

The Royal Air Force Servicing Commando and Tactical Supply Wing Association

Representing a Common Heritage

Newsletter Spring 2016



Chairman's Introduction

Warmest Greetings to all Members, families and friends taking the risk of reading this edition of your Association's Newsletter. Again, we've had a successful year holding membership numbers and revenues pretty steady, while marking some special events for both the Servicing Commandos (see my piece starting on P2 & VP SC's piece on P 8) and TSW (see CO TSW's piece on P9). The usual report on the 2015 AGM & Reunion appears, as do the certified accounts; and a taster for this year's reunion, AGM (and calling note) also appear. Your Committee would appreciate early completion of the return, as would the staff at Tillington Hall and the Sgts Mess!

Inevitably, we have lost some members and friends since we last published and an "in Remembrance" page appears. Many of you will remember Andy "Bart" Lawty, who lost his fight with cancer last month and Ann Packman, wife of your Welfare Secretary Gp Capt (ret'd) David Packman. While we grieve their loss, we celebrate the memories and example they set and thank David for continuing in post – his piece on Welfare appears on P 11.

There are a couple of points I should address before letting you loose on the contents of this Newsletter:

This year, we are trialling a separation of our Reunion Weekend from the TSW Families Day weekend. There are a number of compelling reasons for this, not least of which is reducing the impact on TSW personnel over the weekend and allowing them better to enjoy their Families Day, and Hangar Party in the evening. Association Members are still most welcome to attend the day and our tent will be in operation as usual – but it is the following weekend when we will convene with our usual Meet & Greet Buffet Dinner in Tillington Hall on Friday 10 June 2016; AGM, lunch & Dinner in the Sgts Mess (who welcome the spacing of events) on Saturday 11 June and an afternoon programme provided by TSW to permit Members to see around the real estate, equipment and static displays. I realise this is not ideal and some Members have already voiced disquiet about the change, but we will assess the outcomes after the events and welcome input at the AGM.

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WANTED!

At last year's AGM, Tim Newstead and Martin Williams declared their intention to stand down from their roles as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. We therefore need some worthy successors!

If you have an interest in helping your Association and would like more information on what the roles involve, please contact David, Martin or Tim.

Secondly, we have been blessed with the efforts of Martin Williams (Membership) and Tim Newstead (almost everything else) on your Committee for many years and both intimated their intention to stand down at last years AGM. We have been seeking replacements since and as yet, no volunteers have surfaced. I ask you to consider offering your services to the Association in any capacity, but particularly, we cannot function without a Treasurer and fear not, Tim runs and leaves a tight ship. I will advise Members of progress in filling these positions prior to the AGM.

Now, as the pack ice recedes in NE Fife and the first Penguin calls of spring echo across the tundra, I hope you enjoy your Newsletter. If any of you are inspired to contribute a piece on any topic for future publication, send it in any-time!

David Orr
Chairman

Andy "Bart" Lawty

It is with profound sadness that we record the death of Andy "Bart" Lawty on 10th February 2016 after a long battle with cancer. Bart was an extremely popular member of the Wing from 1989 to '91 and again from 1994 to 2006. He bore his illness with the utmost courage and fortitude and – as readers of last winter's Newsletter will recall – after leaving the RAF, he forged a new career as a Registered Mental Health Nurse, graduating from the University of Wales in Bangor in 2013. It was great to see him at the past two Association Reunions.

Andy's life and achievements were celebrated at his funeral at Amlwch church, Anglesey, on 19th February 2016. Our thoughts and condolences go out to Jo and the children.



A Normandy Excursion

You'll remember the suggestion at the 2014 AGM that we present a Plaque to the Mayor of St Croix sur Mer, to commemorate the Servicing Commandos who came ashore there on D Day in June 1944. Your Chairman is pleased to report that this excellent idea was turned to reality in Oct 15 and this is a report on the trip.

On Monday 12 Oct 15, your Chairman heard the cock crow at 0500 and headed south in his Panzerwagon from the frozen north to collect your VP SC, Gp Capt (Retd) Duncan Grant, at a secret RV just off the M6. I said I'd be there at 1000, and was. Whence to the rural tranquillity of Bourbon with water to collect your Treasurer, Wg Cdr (Retd) Tim Newstead who had our secret weapon, Mr Alan McQuillan in residence. We said we'd be there by 1230, and were. Thence to Dover to board a P&O ferry at 1725 and again, we ran ahead of schedule but the 1st problem emerged. Duncan Grant had brought his wife Pat's passport and although they have shared many things in the course of their long marriage, Pat's good looks are not one of them.

