

The Royal Air Force Servicing Commando and Tactical Supply Wing Association

Representing a Common Heritage

Newsletter Winter 2014/15

Chairman's Introduction

I hope you enjoyed our special issue last summer, detailing our activities to mark the 70th Anniversary of the D Day Landings. A refresher is included here to reinforce our focus on this key area of our Association's Operational history. This edition is slightly later in publication than normal, but no less filled with super stuff:

I should start by advising some changes in leadership. Our President, AVM Graham Howard, has reached the end of a long and successful career which had TSW, RAF Stafford and our Association at its heart. Thankfully, he has agreed to continue to represent our Association as President but to maintain current, serving presence at an appropriate level of influence, Air Commodore Paul Higgins has agreed to bat our wicket. Air Commodore Higgins has had exposure to TSW and Stafford during his career and looks forward to embracing the Association. CO TSW, Wg Cdr Andy Males, has reached the end of his tour and leaves with the grateful appreciation of the Association for his support, empathy and hard work. Our works have been made much easier thanks to his cooperation and Wg Cdr Males has displayed great interest in all areas of Association business, adding impetus, intellect and leadership. He has been succeeded by Wg Cdr Tim Moss, whom we welcome into the fold and look forward to a fruitful relationship. Whilst on the topic of COs TSW, many of you have been enquiring about Gp Capt (Retd) John Craven-Griffiths whom we have missed of late. Vice President Servicing Commandos, Gp Capt (Retd) Duncan Grant made contact with C-G before Christmas and is pleased to report that although C-G has Parkinson's Disease, medication is effective and he retains his wit! C-G will be 84 in April and appreciated our enquiry and sends his best wishes to all. We are grateful to Duncan further, for his efforts in facilitating the award of the Legion d'Honneur to those Servicing Commandos who participated in the D-Day operations. Several ex SCs who applied have received confirmation from the MOD that the UK processing has been completed and the applications passed to the French authorities. We trust that they will receive their medal soon. It is a great tribute to these stalwart men and richly deserved.

To the Newsletter: We are grateful to Gp Capt David Packman (Retd) for his continuing service as our Welfare member and he provides a piece here. Please feel free to contact David about any issues you may have – David has great experience in this field and knowledge of our particular business; and enviable patience. Many of you will remember Andy Lawty from his time on the Wing and at subsequent reunions. Andy provides a quite remarkable tale of determination in this issue and I hope you find it as inspiring as I did. For some, the fighting starts when they least expect it, but the mark of the man is measured in how they face the fight.



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You will also find a heartwarming story from New Zealand, proving the “small world” adage and the links the Association can provide down the generations. Your Committee continues to badger the National Memorial Arboretum regarding the placement of a memorial Paving Stone for TSW. We have the money to pay for it and have confirmation that work is now scheduled, but not imminent. I sense that several hundred Service Organisations have all tried to influence proceedings and have succeeded only in delaying progress. `Twas ever thus...

I am very pleased to report our continued support of the TSW Community Outreach Programme at the Nanyuki School in Kenya and a piece is included here. Also, we have an article from the final Op Herrick TSW effort. It makes good reading and reinforces the “First in – Last out” nature of TSW deployments. It will strike a chord with many of you and the professionalism and excellence of the Wing continues to be its` calling card. Talking of professionalism and excellence, we must soon lose Wing Warrant Officer Mark Farrell, who at 107 is retiring from the Service. It has been a particular pleasure working closely with such a competent, consummate professional who finds time for humanity and humour in his conduct. It is a rare mix and Mark will be missed....unless he can be convinced to take up a roving remit on your Committee?! However, as we all know, the show goes on and Mark is to be replaced by WO Mick Stokes. Mick has already shown his enthusiasm for the Association and contributes a piece here on the Union Jack Club in London – I commend to you both the piece and the Club!

We report the AGM and associated business from last year and advertise the same events for this year – which will now take place from Friday 12 June to Sunday 14 June. Rooms reserved in Tillington Hall, quote “RAF Reunion” for special rates when booking and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible over the weekend. Finally, we end our Newsletter with the sad list of those whose deaths have been notified since our last publication. I know I should not do this, but I cannot allow the passing of Wing Warrant Officer Joe Ronan to go without comment. Joe imbued me with his love of the Wing and his mischievous love of life was a joy to behold. We remember them all.

Welfare

Last year’s newsletter contained quite a bit of information about some of the Service charities such as SSAFA, The Royal British Legion, Help for Heroes and the RAFA/RAF Benevolent Fund that are concerned with the welfare of Service and ex-Service people and their dependents. As always, they remain active and are keen to assist whenever they are needed. That said, the many ways in which they can help may not always be well known. What follows is a brief reminder of what they can do; it cannot be stressed too strongly that confidentiality is always the order of the day.

