



Joint Editors: Colonel Mike Peters & Major Gerry Bartlett

The NetWorker

The Pen & Sword Club includes serving and retired members of Britain's Regular and Reserve forces and Government information staff who worked in the media operations specialisation. Our membership, which is by invitation and recommendation also includes NATO officers, civilian practitioners sympathetic to military media operations or who work with Ministry of Defence organisations. The club's prime mission is the promotion of media operations as a valued and necessary military skill in the 21st century.

The Beast was somewhat hungry for information.....

Operation Ellamy keeps 7644 Squadron busy

By Flight Lieutenant Tom Calver



Flight Lieutenant Tom Calver is a PR consultant, currently working at Network Rail. A media specialist with 7644 (VR) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force for the past five years he recently returned from Italy and Operation Ellamy. British aircraft have been operating in support of NATO's Operation Unified Protector to protect the civilian population of Libya from attack. Moving from the UK to Italy on a rapid deployment Tom relates his tasks from the first 'get cracking' telephone call from his Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Peter Clarke, through first encounters with an espresso fuelled press pack to the hectic role of telling the RAF's operational story. Tom has twice deployed on Operation Herrick to Afghanistan.

The RAF Mobile News Team arrived at Gioia del Colle in southern Italy in the early hours of the morning on board the first RAF transport aircraft to land at the air base. However, while we were ahead of many military colleagues, we were barely ahead of the media. They arrived at the main later that morning. The Italian Air Force corralled them hospitably in the officers' club, and then came to find a Brit 'who could talk to them.

After half a morning, waiting and loading up on espresso, the beast was somewhat hungry for information... I gave them what little I had, all the time ensuring they did not come between me and the door – I was not convinced I would make it out otherwise.

And so the deployment got under way only a few days after I had walked out of my office, bidding goodbye to my employer of seven years. By Friday lunchtime I was in the media office at RAF Brize Norton, waiting for a flight to 'somewhere in the Mediterranean'.

Not that the phrase is intended to make this sound any more dramatic or secret. At that stage, an advance team was still looking at possible airfields. I knew it would be the Mediterranean, but I didn't know where. The media operations team was packed and ready to go, ahead of the game. And, by fortuitous timing, I was part of the team.



An RAF GR4 Tornado takes off from Gioia del Colle air base Italy. Tornados clocked up well over 7000 flying hours in support of NATO's Operation Unified Protector.

When my Commanding Officer made his first call to me I was packed and ready for a squadron training weekend in the UK. His opening to me was: 'How quickly can you get to Brize Norton?'

Fairly quickly, was the answer. After a quick repack – green kit out, desert kit in, throw in things like a sleeping bag and mess tins in case I end up somewhere basic – I was on the road to meet up with my Mobile News Team of Senior Aircraftsmen Gareth Little and Neil Chapman.

The team had already provided stills and video of the first night's strike of Operation Ellamy, using Storm Shadow missiles fired by Tornados flying from RAF Marham in Norfolk, by flying on the VC10 refueling aircraft supporting the mission. In the early hours of Sunday morning, copy and pictures duly filed, we went to bed.

Then the phone rang again. 'How quickly can you get to Lyneham?' I borrowed a car from Brize's MT section, promising faithfully to deliver it to their counterparts at Lyneham, and we headed for Wiltshire.

I *did* intend to deliver it, but on arrival at the Lyneham air terminal, I was instructed to hand my keys to a mover, and then ushered straight onto a flight. I now knew I was going to Gioia del Colle in Italy. I did not know much more. I still don't know what happened to the car.

Meanwhile, the RAF had been getting plenty of other support from 7644 Squadron's media reservists. Squadron Leader Howard Leader and Flying Officer Geoffrey Maskell had gone to Marham for that first strike mission.

Geoffrey later headed to Akrotiri to cover the work of the Sentinel ASTOR aircraft. Peter Clarke had become SO1 Media in the JFACHQ, and Deputy OC Squadron Leader Dylan Eklund was preparing to follow me out to Gioia. Even one of our officer cadets, Meg Fairhurst, was filling a watch keeper's job at Air Command.



The ability to deploy personnel to cover key posts, at virtually no notice, is a testimony to the way 7644 Squadron and the RAF have developed a flexible approach to the use of media operations reservists. 'Intelligent mobilisation' is a good phrase to throw around; for this Squadron, it is also a reality.

After heading to established media operations centres in Afghanistan, the reality of an emerging operation was refreshingly different. My civilian specialisation of crisis and issues PR at least meant that I was comfortable dealing with a fluid situation where information was changing constantly. Even so, the intensity of that first week will rate as one of the most satisfying challenges of my media operations career.

The arrival of Dylan Eklund meant that the Mobile News Team could focus on producing content, while he could provide information and support for the media pack. Daily press conferences and interviews with detachment commander Group Captain Sammy Sampson continued until editors decided that their people had spent quite long enough abroad.

Dylan and I then settled into the business of building up a sustainable media operations function. This was greatly aided by the arrival of three large boxes full of office supplies, making us relatively well equipped. Some of these we promptly traded for favours, a useful lesson identified for future operations



7644(VR) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force is tasked to provide media operations support for the RAF and NATO forces worldwide in both peace and war. Based at RAF Halton in Buckinghamshire the Squadron is successor to the 1940 brainchild of Lord Beaverbrook whose aim was to find information experts with a service background or interest. The Squadron's main role is to provide the RAF's Media Operations 'Force Element at Readiness' to support operations overseas. All its members are professional journalists or public relations practitioners.

At the same time, the Mobile News Team continued to supply new imagery and stories. The nature of the UK deployment meant that we also had the occasional 'road trip' to the air operations HQ at Poggio or the UK's Sentry and VC10 detachments on Sicily. This was another complete contrast to the Afghan experience, where movement is, of course, much more tightly controlled. Italian driving, however, proved to be as the clichés had suggested, meaning that road moves were not as risk free as I might have liked.

The nature of operations is always that time passes quickly. After four months I became one of the longest serving UK personnel on Operation Ellamy, a clear indication that it was time to go home. I handed over to 7644 colleague Tony Newton with some relief and some regret. Having done so much to set up things, it was odd to leave it all behind, but the continued flow of stories that appeared on the MoD and RAF websites suggests that all was in good hands.

A ring-side seat at a slice of history

By Flying Officer Geoffrey Maskell



Demonstrating the rapid response capability of 7644 Squadron Flying Officer Geoffrey Maskell - a Nottingham based BBC journalist - switched rapidly from his weekend fitness run and a planned Anglo-French air exercise to RAF Marham in Norfolk where he covered RAF Tornados leaving and returning on the first long range strike of Operation Ellamy.

It wasn't the day I was expecting. Not by a long way. My only real concern for that day was to pass the twice yearly fitness test and I certainly wasn't expecting a ringside seat to witness a little slice of history.

With my fitness run over I bumped into one my colleagues. Change of plan, he said. You've got ten minutes to get on the road to RAF Marham. That was the start of a roller coaster week.

In Norfolk the Tornado GR4 squadrons were preparing for the first bombing raid on Libya. In doing so they would be launching the RAF's longest range bombing mission since the Falklands War. My job, as I was rapidly learning, was to film the air crews as they prepared for the

mission. To follow them from the Ops Room as they changed into their flying suits and walked to their aircraft, and to record them taxiing out into the night.

To say it was tense would be an understatement. The complexity of flying some 3,000 miles at night to strike targets in the first wave of attack saw an atmosphere of gritty concentration for the task ahead. Having cameras present is not comfortable for military crews, and if they decline to be filmed then their wishes are respected.

That night, in the words of Brian Hanrahan: I counted them all out and I counted them all back again: The first RAF bombing raids to take off from the UK since the Second World War. We filed our last piece - shots of the final crew arriving home and a quick interview as they climbed out of the aircraft – at 0545 on Sunday morning.

For me it was the first time that I had been right at the heart of the big story of the day – and I was the only video journalist with a ring-side seat. Was it worth it? Well the footage I shot was used by the BBC, ITV, Sky and lots of other outlets around the world. So I'd say yes. It was exhausting exhilarating, tense, challenging and absolutely one of the best things I have ever done.



More Tornados from RAF Marham have arrived home from Op Ellamy. Over 1,400 sorties involving over 7,000 flying hours have been logged, The scale down of operations has allowed more aircraft, their crews and engineering staff to return home.

New CO for RNR Media Operations

A future full of growth ahead?

Lieutenant Commander Ian Pratt, pictured right, has taken over command of the Royal Naval Reserve media operations specialisation from Lt Commander Penny Utting. Ian, a relative newcomer to media operations, was a Royal Navy weapons engineer and says he has 'relished every moment of my time undertaking a wide variety of tasks in the Royal Navy over the last few years.'

He adds: 'The media operations specialisation is currently 50 strong and has the potential to rise to greater number with the work for the Future Reserves 2010 paper.'

'These are exciting times to be involved in media operations both for the strong Royal Navy story we have to tell and because the development and growth in the area for the benefit of the individuals and the naval service.'

'Currently we have officers on mobilised service in Afghanistan and the Middle East and others who are undertaking a wide variety of tasking for the Fleet. For example, the roulement of officers who have been on call to support the bereaved families of personnel on operations this year.'



'Every task undertaken is unique, each brings its own challenges and learning points, but together, it all creates much valued and important media engagement for the armed forces and support for families.'

Three Deploy on Operation Herrick 15 Plus a shot of adrenalin

Three officers are now deployed with 20 Brigade on Operation Herrick 15, says Lieutenant Colonel Rosie Stone Commanding officer of Media Operations Group (V.) Lt Col Gordon Mackenzie is the SO1 Media Adviser at Task Force Helmand, Major Tim Smith has settled in as the SO2 Strategic Messaging and Major Mark Scadden is commanding the Combat Camera Team.

Majors Lorna Ward and Chris Cobb Smith are back from their Libyan adventures working with Sky and the BBC respectively, while Paul Smyth and Andy Whitehead completed short stints in Iraq in their capacity as civilian contractors

On the home front a positive announcement on Future Reserves 2020 in July was a shot of adrenalin for MOG (V) as a specialist TA unit. There is much detail yet to be produced but a recruitment plan to attract more young officers and soldiers is about to be launched with clear direction from the chain of command to continue expanding to a full establishment of 137.

We have already welcomed five officers and three new soldiers into the Group over the last few months. Good news indeed.

Meanwhile developing specialist training specific to individuals and their SME roles has been our focus since the start of this training year. After a blast of hot and sunny summer adventurous training in Weymouth, annual camp in September got down to the nitty gritty of media analysis, radio production, target audience analysis and PR planning, as well as a full range package of pistol and SA80.

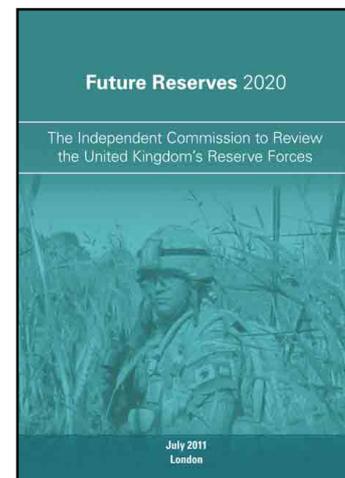
A team from the Land Warfare Centre conducted a very interactive Tactical Influence Officers Course for the majority, while Army Media and Comms supplied their best instructor who ran an intense two day course on the P2 Camera for our CCT members. The camp finished with a full assault on Scafell Pike in glorious autumn sunshine!

The training weekend in November is based around a theme of 'Military Exploitation of Social and Digital Media'. There will be a couple of external speakers and workshops on podcasting, staff



officer planning for use of social and digital media, and social media as a tool for media analysis.

It promises to be a full weekend with a MOG (V) dinner night on the Saturday evening at RAF Halton Officers Mess. Christmas is then almost upon us with the annual Operational Back Brief Day in London followed by a night on the town for those young (and old) enough to survive. Our next big exercise focus is Falklands Forum in January 2012 with a full team heading off to support the PJHQ staff at various levels.



Only the tip of a very long spear 7644 Squadron's hectic year

From the stories elsewhere in this issue, it would be easy to imagine that this year has been solely about Libya for 7644 Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force, but nothing could be further from the truth. Operation Herrick has remained the UK's main effort and the Squadron has continued to support this operation despite the large commitment to Operation Ellamy, writes Wing Commander Peter Clarke.

From the very first day of the year, Afghanistan has provided us with plenty of work - and with confirmation that we have a further two tasks as Christmas approaches, it's definitely back to business as usual for the Squadron... and little likelihood of this situation easing in 2012.

The lessons of Ellamy highlighted the value of media planning, training and awareness as part of Force Element pre-deployment training, and the Squadron is already closely involved in revising the Herrick media-training package to achieve this.

On top of this commitment, those who are Herrick-bound have to update their pre-deployment training every six months, so our bi-annual pre-deployment training at RAF Akrotiri has also taken on a greater importance and we are moving towards a Cat 2 (outside-the-wire) course to replace the current Cat 1 (inside-the-wire.)

Away from operations, wider support to the RAF has taken the form of media injects to station exercises - planning, narratives, scenario support, and media directing staff and, of course, Simpress - and the demands for this are continuing to grow.

Additionally, bigger set public relations pieces are being delivered in support of the RAF recruiters with the highest profile event in this category this year being Sqn Ldr Howard Leader's support to Flt Lt Rachel Cadman's Enduroman Challenge. Supported by a small team from the Squadron, Howard planned and delivered a massive amount of national and regional PR covering Rachel's successful attempt.

Flt Lt Rachel Cadman completed the Arch2Arc Challenge in the astonishing time of four days, one hour and 42 minutes. Only six men have completed the gruelling feat since 2001.

She ticked off an 87 mile run from London to Dover, a 22-mile swim across the Channel and a 181-mile cycle from Calais to the Paris finish.



Exercise Chiltern Kite was used as the carrier to deliver a very effective and comprehensive demonstration of RAuxAF capabilities to help inform the work of the FR20 team. Supported by Joint Helicopter Command, the exercise was based on a Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation scenario, but the backdrop was formed by the ongoing deployment of RAF Force Elements on Ellamy (7644's contribution had to be completely reworked at just seven days notice.) This emphasises just how key the RAF Reserves are to the delivery of RAF capabilities.

Last-but-not-least, no roundup of this year's activities would be complete without mentioning the major internal communications effort delivered in support of the RAuxAF (Strategic Defence and Security Review) and Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) work.

However, the 7644 story is not one about events, it is about people. None of the Squadron's achievements could have been accomplished without the very professional dedicated personnel who are 7644 Squadron. Almost all the Squadron has played some part in the Libya operation -

whether overseas or in the UK - and the six of us who were deployed within 12 hours on day one formed only the tip of a very long spear.

