa offered the possibility to focus on the amphibious aspects of the operation at the place of the event. Back in Kuresaare before concluding the day, the Syndicates were tasked with an operational problem, which was to be presented on the following day.

With the presentations of their findings in the hotel's conference centre, the third day was commenced.

Through reviewing the opposing sides and their approach, again an emphasis was on the operational level and its outcomes for the planning of today. After a short wrap-up, the Commandant of the Saaremaa District of the Estonian Defence League together with members of his staff presented their task. Afterwards they had organized a guided tour through the Baltic Workboats shipyard and a short journey on a vessel of the Estonian Coastguard, which was considered by many as the highlight of the third day. With interesting discussions between members of the directing staff and the students during a hosted dinner at a local restaurant, this day and the trip to Saaremaa were concluded. On the next morning the delegation was to make the journey to Ämari Airforce Base and Tallinn.



A guided tour through the Baltic Workboats shipyard and a short journey on a vessel of the Estonian Coastguard



Display of the A-10 Thunderbolt and the Eurofighter Typhoons



### Field Study Trip to Saaremaa, Ämari and Tallinn

On Wednesday, presentations and static displays in Ämari were scheduled. The Chief of Estonian Air Force, Colonel Jaak Tarien, welcomed the delegation. During his presentation he talked about the current situation and future challenges for the Estonian Air Force. Then the German Leader of the Baltic Air Policing Mission presented his mission and how they are currently conducting it. Happily, the representatives of the Baltic Defence College also had the chance to be introduced to the US A-10 squadron, which currently happened to be stationed at Ämari for the coming months. After the presentations, an interesting static display of the A-10 Thunderbolt and the Eurofighter Typhoons had been arranged, which offered the possibility for challenging questions and memorable photos. Afterwards, the delegation headed to Tallinn for the last stage of the trip.

On the final day, the JCGSC departed early from Tallinn to Muuga harbour. The delegation was welcomed by a representative of the harbour authority. During the presentations, the huge harbour areas and its functions were introduced. They also offered a short mounted trip around the harbour area, so that the students could get an impression of a remarkable civil harbour. Following the civilian side, the group travelled back to the Estonian Defence Force Naval Base in Tallinn, where they were introduced to the Estonian Naval Forces by the Chief

of Navy, Captain Sten Sepper. During the whole visit to the base, which included interesting presentations and static displays of the vessels with the possibility to go on-board, students could get an impression of the specifics of naval forces. In the early afternoon, the group departed in the direction of Tartu, which finally concluded the Saaremaa Field Study Trip 2015.

For many of the students, who come from different countries, branches and backgrounds, the whole trip offered the chance to get an impression of the knowledge requirements on the joint operational level. In addition to that, the nicely chosen places of accommodation also offered a wide range of cultural and social aspects in regards to exchange and cohesion.



### How to celebrate a National holiday abroad somehow differently?

By Major Steven Grimshaw, Public Affairs Officer JCGSC 2015-2016

*On Saturday, the 3rd of October 2015, two students of Baltic Defence College's (BALTDEFCOL) Joint Command and General Staff Course (JCGSC) took part in a 10 kilometre run as part of the Tartu marathon.*



Two days after arriving back from the Field Study Trip to the island of Saaremaa, the Tartu marathon took place. Taking part in this run somehow had evolved from a "crazy idea" in the Syndicate Laidoner just a few weeks back. Despite the poor preparation time and totally aware of the academic restraints during that week, a Lithuanian and a German student took on the challenge of competing against Tartu's huge participant field, at least over a distance of 10k. Although all disciplines and distances combined saw over 6000 runners and walkers, the latter 10k discipline had attracted exactly 1355 starters from 17 different nations, among them only 6 from Lithuania and 1 from Germany. However, both BALTDEFCOL students had agreed that their main goals were firstly to reach the finish line, secondly to have fun and thirdly to be under the top third.

So, at exactly 13:30 the field was sent on the track. Both students had started from the back of the field and agreed on not engaging in "close combat" with each other during the first 5k. Therefore, the task for the first kilometres was to work jointly through the

huge field of rather slow runners. After accomplishing the first hills and bridges of the course, things started to get a little nasty and endurance slightly started to be felt. Both got separated over a few metres after km 6, yet both BALTDEFCOL starters meant to maintain the high set pace of under 5:00 min/km. In the end, they both had set a new personal record, averaging approximately 12 km/h over the full distance, although in this case Lithuania was slightly quicker than Germany.