As money is so often at the heart of people’s problems, the organizations have access to funds that, once the true need has been identified, may enable bills to be paid or items such as washing machines, a full range of ‘white goods’, wheelchairs (both manual and powered) and other mobility aids to be purchased. Following close on these heels is the matter of housing. In this instance, support can be given when dealing with local authority housing departments, not only in securing a roof over one’s head in the first place but also in making sure that the necessary facilities for disabled occupants are installed. It is a sad commentary on public life that some local councils are very reluctant indeed to acknowledge their statutory responsibilities. Still on the subject of money, a lot of help and guidance is available, not only in obtaining state benefits, including war and disability pensions, and in making sure that individuals receive the full amount they are due. Another frequently-used facility is access to independent occupational therapists who may be able to make patient assessments much more quickly than their local council counterparts.

Some of the less-well-known services that are available include a completely confidential telephone help-line in support of the MOD’s equal opportunities policy and an escort service to assist Service families and dependents who are travelling to, from and within the United Kingdom. Last but certainly not least there is a scheme to ensure that those from the ex-Service community who are patients in hospital or housebound due to ill health are visited regularly.

If any member of the Association would like more information will they please get in touch with our welfare officer (Group Captain David Packman) via e-mail: packmanpacky@aol.com or by telephone: 01531 -248294. All enquiries will be treated in total confidence.

D-Day Veterans to be Awarded the Legion d'Honneur

The Government of France has told the UK Ministry of Defence that it wishes to recognise the selfless acts of heroism and determination displayed by all surviving veterans of the Normandy landings, and of the wider campaigns to liberate France in 1944, by awarding them with the Legion d'Honneur. This recognition extends beyond the troops who actually landed on and fought their way up the beaches 70 years ago, and will include Royal Navy and Royal Air Force personnel who operated in support of the landings - clearly, this includes those members of the RAF Servicing Commando units which took part in the operation.

Tim Moss — the New Boss Takes Over



Wg Cdr Andy Males handed over command of Tactical Supply Wing to Wg Cdr Tim Moss in January 2015

D-Day 70th Anniversary Commemoration at the NMA

June 2014 carried broad significance for our Association and veterans in general. Seventy years ago last June, Allied Forces regained a foothold in northern Europe through Operation Overlord and the events of D-Day in particular, leading to an inexorable advance across Europe and the defeat of Germany. The Commemoration of the actions in Normandy attracted widespread attention and the events themselves were a fitting tribute to those involved.

The RAF Servicing Commandos were involved in the success of the Normandy Campaign and your Committee had hoped to mark this achievement with a return visit to France by those Servicing Commandos able to make the journey. Unfortunately, the march of time was out of step with these aspirations; and we were represented by one of our number attending with the Normandy Veterans Association. Mr Alan McQuillin laid a wreath on our behalf at the Servicing Commando Memorial at the B3 Airfield, St Croix sur Mer.

Our annual reunion weekend (20-22 June 2014) culminated in a memorial service at the Servicing Commando Plinth at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) to mark the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. At both this and the Normandy event, photographs captured the occasions and a selection of photos accompanies this note to allow members to see what was done on their behalf. Also, a copy of our order of service at the NMA is included, which contains a description of Servicing Commando activities of 70 years ago.

Your Association continues to mark past and present deeds by members and to promote the special bond and pride we share. We hope you find this piece interesting and thought provoking and we welcome any comments you may have.



Alan McQuillin, David Orr, Duncan Grant, Tim Newstead



We Will Remember Them



Alan McQuillin laid the Wreath



The Wreath



The RAF Servicing Commando Plinth



Alan McQuillin and David Orr



Duncan Grant, Mark Farrell, Alan McQuillin, Mick Stokes, David Orr, Tim Newstead and Kit Ayers



David Orr, Duncan Grant and Tim Newstead



Tim Newstead and Gwyneth Pritchard



Ernie Deighton, Pauline Luckett and Rae Taylor laid a wreath in remembrance of 3207 SC friends

D-Day 70th Anniversary Commemoration at B3 Airfield



Alan McQuillin laid a wreath at B3 Airfield, St Croix sur Mer, Normandy, during the D-Day commemorations there



**The Royal Air Force
Servicing Commando
and
Tactical Supply Wing
Association**



**Act of Commemoration
to mark the 70th Anniversary of D-Day**

Sunday 22nd June 2014

The National Memorial Arboretum
Alrewas, Staffordshire

Order of Service



- **Introduction**

- We meet to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy and, in particular, RAF Servicing Commando Units involved in Operation OVERLORD.

