

Scratching's

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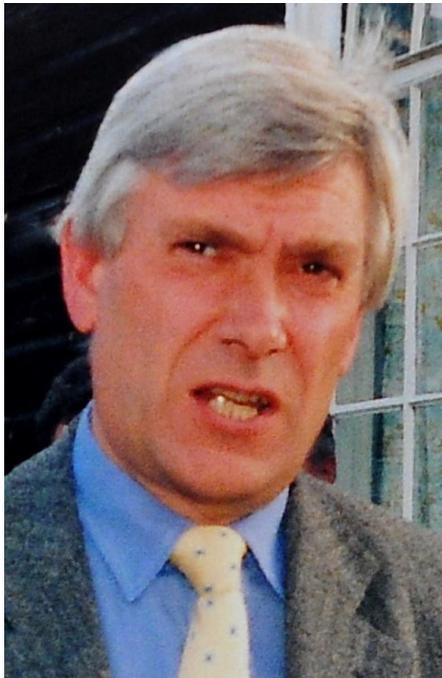
The Pen.....



February 2012: A monthly memo and scribblings for and from members of the Pen & Sword Club

Club goes firm on Media Operations Seminar in Autumn

The Pen & Sword Club took another major step forward in January with the decision to go ahead with its plans to organise a media operations seminar in Central London in 2012. Taking advantage of the 30th anniversary of the Falklands War, which was a milestone in relationships between media, military and government, the seminar will examine the advance of media operations over the last three decades and, importantly, will look at the future.



Says Club President, Hugh Colver: "The seminar will attract attention from military, media and government. Your central team will be working hard to make it a success and that, we hope, will lead to the Club running a landmark annual event in the coming years.

"The Club has based its successful expansion in recent years on the objective of supporting and promoting media operations as a necessary and valued military skill in the 21st century. The one day seminar will draw on the experiences of senior officers, media operations practitioners and British journalists in conflicts, peace-keeping and humanitarian operations since 1982 and will also debate the way ahead

"The club's has identified wide support and interest and is currently contacting, or confirming, those who will take part. It is hoped that a Defence Minister will open the seminar. "

Attendance is expected to be limited to around 200 and more details will be announced soon. Club members will be given an early opportunity to request tickets. Costs will be kept to a minimum for this non-profit seeking venture.

An advance-booking list for members is now open and the first request for tickets has arrived. Please email the National Chairman, Mike Peters on michaelpcoms@btinternet.com to express your interest in attending.

And another great offer

Central England Region has arranged for Pen & Sword Club members of military officer or equivalent civilian status to join the University of Birmingham Defence Dining Club.

There is no membership fee for the event that takes place about three times a year and is black tie or mess kit functions, though dark suits may be worn.

Says Michael, pictured right: "The dinner, which attracts about 70-100 guests, bring together military and academics with an interest in security and defence issues and they are very enjoyable.

"The three course menus include wine and currently cost only £37. Partners and spouses are very welcome.

"Previous speakers have included politicians, military, scientists, diplomats, and journalists such as Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, Generals Sir Peter Wall and Sir Mike Jackson, Vice Admiral Tim Laurence, General Krulak, USMC, Sir Francis Richards and Professor Harry Smith.

"The next dinner is on Thursday, April 26 when the booked speaker is the Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell. The region hopes these events will become an excellent networking opportunity for members and I cannot recommend it highly enough," says Michael.

Further details are available from Michael. Email mc@michaelcollie.co.uk. Please include a one-line sentence of your military/defence background or any other relevant information when applying.



New club appointments in Central and Westcountry

Westcountry Regional Chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Graham Barnett has appointed Lieutenant Colonel David Falcke, right, as his Vice Chairman.

David, who was the Ministry of Defence Chief Media Advisor to HQ Land before retiring is now the armed forces correspondent for the Salisbury Journal.

He joins Graham and regional secretary Sue Nelmes in managing the South West of England membership

After service in the Regular Army, David became a newspaper publisher in the North West before he joined MOG (V) in 1987.

He served as a Territorial for over eleven years and undertook postings to Bosnia and Northern Iraq. David also served with the Army Cadet Force's central public relations team for six years.





In the Central England Region, chairman, Major Michael Collie has appointed former Adjutant to MOG (V.) Major Joanne Bowlt as Vice-Chair.