Bearing in mind that only 1202 participants had reached the finish line, all three initially set goals – especially having fun – had been accomplished. The 3rd October is actually a national holiday in Germany, celebrating this year the 25th anniversary of German unification. Running together with a fellow student in a respected and successful Lithuanian-German team, on foreign grounds, after approximately 24 years of restored independence to Estonia and not solely due to the fact that we provided the fastest German of the field, was a different but very worthy way of celebrating this special day.



## Syndicate GEDIMINAS dominates the 'Ultimate-Frisbee' tournament

By Major Steven Grimshaw, Public Affairs Officer JCGSC 2015-2016

*On Thursday, the 8th October, the Ultimate-Frisbee tournament came to a conclusion. After a five week long and challenging period it was clear that Syndicate GEDIMINAS is the winner of this year's tournament. But how did it come so far and what was their key to success?*



*First, let us take a look at the game and its rules. Ultimate Frisbee was chosen as Baltic Defence College's team building activity. It is a game, which is relatively easy to learn and does not require much skill, but still serves greatly to enforce a bunch of students to really work well as a team. Thereby it also involves some easy tactics of how to arrange your team best in order to score, because the aim of the game is easy: score as many points as possible in 2 x 20 minutes by getting the frisbee from one end zone to another. Thereby the players are only allowed to throw the frisbee. As soon as the frisbee is intercepted, out of bounds or touches the ground, the possession of the frisbee switches to the other team. Sounds easy?! So for the five Syndicates and the so-called 'TEAM SIX' – led personally by the Course Director and formed out of the best players the college's staff could summon – the goal was clear: win as many games as possible.*

So now after the stage was set, let us take a look at the development of the tournament. All teams were introduced to the game just a few days before the first training game so everyone would start with his or her teams from scratch. LAIDONER probably had the worst start of all teams, because they lost one

of their key players due to injury just a few days before the first official practice day. Being past frisbee champions, but only finishing second in the last tournament, they felt constrained to practice in advance. Unfortunately, there were two more injuries to come during the tournament, so that regaining the title was in actual fact impossible. With their hands tied, the brave fighters of LAIDONER decided on a new strategy for the game: just to have fun!

Other Syndicates like ALEXANDER, did not get off to a good start as well. After facing DAUGAVGRIVA in the first week, which was to be DAUGAVGRIVA's only win of the tournament, they both unfortunately went on to lose every game. KALPAKS on the other hand, after losing the first game to the later winner GEDIMINAS, won three games in a row and came second in the whole tournament, despite losing their last game to the highly competitive TEAM SIX. The latter team, although bringing in new players every week, only lost one game in the 4th week, again to GEDIMINAS.



This was a good demonstration of GEDIMINAS dominance. Through winning every game of the tournament, Syndicate GEDIMINAS had achieved what seemed impossible at the beginning. In addition to that, they also managed to score the highest score difference and the most goals in one game, by beating TEAM SIX with 16:1. Through winning every game of the tournament, Syndicate GEDIMINAS had achieved what seemed impossible at the beginning. In addition to that, they also managed to score the highest score difference and the most goals in one game, by beating TEAM SIX with 16:1.

...the 'Ultimate-Frisbee' tournament

And LAIDONER? Suffering from those severe setbacks due to three players being injured, they consequently lost their first three games, but managed to win the last two. Surprisingly they managed to score the second highest points difference with 13:3 against DAUGAVGRIVA in the final game to still make it third in the whole tournament. Despite LAIDONER's progressing performance curve, like the other teams they still had to acknowledge the supremacy of this year's best team: GEDIMINAS. Last but not least, this year's performance of TEAM SIX has to be acknowledged. Each week they were compiled out of new players, but still managed to give the syndicates 'one hell of a fight.' Despite not being counted in the tournaments ranking, they managed to win every game, except the one to GEDIMINAS. Although the score of 16 : 1 speaks clearly for itself, malicious gossips were to say that the absence of the above mentioned team captain seemed to have a noticeable effect on TEAM SIX's performance.