- **Prayer**

- Prayer of thanks for opportunity to meet, for those who gave their lives, for comradeship.....

- **Reading**

- **Psalm 100**

A psalm. For giving thanks.

- ¹ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.
- ² Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before Him with joyful songs.
- ³ Know that the LORD is God.
It is He who made us, and we are His;
we are His people, the sheep of His pasture.
- ⁴ Enter His gates with thanksgiving
and His courts with praise;
give thanks to Him and praise His name.
- ⁵ For the LORD is good and His love endures
forever;
His faithfulness continues through all
generations.

- **Commemoration of D-Day**

- Six Servicing Commando Units (SCUs) – Nos 3205-3210 – had been formed in April 1943 to take part in Operation Overlord and all six were in Normandy within a week of D-Day. 3205, 3207, 3209 and 3210 went ashore the day after the initial landings; 3207 SCU was the first SCU to land.
- No 3205 SCU sailed from Gosport at 1100 on D-Day aboard four LCTs. It comprised 5 officers, 176 other ranks, 20 3-ton lorries, 2 x 350 gallon water tenders, 2 x 15 cwt trucks, one jeep and 4 motorcycles. In the rush to unload, the doors of one LCT were opened prematurely and two 3-tonners were driven off into deep water. The two vehicles and equipment were lost but the occupants swam ashore. The unit went ashore on Gold beach near Ver sur Mer.
- No 3207 SCU went aboard two British LCIs and an American LCT at Gosport at 1800 on D-Day. Early next morning the ships were attacked by torpedoes. One LCI was hit amidships and caught fire; one airman, Jack Croft, was killed and another badly burned. The troops aboard the damaged landing craft were eventually rescued by a US Coastguard Cutter and returned to the UK. The remainder of the unit went ashore on Gold beach at 0800 on 7 June.
- Very little information is available concerning 3209 SCU's part in Operation Overlord; however, Edward Skeggs was also killed on the LCI that was torpedoed with 3207 SCU on board. The Unit landed on 8 June near Beny sur Mer.
- No 3210 SCU embarked on 6 June 1944 and made a landing some 24 hours later at 1100 on 7 June, D-Day plus one, on Juno Beach. However, the Unit lost two trucks carrying their stores and equipment and about 10 men lost their personal equipment while trying to disembark.
- Nos 3206 SCU and 3208 SCU landed on 15th and 16th June respectively.
- Within 3 weeks from D-Day, 31 Allied Squadrons were operating from airfields in north-western France and eventually reached a total of 81. Without the SCUs, the projection of Close Air Support and tactical air power over the battlefield would have been seriously hampered, and as the troops advanced, become increasingly difficult as aircraft had further to travel to reach the battles. The SCUs gave tactical air power in Normandy a vital characteristic: Immediacy.

- **Laying of wreath**

- Laying of wreath
- Let us remember before God all those who have died in the cause of freedom, especially those members of the RAF Servicing Commando here commemorated.
 - We will remember them.
 - One minute silence

- **Closing Prayer**

- Heavenly Father, we thank you for the freedom we enjoy as a nation, freedom earned at such enormous human cost. We give thanks for the bravery and courage of those men and women of our Armed Forces, particularly the Royal Air Force, who are involved in bringing peace and justice to many areas of the world today. Amen

Lawty—from Wing to Graduation

Having left the RAF after 24 years in 2006, I was busy looking for both a house and a job to support the family and of course pay for the house. I applied for and was offered a job at Caernarfon as the operations manager of the local airfield, which included the daily fuelling of the air ambulance and the local flying club charter flights etc. Unfortunately, the mileage involved didn't support the wages being offered to pay for the car and its running, so, reluctantly, I had to refuse the offer. My first day without the ID card was a strange series of coincidences. I did the usual things like the school run and help my wife with day to day stuff, but I soon found I wasn't being challenged enough to feel comfortable.

My local council placed an ad looking for a park keeper, I thought 'why not?' and applied for it and was offered an interview.