A Normandy Excursion



Planning for this excursion had been in train for some months, with a TSW party doing the return trip from Stafford under the banner of *Staff Ride* or some such military benefit in kind. Sgt Dean Wagstaff produced a report on that element of the exercise and I'm sure HMSO will have competitively priced, additional copies remaining, for those who can't guess what happened..... CO TSW, Wg Cdr Tim Moss, assembled 15 brave and true Wing Warriors and battling administrative difficulties aside (uniform/civvies? British Embassy spy networks and French sensitivities to military invasion etc) played a key role in the success of the entire operation. Your Historian and archivist, Sqn Ldr Peter Berry (Retd) created a diversion from the main forces, ably assisted by his cousin, Monsieur Christian Thevenon, whom the more astute amongst readers may discern (by moniker) was a 5th columnist, double agent, fluent in both languages and a dashed bon oeuf. To him, special thanks for local and national liaison without which, our task would have been so much more difficult. It was these latter two, who agreed timings and form with the Mayor of St Croix sur Mer; and delivered to him for fitting, a very fine slate plaque (see photo) commemorating the Servicing Commandos

activities in the area. Tim Newstead had procured the plaque and I think it correct to say that was the only expense to fall to the Association throughout the enterprise.

To him, special thanks for local and national liaison without which, our task would have been so much more difficult.

But back to your intrepid Committee, sipping Costa Coffee in the queue to board at Dover, mulling over the options for VP SC.....PRESS ON of course, and damn the consequences. The drive from Calais to our IBIS hotel in Caen was steady and inexorably, we wheeled in the miles, arriving at 2300 with a Chairman in need more of bed than drink. 1000 miles, 18 hours and a precious cargo to safeguard, I wouldn't like to do the journey regularly.



On the ferry: Tim Newstead, David Orr and Alan McQuillin



The headlight adaptor party get to work

A Normandy Excursion



Alan briefs the Chairman



Alan receives a medal from the Museum Curator...

On Tuesday 13 Oct, we visited the D-Day Museum at Arromanche, where our passport to stardom, Alan McQuillan, was able to correct some chronological errors in a display, take the ad hoc award of a medal from the museum creator, get us money off our lunch and pose with a party of schoolchildren for photos and questions. The teacher had approached with broken English and a slightly hesitant demeanour to seek approval for the photo call and of course Alan, by now inured to fame, agreed readily, showing his medals and insignia to the excited, seething mass of youngsters. Perhaps you've already guessed – they were German schoolkids. As Alan later mused, "I've nothing against the German soldiers, they were just young lads fighting for their country too, no different from us." Certainly these children walked tall from our meeting and maybe somewhere back in Germany, an old grandfather is looking at the school trip photos, remembering and smiling.



Alan did have one complaint about D+2 in 1944. Sitting by a fence and taking his boots off for the first time in about 10 days, he hung his socks on the fence to air (...!...) and washed his aching feet as best he could, only to be interrupted by a call to arms which necessitated his leaving his socks dangling and shoving his bare feet in his boots and continuing with the war. Some of you may have noticed that to this day, Alan seldom wears socks. Hearing this tale, an old friend of mine who joined us for the day, Dr Jim Philp of the OECD in Paris, unable to find the original socks, purchased some fine new socks for Alan and presented them at dinner on the final evening (see photo).

... people waved to us and smiled, many said "merci Monsieur"



...and socks from Dr Jim Philp

Alan was further able to add context, reality and accuracy to an account he delivered to the TSW personnel at the American Gold Beach Museum at Ver sur Mer and they were the better and more memorably informed for his efforts. American & Canadian tourists in the streets asked to be photographed with our Servicing Commando, people waved to us and smiled, many said "merci Monsieur" whatever that means. We enjoyed exemplary service wherever we went.