This contribution has been recognised and I am delighted, if not a little daunted, by the task I now face - that of trebling the size of the Squadron over the remaining three years of my tenure. Would I have preferred my first year in command to have been a little quieter - definitely not!

HMS Liverpool was in good hands Jeremy takes a break from The House



HMS Liverpool returned from the Gulf of Sirte and her part in Operation Ellamy in early November. The ship spent 81 hours at action stations on 28 separate occasions, was fired on and returned fire ten times and launched 211 rounds of illumination and high explosive shells from her 4.5in gun. The star shells were to light up pro-Gaddafi positions for NATO aircraft to identify and destroy.

As HMS Liverpool made her way home from the Mediterranean and Operation Ellamy on board was Lieutenant Jeremy Olver, from the Royal Naval Reserve media operations specialisation. Jeremy, pictured right, was preparing the Type 42 destroyer for her homecoming after 150 days off Libya where her crucial role was in support of NATO's Operation Unified Protector. The veteran Portsmouth based destroyer played a key role in protecting the people of Libya and helped topple the Gaddafi regime. Nicknamed the Crazy Red Chicken in homage to the Liver bird on the ship's badge Liverpool's PR was in good hands. Jeremy, pictured left, flew out to meet the ship just as the operation was closing but still had plenty to do as the ship made her way home.



The task was Jeremy's third RNR media ops deployment in a year. He was attached to the UK Maritime Component Command in Bahrain and also double hatted as assistant media officer to the Combined Maritime Forces, a US led 25 nation coalition. This included setting up an online presence for the CMF. He took BBC defence correspondent Nick Childs to sea aboard one of the Bahrain based mine hunters - a previously unseen aspect of operations in the Gulf and then spent two weeks aboard a Turkish warship as public affairs adviser to a Turkish counter-piracy Flag Officer.

'That role particularly stands out. Its only when you go to the Gulf of Aden and the Straits of Hormuz and see tanker after tanker do you realise the scale of movement of international shipping.'

His second tasking was to Cougar 11, the first deployment of the Royal Navy's new Response Force Task Group. The UK's maritime quick reaction force is an initiative announced in the last Strategic Defence and Security Review.



HMS Ocean launches the first Apache helicopter strike against Gaddafi forces in Libya with the British media aboard to record the action.

'We hosted Sky News, BBC and ITV, the Independent and the Daily Express aboard HMS Ocean to cover the first Apache attack strike missions over Libya. They had competing demands and it was quite difficult to enable them to get what they wanted in the midst of a busy helicopter carrier preparing for strike operations. But it was incredibly rewarding for the ship's company to see the images broadcast on TV only hours after the operation ended.

'Next was to host a press conference aboard the assault ship HMS Albion in Abu Dhabi. The media included over 20 Arabic and international journalists including Al Jazeera. This demonstrated to the British Embassy the ability of the Royal Navy to support Foreign and Commonwealth activities.

'Jonathon Beale of the BBC and Julian Glover of The Guardian were my next group as they covered Exercise Sea Khanjar off the United Arab Emirates. Julian has now moved on to become chief speechwriter at No.10 Downing Street.

'Then it was nose to the grindstone to provide a blitz of local newspaper and radio human interest stories. Over 60 features and nine radio interviews went to most parts of the United Kingdom including those without tradition links to the sea.'

Jeremy who has worked in the House of Commons as a researcher for Members of Parliament believes service as a reservist gives him an edge over civilian colleagues. 'People complain that those in politics are increasingly professional and have little experience of the real world. I value being a reservist - it gives me an appreciation of how things are outside of London which can be something of a bubble.'

'Logistics is always the biggest issue when it comes to bringing media out to a ship or a Task Group. For instance, to bring the media out to witness the first Apache attacks from HMS Ocean, required meeting them at Souda Bay in Crete and for a two day passage to the Gulf of Sirte on board Royal Fleet Auxiliary tanker, which was hardly ideal in the 24 hour news environment.

'The length of any media embed should be as short as necessary for them to get the story or material they need. Any longer and there is a risk of boredom setting in or trying the patience of the ship's company. However, there is the danger of programme changes. I took BBC North West to sea on board HMS Liverpool, it was meant to be a three day jaunt to and from Malta. Two days into the embed, Liverpool was diverted back to Tripoli and it was another three days before we returned, this time to Sicily, resulting in cancelled flights and missed projects back at work.

'The media were very understanding – they thought it was a big adventure – their editors back home less so.

'If it's their first time at sea, regardless of how much you brief them, they never quite know what to expect and there is usually one journalist who brings high heels. Tiredness sets in almost immediately – a combination of the lack of natural light below deck, the motion of the ship, and the heat and dryness of the air.

'Capacity is another major factor. For HMS Liverpool's homecoming to Portsmouth we embarked the BBC, Sun and Mirror for overnight passage between Plymouth and Portsmouth. The ship's company were very good to give up their bunks to visiting press – but the media minder usually ends up on a camp bed in the junction box space or radar office. In the morning we took on an additional 15 local journalists by boat, together with a ministerial VIP party. All in all we had about 30 extra people. Thankfully the end results justified the hardship.

'The media look to you to be able to make things happen and to know what's going on, but often you're just as much in the mercy of events as them. I remember taking BFBS to visit amphibious demonstrations in Cyprus and we were waiting for a helicopter transfer back to the ship. I had arranged the pick up point to be an end of a track near a quarry. On the map it looked easy to find, but standing there in the midday sun, there were endless tracks and numerous quarries and I had no way to contact the ship.

'We just had to wait and hope for the best. I breathed a sigh of relief when I heard the helicopter coming. If I'd got it wrong I think we'd still be standing there now.'



Pop-star Cheryl visits Op Herrick but the real X Factor is 'bravery, selfless commitment, and sacrifice....'

Captain Meredyth Grant, right, was appointed SO3 Media Plans for 3 Commando Brigade's deployment to Afghanistan on Op Herrick 14 in September last year. A qualified broadcast journalist, Meredyth has worked on national news-desks for BSkyB, ITV and most recently was employed as a Marketing and PR co-coordinator for a specialist supplier in the defence and aerospace sector. A member of Media Operations Group (V) since 2005 Meredyth has supported British Army media operations across the UK and in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Singapore and Germany. She is currently completing a Chartered Institute of Marketing qualification ahead of launching a corporate communications company in mid-2012.



Throughout my tour on Operation Herrick 14 I read stories and heard of feats of bravery, commitment and sacrifices made by our service personnel and never have I been so humbled and astounded than in the last six months. Amidst this and watching Sky News coverage of the London riots last summer, I questioned my faith in human nature and was appalled at how quickly the extreme selfishness of mankind can come to the fore.

Yet, one just needs to watch some of the documentaries that our team helped to facilitate - such as BBC 3's 'Young Soldiers' which followed Riflemen through basic training to the front-line - to be reassured there is hope and at the other extreme resounding selflessness triumphs.

But to begin at the beginning.....when the opportunity arose to work with 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines handling their public relations ahead of deployment to Afghanistan, I was caught in two minds. Since 2007 I had completed two deployments with the Territorial Army and although both were excellent experience, for professional and personal reasons, my life had changed. After relocating to Devon, I now had a good job in the defence and aerospace sector developing and implementing a communications and public relations strategy, a dog, a cat and a husband (and not necessarily in that order.)

Within the military community 3 Commando Brigade is held in high esteem for many reasons. The Brigade is the Royal Navy's amphibious infantry on permanent readiness to deploy across the globe, and is a core component of the UK's Joint Rapid Reaction Force.

Although it would have been easier to walk away from the opportunity I believed in the job and I knew I had the drive, experience and was the right person to deliver. I agreed and so began the relentless cycle of Pre-Deployment Training (PDT). PDT puts you through your paces as an individual while also testing the Brigade headquarters and ensuring the individual staff cells are up to scratch and capable of delivering results on operations.

From a media perspective, we were mainly tested on our ability to react to incidents and develop robust communications plans to mitigate negative or damaging PR. We learnt to collate facts quickly and accurately and release them to relevant outlets to ensure a cohesive narrative is presented by the MoD at all times.

Singer celebrity Cheryl Cole visited Afghanistan in September. Pictured here by LA(Phot) Hamish Burke, aboard a Chinook Helicopter Cheryl said she had never experienced so much dust in her life as the helicopter came into land.



The PDT exercises (Pashtun Horizon 1, 2 and 3) were invaluable in preparing the team for deployment. It gave us an opportunity to get things wrong and be mentored and advised by those who had done the job on previous tours and to meet members of the Brigade staff with whom we had not worked previously.

A reoccurring quote of our tour was calling Herrick 14 'Pashtun Horizon 4', because so many of

the scenarios we rehearsed happened in theatre. The only difference was that the February snow was replaced by blistering temperatures in excess of 47 degrees.

I quickly found my feet as the job played to the strengths of my civilian experience in broadcast journalism and public relations. Firstly, prior to the tour our team decided to launch a pilot 'Herrick 14' Facebook site as an official forum for friends and families to follow progress through PDT and on tour. This was the brainchild of Major Rolf Kurth, SO2 Media Operations, pictured below at left, with Miss Beth Cowley, MoD Media Advisor, Lt Col Tim Purbrick, Task Force Helmand Spokesman, myself and Captain Clarke Walsh, Unit Press Officer, 2nd battalion, The Gurkha Rifles.



Major Kurth's experience of social media got the project off the ground. Fully endorsed by the MoD as an official channel, it came to attract over 2.5 million views each month by the end of our tenure. A very different scenario to November 2010 when we had to ask all of our friends to 'like' the page in order to get 25 followers and gain a unique web searchable URL.

The Herrick 14 Facebook page became an interactive portal providing vital support for loved ones and journalists who wanted bespoke Task Force Helmand news. We expanded the project to include video updates from Commanding Officers, Mother's Day messages; audio updates, interactive questionnaires and download-able imagery so families could keep an eye out for their loved ones' unit and get copies straight off the net.

The beauty of Facebook as an outlet (rather than the MoD preferred Army Net or RN Com) is that nearly every individual in the UK can access it via a mobile phone app. It is a great outlet for both pushing and pulling information.

Half-way through the tour other agencies began making contact and asking us to advertise community events for families with partners serving in Afghanistan. Other service charities began asking to cross promote church services and concerts. The Herrick 14 FB pilot was also an organic experience, throwing up new ideas and options to keep people informed. For instance, early on in the tour as troops began arriving in theatre we started receiving a high number of posts from families who had not heard from their loved one for a few days. We began posting messages explaining they were completing an intensive five day in-theatre training package and would be busy and unlikely to make it to a phone or internet cabin for a few days.

One of the more moving aspects of the job came about as we began posting the eulogies of those who had died on to the public wall. We decided that as soon as the MoD released information about a fatality we would post it on to the H14 page. Almost immediately hundreds of condolence messages began pouring in. They were from a broad range of people; from people unconnected to the services, to families of other men serving on the same op tour, to the individuals' friends serving in Afghanistan who would be unable to attend the funeral due to active service.

Poignantly, mothers, girlfriends and sisters of the individuals who had died began reading the messages and leaving their comments and thanks to others for their support. It was truly humbling to know that within hours of the family being informed of their loss they were able to read and interact with their sons/brothers/daughters/husbands friends and those they had never met before and gain some solace through the support extended by others.

Despite the success of the page, mid-way through our tour the MoD conducted a review of its social media strategy and concluded the Herrick 14 Facebook page would remain a pilot and would not be endorsed for Herrick 15 and would be closed down in November 2011.

After ten years in Afghanistan and with the world's foreign news-desks focusing on Libya and the Arab Spring we knew it would be difficult to command airtime and print space in the UK national media. Realistically we knew that even fatalities were being pushed further back into the national newspapers and as a result our strategy had to be robust.

We knew that unique, quirky stories such as Hobo the dog returning to front-line duty after a month recuperating from a shrapnel wound would get picked up by the tabloids. We expanded the project to include video updates from Commanding Officers, Mother's Day messages; audio updates, events such as the Transition of Lashkar Gah to Afghan Security Forces would make the news but aside from these we had to seek out original, punchy stories to push into the nationals. Similarly, we had to be reactive and prepared to get our photographer on a helicopter at short notice to join units with time-sensitive newsworthy feats that needed publicising.

Throughout our tour the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) partnered with Afghan Forces continued to outdo themselves trumping each huge weapons or drugs cache within a few weeks of the last.

It was important to get these stories out to show that we were still taking the fight to the enemy and to demonstrate the immense progress made by Afghan Forces in providing security in their country. But it was not all about national coverage. We focused heavily on saturating our local and regional media outlets with stories, news and information.



Prior to our deployment we contacted all the South West based media organisations (ITV, BBC, Heart, Western Morning News, North Devon Journal) and rallied them around the Brigade getting them signed up to hostile environment training courses and registering their interest with the MoD to come out and embed. For agencies that couldn't afford to get a correspondent out.

We recorded audio messages on a weekly basis and set up down-the-line TV and radio interviews from our live point in Lashkar Gah. Building on the concept behind the Herrick 14 Facebook page, we were keen to rally family, friends and local communities around individual regiments.

On a more simple level we wanted to make sure that local papers ran a story every week, so that those left behind had at least a little insight into what people living among them in their communities had achieved during the tour.

The media role in theatre wasn't solely proactive; on occasions we had to adapt rapidly and make sure we were getting timely and, more importantly, accurate information into the public domain. The day that epitomises this work was Monday 4th July 2011. In the early hours of that morning I was woken and told to get into work immediately. Standing around the briefing map we were informed of a potential man-away incident - when a service person is unaccounted for.

As the investigation is still underway into the circumstances of Highlander Scott McLaren's death I shall not go into detail; suffice to say that on that day I saw the Brigade, all of its men, women, assets and allies pull out the stops without parallel to try and find him.

From a media perspective, it was a challenging day. Within hours of Highlander McLaren going missing the Prime Minister David Cameron had landed with his media entourage at Camp Bastion, with the next destination being Brigade Headquarters in Lashkar Gah. The call was made to keep the PM at Camp Bastion. To continue with his visit would have meant assets needed to search for Highlander McLaren would have to be re-tasked, and this was a call that wouldn't be made.

Later that day, the media handlers took the PM's accompanying press into confidence about the 'man-away'. In Lashkar Gah we were gathering the facts and feeding them back to the MoD News Desk and PJHQ J9 media teams, meanwhile we had an interpreter monitoring Afghan media news and we were keeping an eye on the wires and English-speaking journalists based in Kabul.