On arrival at the town hall I was greeted in Welsh and suddenly thought, "hmm, slight oversight here", language barrier? My fears were soon allayed when the clerk switched to English and asked me to wait to be called. I sat outside while the other candidates went in and soon my turn came and I was called into the chamber. Once inside, I quickly settled down to the four people in front of me – having

being able to talk in front of complete strangers (I used to do this with every course while on TSW Training) and sat down. The Mayor of the town introduced himself and then his entourage of councillors beside him. At once he asked if I had experience of managing different groups of people and if I could make my own decisions. Of course this was fairly straightforward and once I told him about my previous career he just said, "Interview over, you've got the job." I couldn't believe it, the pay wasn't massive but the idea of 'Wombling' around the park with the wheelbarrow gardening tools and a litter pick stick appealed to me. I used to jump over the wall in front of the house and I was 'at work'; I had hours that suited me and no admin! Tending the local town gardens and planting bulbs was a cracking job in summer and I soon became known about the area. Local kids were read the riot act on drinking and smashing bottles on occasion. The job encountered some good days and bad, finding money was a rare treat for the kids' money boxes – or planting 2000 bulbs on the local by-pass in a day! I found all sorts of things, just like the Wombles! But then I don't think they picked up a roll of £600 or cocaine in bags!



The idea of 'Wombling' around the park with the wheelbarrow gardening tools and a litter pick stick appealed to me.

Later on into my time there, I was offered work with the probation service and took the Community Service workers out on a Sunday to complete their sentences handed down for unpaid work. I carried on holding both jobs for a while and soon came into contact with other local authority professions. One of the was a Community Psychiatric Nurse who gave a brief outline of her work and also described how she had come into contact with ex servicemen who had mental health experiences. This seemed to strike a chord with me, and I pursued the idea of becoming a Registered Mental Health Nurse (RMN).

I found that to be an RMN, you had to gain a degree in Mental Health nursing. Where to start? I had to attend college to gain more qualifications to try for University and eventually passed with access level credits in Maths, Physiology, Psychology, Study and essay writing – and, of course, I.T.

I then applied to the University of Wales in Bangor and was called for a further interview to gain a place on the course the following March of 2008. I was accepted onto the 3-year study and was paid for being on the course by the NHS. It involved different specialities in nursing, which I had never done, but I was able to transfer the skills learnt in the RAF to the job. I was given first-hand experience of nursing in different areas and managed to work part time for the NHS. These included caring for older adults, looking after younger adults with mental illnesses, and working with stroke injuries. One placement concluded with my presentation to expectant mothers on the benefits of breast feeding and weaning! The different placements gave me a wide range of ideas of where I wanted to work once qualified.

I passed the first two years and gained confidence with nursing until the final placement of the last year when I suffered a seizure.

The day it happened I was taken to the local A&E and given a barrage of tests culminating with a brain scan which showed I had a large tumour on the temporal lobe. This was a massive shock and within a month I was sent off to Walton Neurology Centre in Liverpool for further testing and, finally, an operation to de-bulk what was there. Further treatments at Clatterbridge Hospital on the Wirral included radiotherapy to reduce the tumour more which was then discovered to be malignant. I attended the treatment with another serviceman I'd met on ops in Bosnia and we basically carried each other through. The university considered my position within my training and arranged for me to carry on where I left off whilst in recovery a year later. Once I got the "all clear" for work, I started back slowly, as a drugs worker and then worked up to University again. It took a further two years to complete my qualification and the University of Wales supported me throughout and gave me time off to attend for check-ups at Walton. My cancer is a part of my life, but not all of it – I'm too busy to worry about the 'what ifs' – but fight the good fight every day.

I graduated in 2013 as an RMN! I now work as part of the team in a Dementia assessment unit and thoroughly enjoy my work. I have regular checks on what's happening in the brain box, and have been 'clear' for four years. Occasionally, we get older ex-serviceman into our hospital, and they seem to all get on with one of the staff and each other, often enjoying the service banter that is never far away.

So there you are, from Wing to Graduation! As an aside, I still keep in contact with many serving and ex Wing members and attend the once a year reunion. Hope to see some of you there soon.

Putting People in Touch...

We were delighted, last year to be able to put two daughters of ex RAF Servicing Commandos in contact with each other. Nothing too unusual in that, perhaps you might think; however, both live over 11,000 miles from the UK, yet less than an hour's drive from each other in New Zealand! Lisa Davies, the daughter of ex-3205 SC member Derek Meredith, and Sonya Ward, the daughter of ex-3207 SC member Ernest "Nobby" Coxshall, met last November and spent time chatting together about their links via their respective fathers and to the Association. Sonya discovered only recently that her father, Nobby, was awarded the Military Medal for his actions during operations with the Gurkhas in Burma in 1945 — she is very keen to locate her Dad's service medals which, she believes, may have been sold some years ago.



Putting People in Touch...

