

Scratchings

from

The Pen...



July/August 2012: A monthly memo and scribblings for, and from, members of the Pen & Sword Club

Knighthood for Tony Baldry

Long standing club member Colonel Sir Tony Baldry, MP has been knighted in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Honours.

Tony has been a Member of Parliament for 29 years and represents the North Oxfordshire Constituency. A Territorial for some 22 years he served in the TA Pool of Information Officers and is a member of the Royal College of Defence Studies.



During his parliamentary career Tony was Personal Aide to Margaret Thatcher during the October 1974 General Election and subsequently remained in her private office when she became Leader of the

Opposition. He held various Ministerial posts from January 1990 until the 197 General election including Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Energy when together with John Wakeham he privatised the electricity industry.

From 1994 he was PUSS at the Department of the Environment and between 1994 -1995 he was PUSS at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Between 1995 -1997 he was Minister of State at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Tony, a practising barrister, is Head of a commercial Set of Chambers in The Temple and the director of a number of other companies. He has been the Second Church Estate Commissioner since June 2010.

Gibraltar here we come!

A party of nine is joining the Club's trip to Gibraltar in October where the programme has been expanded to include Operation Flavius and the subsequent media reaction, including the programme *Death on The Rock*. Martin Newman is hoping to arrange a get together with our two club members based on The Rock and to facilitate a brief from The Gibraltar Regiment.

At this stage it is proposed the party flies out on a Friday evening and return trips will be at the discretion of individuals. Accommodation is being sought at Britannia House and this will be confirmed shortly.

There is still an opportunity to join the visit. Please contact Mike Peters on michaelpcoms@btinternet.com if you are interested.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE.....

Better known to club members and the TA Pool of Information Officers as a photographer of considerable skill and determination Captain Kevin Harvey appeared in unaccustomed guise in the last few months as Dennis in Shakespeare's As You like It.



Former Press Association and Portsmouth News photographer Kevin took to the boards with the Sinoden Player in what is arguably one of The Bard's best comedies.

In his 30 years as a photographer Kevin has taken pictures around the world and faced some hostile scenarios in seeking out the best news. Now living and working in Wallingford in Oxfordshire Kevin has a successful business and also teaches photography.

Kevin says he thoroughly enjoyed his stage appearance and working with a great cast. You can never get too much of good thing, Kevin!

Military uniform or Corporate suit – does the choice have to be a battle?

By Peter Dorey

It's been a while since I last marched, it's been a while since I last saluted but it doesn't seem that long ago that I finally cleared the loft of enough camouflage kit for a battalion of irregulars. The time finally came to clear away the uniforms that might fit, but won't be worn again, as I came to the conclusion that the eight years since I left 7644 Squadron had actually been quite full and the time spent in the military was one to reflect upon but not to try to repeat.



In civvy street, I have been fortunate in that I come to work each day to do something that is easy to believe in. As I say in our Town

Hall meetings, nobody works in the defence business by accident, we all have a reason to be there and I get motivated knowing that what we are doing supports what our Armed Forces need to do.

For those of you not familiar with the Town Hall concept, it's the corporate world's way of having a staff meeting in an informal manner where *people are allowed to ask questions*. One of the many changes since starting life as a reporter more than twenty years ago is the self-evident explosion in media channels and sources of information. At the start of my career with 7644, we almost knew all the individual journalists in the defence and national media by name and we knew that their TV station or newspaper would be the reference of record.

Peter Dorey served with 7644 Squadron RAFVR for some ten years. Today he is Marketing Director at HP Enterprises, a name well known in the IT world. Previously Communications Director at defence company, Thales Peter also worked in a similar capacity at Quintec.

Equally in the business media, whatever a sector, having only a few trade magazines made the life of the corporate PR easy in knowing that the bases were covered.

The internet has blown all of that away and while the defence media stills exists and they are authoritative references, there isn't the air of having publications as the "must read" that everyone in the industry will be talking about. So much for the old school Press Officer with the regimental tie but a more complex and I feel, personally rewarding, opportunity for media people to use the communications skills learnt on the battlefield and in the newsroom, taking those into the corporate world.

If we have one, unique skill that identifies our profession, it should be the ability to tell concise, compelling & credible stories. In business the natural home for this is in marketing to customers, and internal communications to our staff. The ease of producing information has made people incredibly poor communicators. Information is just data packaged to be more digestible; communication takes information and creates the means to engage, convince and change – whether that's winning new business or transforming the way we do business.