From all directions we were being pulled for information, but we remained resolute in relaying information that we knew to be hard fact. There were so many rumours and theories circulating that we could not afford to get embroiled in misinformation - many of the broadcasters were already doing this anyway.

I am still amazed at the search operation that was mounted at such short notice and up until his body was found, we all held onto the hope that he was alive. His loss and the circumstances

surrounding his disappearance may never be known, but I hope his family knows that everyone gave everything that day to find him.

Getting the servicemen and women of Herrick 14 the recognition they deserve in the public domain was an over-arching priority for our media team. A perfect opportunity arose towards the end of the tour when The Daily Mirror sponsored Pride of Britain Awards flew Cheryl Cole to Camp Bastion to present the Brigade Commander with an award recognising the sacrifice and achievement of British Forces in Afghanistan over the last decade.

Tasked with writing the programme for the visit we were keen to put Cheryl through her paces and make sure that she was absolutely overwhelmed. We wanted to make sure she got an insight into the resilience, bravery and utter selflessness that our men and women displayed everyday on operational tours, so that she would return to the UK and recount her experiences to her peers and spread the word and garner further recognition. We sent her through serials with the BRF, 42 Commando and 1 Rifles which saw her carrying an SA80 as she clambered over walls, and helped carry a casualty in a mock casevac.

There is a powerful segment in the video coverage where Cheryl is sat in the dusk and simply says, 'This is the biggest wake-up call of my life'. Of course, it wasn't just about informing Cheryl Cole and the viewers of the Pride of Britain Awards, it was also about morale.

Many (who weren't there) said that we should have flown Cheryl out to some of the patrol bases but this would have been unrealistic. Many of our units had men and women on rotation back in Camp Bastion so it was better to keep her there and get her around as many as possible instead of using vital airframes to move to small outposts.

Watching the Pride of Britain Awards Ceremony and reading the comments left on the Herrick 14 Facebook page about the imagery our photographers obtained (Hamish Burke, 3 Commando Brigade and Dave Hillhouse, 42 Commando RM) it was immensely satisfying and I hope the eight million viewers that ITV 1 drew felt a sense of pride and admiration for the work of service personnel in Afghanistan whatever their political sentiments may be.

Chiltern Kite tests RAF reaction to media

Learning the lessons of Simpress role

Officers of 7644 Squadron, RAuxAF continue to play a decisive part in helping the RAF and its people tell their stories at home and overseas, writes Flight Lieutenant Andy Wasley, pictured right. 'We also continue to help train our colleagues to work with the media on operations and so eleven of us took part in Exercise Chiltern Kite, the largest Reserves-led air exercise in the UK for some years.



Hundreds of RAF Reserves and Regular RAF personnel took part in the exercise on Salisbury Plain Training Area, along with Pumas from 230 Squadron and a Merlin from 78 Squadron.

'I took on the role of deployed Press Information Centre commander, part of a fictional peace enforcement operation in a Balkans-style scenario, supported by Flying Officer Tony Newton as my second in command. Six of our people acted as journalists, seeking stories about the operation.

'For many of our colleagues in other squadrons, this was the first time they'd worked with real journalists, adding a note of realism to the scenario; it's hard to get through an operational deployment without being affected, in some way, by the media, and its 7644 Squadron's role to teach people what that's like.

Lots of learning points... for the next time

Minding the media proves difficult

Salisbury Plain can be a cold and muddy place, but the fates took pity on us this time. The fields were covered in yellow dandelions, and the Plain showcased England's green and pleasant land at its very best. It wasn't entirely convenient, though; instead of mud, we had to contend with clouds of dust, a faint echo of that experienced in Kandahar, writes Flying Officer Tony Newton.

Chiltern Kite took place in bright sunshine that added dehydration and sunburn to the list of potential hazards. For the scenario, the rolling countryside became a foreign country into which the UK had sent troops as a humanitarian effort in support of a UN resolution.

There were two roles for 7644 Squadron: half ran the Press information Centre while the others played 'Simpres' tasked with helping journalists get stories for their various print and broadcast media outlets. The realism of the scenario was such that things kicked off much earlier than anticipated. 'I was soon involved in a melee of displaced persons demanding money for alleged destruction of property, *humanitarian* workers with a political agenda were trying to capitalise on the situation and local media wanted to see inside our Base.



Flying in formation: A RAF Puma and the powerful Merlin, a three-engine workhorse.

'The media ops directing staff added to the spice with injects of their own. One journalist made a break for the main gate and was brought back to the fold. Another complained loudly and often that he was not getting the airborne camera footage that he needed.

And we ran into the inevitable scheduling problems: how do we ensure that one journalist manages to get his interview with the busy commander who was in a convoy that would leave at a set time, with or without him.

'Media minding of journalists on convoys took up a lot of time, and even within the exercise scenario I was reminded that my task (to ensure that journalists get their interviews and photos) was subordinate to that of the convoy. So it became even more important to find a polite way to bring my task to the attention of an already stretched convoy commander. He had the ultimate say.

'Having accompanied two convoys, one of which encountered a mine strike on a civilian vehicle and meant I had to arrange a casualty evacuation by helicopter, I returned to the PIC to be faced with a new 'inject' we had to make plans to brief local press in the displaced persons' camp. This meant a very quick jigsaw puzzle in which the only picture to guide me was my military training superimposed on civilian experience.

'What does intelligence say about the threat level? Do we have enough vehicles? Can Force Protection ensure the safety of participants? Can the RAF Police do their checks in the timeframe? Moreover, does the base commander think this is a worthwhile use of assets? All questions I needed to pose and get an answer so that the PIC Commander can report to the evening commanders' meeting.

He added: End result for me? Lots of learning points that can be translated directly into the operational environment, plus some thoughts on what the squadron really needs in its go bag the next time we play the game'



Sergeant Alison scoops top awards

Soft images of Op Herrick

Sergeant Alison Baskerville, the first female Territorial Army Combat Camera Team photographer to deploy on operations in Afghanistan, won two major awards in the Army's annual photographic competition with pictures from Operation Herrick 14 in Helmand.

Says Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Rosie Stone: 'Two members of MOG (V) have won prestigious awards in the competition. Sgt Baskerville won the Best Professional Photographer Portrait and Best Professional Photographer Image.'

'She was particularly pleased that it was not a 'fighting' photo that won a prize but a 'soft' image of Op Herrick.' Both winning images are shown here.



Captain Andy Whitehead picked up the award for Runner Up in the Amateur Operational Photograph category.

'These awards are especially sweet at a time when MOG (V) is justifying its role as a provider of reserve Combat Camera Teams, with some reservations being expressed from the military photographer's fraternity about the deployment of 'civilian' photographers on operations. Many congratulations to both our winners.'

Lt Col Tim Purbrick, Op Herrick 14 Spokesman added: 'It is hugely rewarding to see Sgt Baskerville win these prizes. 'During my time as commanding officer we broadened the Group to include other ranks and we also developed specialist trades to reflect, in this case, the Regular Army's photographic branch. Alison joined MOG (V) after Regular service in the Royal Air Force. Following her degree in photo-journalism she completed the military photographer conversion course at the Defence School, of Photography before volunteering for active duty. 'These awards are a great tribute to her professionalism, energy and commitment.'



Tribute to the RAF's photographers They stand comparison with the best

This picture of a pilot climbing into the cockpit of a Typhoon won the PR Image of the Year award in the RAF's 2011 photographic competition. Taken by Sgt Pete Mobbs, a former instructor at the Defence School of Photography, while on deployment to Gioia del Colle it was selected from among 900 images entered in the competition.

Sgt Mobbs, who entitled his photograph 'If the glove fits,' deployed to Italy soon after the start of RAF operations in support of NATO's Operation Unified Protector. A former photographer for the Red Arrows, Sgt Mobbs now runs the photographic section at RAF Coningsby.

Flt Lt Tom Calver, Mobile News Team leader said: 'Sgt Mobbs always had a clear idea of the photos he wanted and worked hard to get them.'

Whenever I was complimented on the Mobile News Team's work I would confess it was the photographers who made the difference. It was hard for me to go wrong. I was lucky to work with some highly professional and committed Regular RAF photographers who, I believe, stand comparison to counterparts in the civilian world'



Three years have passed in a flash

If a week is a long time in politics... then 42 months is an eon in the world of media operations.

That is the length of time I have completed in full-time service, first on mobilisation as SO1 Media Ops at HQ Multi National Division South East, based on the outskirts of Iraq's second city, Basra, and latterly as an SO1 at the Defence Media Operations Centre (DMOC) at RAF Halton in Buckinghamshire, writes Lieutenant Colonel Derek Plews.

The period since 2007 has seen significant change and improvement in the way the military approaches not just media engagement but the whole business of bringing influence to bear on target audiences – both at home and in the AOR. It has been exciting, fascinating and hugely gratifying to have been able to play some small part in that process.

Having completed a six-months' operational tour in Basra, I was offered the opportunity to undertake a Full Time Reserve Service appointment as SO1 Joint Media Operations Team at DMOC, then based at RAF Uxbridge, just outside London.

The role was to lead the JMOT, which was established to provide high-readiness, rapidly-deployable, early-entry media ops capability in support of contingency operations. Needless to say, in my three years in that post, we were never called upon to function in our primary role. But we did spend significant amounts of time, sweat and nervous energy in support of the enduring operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Lt Col Derek Plews is currently head of Public Relations at Reading Council. He recently completed three years in uniform in which he served in Iraq and at the Defence Media Operations Centre as a chief instructor.

Derek is a long term member of MOG (V) and held senior posts in the government information service. He was communications adviser to Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott.

He recently accepted the appointment of Club Deputy Chairman (MoD) with a role to improve recruiting within the defence information group.

As a result of the lessons learned in various deployments, we produced a paper, in the autumn of 2008, making a number of recommendations for how defence, as a whole, might improve its ability to conduct effective media operations. Among the key recommendations were:

- Improving the media operations elements of collective training for Brigades working up to deploy on operations, including developing and implementing clear collective training objectives.
- Ending the hand-to-mouth approach to appointing key media ops staff too late to participate in Brigade work-up training.
- Selecting rather than appointing key media ops personnel, particularly SO1s.
- Career-managing personnel to create a cadre of experienced media ops officers rather than constantly training people, sending them on operations, providing them with hard-won experience and then never making any further use of their new skills.
- Improving media ops training to reflect the changing situation on the ground.
- Recognising the important role that reservists could play in supporting media operations, providing the system was able to take account of their particular requirements such as recognising the need to give them reasonable notice of requirements so that they are able to better plan their lives.

The paper went forward to the Two-Star Defence Communications Group, which endorsed the proposals and directed that further work should take place to implement them as quickly as possible. This became the responsibility of the Media and Communications Capability Working Group.

The M&CCWG was led at One-Star level by the Head of Operational Communications in the Directorate of Media and Communications and included representation from all three Front Line Commands, with DMOC taking on the secretariat function, represented by the Head of DMOC, Col Ian Mackenzie and myself.

Three years on, I am pleased to report that all of the key recommendations



have been implemented, together with a number of others that have arisen as further lessons have been identified.

One of the most significant changes has undoubtedly been the decision to select rather than appoint personnel to fill the SO1 Media post in Task Force Helmand, as MOG(V) officers, Lt Col Tim Purbrick and Lt Col Gordon McKenzie can both testify, having successfully completed the process.

Applicants for the job now undergo a day of rigorous testing at DMOC, designed to identify their aptitude for media operations. The individual assessments then form a part of the Army Personnel Centre's decision-making process. As well as helping to ensure that the most suitable candidates are posted into this important job, the process has also helped to drive home to the military just how important defence takes media operations. No other post in Task Force Helmand is filled in this way.

The other part of my job at DMOC was to provide 'consultancy' services for DMC, PJHQ and deployed headquarters. For example, having just returned from an operational tour in Iraq in March, 2008, I found myself back in Basra in July that year, writing a communications strategy for Major General Barney White-Spunner, designed to overcome some of the bad publicity that had followed Operation Charge of the Knights – the Iraqi-led assault on Sadrist militias in Basra City, during which the UK was perceived to have failed to provide sufficient support.

A few months later, I was detached from DMOC to DMC to write the communications strategy for what became known as Operation Brockdale – the UK draw-down from Iraq, ending with the transfer of authority from the UK to US forces in Basra.

It was a huge privilege not only to pull the strategy together and get buy-in within the MOD, in Basra and in Baghdad, but to be able to deploy in April 2009 for an intensive week of events culminating in the final flag-lowering ceremony, which attracted massive positive coverage for the UK military in home and international media outlets.

Three years may be an eon in media operations terms, but the time has passed in a flash. I have enjoyed every minute, learned a lot – about myself and about media and communications in the military context – and count myself blessed to have had the opportunity to serve in this way. I am now looking forward to my new appointment, back with Media Operations Group (V) as the Liaison Officer to DMOC, where, among other things, I will be working on a project to re-write the Defence Media Operations Doctrine.

Clockwork cameras and a long bloody war From Desert Victory to Barbaric Belsen

Editor Mike Peters talks with Paul Clark, No. 9 SEAC section of the Army Film & Photographic Unit - the voice of the Association of Former Members of AFPU - and to Hilary Roberts of the Imperial War Museum . Still working as a professional photographer Paul has an ambition to gain recognition of the achievements of his comrades, the combat cameramen of the Second World War. This diminishing band was honoured at the 2011 Army Photographic Competition prize-giving attended by Lord Puttnam, son of the AFPU's Len Puttnam, who covered the Dunkirk evacuation in June 1940 and also took part in the Commando Raid on Vaagso in Norway in December 1941.



They were about 400 strong and suffered a 23 per cent casualty rate in the Second World War. In many ways they were a special force but they never received the recognition they deserved. Armed only with revolvers and cameras they were the men of the Army's Film and Photographic Unit. Their work survives today and forms the back bone of historical TV documentaries illustrating the momentous years between 1941 and 1945.

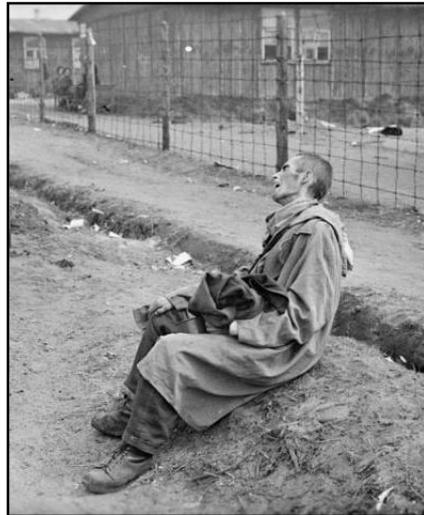
Just a few weeks ago some of the surviving veterans of this all but forgotten unit met at the Imperial War Museum, where their work is preserved for the nation in a 70th anniversary celebration tinged with sadness. Many of their company have passed on and that day they were without their founder and war long leader, Lieutenant Colonel Hugh Stewart, who died earlier this year after reaching his centenary.

