



The Royal Air Force
Servicing Commando
and
Tactical Supply Wing Association

Representing a Common Heritage



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NEWSLETTER - AUTUMN 2009

INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIRMAN

This newsletter is a little later than usual for a number of reasons, some being pure procrastination on the part of the Chairman! Yes you can look up the meaning of the word procrastination!

In the last newsletter we entered a plea regarding subscriptions by Standing Order and the cost effectiveness of using e-mails. The recent Postal dispute reinforces the case for e-mails. Indeed for those of you who prefer hard copy this Newsletter may arrive late due to the dispute.

Regrettably, Tim Newstead our Treasurer still chases up a number of you whose subscriptions are outstanding. Please help Tim - remember he is a volunteer!

Turning now to future events, **please put Saturday 5th June 2010 in your diaries.** This is the date for next year's get together. Further details will be released early next year, but given the economic climate you will be pleased to know we are confident of keeping prices down without degrading the value of activities!

This Newsletter covers the President's Award, as well as the AGM and Dinner and TSW News. Some initiatives are also reported upon.

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The award was presented to SAC Carl "Taff" Woolway, an MTD at TSW, MOD Stafford, on 12th March 2009 jointly by the Association's President, ACM Sir Joe French, and JCB's Director & General Manager of Defence Products, Mr Michael Leeming. Prior to the award ceremony, the presentation party were given a guided tour of TSW equipment and vehicles where the visitors were briefed on the various tasks and modus operandi of the Wing. The Wing put on a magnificent display and the professionalism and enthusiasm of all involved really shone through.



SAC Taff Woolway receives The President's Award for 2008 from our President ACM Sir Joe French

Extracts from his citation are given below; the full version can be read on the Web Site.

“Following completion of initial TSW training, he deployed to a number of locations including an operational deployment to Iraq. During this time he amassed an impressive total of over 200 days deployed in a single year, most of which has been voluntarily. SAC Woolway is without doubt a professional and competent tradesman whose abilities are trusted by all. Consequently, this has seen him adopt the position of acting Corporal on many occasions; a position he has taken seriously and carried out with meticulous professionalism. In Iraq he took control of the detachment’s specialist equipment; historically known for requiring a high level of knowledge to use, and which was vital to vehicles completing convoy moves outside the ‘wire’. SAC Woolway, in true manner, quickly became fully conversant with all aspects of the equipment fitment and its use. He then took it upon himself to pass on the knowledge that he had gained to other members of the detachment who were required to operate the equipment.

When the JNCO MT CES was detached for a 3-month Out-of-Area commitment, SAC Woolway was the natural choice for his superiors to fulfil the shortfall. Once

again as acting Corporal, he completed his duties to an extremely high standard. In late 2008, TSW were asked by the MT Trade Sponsor to accommodate six airmen holding between recruit and trade training. SAC Woolway volunteered in his capacity as an acting Corporal living-in to act as mentor to the newly arrived personnel. His action proved pivotal in ensuring that their secondment with TSW was both memorable and enjoyable whilst ensuring Service discipline and ethos were upheld. SAC Woolway excelled in this task. He demonstrated that his leadership, development and trade experience qualities are well above that expected of his current rank. His dedication to the Service extends beyond his primary duties. He is a valued member of the TSW Social and Welfare Committee and also acts as the Deputy Bar Manager for the TSW bar; all of which is carried out in his own time. He has also recently volunteered to be a member of the Station Amenities Centre Committee.

Whether on operations, exercises or based at MOD Stafford, SAC Woolway has consistently displayed an exemplary, proactive, and wholly professional performance in all the duties he has undertaken. As a result he has gained an enormous amount of respect on TSW and within the Tri-Service environment in which he has been employed. He has positively met the Royal Air Force’s challenge and has, without doubt, ‘Risen above the Rest’. In recognition of his efforts, SAC Woolway is the worthy winner of the RAF Servicing Commando and Tactical Supply Wing Association’s President’s Award for 2008.

THE AGM AND DINNER – 30th MAY 2009

The Association's 2009 AGM and Reunion Dinner was held at Stafford during the weekend of 29th / 30th May 2009. The event was attended by over

60 members. As usual, the weekend started with a 'meet and greet' at the Tillington Hall Hotel on the Friday evening. The AGM was held on the Saturday morning, which preceded the TSW Families Day at Beacon Barracks, while some 20 members visited the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA) at Alrewas for the dedication of the plaque to the Fallen Servicing Commandos of WWII.