But what made GEDIMINAS so successful? To get to the bottom of this, it was necessary to closely observe and examine their strategy. Their strengths had to be uncovered. According to an internal source, GEDIMINAS' key to success were their intensive additional team building activities through so-called social events. 'We had a lot of nice social events' one stated. According to another highly involved informant, their key to success was that 'we had a strategy, from the beginning on, and we followed it through'. So the question could be raised, if having so-called social events and sticking to your play is the key to success? At least in the case of Syndicate GEDIMINAS, the deserved winner of the Ultimate Frisbee battle, it was!



## Tartu Mountain-bike (xc) marathon

College's participation in 18. Tartu Rattamaraton, The third largest mountain bike marathon in the world in pictures



Both 89 km and 40 km tracks were concured!



Officail map of tracks by Klubi Tartu Maraton

## Introducing Estonia

By Major Steven Grimshaw, Public Affairs Officer JCGSC 2015-2016

Directing staff, faculty members and students undertook a joint trip together with their family members to the north of Estonia

On Saturday, the 29th of August, a large number of participants took part in one of the traditional trips to explore the undiscovered parts of Estonia. All members and students of the Baltic Defence College and their families were invited for this one-day trip, which this time introduced the north of Estonia. The Commandant of the Baltic Defence College, Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras, and also the new Course Director of the Joint Command and General Staff Course, Colonel Mark Hollis, also attended together with their spouses.

The trip started early at 07:30 a.m. from the Baltic Defence College with two busses heading to the first destination, the ancient trading point Viitna approx. 140 km north of Tartu. Here the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College introduced the two Estonian tour guides and emphasised in his introductory words, the importance of learning about the culture and the history of the three Baltic States and getting to know each other more. During his speech it suddenly started raining 'cats and dogs', which was considered by a few as a bad sign. But as it turned out, this was to be the last 'wet moment' of the day.

After a short snack and some coffee, the busses took the participants to the second station of the tour. During an interesting slideshow in the Lahemaa National Park Visiting Centre, everyone experienced the beautiful nature of Northern Estonia. Afterwards, the group was guided along the lovely gardens and the restored main building of Palmse Manor, where for 247 years the famous German Baltic family von der Pahlen had lived. The Manor is one good example of the beautifully restored manors in Estonia, although with its 17 rooms it is also one of the smallest.

The third station of the day was Käsmu village, which is considered to be one of the most beautiful villages in Estonia. Käsmu is famous for its maritime background, because due to the presence of the maritime school from 1884 – 1931, many famous Estonian Captains came from here. That is why it is also known as 'Captain's village'. In the historic Soviet border guard building, which is now a maritime museum, everyone could experience some traces from this time. For the favoured braves, the old border guard observation tower provided an impressive view over the small town and the lovely bay.

During the journey to the fourth station along the roads near the coast line, the group listened to some interesting stories about the days of alcohol smuggling

between Estonia and Finland and was provided with another lovely view on the Estonian coast. After the lunch at Viinistu restaurant, the Commandant gathered the whole group for a photo under pleasant sunshine in front of the Gulf of Finland.

The fifth location of the tour took the group to Altja village, which is another good example of a historical fishing village typical of Northern Estonia at the end of the 19th century. The participants walked along the small main road directly to the land head, where another impressive view of the natural coast of Estonia was provided and many photographs were taken.

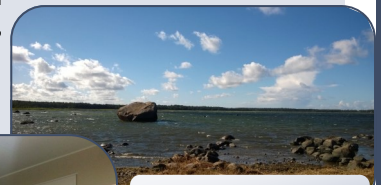
After a quick stop for some photos at the Vihula Manor Holiday Village, the next and final destination was the 'Buffalo Ranch' near Rägavere. Here the group was welcomed by the host, his wife and his assisting farm girls in a traditional 'western fashion'. Next to real bison, the group enjoyed scrumptious food in a very pleasant environment. The ladies of the farm together with the Commandant invited everyone on the dance floor to join in dancing a traditional square dance, which was very challenging to one's coordinative skills.