Pictured left, Joanne served a total of 16 years, first as a Regular in the Royal Logistic Corps and later as a Territorial with MOG (V.) As a Logistics Officer Joanne spent six years in Germany, the Balkans and the UK.

As a Territorial she mobilised in 2003 and served four months in Iraq as an Army and Coalition Provisional Administration press officer.

Captain Kevin Harvey, right, has accepted the role of secretary to the Central Region.

A highly successful newspaper photographer Kevin has captured images in many hot spots around the world.

Kevin is the owner of Images of Oxford and provides studio based and press photography as well as running a successful photographic teaching programme.



Mark takes over at DSMC

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wenham has taken over as Chief Instructor at the Defence School of Media & Communications, following a tour as Chief of Public Affairs at HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps.

Mark will be responsible for running the DSMC, delivering all media and communications training, education and consultancy for the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air force.

As Chief Public Affairs at HQ ARRC Mark was spokesman for Commander ARRC and HQ ARRC and spokesman for the UK in Helmand in 2009. Mark has also served as Deputy Chief Public Affairs at HQ ISAF Joint Command.



Heather enjoys Bahrain Sunshine

Lieutenant Commander Heather Lane, RNR Media Operations Specialisation, pictured below, has deployed to Bahrain where she is double-hatted as the UK Maritime Component Command Media Operations Officer and Public Affairs Officer to Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).

Heather tells *Scratchings* that when she can manage to get away from her desk and computer she is making the most of the Gulf sunshine. She took advantage of her first day off in three weeks to visit the “most amazing shopping mall in the world” in Dubai, which she says is “a fantastic city.”

CMF is a multi-national naval partnership, which exists to promote security, stability and prosperity across approximately 2.5 million square miles of international waters in the Middle East, which encompass some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

It's been "busy, busy" says Heather who is preparing for the arrival of HMS Daring, the Royal Navy's new Type 45 air defence destroyer to the area. "Lots of people want to see her."



There have been plenty of VIP visitors to look after. Prince Edward and the Countess of Wessex saw HMS Triumph, the Trafalgar Class submarine and Crown Prince Salman Al Khalifa, and his son, visited HMS Triumph and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Diligence. Lord Astor went aboard the mine hunter HMS Quorn.

Senior officers visiting on Heather's watch have included the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, who flew out to the aircraft carrier USS John C Stennis. Press visits have also kept Heather on her toes with the BBC's security correspondent Frank Gardner among them.

Rosie leads MOG (V) to the Falklands

Led by Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Rosie Stone, pictured below, a team from Media Operations Group (V) has flown to the South Atlantic to take part in Exercise Falklands



Forum 12 which is designed to test British Forces in their military and defence capability as part of UK foreign policy.

In the planning for the last 18 months, Falklands Forum also involves a contingent of the Joint Force HQ from JPHQ Northwood that will augment the Falklands Islands staff.

The nine strong MOG (V) team will provide a combination of EXCON led

media input to the scenario and cover TV, radio, print and website injects as well as media training and advice to full time media staff who are also players.

Says Rosie: "Considering the current newsworthiness of the Falkland Islands in the lead up to the 30th anniversary of the conflict in the South Atlantic, plus the imminent arrival of Prince William in his role as an SAR pilot, it should prove an interesting experience."

Tony spreads a special Christmas cheer

Flying Officer Tony Newton of 7644 Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force ended his busy media operations year just before the 2011 Festive Season by helping spread Christmas Cheer across the United Kingdom.

"I'd been tasked by Air Command to take a Mobile News Team to Kandahar and Bastion, told to record as many Christmas Messages as we could from personnel across all three services and bring the material back to the UK for processing and uploading to the RAF's website.

"With me was videographer Corporal Dylan Browne and we were hosted in theatre by Flight Lieutenant Chloe Bridge who manages media operations for 83 Expeditionary Air Group. Chloe had lined up sessions for us with many of the units represented in Bastion and by the end of the project we'd recorded over 250 Christmas messages.



"With mobile phones banned in theatre and Paradigm cards limited to 30 minutes per week for phone calls and internet, the opportunity to send a personal Christmas message to loved ones back home is one was popular.

"We'd brought a few props with us but also liberated something extra from each unit we visited: an inflatable snowman which we christened Orville, various bits of tinsel, a table top Christmas Tree and, our favourite, a cardboard cut-out reindeer

"The props came in handy to break the ice and the messages varied from straight and business like to wonderfully cheesy. Some made great use of the props, others none at all, but the end effect was much the same – a personal heartfelt message to loved ones. Emotion came to the surface readily, and it's great that no one was embarrassed.