As it's not as easy to slip into a Press Officer role, I have sought out in my career ways to develop marketing plans that will take HP into new business area. It's not enough to be the 'brochure guy' who comes in at the end of the business development process. We have to set a vision of how the business will look when successful and how we will get there using marketing skills and investment to get there. I've been pleasantly surprised that the instances being rebuffed when presenting ideas to my peers have been so few as to be highly memorable.

The ability to tell a story, argue a case and develop plans towards a 'vision' is what my business peers look to marketing to provide.

Telling the story of what HP does in defence will always be a challenge because of people's awareness of our consumer products such as laptops and printers, despite the fact we are main supplier of IT kit and services to the MoD. It's where that storytelling comes in, not just drafting the stories but finding the right places to tell them.

In the four years I have been with HP I have initiated the sponsoring of army sport which allows us to show our commitment to our service people and meet our senior clients in an environment where we get to know each other away from the day to day transactions of business life. We are also in the second year of supporting the British Military Tournament, which has been a great way to get the message out to the younger upcoming audience. These activities require their own plans to ensure we are talking to the right people at the right time saying the right thing.

They are part of the overall plan to make HP thought of as a defence company as much as an IT company – we are pretty good at talking technology and it has transformed the way we live so IT is of enormous benefit to the military. At HP we just have to act like a defence company

that takes a long term view, fully understands and engages with our clients and has an integral role of helping the military do what it needs to do, transforming in an age of demanding cost constraints while continuing to ensure the defence of the realm.

So for me there has been no real conflict, just an extension of skills into a new area but with the same goal in mind.

Dylan takes to the skies for the Diamond Jubilee

Squadron Leader Dylan Eklund, Deputy Commanding Officer at 7644 Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force was one the many club members involved in supporting the Queen's Diamond Jubilee events.

He writes :”During my time at 7644Squadron and as a civilian journalist I've had some amazing experiences flying in military aircraft. “Family and friends have shown little interest in my tales of derring-do save for one - namely flying over Buckingham Palace in an RAF Tristar for the Golden Jubilee a decade ago.

“For me the flight was, to be honest, one of the least exciting. A couple of hours circling over Suffolk in poor weather were followed by an all too brief run over London. While it looked impressive on TV as we flew in over a packed and Union Flag-bedecked Mall, on board the big jet we saw none of the spectacle which was hidden below the fuselage.



“It was an undoubted privilege, however, and so I was thrilled to have the opportunity to 'do the double' and fly over Windsor for the Diamond Jubilee. I gladly accepted a late request to be the escort for an ITV journalist and cameraman to fly on one of two Hercules transport aircraft which would form part of the armada of 78 aircraft flying overhead Windsor.

“During the early-morning drive to RAF Brize Norton I feared the worst. The British weather was at its worst, and low cloud and drizzle is not conducive to flying aircraft in close formation safely. Thankfully things brightened up at Brize, and having met up with the ITV team we were taken out to the aircraft where we set to work straight away.

“With the start of the engines filmed, we were on board and strapped in, and with six on the flight deck it was certainly cosy. Airborne we transited below the low cloud base to the South, passing over RAF Odiham where the rotary element of the flypast was lined up.

Splitting from the second Hercules the crew flew along the route of the flypast to check the weather for the big event which, fortunately, was bright and getting better.

“Having reported to Windsor that the weather was satisfactory we turned south to join the other Hercules holding off the Isle of Wight. As time went by we could hear on the radio all the other formations checking in at their various holding locations.

"Flying in close formation is a skill but getting a variety of aircraft travelling at different speeds to fly over a specific point with no second to spare takes some doing.

"With fast jets flying three times as fast as the helicopters, the whole long procession of formations concertinaed over Windsor so from the ground each was the same time apart.



"With the time to head for Windsor upon us we saw to the east a gaggle of Tucanos

racing in ahead of us to form the figure 60. For the whole 40-mile run in to Windsor the crew of our aircraft, call sign 'Albert 01', made constant delicate adjustments to the speed. Below us car parks, gardens and motorway bridges were crowded with people, many waving as we flew over.

"Up ahead the Long Walk came into view ahead of Windsor Castle. It certainly brought a lump to the throat, and the ITV cameraman was ideally placed to film the scene below as we roared over, hitting the mark spot-on. Heading back to Brize ITV filmed three pieces to camera, before interviewing the crew once back on the ground. Job done.