At 09:15 p.m. the two buses arrived safely back in Tartu after a journey of approximately 90 minutes. Everyone agreed that it had been a long but very entertaining day, with many beautiful views,

Slideshow in the  
Lahemaa National Park  
Visiting Centre



Altja village



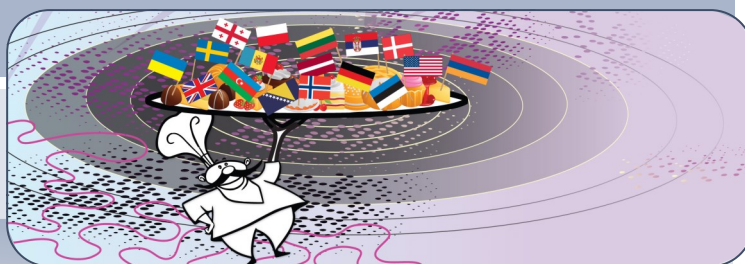
Kitchen of Palmse Manor



Participants of the trip in Viinistu

## International Night in the Baltics - a high-speed trip around the world

By Mrs. Kaire Hallik, Management Secretary



*Baltic Defence College has a code of conduct that we all live by in our daily business at the college - respect, responsibility, openness and to having fun. We try hard to achieve the balance between all the components of this code and to be the best ambassadors of the institution and the many cultures represented amongst our staff and students.*

One could say that an event to introduce and get familiarised with a variety of cultures at the college in a time window of only a few hours falls more or less under each and every part of the code.

From year to year we can see different nations represented at the college, proudly presenting a piece of their culture to our high level guests, staff, students and their families, as well as our partners and friends from many different countries and functions. Taking part in the International Night feels like a high-speed trip around the world, visiting many interesting cultures, tasting their national food and drinks, and enjoying their songs and dances.

*This multinational environment is truly a magnificent jewel to be cherished!*

On 6th November, for the eleventh time in the Baltic Defence College's history, 'International Night in the Baltics' was celebrated, enabling faculty, students and guests to get together and catch up and enjoy the food and beverages.



The event was once again opened by the Commandant of the Baltic Defence College, Major General Vitalijus Vaikšnoras, who, in his opening speech, stressed the importance of the international

working environment as well multicultural atmosphere which he considers to be one of the college's most valuable features. Events like 'International Night in the Baltics' lead to a strengthening of the team spirit among its individual members.

Once again the celebration presented an excellent opportunity for invited guests, students and faculty members, along with their families, to get an insight of the culture, traditions and national cousins of the three 'owner' nations – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – as well as all the other countries represented at the college. The night was filled of delicious national food, drinks and joyful performances by Latvian folk group, Lithuanian musicians, singers and dancers from United States and Ukraine. This year sixteen national tables were prepared; countries like Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Germany, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Norway Poland, Serbia, Sweden, United Kingdom, Ukraine and the United States were represented.



## ... International Night in the Baltics

By Ms Liene Andersone, JCGSC 2015-2016

*Students and faculty put a lot of effort to present their nations as best they could, starting from choosing which national delicacies to serve to setting up the table design. Everything required detailed preparation.*

Some nations' tables included such unusual dishes as reindeer meat on the Swedish table and lamprey fish on the Latvian table. The three core nations of the Baltic Defence College, the Baltic States, as usual had a friendly competition of which table – and especially which beer – would be the most popular during the evening. It's fair to say that by the end of night all glasses were empty.



The entertainment for the evening was brought by four national performances. Latvian folk dance group "Bramani" took the stage first performing Latvian traditional dances. The performance from the United States continued with dancing and invited to look at Estonian take on swing dance, with the Tartu Swing Club dancing and Louis Digman by the piano. As the swing

dancing heated up, even the American students and faculty couldn't resist but to join in. The Lithuanian folk music band "Ugniavijas" continued with historic war songs. However, probably the most entertaining part of this performance was the song when the Lithuanian officers joined the band on the stage. At the end of the evening, the Ukrainian students finished with beautiful Ukrainian folk songs.



The evening also went down in BALTDEF COL history as the first time when all the leftover food from the national tables went to the Estonian Food Bank,

ensuring no food was wasted and helping those in more need.