It is little known that many of those who served in AFPU went on to become doyens of the film industry, TV, newspapers and magazines. Hugh Stewart was no exception and is best remembered for extolling the virtues of kindly, slapstick comedy with movies starring Norman Wisdom and Morecombe and Wise.

But his most notable contribution on celluloid was made at Bergen-Belsen in April 1945 when he insisted that the Allies record the horrors of the liberated concentration camp.

The gathering of photographic material in conflict predated the onset of the Second World War. Indeed, the first extensive photographic documentation of war occurred in the Crimea. The AFPU and its counterparts in the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force during the Second World War were to take photography and film to unprecedented levels.

In 1941 the British Army found itself in a catch up situation. The German Army was already adept in the use of film and photos and had the best of equipment, some of which the AFPU was to 'liberate' and use to good effect, says Dr. Fred McGlade in his book setting out the unit history. Dr. McGlade's journal of record is available from Helion & Company (ISBN 978 1 906033 94 1) as a comprehensive and detailed record of the unit from formation to disbandment.



Fred McGlade digs deep into the politics that also surrounded the AFPU and Public Relations which were separate but linked organisations. The problems faced by AFPU were not confined to the battlefield. The difficulties of overcoming military aversion and the political apathy towards a visual record of war was an enormous bridge to cross before the actual dangers of filming and photographing in the midst of the confusion of battle. The nature of capturing actual fighting on film or stills is itself haphazard affair with a great deal of luck being a major element in success or failure to 'capture the moment.'

Many familiar names in the post war film industry and in the media served as Army combat cameramen. Probably the most familiar name is Captain Bert Hardy, who while always maintaining that he had become a photographer by accident went on to become one of the best known names of Fleet Street.

Called up in 1942 Bert joined the AFPU's No. 5 Section and then set out his war time ambition to get a photograph in Picture Post and the Illustrated London News each week. This he managed to do on numerous occasions.



Making his way, after D-Day, to Paris which was to be *freed* by the Americans and the French, Bert borrowed a large Union Flag and took a picture in the Champs Elysees with it draped over the back of a jeep. He went on to the liberation of Belgium and the Crossing of the Rhine.

Bert's good humour and love of life was well able to cope with most of his war experiences but the horrors of Belsen were an exception. When he saw the German soldiers who had been guarding starving prisoners were about to be given a meal he was so shocked that he took the food and threw it in their faces. He later went onto to serve as Lord Mountbatten's personal photographer in the Far East. Later he was to photograph the Korean War for Picture Post.

For a more dramatic and personal account of the AFPU, *Cameramen at War* by Sergeant Ian Grant's - published by Patrick Stephens Limited (ISBN 085059 489 8) – is hard to beat though some of its stories have been contradicted by recent research. Ian landed on D-Day attached to Lord Lovat's Commandos.

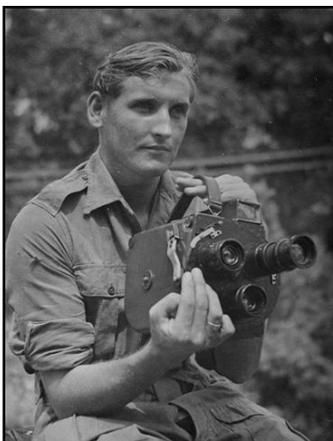
To be published late this year is a new book featuring Sgt Eddy 'Smiler' Smales, pictured right in training for the Normandy invasion, who served in AFPU. Written by his son, Nigel, *When you're Smiler* is a new account and includes those on the home front who supported the cameramen, including two ladies, Nadine Manning of the Canadian AFPU and Daphne Hudson who continues her membership of the veterans' association. Smiler Smales was one of the original AFPU cine cameramen and served with No. 1 Section in the Middle East and North Africa and with No 5 Section from Caen to Berlin. His coverage of the battle of El Alamein and its aftermath was included in the Oscar winning film *Desert Victory* - the book, currently under review by The NetWorker - enters the political affray of how a film shot by the Army appeared with an RAF Photographic Unit credit. .



Smiler covered the fall of Normandy and the advance to Le Havre. He was in the vanguard of the amphibious crossings of the Scheldt estuary and the Rhine and saw the surrender at Luneburg Heath. After the war he returned to his roots in feature films and eventually became a BBC TV News cameraman.

There are many anecdotal stories of the bravery of AFPU. cameramen. A favourite of the veterans is that of the tank commander enquiring of a military police traffic control post: *Is the way clear down there? Yes Sir, the Army Film Unit has been down taking pictures this morning!*

Except for a few refinements the essentials of news and image gathering changed little between the Crimean War and the Second World War. Pencils were augmented with shaky and often cumbersome typewriters. Fortunately photographers were no longer required to coat sensitised plates in a mobile, horse drawn darkroom. Colour photography was possible but shortage of film supplies restricted its use to a few senior AFPU photographers between 1949 and 1946.



The success of the AFPU was achieved with the most basic of equipment, especially when compared with that of today. Processing and camera maintenance were a constant problem, together with the dispatching of material shot back to base for distribution. This, just as today, served to boost morale on the home front.

At the turn of 1940 in the United Kingdom it was Ilford and Kodak who were the major manufacturers of film stock and photographic

paper. Cameras and accessories were in short supply, prompting numerous government appeals for the public to donate their personal cameras.

Sergeant Ken Higgins, pictured above left, of No. 9 SEAC Section spent some time in the Burmese jungles with the Chindits. Pictured with a typical cine camera of the time, a Vinten Normandy he was the last survivor of those who served with General Wingate's jungle force. Sadly the veterans of AFPU lost contact with him and only learned of his death this year. The Vinten Normandy had a triple lens system, was loaded with 100 ft of 35 mm film and was clockwork driven

AFPU photographers also used Zeiss Super Ikonta 12 cameras and 120 monochrome roll film. When these became worn out Ensign produced the Ensign Commando, a cheap copy of the Ikonta. A number of 35mm Leica and Contax cameras became available as the Army captured enemy cameramen. Zoom lenses were unknown.

On exceptional occasions, such as the opening of the El Alamein barrage in 1942, photographers and cine cameramen called on previous battle experience to get their shots. Cine cameras were either run very slowly or the gun flash itself was allowed to make the exposure by leaving the shutter open throughout the gun's firing, moving the film on frame by frame manually after each momentary explosion of light.

From the work of the wiser cameramen that night was built up the record of the tremendous bombardment. The resulting film, *Desert Victory*, was considered equal to anything produced by either the Allies or the Germans and won an Oscar for the best documentary in 1943.

In the years leading up to the war the German propoganda machine had become finely tuned. This was very apparent at the time of Dunkirk in 1940.

The shortage of British Army photographers and cameramen forced the Army to rely on civilian press photographers and the newsreel cameramen of the day.

Initially recruitment to AFPU centered around those in the film industry and the press, most of whom were by this time were experienced soldiers serving in varying regiments, and one or two even having served in the Spanish Civil War.

However, more men were required. It did not take long to establish that soldiers could be more readily tuned into cameramen than cameramen into soldiers.



Recruitment and training had to be extended and Pinewood Studios became the AFPU HQ and training base

Early appreciation of the AFPU came in the Western Desert. Pictured, above right, in a magazine of the time is the aptly nicknamed Chet's Circus, a section documenting the Eighth Army. The group consisted of Sergeants Len Chetwin (Keystone Films,) Jimmy Mapham (Leicester Mercury) who went on to land on D-Day, John Herbert (Kodak) and Chris Windows (Gaumont .) They were in a 15cwt truck and always close to the action. The contrast in uniform, kit and transport compared with today's digital cameras, camouflaged combat uniforms and transport is marked.

Although trained in both cine and still photography all cameramen were usually posted as one or the other. Cine men also carried a still camera. This proved invaluable for Sgt George Laws whose cine camera jammed a few minutes after landing on D-Day 1944.

The AFPU kept detailed records of their work which are now lodged in the Imperial war Museum. Initially little information was recorded about the men serving in the unit. In fact it was not until after the war had ended and the unit disbanded that more information could be added.

Most of this came through the early reunions held in a Fleet Street pub. However, the Imperial war Museum has worked for many years to research and augment this information, interviewing many veterans who are no longer with us and adding their personal mementoes, photographs, documents and cameras to its collections.



For the Imperial War Museum staff that now look after the huge quantity of film and photographs this is still only a part of the problem as no official records of AFPU personnel exist. Indeed, the most comprehensive listing was assembled by George Reeves, Harry Thompson, and Paul Clark by word of mouth and personal recollections.

The Fleet Street re-unions also embraced War Correspondents and PR staff, among whom was Major General Edgeworth Johnson who was Assistant Director of Public Relations between 1940-44.

General Johnson decided that most AFPU cameramen should be awarded the rank of sergeant. Sgt John Wenham disagreed with this decision; in his view they should have had no rank at all. Sergeant R E Day countered that it was a very good idea; sergeants would have sufficient authority to approach an officer yet still have the ability to keep in touch with the private soldier. He did add, however, that he felt it unfair that cameramen did not receive an extra allowance for their technical status.

Sergeant R Meyers' thoughts on the subject are probably the most widely accepted. In his opinion awarding cameramen officer rank would have had an adverse effect on their contact with the troops. The rank of sergeant provided the right balance.

The history of the AFPU shows that No.1 Section it was formed in Cairo in January 1942 when Rommel and the Afrika Corps were only 35 miles away and the British Army were preparing to withdraw from North Africa. The turning of the tide at El Alamein brought an unexpected dividend

– the capture of a magnificently equipped German mobile darkroom which was already supplied with the materials needed to publicise the planned triumphal entry into the Egyptian capital. It was to render good service up to the assault on Sicily.

No 2 Section covered the Tunisian Campaign. Although some cameramen from both units returned to Pinewood to prepare for D Day the remainder accompanied the assault on Sicily and Italy. One section was led by Dick Gade, and the other by Alan Whicker, whose book *Whicker's War* tells a fascinating tale of the relationship between senior officers and the unit's free ranging cameramen.

Camera crews were deployed with Special Forces such as the Long Range Desert Group, Special Air Service, Commandos, Special Boat Service and the resistance organisations in Greece and Yugoslavia, Tony Keys was parachuted into Greece twice in a couple of weeks to record both sides of the resistance movement. On his second mission he was called on to withdraw through 60 miles of occupied territory.

John Wenham, who narrowly missed his centenary, is remembered because he was deployed in Nairobi. As a member of No 3. Section he shot morale boosting pictures of home for the colonial forces serving overseas,

D Day was extensively filmed by cameramen from No. 5 Section which formed in 1944 with a strength of nine officers and 72 other ranks. Each cameraman was issued with a SHAEF pass which was authorized by General Eisenhower and displayed his signature. On the reverse the pass stated that 'the bearer will be accorded every co-operation by all commanders.'

Sgt George Laws attached to 4 Commando landed on Sword Beach in an assault craft and was the first AFPU cameraman ashore. He was followed by Desmond O'Neill with the East York's, Jimmy Mapham with the 13/18 Hussars, and Billy Greenhalgh with the South Lancashire Regiment.

Within 15 minutes Lt Peter Handford with Dick Leatherbarrow and Ernest Walter landed at the extreme end of Juno Beach with 48 Commando and they were followed by Captains Leslie Evans and Derrick Knight alongside HQ Commandos. Ian Grant landed with 45 Commando and Sergeant Christie was parachuted in with 6th Airborne Division.



He was the only airborne member of AFPU to take part in the initial invasion from the air. He landed an hour before the main force and covered the landings from the shore.

Later as No 5 Section accompanied the British Army across North West Europe it covered the airborne landings at Arnhem, the Rhine Crossing and the horrific scenes of the Belsen/Bergen concentration camp where Harry Oakes spent 16 days photographing. The AFPU footage was incorporated in another Oscar winning film, *The True Glory*.

A public relations group was formed for the Arnhem landings. Led by Major Roy Oliver it included two BBC civilian broadcasters, Stanley Maxted and Guy Bryan, two censors and two newspaper journalists Alan Wood of the *Daily Express* and Jack Smyth of Reuters. There were four signallers and three AFPU cameramen Sergeants Mike Lewis, Dennis Smith and Gordon 'Jock' Walker.

Jock Walker, pictured above, landed by glider and brought back eight 100 ft rolls of film. Dennis Smith also went in by glider and returned with 54 still pictures while Mike Lewis parachuted into the Arnhem theatre and took 26 still photos and exposed seven rolls of cine film.

Roy Oliver was to be awarded the American Silver Star for his gallantry at Arnhem. He not only enabled the correspondents to radio their stories to the world but he made his sets available for military messages. Most radio sets dropped into theatre did not work. Roy Oliver was wounded twice. His last coming in the withdrawal across the Rhine when he also lost his boat. He swam the remaining distance carrying film negatives, still photos and radio discs of the operation

Alan Wood told the newspaper world: 'Oliver is unique among PROs. In my experience a PRO is either the occasional dud, who has been weeded out of fighting unit, or a professional soldier who knows nothing about journalism or a journalist who knows nothing about soldiering. Oliver is a professional soldier who has been at Tobruk, who landed on D-Day, went to Arnhem and has been in almost every rough spot in the war....The job he did at Arnhem must be the most brilliant success a PRO has had during the war.'

The praise for Roy Oliver, who was also twice mentioned in Despatches – was well merited. The generalised sentiments of Alan Wood were much less appreciated but this situation is not unusual. War Correspondents were not always the most popular people in the war zone and in other conflicts the antagonism between the two sides has also surfaced

To the veterans of the unit it seems that researchers and producers in recent times have all been pre-occupied with the war in Europe, overlooking the Desert campaign, the D Day Dodgers in Italy and the little publicised No 9 section, which was originally under the direction of Phillip Daniel in South East Asia Command with Admiral Louis Mountbatten. Derrick Knight ran the show in Singapore and after the war returned to Shell and then Reuters. He went on to become President of the Royal Photographic Society.

A special draft of the AFPU was based in India to cover the Burma campaign and late actions in the Ceylon and Singapore. They covered some of the most stressful conditions of the war as well as going deep behind Japanese lines with the Chindits. One of the draft was Basil Wishart who later owned the Shetland Times. A film, Burma Victory resulted from their footage.