"Here's how the Christmas messaging worked: we set up our video camera in the best location we could find, trying to ensure that the background reflected the speaker's working environment. Offices and conference rooms don't make great video, so we went for external settings wherever possible. Each participant was given a card printed with a unique password and an RAF web address, so that only those given that password back at home would be able to view the message – so the output was both personal and very secure.

"On Christmas Eve, and not before, to ensure a sense of occasion all 250 plus messages went live to be viewed on Christmas Day by family and friends.

"Media interest in the project was surprisingly high but emphasised the importance of having a specific concept or 'package' to sell -in to busy producers and planners, and of tailoring that package for specific regional needs. It meant identifying service personnel with families in each of the BBC TV regions, then getting buy-in of those families to be interviewed.

"Each regional package comprised a combination of bespoke footage (an interview with the selected service person about what they are doing in Afghanistan and what it's like to be away at the time of the year. Cutaways of that person doing their normal job and of the messaging processes underway) with boilerplate interview footage with the Officer Commanding 903 Expeditionary Air Wing, the RAF padre and background footage of helicopters lifting from camp Bastion

"To complete the story, all the regional media then had to do was to interview the family and get shots of them logging in to receive their personal Christmas message

“To anyone thinking that managing a Mobile News Team, is just about turning up and swanning around with a video camera, I’d remind them that the selling-in process involved a lot of extra legwork, but it made the difference between capturing a lot of material that ends up sitting on a hard drive and creating stories that made it on to the BBC Scotland, BBC Wales, BBC Look East, Look North and Look West plus BBC Three Counties Radio.”

Grassy deploys to Afghan Pastures

Lieutenant Commander ‘Grassy’ Meadows, RNR MOS, pictured below is well into a six months tour of Afghanistan, serving in the Force Effects Coordination Centre at Camp Leather Neck. An experienced media officer, Grassy is on his third operational tour – he has been to Iraq and Bahrain – and is currently Deputy Communications Strategy Officer working directly to an RAF Group Captain.

He coordinates the Public Affairs Group, Information Operations and all Military Information Support Operations sections, in order to develop and promulgate themes and messages in support of the regional Command (South West) Commander’s communications strategy.



Says Grassy: “The role in the headquarters is extremely busy and demanding, there are further and more exciting commitments outside the wire dealing with media, population engagement and provincial reconstructions teams at the other forward operating bases.”

Lt Cdr Meadows has served for 36 years in the Royal Navy completing his full time engagement as Lt Cdr Physical Training and Recreation. He has served in RNR MOS since January 2004 and on completion of this tour he will be applying to serve until January 2013 to complete almost 45 years naval service.

Artwork & photographs from Afghanistan's front line unveiled

Captain Meredyth Grant, MOG (V,) pictured below right tells *Scratchings* that 3 Commando Brigade and the Services Sound and Vision Corporation (SSVC) have launched **Shoulder 2 Shoulder - Delivering the Offer** a multimedia exhibition for 2012.

The exhibition showcases the work of the men and the women from 3 Commando Brigade and their Afghan colleagues who served on Operation HERRICK 14 during the summer of 2011.

On display will be more than 100 images captured by frontline service photographers, embedded journalists and the renowned war artist Andrew Miller. This will be the first time that many of the photographs and artwork has been exhibited to the public.

Original artwork, limited edition signed prints and an Operation HERRICK 14 photographic book will be sold at each exhibition and online to raise money for The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund and the Not Forgotten Association, two charitable organisations which support those injured or bereaved in service for their country.



Chief of the General Staff, General Sir David Richards said he is proud to support the exhibition on behalf of the three services, all of which will benefit from the proceeds. "They have my fullest backing and I urge you to support this initiative over the coming months."

TV star Ross Kemp (embedded with 3 Commando Brigade on Op HERRICK 14) says: "I've been reporting from Afghanistan for the last five years. During my time there I've always received the warmest welcome from all members of our armed forces. They remain the most professional and bravest people I've met on my travels. I'm continuously impressed by the tenacity shown in adversity, not only by them, but also their families. Myself and my crew will always be indebted to them."