"During the flight I asked reporter John Slee about his thoughts. 'In my job I sometimes get to do things money just can't buy,' he replied. 'Couldn't have put it better myself.'

Mervyn Changes Step

Regional Vice Chair, Major Mervyn Wynne Jones is assisting a North Wales charity to set up a peer-mentoring, counselling and "sign posting" service for military veterans suffering from substance mis-use issues and trauma.

Already working for the Llandudno-based drug and alcohol misuse charity CAIS as a counsellor, Mervyn has now taken on the (for now, voluntary) role of Armed Forces Veterans Support Officer for CAIS.

Working several days each month in the role, Mervyn has helped set in motion the new service which is to be called "Change Step", a name he came up with based on the parade ground command but which could also mean a change of direction for a veteran who has found life challenging after leaving military service.

Mervyn has helped host focus groups and meetings with North Wales based veterans, and is engaging with the Welsh Assembly Government and statutory bodies and health providers in the region.

Mervyn adds: "There are many vulnerable veterans in the region, and we aim to get the service up and running this summer. The feedback to our idea from the many veterans we have so far met has been very positive, and we hope to get a lot of them involved. The service is being designed to be delivered by veterans for veterans, and builds on the already existing and hugely successful peer mentoring service offered by CAIS for substance misusers. It aims to support those seeking help for problems encountered as a result of military or operational duty, and will be open to former members of the emergency services too."

Change Step will provide a focal point for veterans, family members and carers, and will offer peer mentoring services, bespoke training opportunities, a detox and rehabilitation programme if required, a specialist counselling service, and signposting to other appropriate services in the community. Mervyn is seeking, on behalf of CAIS, potential patrons for the new service, and will be very pleased to hear of suggestions or offers. Mervyn can be reached on mervynwynnejones@hotmail.com

MEDIA IN THE MED

Stuart Green reflects on five happy years in the sun

More than three centuries after it was captured from the Spanish in July 1704, Gibraltar's strategic importance is undiminished. Not only does the Rock command the entrance to the Mediterranean, it also sits at the point where Europe is closest to Africa: indeed, on most days, across the Straits I can see the coastal towns of Morocco from my windows. The Rock of Gibraltar has been home to the British military for over 300 years.

Driving through the town, I pass surplus old cannon barrels now used as road bollards, their original military purpose having been long forgotten. And, late in the evenings, officers in their Mess kit wandering home through the town after a dinner night attract barely a second glance from the teenagers outside the bars and clubs of Casemates Square.



Most Gibraltarian youngsters have fathers and uncles who once worked in the old Dockyard or who have served with the Royal Gibraltar Regiment and the young people here have grown up with British soldiers, sailors and airmen in the midst of their community.

But, despite ceding Gibraltar to the British in perpetuity when she signed the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, Spain continues her

territorial demands for the Rock's return and, as a result, Gibraltar continues to suffer from a continuous campaign of annoying pinpricks inflicted by our big neighbour across the fence.

One of the most annoying of these pinpricks is the policy of searching cars waiting to cross the border into Spain. On any given day, perhaps one car in ten is searched but, on the slightest whim, traffic delays of up to three hours can be caused if the Spanish customs decide, painstakingly, to search every single car. And a three-hour wait in the Mediterranean sunshine can cause tempers to rise, believe me! As I write this piece, the local paper's two front-page headlines read 'Protests in UK and Gib against Spanish Aggression' and 'We must defend what is ours!'

It's against this backdrop that I held the job of Media Officer in Headquarters British Forces (HQBF) from September 2007 until May of this year. Prior to that I had served as Chief Press Officer at UKSC in Germany; in a similar role at PJHQ and after retiring from the Army as MoD Regional Press Officer in the East of England.

Clearly, the last few years have been a time of the most rigorous financial scrutiny across the whole of Defence but, in the months leading up to SDSR in 2010, a far-sighted Commander British Forces saw the writing on the wall and offered up his own radical re-structuring plan for Gibraltar. Not only did this plan exceed all the required savings targets, it also negated the

need for Whitehall to impose its own ideas from afar and so it was perhaps somewhat surprising that the plan was accepted by London with barely a comment.

Under Project EUSTON, as the plan became known, Gibraltar would continue in its role of a Forward Mounting Base, albeit at a slightly lower state of readiness than before. Under a Lands Agreement signed with the Government of Gibraltar, around 300 military houses and flats would be handed over to the Government in return for 100 brand new housing units which the Government would build on the Four Corners estate. The old HMS Rooke site in the middle of town would be handed over to the Government with MoD concentrating its functions largely in the Naval Base, on the airfield and at Devil's Tower Camp.