The Unit strength was only just over 400 and it is interesting to note that so many names were well known at the time and later others became the movers and shakers of post war TV and photo journalism.

On disbandment in September 1946 members were deployed to other duties. Roland Park to the Imperial War Graves Commission while Morris Aza dealt with ID photos for thousands of Japanese prisoners. Gillie Potter, Bill Morris and Rex Ebbetts went to Kuala Lumpur, where they were seconded to set up and train the Malayan Film Unit. Three years on they decided to be demobbed, only to be told there were no records of their existence. They had to rejoin before they could be released!

With John Wilcox, Harry Oakes, John Tulloch and Harry Oakes Paul Clark were posted to No. 9 Section in Vienna. This was really a Press camp headed by Nigel Dugdale, who was to become DADPR War Office. He was succeeded by David Henneker, later a song writer and creator of Irma La Duce and the show stopping production "Half a Sixpence" which set Tommy Steele on the road to fame and fortune.

John Tulloch and Paul Clark produced two short films *Yorkshire men In Austria* featuring the East & West Yorkshire Regiments; and *Irishmen in Austria* - The Royal Ulster Rifles and the Iniskilling Fusiliers.

Sgt Bob Baker produced Roger Moore's Saint series and *The Persuader*. British film maker Roy Boulting of the Boulting Brothers was in the leading jeep to enter Paris; Capt Peter Handford gained an Oscar for his sound recording of *Out Of Africa*.

There so many more than cannot be mentioned here. What is certain is that many still believe the Unit and its members' achievements never received the accolades and recognition they deserved. Despite strenuous efforts the story of the Army Film & Photographic Unit has never been screened and until Fred McGlade's *History of the British Army Film & Photographic Unit* only Ian Grant's very personal account existed. However The Imperial War Museum' resources ensure that a record of the Unit's personnel and work is available to researchers today.

In recent years Paul Cark has been approached by researchers and would be producers when the opening gambit is about the attitude and approach to propaganda of the veterans. His reply remains constant - he has no recollection of directives in training related to shooting propaganda film and has never heard any veterans say that they were aware of a possible propaganda use at the time of shooting.



The use to which the unit's film and photos was applied subsequently was in the hands and control of others.

Thanks to the generosity of the directors and staff of Pinewood Studios, the plaque produced by former Adjutant, Major Alan Goatman in memory of those who lost their lives enables the few remaining members of the unit and their families, to reflect on the achievements and sacrifice of those listed on our Roll of Honour. Another plaque has also been placed in the Allied Special Forces Grove at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Today the veterans greatly value and appreciate the interest, comradeship and support of those serving in military media operations whose achievements, they believe, are increasingly spectacular and demonstrate skills in using advances in technology, often in arduous conditions, with considerations and restraints not previously encountered and endured.

Various anniversary celebrations have in the last few years raised awareness of the AFPU which up to the 50th anniversary of D Day, had enjoyed a time of near obscurity. Most interest centres on Europe. Whickers War covered his time in Italy and gave good recognition of The Unit while George Law's picture was featured on the D Day stamp.

Kay Gladstone and Hilary Roberts of the Imperial War Museum deserve much praise for their endeavours to raise the profile and have accepted an invitation to become Honorary Members in thanks and recognition. Anne Runeckles at Pinewood was also invited in appreciation of her valued help.



The material shot by the Army Film & Photographic Unit continues to be used by television programme makers and film producers. With a little effort, by reference to existing *dope sheets*, credit could be given to the actual cameramen for the tremendous legacy that they have left this country. This story is but a short tribute to all those who were proud to serve in The Army Film & Photographic Unit 1941 – 46.

Hundreds of hacks and just one tiny loo! Colonel Mike Peters and the TAPIO team look back to the 50th anniversary of D-Day

It was the re-union of all time. Anyone who was in Normandy during the few days before the 50th anniversary of D-Day on June 6, 1994 will say it was a week to remember. For the TAPIO Pool it was probably its most significant peacetime event. Involved at the very last moment the Pool, ably supported, by volunteers from the Ministry of Defence information service, took over the media organisation at the British war cemeteries in Normandy, at the ad hoc celebrations, and on the beaches at Arromanches. There is no doubt it was an exacting time that drew on all the skills of the Pool. There were hundreds, if not thousands, of journalists, photographers, radio teams and roving TV cameramen and the BBC's massive presence also meant there were headaches enough to go around.



That the TAPIOs acquitted themselves well was borne out by the praise of the Chief of Public Relations at MoD, Gill Samuels, who wrote: 'The TAPIOs have once again proved a highly professional and impressive organisation which can be depended upon to deliver on the day.' But behind that note of congratulation was a whole story of how to get it wrong!

There had been a failure to comprehend just how important the ceremonies in Normandy would be compared to those held in southern England. It was Normandy where the veterans of the invasion wanted to be. It was Normandy where a sizeable portion of the Royal family would be on June 6 1994. And it was at Arromanches that the Queen would review the parade of veterans and TV would broadcast it to the world.

Planning and visits to Arromanches and the other locations had been going on for a year. The miniscule media team in France, together with the small British administrative headquarters and the MoD in London started to realise there was a distinct opportunity for the media plan to go awry. Help was needed.

Called into the MoD to discuss TAPIO Pool involvement I was suspicious, direct, if not blunt, in my responses. Is this a poison chalice? Who gets the blame? Will it be the TA? There were no promises made on any future inquest but I realised this was an opportunity. Mastermind this major media event and we would break down some thick doors. To the credit of the Pool there were more than enough volunteers.

The frustrations of the TA back in the mid 1990s started to come through. Man Training Days were at a premium. Where could we get more? Then the message came that possibly 50 of those MTDs would be wasted. Instead of a short, cheap commercial flight into Caen Airport the team spent nearly 24 hours passing through the Air Mounting Centre in South Cerney for a hop, skip and jump across the Channel. And, almost as long getting back.



The accommodation was as basic as it could be. We were after all at the end of the food chain. The weather was as bad as 1944 and it took a great deal of effort in the mud surrounding Arromanches to be as smart as we wished to face the thousands of veterans who were already in France. The consolation was the food. The Army's chefs did a splendid job and there were also some amazing local restaurants that I have visited in the years since.

The Press Centre was a potential disaster - a tiny infant's school with basic facilities. This was a school for tiny tots. There was a miniature loo which was to be assailed by desperate veterans and their families as well as the media. Whoever had thought that just because the building was relatively close to the beaches, pictured above, that it would be right for the job I never discovered?

It was a task to make it work. And that is the abiding skill of the Army – the can-do attitude. Every TAPIO and our civilian helpers made the extra effort in poor circumstances and in bad weather much akin to the real day half a century earlier. Not that anyone would claim our task compared in the slightest with June 1944. This was very obvious as time and again we were reminded by veterans that no one landed on the beach at Arromanches on D-Day. It all took place further down the coast.

It was a time for humble thoughts about those who did not survive the day or the months that followed. For me it was a reminder of my home battalion, The 4th Kings Shropshire Light Infantry, who with the many other Territorial and Yeomanry infantry, gunner and tank units made 11 Armoured Division – the Black Bull – one of the best in the battles for Normandy and on into the heart of Germany. KSLI were to land 13 days after the invasion and move into the carnage of Operations Goodwood and Epsom and the battle for Caen

The pressures started to build on June 5. We were checked out by some senior Regular officers who asked to see and review our plan. They were somewhat surprised to be taken into the main classroom to see a huge blackboard with a multi-colour depiction of the Arromanches site with sub plans for the other British events, depicting every media location, route and holding point. All the media officer's tasks and locations were displayed together with information relevant to the operation. It was, indeed, a work of art and matched any battle map we had seen in British Army of the Rhine. We had 'borrowed' a lot of coloured chalk.

Our 'bosses' left satisfied the plan was workable and the assets properly deployed. When we came to wipe the slate clean later I regret we never took a photograph. It was a work of art. We left the board cleaned and with a simple message of thanks to the children and staff of the school. And the words *Vive le Entente Cordiale: Vive la Belle France.* We meant it.



With a mob of photographers already demanding facilities to process their photographs there were problems with the three electric power points in the school. In a joint effort with the British Forces Broadcasting Services team we tackled the local Mayor and electricians arrived the night before the big day.

There were barriers to be moved or re-arranged, press viewing areas and sites to be confirmed, changed and transport fixed. Believe it or not the main British Press centre had been sited at Caen – over 20 miles away. Apparently little thought had been given to the movement of journalists from the city to Arramanches or, indeed, how some would get their copy and pictures back to the main press centre. All roads were closed to public movement as VIPs shuttled back and forth and there were some long faces among the media.

The timely use of a TAPIO with a, RMP cherry beret, did the trick. And the vital envelopes were rushed through the crowds and the closed roads by an obliging French gendarme on a motor bike. A real victory for Major Bob Peedle, pictured above far left with Lt Col David Falcke, and his practiced persuasion as a former Superintendent of the Metropolitan Police.

On top of the problems of getting it right for the media there were a surprising number of calls on our services. Why was I asked to stop an enthusiast's renovated Churchill tank driving up and down the village pave and spewing rocks everywhere I do not know?



Col Mike Peters, left with Lt Col Colin Mason and Susi Coulthard make some last minute alterations to the media sites.

The re-enactors also gave us great concern. While, to us, the uniforms they wore were readily identified as WW2 vintage here were some locals who could not tell the difference. Some were scruffy but others were incredibly accurate in the uniforms and equipment of 1944.

The problem with these enthusiasts got worse as dawn broke on June 6. Driving military vehicles and DUKWs at sometimes breakneck speed on the sands of Arromanches beach they also played battle sounds at huge volume. That was one where the local gendarmes did come to the rescue.

Did it all run like clockwork? No! But given the short notice to deploy and the limited: very limited resources and time available it went very well. On that evening the media came to see the Pool relaxing in the sun after a hard day's work and said thank you! The BBC even provided a glass or two of bubbly. Perhaps the best of all was the mention of the minders on Sky TV.

The lessons learned at this event took the form of some five pages of notes to the MoD. Did we get any blame? No! Everyone was best pleased that the TA had come up trumps.

Shame that the only real recognition was a solitary letter from our professional head. But it was ever thus.

Experiencing a culture shock

Susi Coulthard on her first military jaunt

The culture shock of my first military deployment could not have been more acute if I had been parachuted into the Congo. I had been to Normandy many times before - usually a jolly family road trip that included a brisk and simple sea crossing and plenty of red wine, seafood and patisserie.

When I was told we would be flying across the Channel I was quite relieved - I was so eager to get on the ground and begin what I knew would be a mammoth task –and the quicker we got there the better. The weather was foul - more like February than June - the driving rain, heavy seas and force eight gales mirroring the beaches in 1944. Yes, flying was definitely a good option. What a novice I was.

My first day in Normandy was a state of confusion. How could it take more than 18 hours to fly from Netheravon across the English Channel? I concede not all of those desperate minutes were spent in the air, but were largely spent being processed for transiting in an aircraft without seats, adequate lighting, heating, duty free, drinks, in-flight meal or movie, and in which the forward and aft toilet facilities had been replaced by a bucket. Numerous future trips around the world with airborne forces would make me a professional Hercules passenger, but the scars left by that first, chastening experience remain livid to this day.



In true Gestalt style we got into character from the start. We rested for all too few precious hours each night in a camp site overflow, on mildewed cot beds in what were, I was convinced, WW2 issue tents - complete with holes you could have seen the stars through if the rain filled clouds drenched, battered by gales, and beset by seemingly insurmountable difficulties. had ever cleared. The rest of the time we were literally up to our knees in mud, permanently. My infamous hand-to-hand combat in the waves with a French cameraman determined to prevent the Royal Marines from bringing the colours ashore was probably no more than serendipitous re-enactment.

Perhaps it was sleep deprivation, or hysteria brought on by deep rooted fear that what we had taken on was just too big, too difficult for the able but too few staff on the ground, but I don't think I have ever laughed so much, so hard and for so long. The surreal adventure that was D-Day 50th was one of the happiest times of my life. Memories that I especially cherish are:

The stoicism of the RLC who were tasked with creating a beach setting fit for The Queen right on top of a sewage outflow pipe. They built a magnificent sand saluting platform and parade - and again, twice a day, everyday so that we could rehearse prior to the royal visit then when the tide came in and washed it all away re-exposing the sewage pipe, they rebuilt it.

Popping my head round the corner in the bijou Gulliver-like Nursery School that had been requisitioned as the D-Day 50th International Media Centre only to see six of the world's greatest photographers squatting around three miniature pissoires attempting to develop their images for tomorrow's front pages.

That and trying to keep a straight face when briefing some of the most eminent TV commentators, editors and news reporters in the business while they were sitting in front of us on chairs designed for 3 year olds. Pinching myself to check I wasn't dreaming when legend Raymond Baxter asked for my help in drafting his commentary notes. All the British media were a delight to work with in

Arromanches, but Raymond was by far my favourite. Completely without ego, he had the most perfect manners, was endlessly patient and charming, and so very, very funny.

He was an amazing advocate for the military. As a venerable veteran of the war himself it was a particular honour to be able to spend so much time with him there in France. How I miss him.

Running through a cornfield like a starved greyhound, to restrain a rogue paparazzo who had attempted to get too close to the Prince of Wales at the parachute drop in Ranville. Then being mobbed by Paras who recognised me from Aldershot and thought I was there just for them. Being persuaded to have dinner with a Member of Parliament (the Colonels wanted him out of the way so they could finish their media plan in peace - he'd been haranguing everyone hoping to blag a front row seat at the Veterans' march past, despite not being on the guest list.

The delightful and irrepressible Major Doreen Cadwallader pictured right dealing with the local gendarmerie. happily fulfilling some of the worst tasks we had to cope with, always cheerful, always capable, always a comfort: lifting our spirits with trays of pastries hot from the patisserie whenever things got too impossible, and rescuing our tent when it blew away in a vicious squall.



Being treated to dinner by the BBC producers on the evening of June 6 when there wasn't a table to be had in a ten mile radius. Being cheered by every inhabitant of that delightful French village even though we had besieged them for ten days.

Getting a piggyback ride back to the media centre from a chivalrous member of 23 Parachute Field Ambulance after 20 hours in high heels on the big day had cut my feet to ribbons. But most of all being so proud of a job well done, done with friends, surrounded by heroes.

So much for European co-operation Major John Boyes at Bayeux Cemetery

Jean Pierre was the cameraman for 'France 2' TV: a diminutive individual barely reaching five feet in height. It was my duty to escort him during the visit to Bayeux Cemetery by The Queen and President Mitterrand. He was allocated a prime position suitably cordoned off by a white rope.

