



The Royal Air Force Servicing Commando and Tactical Supply Wing Association



Representing a Common Heritage

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NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2011/2012

INTRODUCTION BY THE CHAIRMAN

Your Chairman is now back in harness. Many thanks to our Treasurer and webmaster, Tim Newstead, for masterminding the last issue during my enforced absence. This Newsletter is somewhat meaty. Never mind the quality, feel the width! As usual we can enjoy reading about the Wing, while Bob McBey's Bergathon exploits with the Veteran's team also features. The piece about this year's President's Award winner makes us all feel humble yet proud.

Your Webmaster's efforts cannot go unsung. However, his job and that of Martin Williams our Membership Secretary would be more straightforward if changes of e-mail addresses and other contact details were notified. Through Tim's initiative there is now an on-line membership Application Form which is proving most successful. So when you mention the Association (and don't forget we are all recruiters!) just say to the potential members there is no paperwork involved – not even the writing of a cheque!

Interest in the Association tie continues unabated and more stocks have now been obtained. If you would like one, please get in touch with Tim Newstead (his contact details are above).

Members will recall that Paul Giles stepped into Des Peters shoes as Welfare and Publicity Committee Member. Regrettably Paul now feels

unable to continue in this role, so a successor is now sought. Anyone interested please contact the Chairman by phone or e-mail.

In 2012, thanks to David Packman's sterling efforts, the Association is facilitating the installation of the Wing crest in St Clement Danes, the RAF Church. This Service will be held on the 29th April. Details are included in the Application form attached to this Newsletter. Do try and come along.

The 2012 AGM and Dinner will not conflict with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee or Olympics! Once again we will hold our events to coincide with the TSW Families day. We have taken on board the comments regarding the 2011 events. The Dinner will be held on Saturday the 16th June.

There are, as they say, personnel changes in 2012. However it would be somewhat rude if we were to consider a Knight of the realm and a serving Air Vice Marshal as "personnel"! In turn, as the avid readers of the AGM notes will remember, the Chairman will also be handing over the reins; this will occur in an ordered manner during the latter part of 2012. A volunteer is in the offing, so now is the last chance to make an offer for this coveted post!

A NEW PRESIDENT

During 2012 our President, Air Chief Marshal Sir Joe French, will hand over the reins to an Air Officer whose name many of you will know well; Air Vice Marshal Graham J Howard. Our President (designate) is presently serving as the Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (ACDS) with responsibility for Logistics Operations. He is also the professional head of the Logistics Branch.

We owe a great debt of appreciation to Sir Joe. Often working quietly behind the scenes, he has been a great supporter and guide. By way of example, he facilitated the release of the commemorative note from the Duke of Edinburgh for the Wing and Servicing Commandos and ensured the success of the Wing and Servicing Commando display at the RAF Museum. Freely giving of his time from his busy schedule, he has been a stalwart supporter of the Bergathon and of course the annual President's Award. More topically, once again he has given guidance on the St Clement Danes Commemoration. Of course, he has also always kept your Chairman in check! We owe Sir Joe a deep debt of gratitude.



Graham Howard brings a significant and appropriate career profile to the role of President of our Association.

During much of his career, from junior officer to his present rank of AVM, he has been associated with operational logistics. His knowledge of TSW is of course second to none as a consequence of his tours as OC TSW, Station Commander RAF Stafford and more recently in tours associated with and in Afghanistan. He fondly remembers

our Servicing Commando Members from his time at Stafford.

As enthusiastic a supporter of the Association as our first president, Sir Joe, Graham Howard looks forward to serving the Association as more than a member from mid-2012. We welcome him aboard!

THE WING – A 21ST CENTURY VIEWING

The following paragraphs are based on an article by Flight Sergeant Chaz McKnight for "LZDZ" the House Magazine for Joint Helicopter Command. The photographs are courtesy of Warrant Officer Mark Farrell. See if you can spot him in one of the photographs!

In Afghanistan on Op HERRICK, TSW maintains a permanent 22-person detachment. The main task is to provide Forward Refuel Point (FRP) capability in support of deliberate operations 'outside of the wire' as well as maintaining a 24/7 Rotors Turning Refuel capability at BASTION and Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) as required. Hover-refuels and aircraft defuels are also undertaken when the situation requires. Additionally, the Wing supports the Combat Logistic Patrols that achieve the bulk movement of fuel by road to the FOBs.