Percy Lackey



Association members who attended the Reunion in 2010 will remember 92 year old Percy Lackey, of 3209 Servicing Commando, who had travelled from New Zealand for the occasion. Sadly, since his visit, we had lost contact with Percy; however, both Sonya and Lisa above had kept contact with Percy and Lisa visited him late last year. Now aged 96, Percy is living in a care home in Auckland. Lisa reports that Percy seemed very well and, although now pretty much immobile (ie needing a wheelchair for getting around), he was in good spirits. It was good to see from the photographs of Lisa's visit that Percy still has a twinkle in his eye!

TSW raises funds with a fitting memorial to their forefathers...

As members will know, the Association is spearheading the raising of funds for a TSW Paving Stone in the newly formed Heroes' Square at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas. In honour of the shared heritage between the RAF Servicing Commandos and Tactical Supply Wing, several members of TSW expressed a wish to contribute towards the £3,000 cost of the stone, by taking part in a charity fund raising event. With 2014 being the 70th Anniversary of the Normandy Beach Landings and Operation OVERLORD of which the RAFSC were a part - establishing deployed servicing and refuelling areas at airfields close to the beach heads, members of TSW wanted to recognise the efforts of the RAFSC and help raise money towards the paving stone on their behalf.



It was decided therefore that members of TSW, using a mixture of exercise bikes, rowing machines and personnel running on foot would replicate the distance from their home base of MoD Stafford to Normandy. The distances involved were a 200 mile cycle from MoD Stafford to Portsmouth, an 85 mile row from Portsmouth to Caen and a 58 mile run along the length of the D-Day beaches - a total distance of 343 miles. On the morning of Saturday 25th October, in the Market Square of Stafford town centre, a team of ten personnel from TSW started the 'journey' on two spinning bikes, two rowing machines and a mile long loop of the town centre with other members collecting donations and engaging with the public. Throughout the day everyone involved took turns running multiple laps of the town centre and turns on the bike and the rower. This demanding physical challenge was completed in less than six hours and raised a magnificent sum of £1,061 which was shared 50-50 between RAFA Stafford and the TSW Paving Stone Project.

Picture and text extracted from JHC's LZDZ Magazine, Issue 4, 2014

2014 AGM and Reunion Dinner



All the usual suspects assembled for the Association's Annual General Meeting and Reunion Dinner at Stafford on 21st June, preceded by the customary 'meet and greet' at the Tillington Hall Hotel on the Friday evening. As ever, during the afternoon, members enjoyed the hospitality of the Wing at the TSW Families Day followed by a splendid dinner in the Sgts' Mess that evening, with over 60 members and guests sitting down to dine. The record of the AGM can be found [here](#).



At the dinner, SAC Luke Cooper was awarded with a framed certificate by Association President AVM Graham Howard; he also received a memento from Neill Eltringham, the Export Controls Compliance Manager at JCB Defence Products UK, the sponsors of the President's Award. Luke's citation for his award is shown below. Also at the dinner, our Vice President Servicing Commandos (and former Chairman), Duncan Grant, was presented with some rather special Scottish amber liquid in commemoration of his own D-Day on 6th June 70 years ago. Many congratulations to both!

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 Andy Males, delivered an interesting and comprehensive report of TSW's typically hectic year.
- 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 fund s.
- Current paid-up Membership stood at 261, a small increase over the previous year.
- David Orr and David Packman were re-elected as Chairman and Welfare Member for a further 2 years.
- The Committee had pursued a permanent memorial to TSW at the NMA in the form of an ornate Memorial Paving Stone. A £1000 deposit had already been committed and £2000 of further cost was required and available within Association funds. £1000 of these monies had been secured by specific donations .
- The Chairman thanked TSW for facilitating the Association activities over the weekend, commenting on the usual, faultless effort by all concerned at the Wing and Beacon Barracks Sgts' Mess. Particular thanks were recorded to TSW Wg WO Mark Farrell for his tireless assistance and unflinching good humour
- The Chairman outlined some of the achievements of the Association in the past few months; with particular mention of the Ndururi Primary School work and President's Award for this year to SAC Luke Cooper
- Thanks were recorded to Alan McQuillan for laying a wreath on behalf of the Association at the B3 Airfield SC Memorial at St Croix sur Mer. Alan suggested that the Association present a plaque to the Mayor of St Croix sur Mer in recognition of his enduring support of veterans and specifically the SC.
- Alan Robinson proposed a most gracious vote of thanks to TSW for their continuing support to the Association and particularly, to the memory of the Servicing Commandos.
- The President had written to JCB, thanking them for their continuing sponsorship of the Airman of the Year Award



Presentation of the President's Award 2013

The presentation of the President's Award for the TSW Airman of the Year was made to SAC Luke Cooper at the Association's Reunion Dinner on 21st June 2014. The ceremony, which was attended by Luke's fiancée, grandfather and uncle, included presentations by Association President, AVM Graham Howard, and Neill Eltringham, Export Controls Compliance Manager at JCB Defence Products UK.