A Normandy Excursion



The Gold Beach Museum at Ver sur Mer

It was at St Croix sur Mer that we enjoyed the most poignant moments of the trip

It was at St Croix sur Mer that we enjoyed the most poignant moments of the trip. Monsieur Garlet, the mayor and several of his local fellow mayors, veterans of the fields where the B3 Airfield operated, who, as young boys, had tended the fields amidst the chaos of war. Local villagers, schoolchildren and the smartest, happiest TSW turn out for many years and your Committee, basking in their reflected glory and dispensing shortbread, tablet and Tunnock's Caramel Wafers (specially imported) in the land of rural, rich gastronomy. The formal unveiling ceremony and speeches over, the assembled host descended on the Mayor's offices for reminiscing in pigeon franglais, local goodies to eat and wine to drink and a Pathe Newsreel of the Airfield in operation, where one present identified himself as the lad behind the horse and plough in the distant fields. Whatever they must have thought of this liberation at the time, it's clear what they think of it now. The Servicing Commandos were toasted, lauded, feted and honoured and their representative Alan McQuillin, lead the line with the quiet, unassuming honesty, humour and strength that seems never to have diminished in the intervening 71 years.



The B3 Airfield Memorial at St Croix sur Mer



Alan McQuillin unveils the RAF Servicing Commando Plaque with the Mayor of St Croix sur Mer and CO TSW

A Normandy Excursion



But back to your intrepid Committee, searching the Panzerwagon for VP SC's falsers, which have gone the way of Alan McQuillan's socks....Tim eventually recovered them from deep in the workings of the forward gunners seat, with the aid of a wire coathanger and surgical gloves. Thus rendered respectable again, a last supper was held in Caen before the long trek back to Scotland next day, via many drop-off points, none more significant than Calais Customs and Immigration.....



VP(SC) Duncan Grant, Historical Focal Point Peter Berry, Chairman David Orr, Treasurer Tim Newstead and Alan McQuillin at the B3 Airfield Memorial



A technical problem at a motorway service station prevented a refuelling stop, rendering us perilously low on fuel for such an assembly of RAF fuel experts, but a local diversion to a very surprised (and enriched) outlet in a village saved the day and we breezed into Calais, avoiding running migrants leaping on moving trucks, brazenly proffering our passports to the French Border Post. "Wheech one ees Pat?" he enquired with a nonchalance that indicated he had seen most things in his time. After some Anglo/French honesty and advice, it was decided to come clean at the UK Border Post and rather than arrest, passport confiscation and gaol, VP SC escaped with only a 2-hour interrogation and delay to our departure. So it was that at 0200 on 16 Oct 15, your Chairman reached the sanctuary of Scotland, alone save for the fog which had attended the last 50 miles of the journey. Almost 3000 miles in total and over 50 hours driving. But nobody shooting at us. Plenty to eat and drink. More humour than fear. A comfortable bed every day. A change of socks every day. Universal welcomes and kindness. It was well worth the effort and nothing really, just ask Alan.





Flt Lt Robyn Plant, SAC Morris, Alan McQ and Sqn Ldr Libby Taylor



Msr Turgis, owner of the B3 Airfield, with Alan McQ



The TSW party at the B3 Airfield memorial with Alan McQ and the Mayor of St Croix sur Mer



D-Day Veterans Awarded the Legion d'Honneur

Well, for once the French came up with goods! Out of the blue (or is it le bleu) in 2014 the Republic recognised the sacrifices made by the British (and Canadians) in helping to free France in 1944. The means of expressing appreciation was to be the award of the Legion D'Honneur.

Well, as usual the policy set by politicians was the easy bit! Slowly but surely the reality of how to apply slipped out. Fortunately, VP Duncan Grant had worked in MoD so understood how to manipulate the system (you can never win!). It even extended to "collaring" the French Air Attaché (who thought he was at a hospitable buffet lunch!) and writing to the Secretary State for Defence, one Mr Fallon. The French and our Government upped the ante by providing more resources to speed up applications. By the end of 2015 it seems that all applications had been actioned.

The accompanying letter to veterans from the French Ambassador includes the following:

I have pleasure in informing you that the President of the Republic has appointed you to the rank of *Chevalier* in the *Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur*.

I offer you my warmest congratulations on this high honour in recognition of your acknowledged military engagement and your steadfast involvement in the Liberation of France during the Second World War.