Bastion is a huge base. It really is a small town with the attendant facilities. TSW have made themselves at home here over the years –as you would expect!



No Doubt Who Owns this Real Estate!



All Ready for Inspection?!



What Happened to the Green 12 x 12s??!

In Kenya during the Ex ASKARI THUNDER season or even during the Christmas break between exercises, TSW personnel support helicopters from Laikipia Air Base. This is the Main Operating Base where the fuel is received from Shell Kenya in road tankers as F35. The fuel then goes through extensive testing to ensure it is fit for purpose prior to it being blended with Fuel System Icing Inhibitor by TSW operators to produce AVTUR F34. TSW also have a dedicated refuel site at FOB SIMBA in 'Archers Post', guarded by the Massai when not in use. The Massai take their responsibilities very seriously and are armed with spears to fend off the lions and rodents (which are bigger than the lions!).

Additionally, TSW personnel can also be found moving around the bondu in Oshkosh Tactical Aircraft Refuellers (TARs) that provide a mobile



At Last - a Worker!

FRP capability wherever it is required.

For a few months of the year, TSW can be found in Oman supporting both fixed and rotary wing assets. This is predominantly a Wing Para Cadre tasking where the TSW personnel practice the air despatched Forward Refuelling Point (FRP) capability, using 'old faithful'- a couple of Air Portable Refuelling Containers, hoses, pump and filter. The equipment is squeezed into a frame for air delivery by C130. The TSW team then launch themselves after the Equipment and attempt to minimise the distance they need to run back to the landing point.

Spain is a more recent addition to TSW's exercise plot. In support of the European Air Group, the Wing is tasked with leading the international effort on deploying fuel capability forward in support of

an effort to rescue downed aircrew in a hostile environment. This allows the Wing to share expertise while at the same time educating its European Allies in delivering fuel in a tactical environment. TSW also deployed on Ex JEBEL SAHARA 10 to assist the Moroccan Royal Air Force by providing the knowledge and skill sets required to safely operate a rotors turning capability, fuels testing, accounting, assurance and equipment care.

Battle of Britain Sunset Ceremony at MoDStafford 15th September 2011



Like all fine military men and women the Wing keeps its Drill and Ceremonial expertise finely honed! These occasions also provide a timely reminder of the sacrifices made to keep us free.

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR 2010

We never cease to be amazed at the high calibre of the recipients of the President's Award; the winner of the 2010 Award, sponsored by JCB, was SAC Dan Ferrer and he is no exception. At a ceremony held in the Sergeants' Mess at MoD Stafford on 25th May, Dan Ferrer was presented with the President's Award trophy and certificate, together with a memento from JCB and a gift from the Association. The ceremony was followed by a buffet lunch.

The Citation:

Over the last year, SAC Ferrer has contributed enormously to TSW activities across a range of environments. His exemplary performance and overwhelmingly positive attitude have consistently prompted notable praise from his chain of command and all of his detachment commanders.



L to R: FS John Taylor, Sir Joe French, SAC Dan Ferrer, Neil Eltringham (JCB), Wg Cdr Polly Perkins (OC TSW), Sgt Dai Miller

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On the departure from TSW of his Section IC, SAC Ferrer took control of the largest tanker pool in the RAF, for a period of 3 months. The size of the fleet, coupled with the high level of activity, constituted a sizeable task. He worked tirelessly from the outset, frequently on extended days, in order to ensure that the tankers were always ready to deploy. He supervised his peers admirably in carrying out the vehicle husbandry, equipment control and Millipore and strainer checks. The excellent level of communication he maintained with Mechanical Transport (MT) Control and the MT Maintenance Section and his continual supervisory performance were characteristic of a senior JNCO.

SAC Ferrer has also undertaken numerous deployments over the period. During Exercise ASKARI THUNDER in support of Joint Helicopter Force (Kenya), he was responsible for running the Forward Refuel Point at FOB SIMBA; a role usually assigned to a JNCO. He also completed numerous solo tasks to Mombasa to collect mission critical fuel equipment, demonstrating in a challenging environment that he is both shrewd and intelligent.