Says Virginia Wheeler, Defence Correspondent The Sun: "Shoulder 2 Shoulder - Delivering the Offer' keeps our servicemen and women in the public eye through the work of the photographers, artists and journalists who were embedded with them last summer."

Confirmed venues and dates so far are:

- Plymouth Central Library 8 Feb 12 (public launch)
- Exeter Guildhall 10 - 17 Feb 12
- Barnstaple Pannier Market 20 - 25 Feb 12
- MoD Main Building, Memorial Courtyard 27 Feb - 02 Mar 12 (MoD employees only)
- SSVC location (Venue and date soon)
- Royal Marine Reserves London (Venue and dates soon)
- RMB Stonehouse, Op HERRICK 14 Honours & Awards Families Day 30 Mar 12
- Royal Marines Museum, Portsmouth 02-20 Apr 12

More information can be found at: www.shoulder2shoulder.co.uk

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Diamond Charity Ball in June

Media Operations Group (V) and the Guild of Public Relations Practitioners will hold a Diamond Charity Ball this summer on June 15. More details in the next edition of *Scratchings* but the Ball will be open to members of the Pen & Sword Club to attend. Get ready to trip the light fantastic and dance the night away to the London Swing Orchestra.

New Members

The following new members were confirmed in January:

Royal Navy

Cdr Ian Aitchison RN. Currently Group Communications NYK Group, Europe. Formerly RNR Media Ops Specialisation, UKMCC Bahrain, SPRO HMNB Clyde.

Cdr Pam Healey, RN. Currently CEO The Haven Breast Cancer Charity. Formerly Head of RNR Media Operations Specialisation and Head of Regional Media, MoD.

Cdr Paula Rowe, RN. Currently Head of PR & Communications, Hope Rescue. Formerly Chief Media Ops 3 Cdo Brigade, Staff Officer Info Ops COMUKAMPHBFOR, Deputy Chief info Ops, ISAF, Media Advisor Commander JFO.

Lt Cdr John Lewis, RNR. Currently Regional Client Manager, EMEA at JP Morgan Chase. Formerly Media Ops Specialisation and Equerry to the Queen, Media Officer aboard HMS Ark Royal.

Lt Cdr Brian 'Grassy' Meadows RNR. Currently deployed to Afghanistan. Media Operations Specialisation.

Army

Brigadier Miles Wade. Currently Head of Media and Communications, Army. Formerly Brigade Commander, Southern Region; Commander British and NATO Forces, Bosnia.

Lt Col Richard Eaton. Currently Media Advisor to GHQ Armed Forces, United Arab Emirates. Formerly DACOS Media Ops, HQLF, Chief Media Ops, Sierra Leone & Ops Slubber & Fresco, ISAF 1, MND(SE) Basra, SO1 Media Ops 12 Mech 52 Bde.

Lt Col Liz McKinney-Bennett. Currently Strategic Media Analyst at Dubai Consultancy Research & Media Centre. Formerly Media Ops, HQ 2 Division.

Lt Col Robert Patridge. Currently Owner of Perdix, Film Firearms Consultancy. Formerly MOG (V).

Major Bob Crookes. Formerly Media Ops BAOR & Northern Ireland. Latterly Reporter & Producer, BBC Northern Ireland.

Major Laurence Roche. Currently Joint Services Command & Staff College. Formerly Media Ops Officer, Iraq.

Capt Charles Phillips. Currently Film Firearms Consultant at Perdix. Formerly SO3 Media Ops, HQLF.

2/Lt Ed Perkins. MOG (V.) Currently Deputy Press Secretary to The Queen.

RAF

Wng Cdr Neville Clayton RAF. Currently OC Base Support Wing, RAF Leuchars Formerly Media Operations, Camp Bastion.

Wng Cdr Ian Cumming, RAF. Currently Head of RAF Corporate Communications

Sqdn Ldr Harry Pearce, RAF. Currently RAF Marham. **Formerly** SO2 Media Ops, HQAir Command, SO3 Media Ops DMOC, MCO Cyprus, PLO, RAF Marham.

Ministry of Defence

Mr. Graham Bound. Advisor to the MoD Afghan Communications Team. Formerly Editor of Falklands Island Penguin News and Editor of the MoD Defence Focus magazine.

Mr. Jason Impey. Currently Head of Media, Airbus UK. Formerly Senior Regional Press Manager, MoD.

Mr. Ronnie Jones. Currently MOD Army Information Officer, Devon & Cornwall.