As we contemplate this Europe of peace, we must never forget the heroes like you, who came from Britain and the Commonwealth to begin the liberation of Europe by liberating France. We owe our freedom and our security to your dedication, because you were ready to risk your life.

Those Servicing Commando colleagues who decided to apply used appropriate advice and of course, given their bravery and tenacity, contributed to the cause of ensuring due recognition. It has been particularly pleasing that former Servicing Commando stalwarts, Alan Robinson, Ernie Deighton, Don Thorogood, Ronald Trigger and Mac McQuillin have all been awarded the French "gong". There may be other Servicing Commandos we have not yet learned of who have been similarly recognised; however, to all we offer our heartiest congratulations.



Mr Alan Robinson



Mr Don Thorogood

Photo by kind permission of The Essex Chronical

TSW Review 2015/2016

As many of you will know, TSW celebrated our 45th Anniversary last November. A momentous occasion and quite unique, for a unit to have remained in the same location, in fact in the very same buildings, that we were formed in all those years ago and doing essentially the same role as the Wing was initially established for: refuelling battlefield helicopters in remote and austere locations around the world. The occasion was marked by a dinner, which included a number of former and current Wing members and culminated in the traditional celebratory beers in Choppers Bar!

In terms of operations, the Wing has not been idle over the last year, since our redeployment from Afghanistan at the end of 2014. Op GRITTROCK saw TSW personnel embarked on RFA Argus in support of RN helicopters assisting in the humanitarian efforts in the wake of the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone. A/Sgt Scott Gasser led his TSW team ashore to provide a FARP to enable Merlin helicopters to gain extended range in order to get to the most isolated and remote areas of the country to provide medical assistance. The TSW detachment was one of the few RAF non-medical units to be involved in the operation and A/Sgt Gasser's efforts in leading the detachment were rightly rewarded with him gaining a Commander JHC Commendation in the New Year's honours.



In the Spring, TSW were again called into action, this time as part of Op LAYLAND, the UK military response to the tragic earthquake in Nepal. The 10-man TSW team, under Sgt Ritchie Pellew and A/Sgt Gav Sandell, deployed at very short notice, along with Chinook helicopters from RAF Odiham, to an Indian Air Force base close to the Nepalese border. Unfortunately, as you may have heard on the news, due to various diplomatic wranglings the Chinooks were not permitted to operate in Nepal. However, unperturbed, A/Sgt Sandell did manage to get into the country as part of the UK military recce team and was there when the second earthquake struck and was able to help out on the ground. It was, nevertheless, frustrating for the rest of the lads stuck in India, that they were unable to render any more assistance, but the deployment at least proved the concept that TSW were ready and able to deploy, at a moment's notice, to a part of the world that has not been visited by the Wing, or the RAF, for some considerable time.



The last year has also seen the Wing engaged in considerable exercise activity, as we return to the contingent battlespace. The 'biggy' in terms of numbers was Ex JOINT WARRIOR, which saw around 68 TSW personnel deployed across the UK. Some up at West Freugh, in Western Scotland, supporting the Commando Helicopter Force, but with the main bulk of TSW personnel at RAF St Athan, in Wales, before 'spring-boarding' into Keevil aerodrome near Salisbury Plain. TSW personnel were aboard the first C130 to land on, after the paras had 'taken' the



airfield and within a matter of minutes TSW were pumping fuel — exciting stuff! There were also opportunities to practise doing flying FARPS, from Chinook helicopters: getting back to the sort of stuff that the Wing does best.

TSW have also been engaged in a number of overseas exercises and this theme will continue throughout this year. We have recently had a detachment return from an exercise in Jordan, personnel are currently in Norway, as part of Ex CLOCKWORK and TSW personnel are about to deploy on an exercise in Oman. Later on in the year TSW will be involved in exercises in Germany and hopefully a deployment to Belize, somewhere we haven't been to for a while and an opportunity to do some Jungle Environmental Training.



In terms of our Standing Commitments the Wg will be increasing its presence down in the Falkland Islands, taking on all of the Tactical Fuels posts, in addition to the ones we currently fill at Fox Bay. We are maintaining a presence, albeit on a reduced footprint, in Kenya and I'm happy to say that from this month (March) TSW will clock up yet another 'battle honour' when we start to take on some positions on Op SHADER in Cyprus, manning a PBF1, in support of RAF fixed wing aircraft engaged in the fight against Daesh (or, as the BBC like to call it, 'so called IS') in Northern Iraq and Syria.