The Citation

Senior Aircraftsman Cooper has performed superbly throughout 2013, with his dedication to duty and professionalism being key to both his personal success and that of Tactical Supply Wing as a whole. The extremely high turnover of Junior Ranks within Tactical Fuels Squadron has led Cooper to find himself at the forefront of a continuous mentoring programme. This allowed less experienced personnel to develop under his watchful eye and ensured that they were able to operate effectively when deployed. Operating as the Second-in-Command on numerous UK based exercises; he has demonstrated inspirational leadership and admirable managerial capabilities far in excess of that which is expected from an SAC. This was aptly highlighted during Exercise OPTASS when he showed great mental agility when faced with an ever changing plan and despite being under extreme pressure, was able to remain flexible and produce meticulous logistic planning. As an accomplished operator, he was specifically selected ahead of his peers to lead two capability demonstrations for the benefit of Joint Helicopter Command HQ and Joint Special Forces Aviation Wing; on each occasion he delivered a flawless presentation to the assembled delegates, accurately describing TSW's current equipment and capabilities in the contingent battle space.

His work in this vital area meant TSW was now ready to operate 'outside the wire' well within the specified readiness timelines.

When deployed on Operation HERRICK, Cooper operated as part of the Joint Aviation Group (JAG) and provided a 24/7 rotary refuel capability. In particular he facilitated an extensive training package for the newly re-instigated Forward Refuelling Point capability in support of a discrete 'customer' set. His work in this vital area meant TSW was now ready to operate 'outside the wire' well within the specified readiness timelines. He always remained composed and able to deliver highly informative tuition to his fellow team members culminating in a successful deployment to test the concept. His ability to think on his feet was further endorsed when refuelling a Lynx aircraft at Camp Bastion, identifying a significant problem with the aircraft, Cooper swiftly alerted the aircrew and prevented what potentially could have been a catastrophic incident. His foresight and eye for detail was rewarded with the presentation of a Flight Safety Award from Commander JAG(COMJAG); a laudable recognition for his action that day. Cooper's expertise and bearing also made him the obvious choice to deliver operational briefs and demonstrations to the plethora of ISAF visitors to the TSW detachment; each group commenting on his professionalism, subject knowledge and dedication to duty. In short, Cooper was instrumental in the detachment being awarded the COMJAG Team Commendation 'in recognition of exceptional service to the Joint Aviation Group'.

Senior Aircraftsman Cooper personifies the modern airman, both loyal and committed to the Service, he maintains a high profile in his primary role and also within the wider civilian community. Cooper's desire to continually raise the RAF's profile within the local area has been exceptional and as a 'Project Officer' for the TSW 'Stafford to Normandy' charity bike ride, he was integral to the overall success of an event which raised a considerable sum of money for the Royal British Legion. He was also pivotal in the formation of a 3 man team who selflessly gave up their free time to support a local school in order to develop life skills, communication and teamwork. The resulting letter of appreciation received from the Headmaster, extolled his professionalism and thanked the team profusely for the effect they had on all the children present.

His achievements have been an inspiration to all. He has shown excellent leadership through his integrity, morale courage and unwavering dedication to duty, particularly when deployed on operations. He is without doubt an exceptional airman and an outstanding ambassador for TSW. Senior Aircraftsman Cooper is fully deserving of the RAF Servicing Commando and TSW Association President's Award for 2013.



The Union Jack Club

Association member — and soon to be Wg WO — WO Mick Stokes is one of the 5 RAF WOs that sit on the Union Jack Club's General Committee.

The Union Jack Club has been standing at Waterloo for over 100 years and has received over 20 million guests through its doors since its formation. Its founder was Ethel McCaul, a Royal Red Cross nurse, who was adamant that servicemen and women from the ranks should have a haven for themselves in the Capital. Ethel McCaul's vision remains the Club's primary purpose today: to provide non-commissioned serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families a comfortable, hospitable and friendly location for their visits to London.

Serving and Ex-Serving non-commissioned members of the Armed Forces are why the club exists. It provides accommodation, a relaxed atmosphere and the camaraderie unique to the Military community. In recent years, through charitable donations, it has created an additional 8 disabled access suites to cater for the ever-growing population of wounded sailors, soldiers, airmen and elderly population.

Service leavers within 2 years of leaving the RAF can currently join for free; retired non-Commissioned ranks can join at the usually annual rate of £20. Retired Officers of HM Forces are entitled to stay at the Club but only as Temporary Honorary Members and cannot become full members.