In another agreement, a range of MoD services and utilities would transfer across to the Gibraltar Government.

For historic reasons, the MoD had always produced its own water and electrical power but, in future, the military community will be customers of the local utility companies rather than users of MoD's own supplies. We are also closing our Services school and making use of the excellent local schools, which follow syllabuses used in England and Wales. And most of our Secondary Health needs are now being met by the local general hospital rather than by military health specialists.



***Everything stops for the runway.
An RAF C-17 holds up traffic heading for Spain.***

Together with other smaller transfers, these changes will impact most upon our civilian workforce, most of who will move across with their posts to various Government agencies. The loss of Secondary Health care, however, has produced a marked reduction in the number of military medical posts. But, under EUSTON, by far the biggest impact on the Rock's military manpower will be the result of RAF Gibraltar's reduced state of readiness. Instead of employing our own airfield specialists, such as armourers, engineers and freight handlers, these support functions will be carried out by the visiting units themselves, whether they are in an operational or training role: as a result, only a handful of RAF posts will remain on the Rock.

Significantly, however, the airfield itself will remain an MoD asset – albeit one that is used more by the commercial flights from Heathrow, Gatwick, Manchester, Luton and other UK airports than by any military users. And what an airfield! Sitting as it does on the disputed isthmus between Gibraltar and Spain, it has an international frontier fence running along one side and it has the main road between Gibraltar and Spain running directly across its runway.

Oh yes, aircraft using the airfield also experience severe wind eddies produced by the sheer size and scale of a Rock which dominates the runway. Rarely a week goes by without there being a news story about the airfield.

Another unique feature of British Forces Gibraltar is the Royal Gibraltar Regiment (RG). Recruited both locally and from the sons of British ex-pats on the Costa, it is a light infantry battalion with a distinct infantry culture and ethos. The Regiment comprises two rifle companies of Regular soldiers, a rifle company of TA soldiers and a Headquarter Company whose chefs, armourers, vehicle mechanics and signallers all wear the RG cap-badge. Under EUSTON, the Regiment now has several fully trained Bomb Disposal teams (which is unusual for an infantry unit) and its Headquarter Company is equipped with the L118 Light Gun for ceremonial saluting purposes. Its talented Regimental Band is made up of TA soldiers and its own Army Cadet Force unit has recently been formed. No shortage of stories there then!

The Regiment's main role is to provide security and force protection for Gibraltar but many of its troops have also seen operational service in Iraq and Afghanistan. In recent years the Regiment has achieved considerable success in providing Peace Operations Training Teams for various countries in North and West Africa. In particular, several thousand Gambian troops have benefitted from the pre-deployment training they received from RG soldiers prior to peacekeeping duties in Darfur.

Apart from the RG, there are few other Army personnel permanently based on the Rock and, since I arrived in 2007, cutbacks in travel and subsistence budgets have had a negative impact on the number of units able to train out here.



The Gibraltar Squadron escorts HMS Daring out of the Naval Base

A unit that has seen no reduction in visitor numbers is the Naval Base. Current operations East of Suez, anti-piracy deployments off Somalia and recent events in Libya have ensured that RN ships are still making full use of Gibraltar's deep water, non-tidal port. The Naval Base facilities are available to NATO ships 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and, in the last 12 months, we have seen nearly 70 ships in the Base. Ships returning from operations usually provide us with lots of good stories, stories which we often publish before they appear in the British press. On a less positive note, the Spanish press can always be relied upon for vociferous criticism whenever we host a visiting submarine, be it British or American.

The RHIBs and two fast patrol boats of the Gibraltar Squadron have been particularly busy over the last few months with incursions by Spanish vessels into Gibraltar's territorial waters being a regular feature of local life. And since the Gibraltar Government banned all use of trawl nets in Gibraltar's waters, Spanish trawlers have often been accompanied by paramilitary Guardia Civil vessels with the resulting confrontations making national news in both Britain and Spain.

As well as trying to maintain British sovereignty on the waters, the Squadron also carries out force protection duties whenever warships approach or leave the Naval Base.

Clearly, there is no shortage of media interest in the MoD's activities. The Rock only has 30,000 inhabitants yet it has its own TV and radio station, a BFBS radio station, an internet-based TV news station, two daily newspaper, two weekly newspapers, a handful of glossy monthly magazines and several on-line news sites.