We watched the serried ranks of veterans arriving and arranging themselves reverentially around the gravestones.

The weather, for early June, was cool. The pyramids of bottled water to guard against dehydration seemed somewhat redundant. The portaloos, in true French fashion were underprovided for and each was accompanied by a snaking queue of, no doubt uncomfortable, veterans.

As we waited and the clouds tried their best to clear, a group of redoubtable elderly French ladies approached our TV position and stood in front of it. Hoping my vague memories of M. de Fontenay's efforts to teach me the basics of the French language at school would suffice, I politely, I hope, asked them to move. This was greeted with equally polite defiance until I managed to get them to understand that the camera was relaying the ceremony to their own nation. At this they changed their attitude completely and made to move off.

She who was clearly their leader enquired if I knew where the French standard bearers were located. Seeking to help her I indicated a fluttering of colourful flags nearer the catafalque at the further end of the cemetery. 'Those are the Belgians' she informed me, almost, but not quite, in

disgust. 'We have no wish to be near them' and off she marched with her entourage to find a more friendly delegation. 'So much for European co-operation', I thought to myself.

In due course the VVIPs arrived and necessary protocols were observed. But there were no such protocols for the veterans. As if to a man there dawned a sudden realisation that this was *their* day and that royalty and the republic's representatives had for once to take at least equal ranking to those who had actually been there 50 years previously.

This is something I shall bear in mind for next year's dedication of the Bomber Command Memorial.



The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh at Bayeux Cemetery

Controlled chaos ensued as the veterans surged through the gravestones as they must have surged up Gold, Juno and Sword beaches on that June morning so many years before. They were there to see their Queen and were not to be deprived of that opportunity.

True professionals, their majesties took it all in their stride – not so perhaps their minders, the presidential entourage too were less skilled. Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd separated from his escort looked lost, a mere face in the crowd.

Perhaps there were those regulars in uniform who saw their careers dissolve before their eyes. What France 2 viewers saw, I know not. A disheveled Jean Pierre eventually emerged after the human wave had passed around him.

In spite of what appeared to be organised chaos it was a moving experience: those who had survived and those who had not united in commemoration. The event was deemed to have been a great success and in true 'tea and medals' tradition the French Ministry of Defence later gave us all a commemorative medallion and a piece of cake in grateful thank for our contribution.

This was but one of the events that the TAPIOs covered: a blend of dignity and ceremonial at all venues. The feared deaths amongst the veterans did not occur. The parachute drop at Pegasus Bridge – the original bridge thoughtfully removed for replacement by the French just before the event - was one of those events we may never see again in such numbers.

Red Roses from the children

Major Richards Shields recalls a moving tribute

Landing after our short flight we were moved to a leisure centre outside Caen. I was working with Ghurkha Major Patrick Gouldsbury and Major Penny Studholme. Patrick is sadly no longer with us.

Our first task was at Pegasus Bridge where the action in the last minutes of June 5, when the first British troops dropped silently out of the night sky. The original bridge had been re-sited nearby as part of a memorial to the men of 6th Airborne Division. In June 1994 the area was a sea of colour - smartly dressed veterans with their glittering medals and the badges and berets of many regiments.

Those who had difficulty walking found ready hands at their elbows to guide them; wheelchairs had plenty of volunteer pushers. The hub of this throng, just a few yards from the bridge, was the Cafe Gondre, the first French house liberated in the invasion. Mingling with the veterans, and greeting many of them as old friends, was Madame Gondre, a little girl of three on D-Day and now the cafe's owner.

First task of my team of three was to clear the crowds from the cafe forecourt for the arrival of the Band of the Army Air Corps.

Luckily Patrick, spoke French, having spent time with the French Army, and he promptly took command while Penny and I "advised" the local gendarmes on crowd control. Problem solved! The band, newly formed at the time, proved an immense hit with the old soldiers. We got to know them quite well and we travelled with them throughout the week.

Another special part of call during a week of services and celebration was Hermanville, where we witnessed a touching ceremony. All the town's children, led by a Scottish piper, paraded between the rows of graves in the beautifully groomed war cemetery, carefully placing a red rose in front of every stone.

They do it every year, not just on the big anniversaries. I saw many war graves that week, but never a more moving tribute. Another tribute came from the then Mayor of Hermanville, who kindly invited my two colleagues and myself to his celebration dinner along with several hundred veterans. The dinner was superb. We found out later that the Mayor had spent his entire entertainment allowance for the year on that on evening.



On another day in Hermanville I found myself grabbed and dragged into a bar by a massive local proclaiming "Mon ami!" and buying me a large beer. I think the grey hairs made him think I was one of the original veterans! Trying to explain that I was just nine years old on D-Day didn't make much difference.

The most stirring moments of the celebrations came at Arromanches, when 10,000 British and Commonwealth veterans paraded on the beach, with the blackened remains of the Mulberry harbours still visible in the water. Six bands escorted them as they marched proudly across the damp sand. One of the stories circulating at the time concerned a medical estimate that in any collection of 10,000 men of that age group, mostly in their 70s and 80s, some 90 plus, there could be up to 17 fatalities, particularly in view of the physical effort.

There were contingency plans. I had to go on the beach, to evict, politely, a TV crew trying to infiltrate the ranks, and found several well-equipped teams of medics discreetly tucked away

behind rock outcrops. As far as I know they were not needed. The men on parade were a tough bunch in 1944 and still were 50 years later.

The outstanding memory of that week was the marvellous atmosphere of comradeship that pervaded the whole event. Recalling that very special and privileged time, I inevitably come back to the image of a war grave seen again and again amid the rows. Its inscription said: A soldier of the 1939-1945 war. Known unto God. To see those graves and memorials is to understand the price of that day and the days that followed.

Alan and Gladys said farewell

Broadcasting from the beaches in 1994



Alan Grace, the sole representative of British Forces Broadcasting within the Pen & Sword Club, has worked alongside many of us over the years. Not the least was his last ever broadcast made from the beaches at Arromanches in 1994. Alan joined British Forces Network in 1957 and in his career held posts with BFBS in Germany, Aden, London, Cyprus and Hong Kong. On his retirement Alan became the archivist and historian of BFBS. His home in Hampshire is a mine of information on broadcasting to the armed forces. He even holds tapes of broadcasts by Lord Haw Haw in World War 2. He has written several books about Forces radio and here tells his tales of June 6, 1994and 1984! He is a major collector of military cap badges and medals.

The last thing a commentator wants to hear are the words in his headphones: "They are over running". My task on D-Day in 1994 was to commentate on the Queen's Review of the Veterans at Arromanches.

Gladys, our Outside Broadcast studio, pictured below right, and named after our first OB vehicle that operated in Italy in 1944, was the only other vehicle allowed on the beach apart from the Queen's Range Rover.

Apparently, the ceremonies at Omaha and Utah beaches were still not over and Patrick Eade, who was hosting the Outside Broadcast programme from inside the studio vehicle, had to keep going until the Royal Party arrived. At this point, it was cue commentator for a few words on the situation at Arromanches.

There was not a lot to see. The veterans were drawn up in a hollow square facing away from the sea and so after a quick scene-set, it was back to Patrick.

While we passed the time, I talked to Tom Scanlan and Margaret Hayes, who were in the front of the vehicle with me acting as producer and research assistant about the 1984 visit to the beachheads,



I explained that one of the major objectives in 1984, was to visit Pegasus Bridge and talk to the Gondee family, who had been in the little farmhouse when Major Johnny Howard and his men of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry landed by the bridge. Johnny Howard, who had returned for the 40th anniversary celebrations, was in good form and he and his small party, who were about to be presented to Prince Charles, were amazed when one of their number who had been listed as missing, turned up for the celebrations. Apparently, he had been hit by machine gun fire and had been left for dead. He survived and returned to the beaches for the first time in 40 years.

With so many veterans, visiting the area there was no shortage of good stories for BFBS. One of the problems was to find a telephone in and around Arromanches that did not have a queue of veterans waiting to call home.

I had to make a report to BFBS Cologne for the One O'clock News. After seeing the queue for the only public telephone in the village, I looked around and spotted telephone wires leading to a rather nice bungalow. I knocked on the door and in my best French asked if I could use their telephone. The startled owner, who's English was excellent, welcomed me in, pointed in the direction of the telephone and returned to his lunch party. His guests were all celebrating the 40th Anniversary of D-Day. I think they assumed I was some sort of lunchtime cabaret. I made contact with Richard Nankivell in Cologne and asked him to call me back.

About seven minutes later, the phone rang and I was through to Cologne. By chance I had a good view of the local television coverage and so was able to bring the listeners in BAOR up to date with the very latest happenings in Arromanches.

Having refused a glass of wine whilst I was waiting for the phone call, I joined the owner and his party for a little light lunch and some excellent wine. Back to 1994 and there was still no sign of the Royal Party, so I carried on reminiscing about the 40th anniversary.

One of my memories was when Mike Peters asked me if I could help David Dimpleby, who was commentating for ITV. Apparently he had no idea of regimental badges and, as his cameramen zoomed in on the veterans, he felt it would be a good idea to be able to mention their regiments. I was given a small lip microphone with a feed leading into David's headphones. All went well until Prince Philip, who was accompanying the Queen on the walkabout, dashed into a group of veterans and began a fairly animated conversation with them.



I quickly said Prince Philip was talking to members of the Recce Regiment. 'Are you sure?' was the reply. 'Yes I am, as they are the only regiment in the British Army that has a cap badge that resembles a fir tree.'

A relieved David never broke stride and just talked about the Recce Regiment and their importance in the D-Day operations.

It was time to earn my keep in 1994 and by this time the Royal Party had arrived and was reviewing the veterans on the beach. The problem was one of timing. The tide at Arromanches

retreats and returns rapidly. I could see the tide getting closer and closer to the back row of the veterans.

The Queen and the Royal Party were obviously aware and without appearing to hurry, talked to most of the veterans on parade before making their way to the esplanade. With the water only inches from the veterans, they did a right turn and marched off.

The BFBS team and Gladys were left to de-rig their operation and just as we finished, the water was lapping against the wheels of the OB vehicle. What a way to sign off from a 37 years long career.

And a final note from ten years earlier....

The transport was certainly different in 1984 and a lot more comfortable. Boarding the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Sir Bedivere and sailing across the Channel the ship went alongside at Caen as the Royal Yacht took the adjoining berth. The team led by Peter Bishop, right, then Senior Military Information Officer at HQ UKLF and now a Colonel and a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, were allocated a four man cabin and made acquaintances with Derrick Knight, a Ministry of Defence civilian information officer.



A quiet and somewhat shy man, Derrick was known to Mike Peters from his days running the Army Press Desk in Main Building. What the team did not know was that Derrick had been to Normandy before. He landed on D Day as a Captain in the Army Film and Photographic unit and had more right than anyone to take his pick of the bunks.

Derrick was a font of knowledge and we listened attentively to his invasion experiences. There is nothing like first hand knowledge. and he was a raconteur. What all learnt later that night was he was a contender for the title of world champion snorer. 'The lack of sleep in the confines of a steel box is still with me and I can still hear, and feel, the reverberations 'says Mike.

The 40th anniversary was, they thought, likely to be the last at which a sizeable crowd of veterans would turn up. The powers that be were wrong again, of course. The international scene had been set, the crowds were enormous and our job was to facilitate, the passage of stories back home in an era when electronic means were in their infancy.

It went well. Peter Bishop got a well deserved pat on the back and Mike and Colin Mason, both were later to command the TAPIOs – honed their networking skills.

Colin, now retired as a Colonel, but still in commercial radio, was a life saver to the radio broadcasters that week. Well he was ex BBC and owned and ran Chiltern Radio. Colin is pictured rig, alongside the RFA Sir Bedivere.

Mike got the task of minding the media as the Queen inspected the veterans on the main square in Arromanches.

He earned fame, if not notoriety, for his crash tackle of a rogue TV camera crew who thought hey could break ranks and get a close-up as The Queen's car came to a halt at the reviewing stand.



Mike neatly deflected the soundman around a nearby lamp post using the cable connecting the recorder to the camera and both came up short and sharp face-to-face. Later he managed the roving camera team for the BBC's world wide coverage.

The BBC producers were enthusing that they had fantastic close-ups of the Royals. But Mike cut it short when he correctly interpreted a stern look from The Queen that enough was enough and the Veterans came first.

The end of job for the PR team was classic. Relaxing at last and with half a day or more to get back aboard they stopped in a quiet Normandy village, found the only restaurant and ate throughout the afternoon while plied with the local best. Calvados has a mighty strong kick!

Since the Pen & Sword Club went purple earlier in 2011 the club has more than doubled its membership and is still growing. To keep members informed a monthly news sheet – Scratchings... of the Pen – is in the planning. So that old and, particularly new members, have visibility of its national and regional officers the NetWorker will carry a regular feature on Who is Who within the organisation. We start with one of the club's founding members and very active regional chairman – Colonel Bob Purvis.

Bob has a detailed Action Plan for... everything!

Captain Mike Buckingham turns the spotlight on Wales & The Marches (Features Editor of the South Wales Evening Argus, Mike will bring more in depth revelations of club personalities in future editions)

He drives a wonderfully battered MG sports car in British Racing Green and can frequently be seen in his local Usk hotel, which he has adopted as his informal place of business, wearing a dashing striped blazer. But it as well not to be deceived by his affable, highly traditional, very amusing and slightly eccentric exterior.

Here is a man who is very direct and does not suffer small talk. This manner often puts people on their back foot but it is an extremely useful technique in his profession as a management consultant. He is known to be quite ruthless in business and with people who fail to achieve their agreed objectives. Albeit, if they ask he will always help people to perform effectively.



Colonel Bob Purvis has a detailed Action Plan with timed objectives for everything he does. These include businesses, charities and for his studies. Indeed, he is currently reading part-time for an MA. He will graduate in six years time at the age of 83! Bob aims to be a perfectionist in all that he does.

Pictured left, Bob held a key post in the sometimes tricky task of presenting the British Army to the public and even at the age of 77 is at the top of his game in business consultancy including public relations.

'I have my own consultancy firm which is another story, it's quite a time since I was in uniform but you never really leave the Army. The bunch of men and women in my club region know that I'm very much concerned with our being on a mission.

'To the outsider the Army's traditions, ranks, protocol and seemingly incurable love of acronyms is bewildering. In fact it forms a structure tested by time and experience which allows for a great deal of flexibility. For instance, in our region of the Pen & Sword we have decided among ourselves that there are those former soldiers who have got themselves into hot water and could do with some help.