As it has always been, our people remain our strongest asset and the Wing goes from strength to strength



During the past year, the Wg also hosted several visits, including those from AOC 2 Gp and Comd and DComd JHC. On both occasions the visitors told me just how impressed they were with the pride and professionalism being displayed by the Wg personnel whom they met during their visits.

Of course the old adage of "all work and no play" applies, so the Wg has continued to be fully involved in a range of sporting activities, in particular football and cross-country running (at RAF and local league levels), but also swimming and water polo. The annual TSW Ski Exped, 'PEREGINES PLOUGH' was another resounding success, the party returning with amazingly few injuries, despite Sqn Ldr Jones' best efforts!

The Wg has also been active on the charities front and continues to raise significant amounts of cash for both local and national charities. Of particular note has been the involvement of TSW personnel with the Donna Louise Trust, which is a local charity (Staffordshire and Cheshire) and helps children with life threatening illnesses. TSW personnel have given up a lot of their time to assist with practical help as well as fund raising activities.

As to MOD Stafford, there have been some significant changes, with the arrival of two more Royal Signals Regts at the end of the Summer last year, with Nos 1 and 16 SR arriving from Germany. They have joined No 22 SR, who have been at Stafford for about 10 years. TSW is now outnumbered by about 10 to 1, soldiers to airmen, but you'll be pleased to know that we are still punching above our weight, being actively involved in all aspects of Station life, from participating in Stn sporting fixtures, social events (the Battle of Britain Dinner being a particular success), charity fund raising, local civic duties and of course we remain the most operationally active unit at Stafford. Whilst challenging, the changes have brought some major benefits to MOD Stafford and TSW, with new married quarters, new messes and new single service accommodation for all ranks. TSW were allocated the first of the new barrack blocks and as you will probably be aware at last year's TSW Families' Day the official naming ceremony took place, with Gp Capt (Retd) Craven-Griffiths unveiling the plaque in his name, to honour his contribution in forming the Wing. There is also a new gym in addition to the 2 older gyms and new sports pitches. The investment in MOD Stafford will see a military presence in the area for many years to come and I have confidence that TSW will also remain here for the foreseeable future.

All in all it's been another very busy year for TSW and it will continue to be so throughout 2016. As it has always been, our people remain our strongest asset and the Wing goes from strength to strength relishing every challenge thrown at it.

Tim Moss
Wg Cdr
CO TSW



Welfare

During the past year, I have not received any referrals about welfare matters. In many ways this is pleasing but in others the news might not be so good. Generally within the Royal Air Force family, both serving and ex-Service, we are quite good at caring for those who may need support. However, experience has shown that, not infrequently, individuals are reluctant to admit that all is not well and that some assistance, be it just a chat or something more substantial, would be welcome. They do not want to appear inadequate and fear that their often very personal problems might become known to the world at large.

The one great feature common to all Service welfare organizations such as RAFA and SSAFA is that all referrals are treated in a totally non-judgemental way and in complete confidence. Should further assistance from other agencies ever be needed there will be no disclosure of information without a client's prior agreement.

If any reader of this Newsletter needs a helping hand, or knows of someone else whom does, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I shall be only too pleased to see what I can do to help.

With good wishes to all Association members: David Packman – packmanpacky@aol.com.

2015 AGM and Reunion Dinner



The annual Association gathering was held on 12th and 13th June 2015 at Stafford with the usual Meet and Greet on the Friday evening followed by the AGM, TSW Families Day and the Reunion Dinner. We were particularly blessed by the attendance of past Vice President Servicing Commandos, Alan Robinson, and a very sprightly ex-3209 Servicing Commando Don Fisher, who had travelled from Sarasota, Florida, via Spain to be with us for the weekend.

In addition, Father of the Wing, Gp Capt John Craven Griffiths, was able to attend in order to participate in the ceremony to name the newly built TSW Airmen's Barrack Block – Craven-Griffiths Block.