He also deployed to Morocco as Acting Corporal on Exercise JEBEL SAHARA in support of 18 Squadron's Pre-Deployment Training. The initial task was to interface with Host Nation (HN) personnel during fuel-related tasks; however, on arrival it became evident that there were significant issues with HN facilities and

procedures, including microbiological contamination and the absence of equipment and procedures for removal of static electricity. These shortfalls represented a serious risk to flight safety. The task immediately changed from one of liaison and cooperation to that of supervision and instruction on safe practices. Ferrer's expertise, diplomacy and initiative proved to be invaluable in bringing the HN vehicles up to the minimum safety standards, rectifying all electrical bonding issues on bulk fuel vehicles and conducting repairs to hose equipment and an overpressure valve. He also identified and solved the absence of ground-earthing equipment on the tanker used to carry out rotors turning refuels. He then mentored the HN personnel through the Quality Assurance activity and refuelling procedures. He worked up to 18-hours per day for nearly 3 weeks until additional personnel could be deployed. Ferrer attracted notable praise from the Detachment Commander, while the detachment as a whole received a laudatory letter from the Commander of Joint Helicopter Force (Morocco) for services to Flight Safety.

Following a subsequent 6-week deployment on Exercise CLOCKWORK in Norway, the Detachment Commander identified Ferrer as being within the top 10% of all Airmen he had ever worked with. This was based on his positive 'can-do'

attitude and confidence. On this detachment, Ferrer completed the Extreme Cold Weather Survival Course and then, despite being newly qualified, delivered a presentation on the subject to personnel attending the subsequent course. He regularly volunteered for additional duties, executing them with supreme professionalism and good humour.

SAC Ferrer has voluntarily dedicated weekends to preparing the MT Hangar for a host of social events such as the TSW Christmas Ball and Families Day Hangar Bash. This task requires a considerable amount of work, which cannot be undertaken during the week due to activity in the hangar. He has also volunteered to work on the TSW Bar at many functions and has given up free time over numerous weekends to deliver TSW displays. Following yet another 6-week detachment to Kenya, SAC Ferrer is now scheduled for Pre-Deployment Training and deployment to Afghanistan in September 2011. Over the last year, he has demonstrated immense loyalty, initiative and selflessness. He has shown great potential through his leadership of small teams in austere environments and represents a remarkable prospect for the Service. He embodies the 'War Fighter First' ethos and is utterly deserving of the award of Airman of the Year.

The 2011 AGM and DINNER

The 2011 Reunion Dinner and AGM were held at Stafford on 3rd and 4th June. As reported earlier, the format was a little different this year in that the Dinner was held on the Friday night rather than the hitherto customary Saturday evening.



More than 65 members and their partners sitting down to dine in the Sergeants' Mess

Although the numbers attending were slightly down on previous years, a good time was had and we still had an (almost) full house with more than 65 members and their partners sitting down to dine in the Sergeants' Mess. The AGM held on the Saturday morning was well attended too. A summary of the AGM proceedings is at Enclosure 2.



OC TSW, Wg Cdr Polly Perkins, concludes her report with a light-hearted historical comment on Equipment Officers!

Following the AGM and a buffet lunch in the Sergeants' Mess, members and guests were able to enjoy the TSW Families Day - an event which seems to go from strength to strength! As well as the usual stalls and fare on offer, the RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team dropped in early during the afternoon to be followed by flypasts from two Spitfires of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, a wonderful sight - and sound! In addition, 5 helicopters were parked in a static display and, thus, MOD Stafford - for a short while at least - became quite an active airfield!



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OUR SERVICING COMMANDO MEMBERS

Once again it was a pleasure to have a strong representation from the Servicing Commandos at the AGM and Dinner. We value their legacy; indeed, their heritage has been recognised by the RAF Historical Society. At a seminar held at the RAF Museum in May 2011 Ernie Deighton and "Mac" McQuillan supported Tim Newstead in offering a 30 minute presentation on the formation, training and operations of the Servicing Commandos in WWII. The record will be incorporated in the proceedings of the day – so the unique band of brothers is not forgotten.