'Helping offenders is not always a popular cause but our job isn't to be popular. We are in talks with a charity whose job it is to help ex-servicemen who are homeless or in some other sort of trouble. We have developed a marketing plan to initiate and to raise awareness - and to raise much needed funds. We are shortly to meet with the CEO to get the plan approved which will be delivered pro-bono for the first year.'

'A lot of these soldiers will be young and many will have seen service in Iraq or Afghanistan with a smaller number involved in conflicts going right back to the Second World War. These men, and there also some women, are surely entitled to a share of our compassion.'

In fact Bob plans to spend Christmas befriending homeless ex-service people – he is registered with Crisis at Christmas in London. 'We have decided that ex-soldiers, who probably haven't been dealt the cards we have been, need help and so we have put ourselves at the disposal of a specific charity.

'Soldiers fight hard and play hard and often fail to adapt to civilian life which has little understanding of the Armed Forces. In purely physical terms soldiers who have learned how to bivvy-down in combat or realistic training exercises know how to survive on the streets. They have the skills and intelligence to survive almost anywhere. The job is to give them the initial boost which will set them on the road to successful civilian life.'

Bob's regular Monthly Action meetings of his Pen and Sword Team are informal and jokingly referred to as the Pie and Cider Club. He prefers the word team rather than committee! In fact he believes that no team should exceed six members! He sees the Pen & Sword Club badge as a brand – worthy of communicating to any target audience.

'We meet at my home near Abergavenny. I provide the pork pies and the others share out the duty of bringing pickled onions and that sort of stuff and, of course, the cider. it's all terribly easy-going but the meeting is carried out briskly as an Action related business meeting.

'At the end of the meeting everyone knows what they have to do and they do it. They report back at the next meeting with what they have achieved.'

Bob is a very determined man and he sets very high standards for himself and expects others to be the same! He is totally driven by the need for results and admits he can be very impatient with people who fail to perform – even if they are volunteers! His style is analytical followed by actiondecide what has to be done and find the most cost-effective way of doing it. That applies whether you are in uniform or not.

The Wales & The Marches Team have already hit upon several schemes for raising money for their chosen charity one of which is the sale of Pen and Sword Christmas cards and they have many other ideas in mind.

Bob Purvis's first uniformed service was with the RAF First as a national serviceman and later as an officer in the volunteer reserve. The transfer from blue to khaki came when he was commissioned into a new Light Infantry Company with its HQ at Ross-on-Wye. 'Then using business techniques, I was able to recruit a 120-man infantry company from scratch.'

A flair for public relations revealed itself and he was encouraged to join the Army unit pioneered in World War 2 which included future media men such as Captain Alan Whicker who was to achieve fame through the BBC. Albeit he had to transfer to 2 Mercian (V) although he remains a Rifleman at heart!

He joined the Pool of TA Public Relations Officers in 1974 and served as the TA PRO in West Midlands District where he met Alan Percival, who later worked as Press Secretary to the Prince of Wales and at No. 10 Downing Street, and club national chairman, Colonel Mike Peters, who were his civilian 'bosses.' Subsequently, he attended the TA Higher Command and Staff course at Camberley as a guest of the Commandant. The invitation followed his preparing a report on Marketing and Public Relations in the TA. He was then granted the rare accolade, of SQ (V) as a Staff Qualified (Volunteer). This is a rare qualification within the TA. Albeit he admits his current approach to administration matters is not too good!

On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel he became the first SO1 (TA) (PR) at HQ UKLF and was awarded his TD the same year. He completed his time with the Reserves as the Colonel Commandant of Herefordshire and Worcestershire ACF where he undertook three tours over a period of seven years.

Throughout his TA career he managed to get to substantive Major (thanks to Colonel Mike Peters help!) without ever attending or passing a promotion exam – surely another record! When he finally donned civvies it was with over 36 years reserve services under his belt. 'Like a lot of people I actually enjoyed my national service in the RAF and was selected to take part in the Coronation Parade. . He was one of very few national servicemen to be awarded the Coronation Medal. Mind you, I nearly got thrown off after I appeared on parade one day without the bolt in my rifle.

'After demobilisation I studied agricultural science and was fast-tracked as a management trainee into the British arm of an international chemicals and animal feed group. I was promoted to manage a marketing team within 14 months - all its members were double my age'.

Bob subsequently trained as a management consultant becoming divisional director for an international business consultancy in 1968 and in 1971 set up a consultancy business which is now known as Robert Purvis Enterprises Limited. He has a consultancy team which includes the President of the Pen & Sword Club and the National Chairman, one three star General, one two star, Major General Greg Smith, who is one of the Club's Honorary Vice Presidents, one Air-Vice Marshal, a former Chief Constable and half a dozen other retired officers from the Army and the RAF plus some former members of the TA and a few 'civvies!'

Many of his team served at high level in Defence Intelligence and in Special Forces. His firm is currently specialising in advising organisations on intelligence, security and defence and has recently been invited by a leading university to set up a new postgraduate course in the subjects.

'Soft power and non-kinetic effects...they are vital even!' **Blogging from the Battlefield by Major Paul Smyth**

Review by Major Gerry Bartlett

This book mirrors the content of the most successful new media project ever deployed on operations by the British military, says Air Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, Chief of Joint Operations, Permanent Joint Headquarters.

The horrors and heartbreaks suffered by British soldiers on 21st century battle-fields can now be relayed in seconds to family and friends at home. When Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen were writing their beautiful First World War poetry in the Trenches and Tommies wrote poignant letters to wives and sweet-hearts, it was weeks – perhaps months – before any of them reached England.



Major Paul Smyth

But now, the information highway has given British Forces' a new combat front line, as "blogging" and technology bring active service military personnel closer to their loved ones and we get an unprecedented insight into the realities of life on modern operations.

That insight, in the words of Lt. General Sir John Kiszely, National President of The Royal British Legion: "Helps us to understand the sacrifices made by the military, and the debt that we, as a grateful nation, owe to them.

I congratulate Major Paul Smyth, Media Operations Group (V,) on bringing together this insightful and unique collection of internet writing. He has rescued these accounts from the digital realm and given them a home in print where they will form a part of history for generations to come.'

Air Marshal Sir Stuart Peach, Chief of Joint Operations, Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), says in a forward to the book: "For the past few years, the team at PJHQ has been leading the way in the field of operational communications, and they have opened up our deployed forces and made them far more transparent than ever before.

Soft power and non-kinetic effects are of increasing importance - vital even –in today's conflict and we are working hard to make sure we worry more about what actions are communicated than how to communicate our actions."

Blogging from the Battlefield,' a new book by Major Paul Smyth, pictured below, a TA soldier and career public relations

professional, was born of a social media experiment he developed on operations.

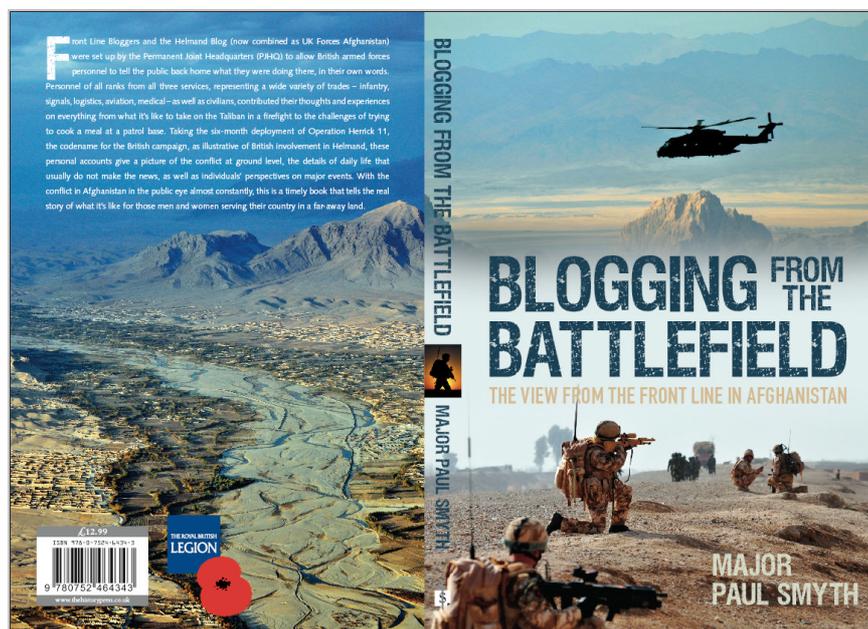
From sudden firefights, to the visits of royalty and the difficulties of cooking a frozen turkey under the murderous stare of the Taliban, Maj. Smyth and the Media Ops team do their best to illustrate every aspect of life in Helmand and explain the Afghanistan campaign to a worldwide audience.

This had never been done before by anybody – it was a most fascinating opportunity for everybody in the profession,' said Paul who lives with his wife, Becky and daughters Jessica, seven, and Annabel, 6, in Henley-on-Thames. 'Frankly, it was manna from heaven as far as I was concerned.

Using the Helmand Blog, now rebranded UK Forces Afghan, everything from breaking news, podcasts, videos and stills were transmitted using blogs, Twitter, You Tube, Facebook and Flickr as fast and as frequently as possible.

Blogging from the Battlefield is a snapshot of life during a busy six-month tour of duty for 11 Light Brigade. It is a compilation of some of the thoughts, feelings and observations from diverse contributors the length and breadth of the rank range from each military service.

This fascinating book, which I found difficult to put down, opens with the matter-of-fact news that 19 Light Brigade were returning home having lost 70 men fighting the Taliban during six months



of Operation Herrick - and that 11 Light Brigade which replaced 19 Light Brigade, were to lose two soldiers in the first week.

As the book unfolds, you read harrowing, heart-stopping tales of inconsolable Afghan parents pleading with Riflemen to help them find their six-year-old daughter blown to pieces by a Taliban pressure pad IED (improvised explosive device); of Rifleman James McKie, under fire from three



directions in Sangin when a Taliban hand grenade hit his platoon commander and landed at his feet.

He picked up the grenade and threw it back at the enemy to save his colleagues. "I don't feel particularly brave," he said. "I thought: I have to do this to survive – not just for myself but for the guys around me as well.

I am not expecting anything from them; I don't want any thanks from them. I just don't want them to get hurt."

A Royal Engineers Sergeant Major tells of his delightful night on the outskirts of Helmand's largest graveyard; Captain Anna Crossley, Queen Alexandra's Royal Army

Nursing Corps and the first female nursing officer the Grenadier Guards have ever had talks of her experiences at Camp Bastion and her hopes of acceptance by Inkerman Company.

Major Richard Streatfield , OC A Company, 4 Rifles, whose reports from the battlefield so inspired Radio 4 Today listeners ,speaks of his hopes and fears.....the stories are legion and with each one, told just as it is with no flowery words or unnecessary exaggeration, the intense pride we feel for British servicemen daily risking their lives is rekindled.

I commend this book, the proceeds of which will go to The Royal British Legion, to anybody and everybody with an interest in our Services and admiration for the valour and performance of our boys on the world's front lines.

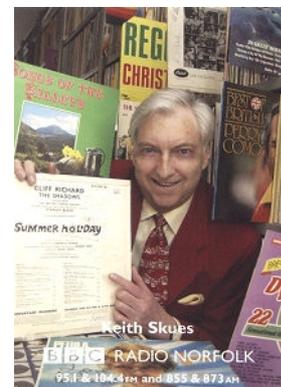
Blogging From The Battlefield, Spellmount and The History Press, ISBN 978 0 7524 6434 3. £12.99

Pop Went The Pirates II The Golden Age of offshore broadcasting

They said it's a weighty tome. Indeed it is! When this book by Squadron Leader Keith Skues dropped on the editorial desk it weighed a hefty two kilos. If you are an enthusiast of pop music, or if you can reminisce back to those days when as a teenager you waited impatiently for The Top Twenty on a Sunday night, then you will not find this heavy reading, writes Col Mike Peters.

Keith, pictured right, began his professional career as a broadcaster and author some 50 years ago. Called up for National Service he was posted to British Forces Network, Cologne and began his life long musical connections.

He claims he is the only broadcaster in the world to have worked with BFN, Radio Caroline, London and Luxembourg, independent local radio, and BBC national, regional and local radio.



Now resident on the Norfolk Broads, Keith, pictured below right, who served with 7644 Squadron RAFVR, is surrounded by a collection of 300,000 records and still presents regular shows on the BBC. He is the author of several other books on the media, Cornish ancestry and names and Freemasonry.

This second edition of his work - he first published in 1994 - on the definitive history of Offshore Pirate radio is massively detailed, comprehensive and ideal for those immersed in that golden age of free radio when the ships and ancient forts in the Channel gave us to opportunity to hear the music we wanted to hear....when we wanted to hear it.

Superbly researched, *Pop Went The Pirates II* takes readers back to days when the powers that be got very uptight about free radio. It paints a picture of the birth of Radio Caroline and Radio Atlanta – Caroline had 12 million listeners – and the days when the BBC was forced to play more music.

Life on board a pirate radio ship was obviously hilarious and one of the laughs must have been when the BBC extended *Housewives Choice* to compete. Keith recounts the tale of when Radio London broke adrift in a storm and the dramatic rescue of nine DJs. Of the times when listeners wrote to the Prime Minister, of days in goal, of debates in the House of Commons and The Lords, the birth of Radio 1 and eventually the silencing of all pirate stations.

Says Keith, in his Parthian shot....'many of us who helped pioneer the days of watery wireless only to have the Government close us down, have dreamed of a return to the golden days...It would be true to say we now believe that those halcyon days of fun and excitement are gone for good' But he happily acknowledges a new era arising: 'Ironically it's the new media of satellite and the internet which is keeping the dream alive.'

Pop Went The Pirates II

Keith Skues, Lamb's Meadow Publications. ISBN 978 0 907398 05 9 £20.00

A Thumping Great Book!

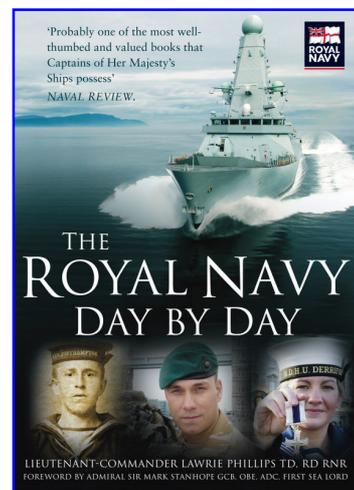
'A source of inspiration and aspiration' says Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope

The now familiar and much-loved naval history reference book *The Royal Navy Day by Day*, which is edited by long standing club member Lieutenant Colonel Lawrie Phillips, has become as much a part of the Royal Navy as *Jane's Fighting Ships* was until a generation ago.