The afternoon's activities – the TSW Families Day – followed on from the Craven-Griffiths Block naming ceremony. The format was slightly different last year in that the whole event was held within the confines of the Helicopter Landing Site (HLS) and adjacent hangar producing a 'Village Fete' atmosphere aided and abetted by the typically damp English weather! Many congratulations must go to the organisers – of whom there were many, but in particular Wg WO Mick Stokes and FS Paul Royer – who did a fantastic job in organising and running the show – Thank you all.

The main points arising from the AGM:

- Thought was given in a moment of reflection for those members of TSW on active duty and Association Members who had passed away.
- CO TSW, Wg Cdr Tim Moss, delivered an interesting and comprehensive report of TSW's typically hectic year. In particular, a Staff Ride to the Battlefields of Normandy was planned for mid-October 2015, when the trip would be combined with the presentation of the Servicing Commando Plaque to the Mayor of St Croix sur Mer.
- The Treasurer reported that finances were in good order and, in summary, after known commitments, over £5,000 was available. The Treasurer invited suggestions for worthy employment of the funds.
- Current paid-up Membership stood at 237, a decline over the previous year. However the new Wg WO, WO Mick Stokes' drive to increase membership from serving members of the Wing was bearing fruit.
- Tim Newstead and Martin Williams were re-elected as Treasurer and Membership Secretary for a further 2 years; however, both indicated that this would be their final period of office. Members were encouraged to ponder accepting the challenge of these two posts.
- The AGM expressed grateful thanks to the Stafford Branch of RAFA for the most generous donation of a cheque for £500 towards the TSW Paving Stone project. Formal presentation was made to Association President, AVM Graham Howard, by the President of the RAFA Stafford Branch and Association Member Paul Davies.
- The Treasurer gave a SITREP on the construction of Heroes' Square, a £15.7 million project being built at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. The TSW paving stone would be installed in the new Heroes' Square. In total the Association had received donations amounting to £1,894 – a magnificent achievement for which very many thanks to all the donors – boosted further by the very generous donation from the RAFA Stafford Branch. The Association had already paid a deposit of £1,000; with these donations, the full £3,000 cost of the Paving Stone will thus be covered. Completion of the project was expected by November 2016
- The Chairman outlined the plan for that afternoon's naming ceremony at Craven-Griffiths Barrack Block, in honour of TSW's founding father, Gp Capt (ret'd) John Craven-Griffiths.



2015 AGM and Reunion Dinner



- The Chairman advised that the annual TSW President's Award would be presented to the 2014 winner, SAC Peter Blakeman at the dinner that evening.
- The Treasurer outlined the service received from Dave McCandless, an ex Halton Apprentice and friend and colleague of V-P SC, Duncan Grant. Dave had provided Web hosting services to the Association free of charge, and it was with thanks that the Association granted a small gift voucher to mark Dave's increasing embrace of retirement.
- A plea was made for submissions for the Association Newsletter, topics could be professional, social, sporting or charitable - anything would be considered!
- Sgt Dean Wagstaff of TSW outlined a proposal to provide financial assistance to the local boy's football Club to help with the costs of a new strip. Given the presence in the team of several "RAF children" and desire to maintain visible links between the RAF and local community, it was agreed that up to £200 be earmarked for the new strip.
- Grateful thanks were given to all those who worked hard to make the Reunion weekend such a success. Particular thanks went to Wg WO, WO Mick Stokes, and to Mrs Gabbi Walker and the Sgts Mess staff, who again provided exceptional support for the AGM, lunch and Annual Dinner.

The annual dinner was particularly well attended last year equalling the previous record of 86 sitting down to dinner. A toast was held to absent friends. It was good too to see so many serving members attending, resplendent in mess kit. The annual TSW President's Award was presented to the 2014 winner, SAC Peter Blakeman, at the dinner; as ever, the award was clearly richly deserved and those of us 'of a certain age' can only be in awe – and very proud and pleased – that the Wing is so obviously in the hands of some very good and professional men and women. The citation for SAC Blakeman's award is reproduced below. A fine time was had – the last one in the aging Sgts' Mess before it is torn down to make way for the car park to service the magnificent new joint (but separate) Officers' and Sgts' Mess nearing completion on the hilltop site of the old Officers' Mess. Gabbi Walker, the Mess Manager and her staff did an incredible job of looking after us; the 2016 event will be even better – bring it on!