As a UJ Club committee member, Mick Stokes is privy to all the latest offers — and there are many! If you want to find out more, please contact Mick on 01785 787250 or michael.stokes937@mod.uk or visit the UJ Club website www.ujclub.co.uk — or follow the link from the Association's website Links page at www.tswscdoassn.co.uk/links.html.

2015 AGM and Reunion 12th — 13th June

Once again the Wing has kindly offered support to our annual get together during their busy Families Day. The weekend will follow the now customary format with Meet 'n Greet on the Friday evening, followed by the AGM, Families Day and Reunion Dinner (and Hangar Bash) on the Saturday. Sign-up details to follow.

The Tillington Hall Hotel has 'reserved' 7 Twin rooms and 15 Doubles at £65.50 B&B per double room and £55.50 per single. A hot, self-serve buffet will be available on the Friday evening. Please quote 'RAF Reunion Weekend' when booking with the Tillington to get the special price.

Supporting the Local Community—TSW Detachment to Kenya



Nanyuki in the province of Laikipia is currently home to the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) HQ.

Located at BATUK is 25 Flt AAC and within 25 Flt is the RAF Tactical Supply Wing (TSW) Detachment who is established to provide support to the training of UK personnel in Kenya by manning a 24 hour refuelling capability in support of CASEVAC helo ops. The TSW detachment consists of nine personnel on a three monthly rotating commitment.

In addition to its primary role, the TSW detachment are involved with supporting the Community Outreach Project set up by TSW Sgt, Jimmy Ramage in June 2013. This charitable project, championed by the local MP Mr Anthony Muthai aims to help improve the development of the local community of Nanyuki. During the past months TSW detachment personnel have worked tirelessly often during their stand down periods, to assist with a number of infrastructure projects. In particular the charity's current focus is on the development of Ndururi Primary School; replacing an old, outdated and dilapidated classroom and kitchen with a newly built facility to teach and feed 600 school children.

As with any charity project, funding has been one of the biggest challenges. However, with the generous support of a number of external agencies such as 25 Flt AAC personnel, Lily Pond Arts and Crafts Centre in Nanyuki and the Servicing Commando & TSW Association, it has been possible to successfully complete such a worthwhile and much needed project. Indeed specific praise should go to The Lily Pond Centre who graciously allowed TSW to host a multitude of events ranging from Cpl Dan Davidson's very popular quiz nights to charity theme night functions. Praise should also go to the Servicing Commando & TSW Association and Wing Commander David Orr (Rtd) whose very generous donations enabled the TSW personnel to procure a new wood burning oven (jiko) for the school, as well providing vital funds to support the refurbishment of the school last year. Forging strong links with the local Nanyuki community and in particular local businesses and tradesmen, such as David Karuku and John Wamau, TSW detachment personnel and their supporters have been able to make the project a success.

Aside from the school development project TSW detachment personnel have also been involved with distributing donations of school uniforms, clothes and toys to where it's most needed, such as poverty area schools, orphanages and disaster areas.

As the project is coming to a close it is with a sense of pride that the departing TSW personnel can look back on the rewarding work it has been involved in and the legacy it is leaving behind. "Providing the community with a much improved school kitchen facility for the future generations of Nanyuki has been a wonderfully gratifying experience for all of those TSW personnel involved." SAC Kyle Green, TSW Detachment, BATUK.

Article first published in JHC's LZDZ Magazine, Issue 3, 2014

Operation HERRICK Pumping till the End

On 7 July 14, Team 3, including Sgt Richie Pellew, 2 Cpls and 12 SACs led by WO Paul Royer departed RAF Brize Norton for the last roulement of Tactical Supply Wing personnel on Operation HERRICK. JHC had been operating in Helmand and Kandahar province for nearly nine years, having first deployed as JHF (A) in February 2006. In that time the aircraft have flown a total of 138,452 hours across five different platforms, this is equivalent to nearly 16 years of continuous flying. TSW have been there throughout, not only for the delivery of aviation fuel to the UK assets but to many other coalition forces including US Marines, UAE and Afghan Forces helicopters. In the first year alone, TSW provided 5,983,057 litres of fuel to achieve the flying hours required, more than the volume of 2 Olympic sized swimming pools.



Following a 2 day ROSI (Reception, Onward-movement, Staging and Integration) package which included a forced march over 5 km in the morning heat of 30 degrees and turned upside down in a vehicle rollover simulator, the handover began in earnest discussing the plans drawn up by WO Hausermann and Sgt Watson discussing how the 2 remaining fuel sites would be retrograded, packed up and, in the case of the Arion fuel site, transferred to the Afghan authorities. It was imperative that TSW were able to issue fuel while continuing to support combat missions supporting the Afghan Forces, government and its people.