During the evening Baltgirls, the college's spouses organisation, organised fundraising and with great success raised more than 1000 euros to help children with visual impairment. The evening was truly a bonding event both for students and staff.



BALTDEFCOL Staff End of Year Reception 2015  
in pictures



*BALTDEFCOL End of Year Reception was held  
in Külitse Aida Peosaal at 10th December 2015*

## BALTGIRLS Activities

By Stefanie Grimshaw with the contributions from Baltgirls

### August 2015

The new Academic year 2015-2016 started in August, and Baltgirls heartily welcomed the new members during our first traditional coffee morning in the college on **18<sup>th</sup> of August**. Irena Vaikšnorienė, the Chairlady of the Baltgirls represented the schedule of Baltgirls' activities and our plans for the nearest future in a very cosy and nice atmosphere with delicious food, prepared by the ladies. It was a great opportunity to get to know each other, to foster our relationships after the summer break and to establish new ones.

On the **29<sup>th</sup> of September** Baltgirls were invited by Ms. Irena Vaikšnorienė for the first trip "Discovery Estonia" to the marvellous and perfect organized home garden near Tartu, which received a prize for the most beautiful garden in Estonia, 2015.

### September 2015

We had a long walk in the huge and very beautiful garden, and then tried the fresh berries, fruits and tea, which the owners had grown there.

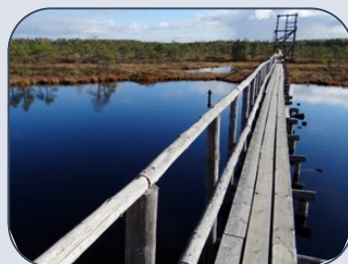


After that, we drove to *Uhti Ateljee*, a former pub which is now an art museum and handcraft shop. The Baltgirls learned how to produce the chocolate candies and how to make little key-holders from leather by themselves. For lunch, the owners presented very delicious soljanka soup, pumpkin-pizza and warm bread. After the lunch we had a look at their work and the entire house. Additionally, they showed us how they are producing very stylish jewellery and earthenware.



### October 2015

On **7<sup>th</sup> of October** some of the Baltgirls had the practical trip of the photo course which took place in Endla, the swamps near to Tartu. It was a cold but sunny day, perfect for taking pictures of this wonderful landscape. Here you can get some impressions:



On the **26<sup>th</sup> of October** the next Coffee morning took place in the conference room in the students' dormitories complex in Ida Street. Everyone was asked to bring one national dish, which we all enjoyed very much!

## BALTGIRLS Activities

Ms Irena Vaikšnorienė introduced the new charity project for the upcoming International Night, the next trip for the "Discovery Estonia" programme and other upcoming events and activities. She also congratulated the ladies on their birthdays, and on behalf of all the Baltgirls presented them with small gifts for remembering their stay in Tartu. Also, during this coffee morning we prepared the little beautiful stickers as a symbol of charity and our thanks for the future donators during the International Night.



On **30<sup>th</sup> of October**, a nice and sunny day, we had the traditional annual Tartu Guided tour for newcomers and other Baltgirls. We visited many places in Tartu's old town which are important for the town and its history. We heard many stories about important historical persons, architecture, monuments and lots about Tartu University, which has a very long and interesting history, and lot of funny stories about previous students' lives.



November 2015

*The most important event of the year for Baltgirls was the International Night.*



On **6<sup>th</sup> of November**, and before all the Baltgirls were very busy with their national stands and tables, many of them also were working on our Baltgirls charity table earning donations for children with visual impairments from Tartu Emajõe Kool. On a special



screen we showed a video from the school about those children. Baltgirls prepared the sweets, cakes, candies for the charity table and presented these and badges for the donators. As usual, it was a wonderful event with lots of international delicious dishes, performances presented by the students and their spouses, and we also had outstanding guest singers and dancers from the Baltic countries. At the end of the event, the amount of donations had been counted by Baltgirls. 1001.19 Euros - the highest amount in the last three years. Congratulations and big thanks to everyone who contributed and worked for this wonderful result!

On **18<sup>th</sup> of November** we continued our "Discover Estonia" programme in Võhma visiting the candle factory. The owner welcomed us very friendly and presented a very interesting tour of his factory accompanied with the stories about how he created the business in Estonia. Later we were allowed to produce our own candles.