Lawrie, who wears the Territorial Decoration as a former member of MOG (V) and the RNR Reserve Decoration from the days he served as a Lieutenant Commander in RNR media operations, has published a fully revised and updated fourth edition. It is a thumping great book of 864 pages, packed with material on what the Royal Navy and Royal Marines did for the nation down the centuries, from the Armada to Afghanistan, and what was done to them by the enemy, the sea and the Admiralty.

In these times of cuts and questioning this fine book tells a reassuring story; it reminds us that the Royal Navy has survived many greater challenges down the years but that it has always come through in fighting order. "It serves as a source of inspiration and aspiration for us all", writes Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, First Sea Lord, in the foreword.

The book illustrates how the character of the Royal Navy has been shaped by wars big and small, by countless engagements fought by generations of sailors down the centuries, in great ships and modest ones, in home waters and in distant seas. It is packed with fascinating information on how the Royal Navy was organised, trained, commanded



and deployed across the oceans, how its ships were designed and manned, how it deterred aggressors, fought dictators, supported friends, and kept – and continues to keep - the name of Britain bright.

Vice-Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham describes it as “probably one of the well-thumbed and valued books Captains of Her Majesty’s Ships possess.”



The author, pictured left, shows how the Royal Navy is a living entity with its unique traditions, peculiar mannerisms and particular ways. To capture the ‘feel’ of the Service and to leaven the mix, the author has brought out something of the funny, the quirky, the quaint, the odd, the sheer whimsy and the sometimes ridiculous that is part of the Royal Navy’s life, punctuated as it is with the odd own goal and the occasionally plain daft – in Admiral Stanhope’s words “The historic and the hilarious”.

This is a positive and encouraging book. Not least of its joys, it provides is the way the reader is taken down less familiar byways to find unexpected nuggets of naval history. It is a treasure trove of naval lore. Executive Officers, hard-pressed to find something to put in Daily Orders to jolly-up their ships’ companies, have found the book a boon, as have countless guest speakers seeking inspiration before a mess dinner.

“This celebrated reference book”, writes the First Sea Lord, “is well-recognised for both its incisive historical authority and its ability to capture the enduring character and ethos of the Royal Navy”. A wide naval readership will delight in the new *Royal Navy Day by Day*. The book is dedicated by permission to Her Majesty the Queen.

The Royal Navy Day by Day by Lt-Cdr Lawrie Phillips. Spellmount, £50.
www.thehistorypress.co.uk. or telephone 01235 465577

Go on! Why don't you (censored) mirror that one? Major Gerry Bartlett reviews a ‘much acclaimed’ networking tool

‘To be an effective networker, you do not have to be an unabashed extrovert who shines and sparkles – you need to be able to draw the other person out and get them talking.....’

A new book claims to transform all its readers into better, more effective ‘networkers’ – magical, pulsating ‘order winners’ that get the business, win the jobs, the necessary fund-raising and even promotion.

Flying Officer Tony Newton who serves with 7644 Squadron RAuxAF, pictured below, and Judith Perle, founders and directors of a management-training consultancy are the co-authors of ‘The Network Effect’ – allegedly a practical guide to making and keeping vital connections that ‘can make your world go round.’

This much-acclaimed book for anyone who has ever had the temerity to say ‘I don’t really like /feel comfortable with/know how to be a networker,’ is brim-full of tantalising ideas and highly recommended for the recent graduate just starting out, or a seasoned professional ready to up their game.

Brian Marrinan, MBA Careers Services Manager at UCD Smurfit Business School, Dublin says of the book: ‘The quintessential guide to networking for those who want to get ahead in their careers.

‘The highly readable, easy to digest format, encourages and empowers the reader to success in this essential life-long skill.’

And if that is not enough of an accolade, this is how John Stopford, Emeritus Professor of International Business at the London Business School, sees it: 'Full of encouragement, this is the book you need to make it happen for you.'

I must confess that even crusty old Luddites and avowed anti-networkers like me find it difficult to put this book down and benefit immensely from pleas to ask 'good' questions, listen actively to new people, be friendly, look for conversational hooks, start conversations in the post office or supermarket queues - in short. get some rapport with others even if you feel like strangling them.



This book must be commended too, for the enormous amount of practical advice and real-world case studies it offers budding networkers – defined by the major dictionaries as people who develop business and professional contacts through informal social meetings.

Right At the start of the book, the authors ask readers to complete a questionnaire guaranteed to indicate just how good our networking skills really are. I really thought mine were pretty reasonable after a life-time divided between Fleet Street and the British Army. But oh no!

To my horror I scored 28 miserable points out of a possible total of 50 – Tony and Judith where is the nearest emergency networking course to Canterbury?

A fascinating collection of case studies includes one on how smoothie –maker Innocent Drinks were conceived at a music festival with the help of an entrepreneurial approach, how a man's first date was almost his last because of lack of vital communication, and timely advice to think long and hard about the format, design, colour and wording of business cards.

One of many fine pieces of advice in this valuable book is that a 'thank you' – all too often forgotten about or ignored in today's competitive and somewhat brutal world – whether verbal or written, makes an enormous impression, out of all proportion to the time and effort involved.

Gratitude is one of those little things that make a big difference. Then change in mindset the book asks us all to adopt is to realise that saying 'thanks' in particular and following up in general, is not just a case of 'doing the right thing' – but everything to do with healthy self-interest. Why? Because it makes the recipient feel good about themselves while, at the same time, enhancing your own profile and reputation.

It has been said that one of the biggest compliments you can pay someone is to be able to recall their name instantly, days, weeks, months or even years after one short meeting. But, equally, forgetting a name or hailing someone by the wrong name while it may not spell disaster, invariably gets an encounter off on the wrong foot.

Such blunders are often laughed off, but the subconscious message sent out by such an error is: 'You are not important/memorable enough for it to be worth remembering who you are.'

A suitably apocryphal anecdote to end this review concerns a salesman we will call Digby who had taken his lessons in mirroring body language too much to heart. He was talking to David, his prospective buyer, and assiduously trying to mirror David's posture and gestures – but done badly it was all too transparent, irritating David so much that irritation overcame natural good manners.

Leaning back in his chair, David ostentatiously propped his feet on his desk and snapped at the luckless Digby: 'Go on, why don't you f...ing mirror that!' You will not be surprised to hear that Digby was sent packing and did not get his sale.

The Network Effect, Management Advantage, £10.99, ISBN 9780956709806

The Link With Home

Sixty years of Forces radio – memories are made of this!

Alan Grace, pictured below right, is a font of knowledge about British Forces Broadcasting. No doubt that is why he is the official historian and archivist and lives in his Hampshire home surrounded by the records and memorabilia of more than 60 years of forces radio writes Col Mike Peters

The first to acknowledge all those who worked with him in nearly 40 years behind the microphone, Alan tells how BFBS achieved its undoubted success. Of the link with the UK for millions of servicemen and women and their families, whether separated by war or conflict or the global distances of the days when we still had an empire.

For one brought up to expect at Sunday lunch time that Family Favourites would be beamed into our home I cannot fail to recall some lyrics from Jo Stafford as she sang.....*see the pyramids along the Nile, watch the sunrise on a tropic isle, just remember darling all the while you belong to me.*



And BFBS does belong. It belongs to all of us who have served: and even today to all those families with a son or daughter, a sister or brother; a father or relatives based in far away places.

BFBS did not have an easy time at the start. Ownership was a challenge. The War Office having endorsed the need for a war time radio service in 1943 as we fought across Africa, and through Europe and Asia, lacked the will to see the concept through when the conflict was over. The BBC declined to accept responsibility for the broadcasting organisation and left the War Office reluctantly in charge. The dilemma was typified by British Forces network in Germany which radiated on 247 metres - the same frequency as the Light Programme. So replacing the BFBS service tailored for British Army of the Rhine was a constant theme of discussion.

BFN had other battles to fight. Just one was the presentation of pop music which was only accomplished in the Sixties by fighting off a vociferous band of officers who felt it was not appropriate. But the services favourite radio station was to battle on and win. Today BFBS broadcasts not only radio but television wherever the armed forces are stationed or operating

Alan's fascinating accounts starts with broadcasting from a harem in Algiers in 1940 and continues through 92 locations where BFBS has operated. The travails of world war and the problems faced and solved were legion. Opening the first ever broadcast with the a signature tune of Lily Marlene acknowledged that it might have been German in origin but every soldier in the Western Desert responded to the haunting melody of a loved one waiting outside the barracks gate. Officialdom soon changed that and Rule Britannia was the order of the day from above.



Pictured left during the final broadcast of BFBS Singapore in 1976 is the delightful Sarah Kennedy who was a regular lecturer at Unit Press Officer training at the time of Ulster's trouble. Sitting at right is the late, much missed, club member Major Roger Hudson. The final farewell was also carried on BBC World Service.

Appropriately Alan takes 40 pages to cover the world war and then moves on to broadcasting in 'interesting times 'in the Fifties; of

the Sixties when' times they were A' changing; of an invasion and two farewells in the Seventies when Cyprus became a war zone and the departures from Malta and Singapore.

In the eighties BFBS faced a war in the South Atlantic, an injunction an earthquake and reported history in the making as the Berlin Wall came down. In the Nineties came more and moiré changes and then war in The Gulf and the withdrawal from Hong Kong. As the millennium got under way came the Balkans, the return to Basra and then Afghanistan.

The future is a challenging as the past, says Alan. BFBS grew out of the dying embers of the Second World War, and war and its aftermath still provides the impetus for its mission of providing Britain's forces with a link to home, a mission that is as important now; as it was in 1943 and will be in 2043.

This is a long history, full of colour and characters. It is a book for all who tuned in and thought of home.....memories are made of this!

The Link With Home: Alan Grace. Published by BFNS for Services Sound & Vision Corporation ISBN 0 9522135 1 6

Humour in Uniform

A lone laugh from Bosnia – with Lt Col Lawrie Phillips

Lawrie Phillips went on detachment to Bosnia in 1994 to join the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) as Chief P Info at the British-led HQ Sector South West based in Gornji Vakuf. At that time, he was wearing his civilian hat as Assistant Chief of Public Relations (Central) and Head of Publicity in the MOD -.

'There was little to lift the spirits in Central Bosnia in 1994 where the civil war had just ended. The shooting and burning was over but the recent horrors were still very evident and reflected in the haunted eyes of men and women and children - we could only barely imagine what they had been through.

'I have boxes of photographs of torched homes, blown up bridges, mud and misery – and other things - which I really don't want in the house and which I keep in a garden shed.

'Amid all the misery, however, the soldiers could be relied upon for their good humour in adversity; this really lifted the spirits of us all and boosted morale. There were

some very funny episodes. Our Headquarters, a former metal works outside Gornji Vakuf, was centrally located in Bosnia and was a convenient 'service station' for UNPROFOR units moving around theatre. We supported all manner of folks dropping-in for fuel, a shower, a bed or all three – but, always, always, a wanting a meal. Visitors were therefore many and frequent and from all nationalities.

'There was always hot food at Gornji but explaining what was on offer in the bubbling pots and pans posed language difficulties for foreign soldiers, often overlaid with problems of religious requirements and restrictions on what could be eaten. What was in this? What was that? The busy chefs solved the problem by displaying on the wall behind the counter pictures of cows, pigs, chickens, fish and sheep – and pointing to the relevant pots. This speeded up the feeding process – had it been left at that. It was not.

'As night follows day, of course, the pictures of the cows and chickens were augmented with an expanded range of strange, unlikely, improbable and increasingly unpalatable creatures; the



addition of dogs and cats caused much concern (particularly when the choice was one or the other) and this slowed-up the queues again. Images of monkeys, rats, hippos, crocodiles, kangaroos and other unlikely animals were added to the exotic foods.

'It was a daily delight to stand back around midday in the galley as perplexed foreign soldiers, very hungry but very apprehensive, were taken through the menu options by mischievous cooks of the British Army. What tales these men of other armies must have taken back home!

'This photograph of the Gornji Vakuf menu is the only one of my Bosnia pictures which raises a smile 17years later'

Chickens and Nazi Salutes: Down on the farm with the TAPIOs

From Major Gerry Bartlett

The TAPIO Pool's first-ever escort officer, Major Pat Morrish, vividly remembers the howls of laughter from fellow TA Public Information Officers, as he taught them how to call-down artillery fire, while surrounded by chickens, on Colonel David McDine's farm.

Pat, a Gunner with the Naval Gunfire Support Unit, with two bars to his Territorial Decoration, after 23 years service in the Territorial Army, and qualified to wear either Para or Commando beret, was teaching officers how to gauge distance by raising the their right arms out in front of their bodies and count off degrees either side of the target by using the knuckles of the right hand.

Repeatedly, Pat ordered the ranks of "flower power" combat-uniformed TAPIOs to thrust right arms 'out and slightly up' in front of their bodies - and as they did so, a Kent country local rode past on his bicycle and returned the compliment with a loud 'Sieg Heil.'

'It caused great amusement,' said Pat who had difficulty maintaining training momentum afterwards, 'but it was those bloody chickens that irritated me. 'I just wanted to kick them - but I didn't, of course.

Joint NetWorker Editor, Mike Peters, recalls: 'What the TAPIOs had not realised was the training team had already arranged for the chickens to become lunch. The task was catch them; despatch them; cook them and eat them. There were plenty who went hungry and cried 'fowl play.'

A whiter shade of pale

From Flying Officer Tony Newton



Arriving in Gioia del Colle in Italy to run the RAF Mobile News team covering Operation Ellamy, Flying Officer Tony Newton of 7644 (VR) Squadron, RAuxAF made his first impression by hitting the ground running after gleaning stories from his fellow Hercules passengers on the Brize Norton flight.

But he had to tread carefully in his first days. He was not sure of the personal chemistry between himself and the Officer Commanding 906 Expeditionary Wing. 'My other hat on the Italian air base was media training for the Boss!

'You don't get to be a Harrier pilot and a Group Captain by being a slow learner or a poor communicator. So I had to pull off the trick of offering consistency of message while building his confidence in me

'A couple of days after our first media training encounter the weather was so hot that, to the dismay of everyone in the media ops office, I ventured out in my issue shorts for the first time.

'As I stood on the office steps I heard a voice behind me remark: Tony, I don't really think those legs should be allowed out in public! I turned around to see the Group Captain grinning. Well I'd made him laugh.

'But being recognised for your professional skills is one thing: being known for the whiteness of your knees is quite another.'

Editorial: The editorial team welcomes contributions about experiences in media operations from all our readers. Please submit your ideas to either of the e-mail addresses below. Please supply copy in Word format and photographs as jpeg.

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