On 14 July 14, Team 3 took full command of all refuelling operations at Camp Bastion, split into 2 shifts led by Cpls Pete Glanville and Tristan Caplin with 3 SACs per shift; two engineers led by Cpl Church remained on days for maintenance of both the sites and the Oshkosh fleet. The first 2 months were steady - predominantly refuelling while continuing the drawdown of the site. The photos below show how TSW facility was retrograded at different stages of deployment.



Tanks cut into strips for disposal



TSW HQ

On 1 Oct 14 Pegasus site pumped its last fuel to a Blackhawk Pedro helicopter and 516 STRE were called to "pig" the lines and the team decommission the site. The tanks were cut into strips for disposal.



Last Bundliner Removed



Retrograde Complete

In the last month the team's expeditionary training came to the fore. Living on ration packs, many TSW personnel lost over 14 lbs in weight; with kind donations from the US Marines the packs were occasionally supplemented with fried chicken and chocolate torte, welcomed after "minced food"! Showers became "ship showers", water on, water off and clothes-washing a communal event. All the team remained at Camp Bastion until the last 36 hours, leaving only 6 to man the Arion Site and refuel the last Huey which lifted General Yoo, the last coalition commander in south western Afghanistan, to Kandahar. TSW can boast that they were one of the last British formed units to leave Camp Bastion on the last C-130. I was honoured and privileged to lead the last team to Afghanistan and hugely proud to be part of all TSW personnel who have worked tirelessly to support — not only in terms of aviation fuel, but also support to the Joint Aviation Group as a whole. Truly **PUMPING TILL THE END!**

Paul Royer



TEAM 3: WO Royer Sgts Pellew Cpls Caplin, Church, Coyne, Glanville, SAC(T) James, SACs Gaskin, Luke, Boyle, Major, Cozendo, Rees, Norris, Sanderson, Haggerty

Subject: FW: UNJUST GOVERNMENT TAX GRAB

Hi Folks,
You may not be aware of this.

The Government has produced a Consultation Document relating to Income Tax Allowances for non UK residents which may become law in the Budget of 2015.

This consultation is about the Government potentially removing the personal tax allowance from those non UK residents, who are in receipt of Government service pensions, including those retired from the Health Service, Fire Service, Police Service, Education, Central and Local Government, Prison Service and the Military. This will be detrimental to overseas members and all those non-resident people in receipt of a UK Government pension.

The consultation is designed in such a way that if there are insufficient responses received it is likely that this measure will the law come into operation at next year's Budget.

Even if it does not affect you directly, I would ask that you use the link below and sign the e-petition to show your solidarity for our overseas colleagues, so that the Government receive as large a number of replies as possible.

Please forward this message on to your own contacts and sign the petition using the link below:

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/68507>

Subject: FW: Save RAF Chapel St George,s Biggin Hill

Saw the above on Television and in The mail on Sunday, was sad and angry that this wonderful piece of history which has lists of those who fought and died in The Battle of Britain is no longer going to be funded by the MOD/ this government, which they say is costing GBP 50,000 per annum to maintain and no longer viable!!! There are already 20000 signatures since 04/01/15 and we need to get 100000 in order to get this turned round.

<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/73191>

Diary Dates

Don't forget to fill in the following dates in your new diaries and iPhones and Androids etc for 2015:

Friday 12th June 2015:

Meet and Greet

Saturday 13th June 2015:

Association AGM

TSW Families Day

Reunion Dinner

Hangar Bash

Further details will follow in the Spring; meanwhile, please note the dates.

In Remembrance

We record with sadness the passing of the following members:

3201 SC	Mr Ian Adam	Died July 2014
3202 SC	Mr Eric Marsh	Died 16th January 2014
3205 SC	Mr Douglas Grewcock	Died 17th February 2014
3205 SC	Mr Derek Meredith	Died 3rd March 2014 in New Zealand
3207 SC	Ernest 'Nobby' Coxshall	Died 31st December 2004 in New Zealand
3207 SC	Mr S J 'George' Revell	Died 2nd April 2014
3210 SC	Mr Bill Bridge	Died 26th December 2013 in Canada
3226 SC	Sqn Ldr Ken Tweedie	Died 20th February 2014
TSW Wg WO 1981-85	Mr Joe Ronan	Died 14th June 2014
TSW	Mr Bill McHardy	Died December 2014

Your Committee

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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!