Sadly and inevitably we have to record the passing of some members and they are remembered at Enclosure 1. In particular, regular attendees at the Reunion weekends will be greatly saddened to hear of the passing of two loyal supporters: Mrs Mary Lockett and Mrs Ena Taylor. Their cheerful nature and ready smiles at future Reunions will be sorely missed. More happily, two stalwarts have overcome health challenges. We wish Gwyneth Pritchard a speedy recovery from her operation while Alan Robinson assures me that in spite of his Stroke earlier this year he intends to make it to Stafford in 2012.

NEWS OF TSW MEMBERS

TSW members worthy of mention are Membership Sec, Martin Williams, and Historical Focal Point, Peter Berry, both of whom have suffered setbacks this year and for whom we wish a speedy recovery. We hope too that Dave Langford will be fit enough to join us at next year's Reunion.

THE 2011 TSW BERGATHON

The Association once again entered a Team in this year's TSW Bergathon which was held on Thursday 29th September. The Bergathon is the annual charity event for TSW with all monies raised going to the Donna Louise Trust Hospice for children. The Association's team, all ex- Wing members, was again led by Bob McBey with Emma Walker, Norrie Murray, Cliff Whiteley, Andy Holsgrove and Dan Stevenson; Jim Coleman (69) also gave support and completed one leg of the event - VERY well done Jim!



The "V" Team

This year's event was by far the hardest the team had ever done; the temperature was 27 degrees, so lots of water was drunk by all - and there were blisters a plenty! The team came in 10th out of the 14 teams entered - a magnificent effort. More importantly, the team excelled themselves financially - raising **over £1,000** for the TSW charity! **A HUGE THANK YOU** from the team to all the Association members who gave so generously of donations/sponsorship

AND SO TO 2012...

Part 1- Dedication of TSW Plaque in the RAF Church of St Clement Danes

We are delighted to report that, thanks to a lot of generous people, the target for raising funds to pay for the installation of a plaque in the floor of St Clement Danes church showing the TSW badge has been met. The dedication will take place during the morning service on Sunday 29th April 2012 starting at 1100 hours. It is very much hoped that as many past and present members of the Wing will be able to attend. Our President, ACM Sir Joe French, will be present as will AVM Graham Howard, Head of the Logistics Branch. The Resident Chaplain has kindly agreed to 'tailor' the service properly to reflect the importance of the occasion to us and it is likely that both a past and a present member of TSW will read the lessons. The form

of the service will be acceptable to a wide range of Christian denominations. Afterwards, a finger buffet will be served in the church and there will be plenty of time to meet old friends and make new ones. For the benefit of members who are planning to attend the dedication, there are plenty of hotels in the area but the Victory Services Club on Edgware Road and the Union Jack Club close to Waterloo station should not be forgotten.

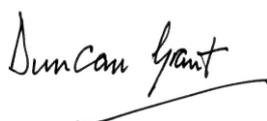
So that all the necessary arrangements can be put in hand (not least the catering ones), it will be very much appreciated if those members who are planning to attend will complete the form which has been distributed by e-mail or snail mail; if you have not received a copy, please contact the Treasurer, Tim Newstead. The booking form should be sent to David Packman by e-mail or snail mail to reach him no **later than Friday 9th March 2012**. Dress for the occasion will be lounge suit or similar for all ranks. Officers have the option of wearing uniform. Medals should be worn.

2012 Part 2- AGM and Dinner

Once again the Wing has kindly offered support to our annual get together during their busy Families Day. We have taken on board the various comments received regarding the arrangements for 2011 and your committee is pleased to announce that with the co-operation of the Wing, and of course the help of Warrant Officer Farrell, we can revert to our usual arrangements. An informal buffet supper "meet and greet" has been booked at a local Hotel for the Friday the 15th June at a subsidised rate for members of £10 per person. Preferential room rates have also been agreed. The AGM will take place in the Sergeants' Mess at 1100 on the 16th June, with coffee being served from 1030. The AGM will be followed by a buffet lunch, once again hosted by Association funds, and then the Families Day events – including our hospitality area. So that we can reduce the pressure on the Wing and Sergeants' Mess we will hold our Dinner a little earlier on the Saturday evening at 1830 for 1900. The cost of the 4 course Dinner (including wine and port) – for members and first guest only – will be £15 per head; members wishing to bring guests will be required to pay the full price of £20 for each additional guest. Guest seats will, of course, be subject to availability of places. The Dinner timings will also offer the opportunity of attending the TSW Hangar Bash after Dinner – for those with stamina! Transport from the hotel for those who require it will leave at 1000 on Saturday and will be available for return to the hotel after lunch and during the afternoon. Similarly, on Saturday evening, transport will leave the hotel at 1800 and will be available for return after dinner and, for those attending the Hangar Bash, later in the evening.