The plaque in position on the Servicing Commando plinth at the NMA

On Saturday evening, the Association Annual Dinner was held, this year, in the Sergeants' Mess. Many of the younger (and not so young!) stalwarts then continued their celebrations at the Wing's Hangar Bash until the early hours. The weekend was a huge success and a great time was had by all! The new Wing Warrant Officer, Mark Farrell, provided outstanding help and guidance – many thanks Mark. The outcome of the AGM is summarised on both the website and as an attachment to this Newsletter. Should

members require a full copy of the record and associated financial statement please send an A5 SAE to the Chairman.



Members gather in the Sgts' Mess for the AGM

The Wing has obtained a limited-edition print of the painting "St Croix Sur Mer" by Robert Taylor. The print had been signed by the artist and 3 aircrew members – AVM Johnnie Johnson, Sqn Ldr Danny Browne and Flt Lt Larry Robillard. Prior to the dinner, all the Servicing Commando members present also added their signatures to the painting. The print will go on display in the Mountbatten Room of the Officers' Mess, along with other Servicing Commando memorabilia.



Servicing Commandos sign the picture - Alan "Mac" McQuillin with pen, watched by Ernie Deighton and Alec Sharp

TSW NEWS

Iraq

Perhaps the most significant Wing activity since the last Newsletter has been the draw down of personnel and equipment from Iraq - Operation TELIC. A summary, based on an RAF News article, of what the Wing faced during its 6 years in theatre is shown below:

Initially deploying as a formed unit with 87 personnel supporting the Joint Helicopter Force in February of 2003, the Wing was at the forefront from the start of operations. Personnel followed US combat forces into Safwan, provided a 14-man team to assist 3 Commando Brigade during their preparation and deployment to the Al Faw peninsular, and were the only RAF unit to deploy to and operate from, the operationally challenging area of Al Amarah.

Their fuel storage areas were a high profile target. In 2006 a major offensive by local insurgents against the Forward Operating Base at Al Amarah saw a direct mortar strike on a pillow tank tank, resulting in the loss of 94,000 litres of aviation fuel, but fortunately with no casualties. Two days later, during a further bombardment, refuelling hoses were set on fire, but the swift action of the TSW detachment prevented a further loss of fuel and allowed helicopter operations to continue. Moreover, fuel and replacement equipment was rapidly redeployed from the main operating base in order to swiftly re-establish TSW's full operational capability. In another incident a General Service Tanker containing 28,000 litres of fuel suffered a direct hit, resulting in the total loss of the vehicle. During the same period, TSW personnel continued to refuel aircraft while coming under fire to ensure that the aircraft were able to take off and counter the threat. In recognition of the dedication and bravery of the TSW personnel, two members were awarded the General Officer

Commanding Joint Helicopter Command Commendation for their actions.



Protecting a Forward Refuelling Point- Iraq

Flight Sergeant Jan Lindsay, Commander of the last TSW detachment in Iraq, said:

"It's been a massive challenge because we have had the transition from British to US forces. We have had to provide 'rotors turning refuel' and remove our own equipment at the same time. And in between all that, there has also been US Forces' training to operate correctly on our aircraft."

Not all members of the Op TELIC detachment returned to the UK and several were re-deployed to Afghanistan in support of ongoing operations.



Last Out!

Personnel on the Move

Yes, there is a new Wing Warrant Officer. Bob McBey has retired. He keeps in touch with and supports the Association to keep him out of mischief. Warrant Officer Mark Farrell returns to the Wing after a spell refuelling a desk at MoD Innsworth. We are pleased to welcome him to the Association and as those of you who were at this year's Dinner will know, he is providing superb support and advice on our behalf. Welcome aboard Mark.

Of course all good things come to an end for those of us who have been privileged to serve as OC TSW. This spring Nick Atkinson moved on and handed over to Tim Etches. Nick has taken up an appointment associated with Supply Support of helicopters while Tim arrives from the bowels of Whitehall. We wish them both well.



Out with Old!



In with the New!

Nick flies off (can you see him?) with Wg Cdr Etches already leading from the front!

MEMBERSHIP INITIATIVES

Your committee has taken forward the actions arising from the AGM and come up with a few of its own since the last communication. These are described below.