## BALTGIRLS Activities



After a delicious lunch in nice and cosy country-style restaurant in Veskisilla, we drove to Kirna Manor. There we learned a lot about the history of the place and about how the healing energies could help. We left this house full of new energy!



At the end of the day, we visited the Estonian Dairy Museum. The guide showed us the unique historical equipment for production of the butter, cheeses and other milk products. After a guided tour we all made butter, buttermilk and bread by ourselves. Also we had a very tasty demonstration of different cheeses



and milk products made in Estonia.

On the **30<sup>th</sup> of November** Ursula Schulte-Pfaffenroth second year traditionally invited the Baltgirls to her lovely house for to bake seasonal German-style biscuits. The ladies were shown how to bake typical German Christmas pastries and decorated them in different patterns. At the end of this workshop with the Christmas spirit, we got from Ursula the traditional gift box with the all the kinds of biscuits we made for our families.



On **4<sup>th</sup> of December** Baltgirls packed the gifts for the children with visual disabilities of Tartu Emajõe Kool in the college. We are very thankful for Jolita Vilčiauskienė for her lesson how to make spectacular decorations and exiting gift-wrapping.

*December 2015*



The last trip in 2015 was a traditional tour by train to Tallinn on **7<sup>th</sup> of December**. After a short stroll through the marvellous old town of Tallinn and lunch in an old town cafeteria we visited the Christmas market.



Everyone was looking for nice presents for their family and friends. It was a sunny and windy day, inviting us to enjoy some of the traditional drink "Glögi" in the very joyful Christmas market atmosphere.



## BALTGIRLS Activities

On Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> of December Baltgirls along with representatives from the Baltic Defence College presented the musical instruments for the children with visual impairments at Tartu Emajõe Kool. The personnel of the school showed our delegation the pupil's dormitories, school and the special educational equipment for children with visual impairment.



The children presented to us a wonderful Christmas concert. They were playing piano music and singing to us and the other guests. The concert was very nice and touching. We were very happy to see how children unwrapped the gifts after the performance. Now we are waiting for the video they promised to send to us about their Christmas concert with all the presented instruments. We wish the best success for them!

On the 11th of December we were invited by Baltgirls Maria Järvare and Lena Meltorn to a very exciting traditional Swedish event – the Lucia Celebration, which took place in the Catholic Church of Tartu. Many children from the International school along with participants of many different ages showed us a very nice and deeply touching performance, singing very beautiful songs and psalms.



Afterwards, we visited the Christmas market organized in the International School near the church by the pupils and their parents. The goods were made and sold by the children, and we could visit the cafeteria with a pot for donations and many tasty cakes and sweets. All donation from the cafeteria and the market will go to the Mäe Kodu orphanage.

*The Baltgirls are very proud of our ladies constantly working for charity:  
Maria Järvare (Sweden) and her children for the Vao refugee centre, and  
Stefanie Grimshaw (Germany) for constant support of the Tartu Shelter for cats and dogs.  
We are looking forward to participate in those charity projects in 2016.*

*We are also very thankful for the great support of our initiatives from the college administration.  
For Ms Kaja Arulepp who helps us to organise our "Discover Estonia" trip programme and great support for the coffee mornings.  
For Mrs Kaie Ehrenberg for organising our Pilates lessons.  
For Mrs Kaire Hallik for her support.*

*We wish the best luck and great health for Alicia Purcell and Jurgita Zagurskienė for delivery of their babies in early 2016!*

**Baltgirls are looking forward to a peaceful Christmas time and to continue their activities in 2016!**

### **The schedule of regular Baltgirls activities:**

*Monday – Estonian language course  
Wednesday - 9:30 Photo course in VTC room in the college.  
Wednesday – 11:30 Pilates in the college gym.  
Friday – 12:30 Pilates.*

*The possibility to study the oil painting or/and drawing in Tartu University.*

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for everybody!**



*May the good times and treasures of  
the present become the golden memories of tomorrow.  
Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for  
the happy New Year 2016.*

*Vitalijus Vaikšnoras  
Major General  
Commandant of the Baltic Defence College*