Sir Joe French, our outgoing President, hopes to join us so I hope that as many members as possible can come along to show our appreciation for his support over the last 6 years. Bob McBey will once again be the focal point for undertaking the admin – members planning to attend should complete the form which has been distributed by e-mail or snail mail; if you have not received a copy, please contact the Treasurer, Tim Newstead. The booking form should be returned to Bob, together with your payment, **by Monday 7th May 2012**. Another plea: if there is anybody out there in a position to help set up and provide support on the 16th June, please contact Bob or your Chairman.

I and your Committee look forward to your continued support through 2012 and the opportunity of meeting many of you in April and June.



DUNCAN GRANT
Chairman

Enclosures:

1. In Remembrance.
2. Main Points arising from the Association AGM held on 4th June 2011.

In Remembrance

We record with sadness the passing of the following members:

3207 SC	Mr Eric Nuttall	Died 23 rd March 2011
	Mrs Mary Lockett	Died 7 th August 2011
	Mrs Ena Taylor	Died 7 th August 2011
3208 SC	Mr Bob (Jock) Burrell	Died 13 th April 2011
	Mr Fred Wilson	Died 13 th June 2011
3210 SC	Mr Gordon Hughes	Died 30 th April 2011
TSW 1972-77	Mr David (Bas) Haviland	Died 1 st November 2011

Main Points arising from RAFSC&TSW Association AGM held at the Sergeants Mess Stafford on 4th June 2011

The main points arising from the AGM were as follows:

- Two matters were outstanding from the 2010 AGM – using the SAGA and RAFA House Magazines for advertising – which the Chairman undertook to progress.
- In introducing the new OC TSW, Wing Commander Polly Perkins, the Chairman expressed the gratitude of the Association for the support provided by the Wing throughout the year. Without such support, the Association would find it difficult to sustain its activities. Particular thanks were due to Warrant Officer Mark Farrell – currently overseas on an operational tour. Wing Commander Perkins then offered her narrative report, from which it was clear that the Wing was in good spirits and was as heavily committed as ever in support of operations and exercises; she concluded with a light-hearted historical comment on Equipment Officers!
- The Treasurer introduced the Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2010, which had been duly validated, and his report for the year was duly accepted by those present. The funds continued to be in a healthy state and proposals continue to be sought for the use of some of the Association funds.
- Current paid-up Membership stood at 224. Overall, membership numbers had increased by about 10% last year, while subscription monies remained fairly constant.
- The Chairman notified the meeting that Bob McBey's Bergathon Veterans' Team had been promised £250 towards their sponsorship and £120 had been committed for Team T Shirts.
- It was agreed that a donation of £250 would be given to the veterans' mental health charity Combat Stress.
- A proposal to take forward a project for the installation of a TSW crest plaque in the floor of the RAF Church, St Clement Danes, was agreed; a donation of £350 from Association funds was committed to the project with the balance to be sought through individual donations.
- Three Associate Members were proposed and agreed – Sqn Ldr Jim Davies, Mr Joe Canning and Mr Paul Davies.
- The Chairman, Duncan Grant, and Treasurer, Tim Newstead, were re-elected for a further 2-year period of office; Duncan advised that he would not seek re-election in 2013 and that a new Chairman would, thus, be sought. Paul Giles was elected as Welfare and Publicity member.
- In discussion the meeting considered that, ideally, members would prefer the dinner to be held on the Saturday evening with an informal Friday gathering - as previously. However, there was recognition that the good offices of the Wing should not be prejudiced. Work in Committee would be undertaken to agree an optimum solution for 2012 with the foundation still resting at Stafford