2014 President's Award Winner — SAC Peter Blakeman



Throughout the past 12 months, Senior Aircraftsman Blakeman has performed to an exemplary standard; his loyalty and professionalism have been significant in the success of Tactical Supply Wing throughout this critical period. His continual drive and determination to excel in all his undertakings has set a fine bench mark that others aspire to.

This was aptly highlighted during Exercise PEGASUS GAUL when he delivered a meticulous, highly informative brief and an extensive practical demonstration to assembled high-ranking delegates from the US and French Airborne Forces. Due to his encyclopaedic knowledge of the Joint Operational Fuel System Light Forces equipment, he was specifically selected ahead of more senior ranks to lead and deliver this capability demonstration. He delivered a faultless presentation which accurately described the equipment capability and its unique function when operating in Forward locations and Austere conditions.

Whilst deployed to support Forward Refuel Point maritime trials with a specialist user unit, Blakeman's organisational and managerial acumen were tested to their limits. Hampered with strict timescales to meet specific objectives he remained composed and able to deliver informative guidance whenever required culminating in successful serials which were subsequently used to develop operational plans. An assured, intelligent and highly effective leader, Blakeman can always be relied upon to complete complex tasks while still maintaining the morale of his team mates; moreover; he has volunteered to take the lead on numerous essential engineering inspections of fuels equipment where he ensured his team remained mission focused through extremely arduous and prolonged activity.

Senior Aircraftsman Blakeman's commitment to Tactical Supply Wing is second-to-none. As well as performing exceptionally in his primary role he dedicates his time to the wider-Service community. He volunteered to aid the RAF Cosford Air show and the laudatory letter of appreciation he received from the Chairman exemplifies the positive impression Blakeman makes in all that he does. It extolled his work ethic, initiative and exemplary performance as well as his judgement to carry out multifaceted taskings without seeking higher direction.

Blakeman's desire to continually raise the profile of the RAF was also evident during both iterations of TSW's support to the Staffordshire Air Training Core. Here he delivered professional and informative field-craft lessons to over 120 cadets during the Easter and Summer camps. His unwavering support of this great cause has a positive effect on the youngsters who attended and gave them the perfect insight to Service life. In further addition to his extra-curricular activities he was an essential member of a TSW cycling team which rode a kilometre for every Service person who made the ultimate sacrifice during operations in Iraq and Afghanistan from 2001 to the present day. He selflessly dedicated his own time to organising the event, arranging sponsorship and publicity which resulted in a considerable sum of money being raised for the Royal British Legion.

Blakeman's remarkably consistent level of achievement, output and selfless desire to promote the RAF and Tactical Supply Wing in the wider-community have all been evident throughout the year. He epitomises the ethos of the Service and is rightly recognised as the Tactical Supply Wing Airman of the Year.

Diary Dates

Don't forget to fill in the following dates in your new diaries and iPhones and Androids etc for 2016:

Friday 10th June 2016:

Meet and Greet

Saturday 11th June 2016:

Association AGM

Reunion Dinner

In Remembrance

We record with sadness the passing of the following members:

3201 SC	Mr Eric England	Died 1st April 2015
3205 SC	Mr Ron Bagley	Died 14th February 2015
3205 SC	Mr Peter Brown	Died 6th January 2016
TSW Training 1990-92	Flt Lt Steve Moull	Died March 2015
TSW 1989-91 1994-2006	Mr Andy "Bart" Lawty	Died 10th February 2016

Your Committee

Chairman:	David Orr,	Tel: 07725 311115	E-mail: guzzlembt@hotmail.com
Treasurer:	Tim Newstead,	Tel: 07849 823551	E-mail: newstd@btinternet.com
Membership Secretary	Martin Williams,	Tel: 01785 245053	E-mail: winja1@btinternet.com
Welfare & Publicity	David Packman,	Tel: 01531 248294	E-Mail: packmanpacky@aol.com

A Final Plea

If you change address—or e-mail address—please do let one of the Committee members above know.

Thank you!

**AGENDA FOR THE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD IN THE SERGEANTS' MESS
MoD STAFFORD AT 1100 ON 11th JUNE 2016**

1. Introduction and Reflections
2. Matters Arising from 2015 AGM
3. Tactical Supply Wing Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Membership Update
6. Election of Committee Members (Chairman and Welfare & Publicity Sec)
7. Arrangements for 2017
8. AOB