❖ New Membership Entitlement

Following extensive debate at the AGM, it was agreed that membership of the Association would be extended to the RAF Wildenrath and RAF Gutersloh personnel who had served on the RAF Germany equivalent of TSW. Many had, of course, been trained at TSW. Accordingly, membership will be offered from the end of this year. Advertising of the new arrangements will be made through the RAF News and RAFA "Air Mail" but word of mouth is of course always welcome.

❖ Membership Cards

We are exploring the cost effectiveness of membership cards. Why, might you ask, is this necessary? Your committee believes that it will encourage a feeling of membership and identity and that we might explore discount arrangements.

Indeed, we hope to offer special hospitality for Association members at the 2010 get together, so a membership card will be essential to gain the benefits. Watch this space!

❖ DVD

Bob McBey and Martin Williams continue to work on the production of a DVD comprising photos and films of 40 years of Wing activities. Our aim is to have it available for members in time for the 40th Anniversary of the Wing's formation. It will not be expensive!

❖ Support for Serving Personnel

You will all have read in the press about the difficulties faced in providing support for serving personnel. The Articles of Association recognise the importance of your Association supporting serving members on Tactical Supply Wing where public funding is not available or is inappropriate. For the last two years, we have made donations to the TSW detachments in operational areas. This year, we are focussing on the home front. By the time this letter reaches you we will have provided a range of "white goods" to the value of £1200 in the three accommodation blocks for single TSW personnel at Stafford. So your subscriptions are being put to good use. However, donations are always welcome!



Duncan Grant with Jim Davies, Chairman RAF Stone Branch, present Wiis to Nick Atkinson.

In the last 30 months we have donated over £2500 to the Wing and dedicated a special memorial plaque for the Servicing Commandos at the National Memorial Arboretum. Overall, this amounts to just over £3000. The range of initiatives has included:

- Coffee machines for Iraq and Afghanistan Detachments.
- Photographs from the Imperial War Museum for the Mountbatten Room display in the Officers' Mess at Stafford.
- Engraving for the President's Award Trophy (Trophy sponsored and paid for by JCB).
- Book Tokens and certificate frames for the President's Award winners.
- Wii consoles for Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Refreshments at the RAF Museum for Wing and Association attendees at the inauguration of the RAFSCdo and TSW display.
- In memoriam plaque for Servicing Commandos at National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas.
- Subsidies for Wing attendees at President's Award Presentation lunch.
- White Goods for TSW Barrack Blocks at Stafford.

❖ TSW Bergathon

This year your Association was represented at the annual TSW Charity "Bergathon". It could be said that Bob McBey had withdrawal symptoms but, for whatever reason, it was great to have him lead the first "Veterans" team round the course. Furthermore, the even bettered some younger competitors and set a record with the oldest ever competitor competing – very well done Jim Coleman! Of course Bob is looking for more entrants next year. Beware!



The Veterans Team: Graham Nokes, Bob McBey, Jim Coleman, Norrie Murray, Neil Buckingham and Cliff Whitley



Neil Buckingham and Jim Coleman slog it out!

❖ **The Association Website**

The Association website at www.tswscdoassn.co.uk is kept up to date with all the latest news. If you do not have internet access at home, public libraries (around the world!) have computer terminals from where you can access the web. The Guest Book has proven to be very popular and several family members of ex-serving personnel have used the Guest Book as a means of getting in touch to find out more about their loved-ones experiences and the

units in which they served. We have been able to assist some family members in their research and have also put them in touch with other members of Servicing Commando units. Why not visit the site and post a message on the Guest Book?

POST SCRIPT

Don't forget;

- ❖ Price increases minimised,
- ❖ Hospitality benefits,
- ❖ Subsidised entrance to TSW "Hangar Bash",
- ❖ Your Association tie – see order form below.