And, whilst the Spanish national media only see Gibraltar as a negative news story, media based closer to the border tend to take a more balanced view and are always keen to know what's happening on our side of the fence.

As a consequence, MoD can have few more varied or fascinating Media Officer jobs than the one in Gibraltar. Life is rarely quiet with frequent ships' visits, a unique RAF airfield, a busy locally recruited Regiment and a plethora of local media. And, of course, almost every story has its Spanish dimension.

In my time in the job, I accompanied the Regiment on exercises in Morocco and Brecon, I joined its Training Teams in The Gambia and I spent three weeks in London for Public Duties. I've been to sea with a couple of frigates and on many Gibraltar Squadron patrols and I have flown in and out of RAF Gibraltar in Hercules aircraft and in a variety of helicopters. Equally satisfying was the fact that the Headquarters recognised 'Media' as a key activity and at all senior meetings and briefings, due importance was always given to Media Ops.

All in all it has been a wonderful five years – the maximum length of time the Civil Service allows me to serve in an overseas post. I have grown to love Gibraltar, despite its many frustrations, and I am delighted to be able to stay here having been offered a Press Officer job by the Government of Gibraltar.

Watch out for my next article in a few years' time!

Getting Defence Social Media Ready

By Pippa Norris

When you think about the kind of changes we've seen to the world of digital communications and more importantly social media, it's hardly surprising that large complex organisations like MoD struggles to keep pace.

Web sites like Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest are changing and redefining the way we live, work, think and share; these sites help us cross geographical boundaries, time zones and even life stages.

Today we live in a hyper connected and networked world where our opinions, photos, timelines, personal and professional personas are shared on blogs, forums, tweets and status updates. Communication is real-time, wireless, viral and dynamic. Ubiquity is replacing novelty.



Pippa has been Head of Digital Engagement at the Ministry of Defence since May 2010 when she moved from the role of Head of Digital Communications for the Army. A digital communications specialist she is experienced in the delivery of digital strategies, solutions and implementation plans.

Given these dramatic changes, what does this mean for an organisation the size and complexity of the MoD? How does this affect our culture, the way we do business, the way we

communicate with our armed forces and civilian personnel? Should we take that leap and become real-time, viral and dynamic ourselves?

Keeping up with the World

The outside world is changing faster than MoD. We know that. We'd like to keep pace with the furious pace of changes in the social media landscape. We want to go Digital by Default as directed by the Cabinet Office and Prime Minister David Cameron.

In the Defence communications directorate, there is a group of believers in social media and we have been active in this space over five years. We learnt from the experiences of others, and our own pilot tests within Defence, that social media can be a double-edged sword.

On the one hand it brings you an invaluable and deeper dimension to audience engagement never enjoyed with traditional media.

At the last count, Defence has over 150 Facebook pages and groups. You can also find us on Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Storify, Tumblr, and the list goes on. We use it to communicate with the general public, talk to our personnel, discuss how Defence is Transforming and for Armed Forces recruitment. Opportunities such as this provide us with the necessary data to prove the case and continue to work in this space.

For instance the British Army is working with industry partners like Microstrategy and CDS in developing new ways to reach some of our audiences via Social Media by default.

On the other hand, breaches of security in the work place could lead to reputational damage at best, but on the battlefield it can bring about untold costs, not only to sensitive information, the military operation, but also possibly to human life.

Individual v Corporate Responsibility

People buy people. As social creatures, we contribute and participate in a variety of communities, at work and at home. By tapping into the basic human desire to want to feel connected to something meaningful, we are deriving significant business benefit by changing our attitudes towards risk and control. In helping Defence people do something worthwhile on social media we help Defence get passionate about it.

Where the responsibility of the individual is now blurred between work and personal life so we must encourage and empower our people to recognise that what they do inside Defence has an impact on how they behave outside and vice versa. To coin the title of a book written by Euan Semple, our leaders are realising that "organisations don't blog" or tweet or share, their "people do".

There will soon come a time when they realise that a well crafted blog or tweet may get better traction than a 30 page document they spent months crafting and staffing around their department. In many ways, social media also allows us to redefine our brand; our vision. By allowing Defence people to become part of that brand we can start to build relationships and networks with friend and adversaries, supporters and critics.

Given that we arm our people to carry weapons and go to war shouldn't we let them tell our story online?

In being brave, we are helping our personnel to find their voice, build their confidence to say what they want, and given the latitude to learn from mistakes. All this can be achieved through a raft of simple steps to get Defence social media ready

To find our voice and help Defence grow and adapt to a changing world, we need to be clear about what I call the tipping point of social media - the point at which a blog, post or status update moves from being safe to being sorry. OPSEC and PERSEC being the key considerations, we have developed five key actions to ensure we stay safe and not sorry:

Leadership

Thought-leaders amongst defence hierarchy already realise that they can't be real leaders if no one knows what you think, so they can learn how they can do things better. All consequences of leading by example and leaders are expected to blog and share their opinions and vision through blogs and online discussions.

This is supported by what will be social networks of corporately responsible employees who think and write with care, who are allowed to express discomfort and air concerns without fear. This will help us learn how to think through the consequences of what we say and do online.

Baseline governance

By laying down simple guidelines and support information (www.blogs.mod.uk/onlinesecurity), we enable and empower personnel to participate on social media safely and professionally. We have a programme of corporate sponsorship for those who wish to communicate online about who they are and what they do in support of Defence communications objectives. This activity sits beneath our official corporate presences.

Response process

We have developed a workflow and triage process that monitors and reports back on issues that may require an appropriate course of engagement. In turn this helps our people better understand when and how to respond. Through practice, more and more will engage with the process and develop a sense for how best to deal with issues and successes.

We have a best practice hub in defence in the shape of the Online Engagement Group

The group is a collection of practitioners from around Defence, its single services and arms length bodies. It provides leadership and shares information, best practice and knowledge gained by digital communications teams around the organisation. As more and more practitioners and enthusiasts join and share with the group, our outreach programme of advocacy grows in momentum and allows us to roll out an extensive programme of education and sharing of best practice.

The sooner we embrace the fact that digital communications underpins all our work and that Social Media is here to stay, the sooner our people will better communicate and work with each other and become our best ambassadors for Defence.

Pen & Sword members wear uniform to work

Among club members who wore uniform to their civilian workplaces in June to mark this year's Armed Forces Day were, pictured right, Number 10's Head of News, Major Vickie Sheriff and Lieutenant Jeremy Olver, Royal Naval Reserve who works next door in the Cabinet Office as a media planner.

Elsewhere in Whitehall, Sub Lieutenant Tamar Howard-Pearce - a recent recruit to the growing RNR Media Operations Specialisation - donned her uniform in the course of her duties as ministerial private secretary.

Tamar told *Scratchings*: "I was proud to wear my uniform and it was great to see so



many other reservists working in Whitehall wearing theirs".

Jeremy added: "It was wonderful to see the Armed Forces Day flag flying above the Cabinet Office. I feel privileged to be able to help represent the Royal Navy at the centre of government".

Vickie served in Media Operations Group (V) and was mobilised for the Iraq War in 2003, serving in Kuwait and Iraq, where she looked after the main war correspondents covering the conflict. Now, she is in a completely different role as second-in-command of the University of London Officer Training Corps which trains all potential officers in London.

"I joined the TA quite some time ago as I wanted a new challenge and put myself under a different kind of pressure," said Vickie. "It has been really good fun, has put me in some challenging situations and taken me to some fascinating places including Nepal, Egypt, Iraq and the Falklands. It's good for developing leadership skills and teamwork too which is transferable for the work place."

Last year, Jeremy took part in a major deployment of the Response Force Task Group, the UK's maritime quick reaction force, for which he was awarded a commendation from the Fleet Commander, Admiral George Zambellas.

Jeremy's citation described his role as "a first class performance from a junior officer" and praised "his humour, drive and initiative throughout a most challenging period".

It was Jeremy's second such recognition. In 2010 he was posted to UK Maritime Component Command (UKMCC) in Bahrain for six months and for his efforts he received a commendation from Commander Joint Operations, Air Marshall Sir Stuart Peach.



"About this time last year I was on the helicopter carrier HMS Ocean off the coast of Libya - and now I'm working in the Cabinet Office. This just goes to show that joining the Royal Navy as a reservist was undoubtedly the best decision I've ever made as it has given me the best of both worlds", said Jeremy.

New Members

A number of new members are being processed. Details will be published in the next edition of *Scratchings* and on the club website.

Contributions Welcomed

Won anything, done anything, travelled far? Got a new job? Let your fellow members know and help your editorial team keep you in touch. Please contact the Editor, Mike Peters on 01483 281822 or email: michaelpcoms@btinternet