Come along to the AGM and Dinner on 5th June 2010

In Remembrance

We record with sadness the passing of the following members:

3201 SC	Mr Bill Stell	Died 21 st September 2008 aged 101 years
3202 SC	Mr C F Dunkason	Died 29 th December 2008
	Mr Ted Dale	Died February 2009
3206 SC	Mr Geoff Pegg	Died 31 st May 2009
3207 SC	Mr George Howe	Died 28 th October 2008
	Mr George Angus	Died April 2008
	Mr Dennis Munns	Died 13 th February 2009
	Mr Ben Taylor	Died 4 th May 2009
	Mrs Sheila Russell	
3208 SC	Mr Colin Newell	Died 23 rd December 2007
3209 SC	Mr Pat Porter	Died 19 th August 2003
3210 SC	Mr Bob Benson	
	Mr Joe Shepherd	Died 7 th October 2009
3226 SC	Mrs Jean Peate	Died 2008
	Mr Len Bryson	Died 10 March 2009
2SP	Mr Trevor Stocks	Died March 2009

Main Points arising from RAFSC&TSW Association AGM held at the Sergeants Mess Stafford on 30TH May 2009

The main points arising from the AGM were as follows:

- The meeting paused for a moment of quiet reflection for those members who had passed away and for the Wing personnel who were on active duty, particularly in Afghanistan.
- In accordance with the Articles of Association, Committee members need to be reconsidered for election after two years in office; there being no alternative volunteers, the Committee was re-elected unanimously.
- There were no matters arising from the 2008 AGM. The two key actions regarding a public display at the RAF Museum and the addition of a Roll of Honour at the National Memorial Arboretum had been completed. Members were encouraged to purchase the new ties through Des Peters.
- SAC Carl "Taff" Woolway, an MT Driver, was the winner of the 2008 President's Award. He was introduced to members and his citation read out.
- The Chairman introduced the new OC TSW, Wing Commander Tim Etches, our Liaison Officer Squadron Leader John Andrews and the new Wing Warrant Officer, Warrant Officer Mark Farrell. The support given to the Association by the Wing and their predecessors had been outstanding and was given due recognition. Wing Commander Etches highlighted the activities and achievements of the Wing during the preceding year.
- The Treasurer introduced the Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2008, which had been duly validated, and his report for the year was accepted. Apart from subscriptions, a number of donations had been received, including those from JCB, RAFA Stone and from individual members. Funds were in a healthy state; however, income from interest had reduced due to the current financial climate. Such was the state of finances, it was agreed appropriate to offer the sum of £1500-£2000 to the Wing for a major investment for the benefit of Wing personnel. Note: Subsequently, it was agreed that the Association would fund the purchase of white goods (fridge/freezers, microwave ovens and table-top hobs) for the snack preparation area in each of the TSW barrack blocks at Beacon Barracks.
- Current paid up membership stood at 216 members. A steady trickle of new ex TSW members was being received. In addition, two former Servicing Commandos had joined or rejoined in the last year. There was still a need to encourage serving TSW members to join. The question of extending membership to personnel who had served at RAF Gutersloh, or indeed RAF Wildenrath, who had a common

heritage with TSW through the Tactical Fuels Squadron, many being FSD qualified, was debated. It was also suggested extending membership to non TSW personnel, or indeed non RAF personnel who had an affinity with the Association or a particular relationship. Finally, "Mac" McQuillin proposed that Mrs. Renee Atkinson, widow of Tom Atkinson, should be invited to join as an Associate member in view of her late husband's commitment to the Association and his historical publication.

- The extension of membership to former Gutersloh and Wildenrath personnel was agreed in principle
- The Committee was authorised to introduce appropriate membership criteria and promulgate the criteria by the end of 2009.
- Non TSW (or indeed non Gutersloh or Wildenrath) personnel could be sponsored for consideration on an individual basis as Associate Members in accordance with the Articles of Association.
- Associate Membership for Renee Atkinson was agreed unanimously
- The chairman briefed the meeting on the project to develop a DVD photo and film archive. This was being handled by Martin Williams in partnership with Bob McBey.
- Peter Berry was continuing to archive Servicing Commando material ready for handing to the Wing / RAF Museum for safe custody. Thanks were due to Peter for all the hard work he had put in to ensure the public display at the RAF Museum was such a success.
- Jim Coleman's draft history of the Wing was being circulated to "volunteer" sub editors for review and editing.
- The meeting considered that the arrangements for 2009 should, in the main, be replicated for 2010. A date would be agreed with the Wing and promulgated in due course.

Association Tie Order Form

From:

Name

Address

Tel No:

To:

Des Peters
57 Douglas Road West
Coton Fields
STAFFORD
ST16 3NX

Please Supply Qty (1) tie to value £ 9.45 (including VAT and postage).
Cheque enclosed and made payable to "*RAFSC&TSW Association*"

Signature:

Date: