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*Rosa*

*Newsletter of the*

## FRIENDS OF THE INTELLIGENCE CORPS MUSEUM

[www.intelligencemuseum.org](http://www.intelligencemuseum.org)

E Newsletter 11 - Summer 2015

### WELCOME TO *SUB ROSA* IN THE SUMMER!



**H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh at Corps Day, 18 July 2015.**

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Corps was royally celebrated at lunch in the presence of Colonel-in-Chief Prince Philip, who presented this year's Corps awards. In an impromptu speech, the prince warmly endorsed the Intelligence Corps and emphasised its essential role in the nation's security.

Drinks in front of the Priory were accompanied by the delightful strains of several of the army's Countess of Wessex's String Orchestra.

Many FICM members made the trip to Chicksands. At the formal lunch Friends made up one lively table of ten tucking into a professionally served meal of asparagus spears, rack of lamb and profiteroles, while bottles of Rioja and Chenin Blanc splendidly boasted the Corps badge.

Photo: CIGY CIGY, July 2015.

## DONATIONS TO THE ARCHIVE

Archivist Joyce Hutton writes "Our new thermo-hygrometer, thanks to the generosity of the Friends, monitors temperature and humidity – important for the preservation of archival material.

Using a drum system and a paper chart it provides a visible record, hour by hour over a seven-day period. At a glance you can see whether the temperature and/or humidity within the archive storage area is within defined parameters.

We can then use the heating system or

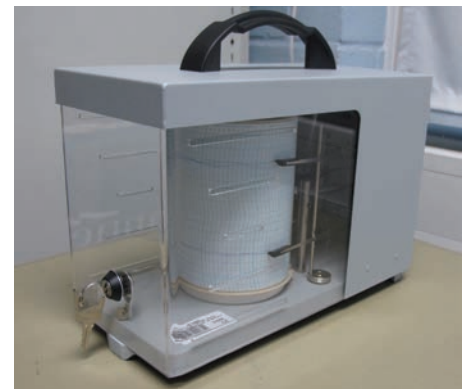
dehumidifier to deal with any unwanted fluctuations."

*The Friends' donation was £666. (Ed.)*

**JH, June 2015**

### Major IT Upgrade

During July, installation of a major upgrade of the museum archive's IT facility was completed, thanks to FICM's donation of over £8,166 supported by £767 from ICA. More details in winter issue.



*Thermo-Hygrometer*

Photo: JH

## DISTRIBUTION GUIDANCE

While this newsletter does not include any classified information, it is intended for the personal use of FICM members, their families and close friends only. Your co-operation in observing this guidance is much appreciated!

# LONDON LUNCH WITH LECTURES AT THE SPECIAL FORCES CLUB – 16 APRIL 2015



Friends enjoying lunch

Photo: CIGY

A warm April day saw the third London Lunch with Lectures at the Special Forces Club in Knightsbridge. Thanks for the careful preparation put in again by Tony Hetherington, for the club staff, and two excellent lectures. It was still going strong with strenuous bar discussion at 5 p.m.

## A Corporal's Intelligence Work at the Front 1914-1918

Jim Beach has edited Corporal Schürhoff's diary<sup>1</sup> a copy of which is held by the museum archives. Of German parents who were naturalised British, Schürhoff served throughout the Great War, keeping a diary and making a typescript in 1970. Much of his work was SIGINT, monitoring German trenches' phone traffic from 'intelligence telephones' that were located close behind the British lines. Later he was involved with POW interrogation. In addition to his German, as a French speaker he also was able to have an enjoyable social life when away from the trenches. With a home furor about German fifth columnists, and a vendetta against German-sounding names, in 1918 he was withdrawn from intelligence duties, so ending a distinguished war service (he was awarded the MM) on a sour note, and he was returned to signals duties. Eventually he changed his

surname to Shirley, in the same way as did the royal family at that time. To the delight of Friends and guests, Jim vividly brought to life this intelligence soldier at war.

Questions ranged from comments about the suspicion of German names at that time, to the ethical responsibility when handling a war-diarist's material.

## 3 Commando Brigade Intelligence Section during the Falklands Campaign

Nick van der Bijl, author of *A Corps History: Sharing the Secret*<sup>2</sup> gave a presentation on his time in the war. "I'm only a regular soldier, so where are the Falklands?" was how Nick greeted the news when he was told to begin war preparations by setting up an intelligence cell of a dozen people. He used the six weeks on board HMS Fearless on the way to the South Atlantic to do so. The Royal Marines had little idea about the Argentine armed forces, partly because the Falkland Islands had been primarily a fleet/Royal Naval responsibility, so the intelligence operation had to make up much lost ground. Nick's presentation, backed up on occasions by photographic evidence that 'found its way into my home' gave a lively and highly personal account of operations. One SIGINT triumph was intercepting Cable &

Wireless telegrams from Stanley to Buenos Aires, by which the British gleaned names and unit IDs in messages home. Despite his rudimentary Spanish, Nick also questioned prisoners. Nick had an Argentine guest for lunch and at the talk: Dr Alejandro Amendelora with whom he collaborates in their joint interest in the conflict.

Nick's style commanded full attention from the audience despite their having enjoyed an excellent lunch. One piece of trivia that we learned was that the occupying forces tried to get the Falklanders to drive on the right, but resistance was so strong that the Argentinians painted direction arrows on the roads.

Questions from the floor were raised about whether satellite imagery was employed and if intelligence had been received from Washington. Other comments related to the presence of oil in the Falklands and whether the assembly of the battle fleet was originally a psy-ops exercise, but not too far into the Atlantic it became the real thing.



Nick van der Bijl

Photo: CIGY

<sup>1</sup>*The Diary of Corporal Vince Schürhoff 1914-1918*, (ed.) Jim Beach, History Press for the Army Records Society, Vol. 35, 201, pp. n/k.

<sup>2</sup>Reviewed in *Sub Rosa*, spring 2014.

See back page for next year's Lunch and Lectures.

## CALLING ALL FRIENDS!

Got a recollection you'd like to tell us?

Finished a book you'd like to review?

Been somewhere of interest?

We'd love to hear from you!

Send to [cigyates@me.com](mailto:cigyates@me.com) or address on back page.

## MEET A VOLUNTEER

*“The King desires no Man's Service but what is purely Voluntier”;  
Daniel Defoe, Memoirs of a Cavalier, 1720.*

**Hello to Peter Metcalfe**, one of our long-serving volunteers.

Born in 1933, Peter went to Sir Walter St John's Grammar School for Boys, Battersea where he “was not a great success”. Called up to the RASC in 1949 he fondly remembers basic training at Buller Barracks in Aldershot. Failing his WOSB, he looks on that as lucky, for he says he would “rather have been [as he became] a sergeant in the Intelligence Corps than a subaltern in the RASC.” After training at Maresfield he was posted to 4 Int School in late 1949 at GCHQ, Eastcote where he enjoyed the company of “eccentric” spillover personnel from Bletchley Park. Peter worked in training and processed R/T tapes of intercepted messages, earning him those three stripes in just over a year. He was “reluctantly” demobbed in May 1951, then served six years in the Reserve.

He began a career in work study with Heinz, married Barbara in 1956 who still tires of his time and motion observations at supermarket check-outs: “it's not the length of the queue that holds you up, but how long it takes to process the items ...” Later he worked for Bowater from which he retired early as a manager at 59 to take up another job for three years. He accelerated his life with extensive

private interests: Labour agent and councillor, book collecting, the army. A claim to fame is that when appointed to the Stevenage Development Board, he replaced no less a person than Sir Douglas Bader. Peter is a revered member of the T.E Lawrence Society. “T.E. gets a bad press,” says Peter, “but he's fascinating; studying his life and writing is like peeling the layers off an onion.”

Twelve years a volunteer, his early museum cohort was a “gang of volunteers” namely John Woolmore, Alan Edwards, Don Beets, Peter Leeming and Brian Parritt. One early important task was starting on the creation of the thousands of personal files, identifying people from numerous photographs and documents. Like many volunteers he likes stumbling across the unusual, such as the intriguing 1914–16 diary of the governor-general of German East Africa, Heinrich Schnee. *The Rose and The Laurel* readers have had the benefit of his elegant writing, especially on Major General Shortt and Maresfield Depot; see the years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2013.

Peter says, “I can't shake off a love for the army, especially the Corps, and I feel at home in the museum and in the camp. I admire the military values of courage and loyalty.”

Two offspring provided Barbara and him with five grandchildren, one of whom is a serving corporal in the Corps. Peter lives in Stevenage with three cats: Petra, Troy and Taliban.

Thank you Peter!

CIGY, February 2015



Museum volunteer, Peter Metcalfe

Photo: CIGY

## INJURED IN THE COURSE OF DUTY

Our American colleagues had been on at me for some time to organise another tour of the Inner German Border (IGB) for them. I agreed and we set a date for 1 October. We commenced the tour at the IGB near Lauenburg on the River Elbe and proceeded south through the Dannenberg Salient past Hitzacker and Schnackenburg around to Lübbow before heading for Uelzen and a well-earned snack at an excellent Schnellimbiss, which was on my list of 5-star bratwurst locations. During the tour, my Land Rover, rather carelessly, put a front wheel into a deep pothole. This caused the camera around my neck to become upwardly mobile and collide forcefully with my mouth causing a not inconsiderable wound and the loss of large quantities of blood. My American colleagues decided it was poetic justice delayed from 1776 and refused to commiserate with me. Thereafter, my tour-guide qualities diminished rapidly as I tried to speak through rapidly swelling lips. Nevertheless, it had been an excellent day out.

East German foot and mobile patrols tracked us on the other side of the fence for quite a long while. They also took several photos of us and, once again, we sought to confuse them by swapping hats, uniform jackets and pullovers as soon as we were out of their sight. This time, the sight of American uniforms in the British Zone excited more than the usual curiosity, and at one stage a lieutenant colonel in the National People's Army joined the patrols. I wondered what they thought of my bloody face. Perhaps they used the pictures for propaganda purposes to show their underlings what the Americans did to their British allies.

FJ, April 2015

*Photo taken just minutes before the camera connected with my bottom lip. Our American colleagues from Bremerhaven presented this photo to me. They cheekily entitled it 'On a Clear Day – you can see Yorktown', a reference to my constant complaints about the Yorktown picture hanging in their entrance lobby.*



## A REIGN OF TERROR *by Chris Yates*

In 1963, after Op Int & S training at Maresfield I was posted to the theatre of my choice, BAOR. Llanelly Barracks, Hubbelrath housed 4th Gds Bde Gp which in turn hosted 14 Int Pl, single soldiers billeted with Bde HQ Coy. It was a jolting return to basic training with morning bed blocks, frequent parades, cookhouse cleaning rotas, saluting all that glittered.

Within days of arriving, I was charged – en bloc with a dozen or so other defaulters – for having dust on my beret on parade. Naturally, the justification was the catchall Section 55 “conduct prejudicial” etc. After the Irish Guards HQ Coy CSM read out the various charges at breakneck speed, the OC kindly asked us as a group if anyone wanted to say anything. No one spoke up and when I did, I sensed everybody stiffening – the OC, the WOII, the guardsmen, assorted other corps – as if that wasn’t done in the Guards. ‘Sir,’ I attempted, ‘my beret had been clean before

the parade, therefore, the wind must have blown dust on it and I can’t see how I could have helped that.’ Brilliant defence, no? The major, fuming, said, ‘Nonsense, you’re supposed to be intelligent and avoid that.’ This jibe had the desired effect, his small office rocking with stifled chortling at the cheap shot about the Corps. Punishment was to pick up non-existent litter on the camp’s roads after platoon duties, for three days.

On another occasion after breakfast, another Corps private and I had our dormitory of half a dozen guardsmen and mixed corps, inspected by the CSM. Narrowly escaping a charge for something vaguely out of place, we were made to tart up our bed spaces again on the spot; protests that we were due to report for our Int duties were swept aside. When we got to the platoon’s office we were again severely chastised (there is another, less refined word) by our staff sergeant for being late, our protests again dismissed. You just

couldn’t win. What was the point of the hard-won lanyard?

Three of us lived under under this reign of terror. But one day the sun came out and we were moved to more civilised accommodation with the RMP. We even had honorary membership of their junior NCOs’ mess (compared with the gloomy, rancid space called the Beer Hall that HQ Coy supplied for the lowest ranks in which, nevertheless, we would have fine conversations with fellows from 247 Gurkha Signals Squadron).

Feeling now properly posted, I got more seriously down to the business of helping the brigade plan the defence against the threatening eastern hordes.

**CIGY, November 2014**

## DON’T CONFUSE THE OFFICERS! *by John Landolt*

I was commissioned into the Intelligence Corps in December 1957 and after a brief spell in BAOR and a tour in an infantry battalion, in 1962 assumed command of a brigade intelligence platoon. The Corps still struggled for acceptance as a regular army corps; quite a number of senior officers still considered it unnecessary in peacetime. To make it more militarily acceptable, (or, as some wag put it, to get the Corps into boots and gaiters) its old wartime structure of specialist units (field security sections, photographic interpretation sections, etc.) was replaced by penny packet units of mixed skills attached to formation HQs as brigade, division and corps intelligence platoons.

My platoon, 5 Int Pl (Bde), was part of HQ 51 Inf Bde Gp near Winterbourne Gunner on the edge of Salisbury Plain. 51 Bde had been a Guards brigade and guardsmen were still much in evidence. The platoon consisted of me (the untrained, unqualified brigade interrogation capability), a fully qualified PI officer (not Corps) whose chances of seeing aerial photographs for interpretation at Bde HQ level were nil, a senior NCO (the security capability), two junior ranks (National Servicemen) and an RE draughtsman. The latter was intended to support the PI officer but was used for numerous HQ tasks such as drawing officers’ mess dinner seating plans. The two junior ranks formed the operational intelligence element but the HQ saw their task purely as running

the map store, sticking Fablon on maps for staff officers and keeping them marked up. They were also the drivers of the platoon’s two Land Rovers parked outside the office. Unfortunately this offended the Grenadier Guards’ DAQMG major who thought they made the place look untidy and wanted them removed to the MT pool. This happened and the vehicles immediately lost wing mirrors, toolkits and other removable parts. I remonstrated with the MTO but was told that if the drivers were in the MT lines where they belonged, such losses would not occur. To him, the fact that the drivers had other duties in the intelligence platoon was irrelevant. Drivers is drivers! As it was, the junior ranks were at the tender mercies of the brigade’s HQ Company, still largely a Guards preserve. They were advised, if brought up before an officer, to respond to any questions by answering “Sah!”: to say yes or no would only confuse the officer. I had one notable success by managing to detach the PI officer to JARIC where he could use his skills. This irritated the Bde HQ, not because they needed his PI expertise but because it meant one less officer available for the duty roster.

I was concerned about the future of the Corps. Morale, particularly amongst senior NCOs with wartime experience, was low. My predecessor had quit to join the Australian Security Service. Fortunately, the problem of the dispersed nature of the Corps was being tackled in BAOR with the creation of an

Intelligence and Security Group with specialist companies deployed according to their role, and not tied to formation HQs. Operational intelligence sections remained with formations.

I returned to command 5 Int Pl in 1966. It still formed part of HQ 51 Bde but by then it had become 51 Gurkha Bde deployed in Brunei in the Confrontation campaign. The difference was striking. Facing a real enemy, the platoon was properly employed. Although still the penny packet establishment, the operational intelligence NCOs were properly used, the PI SNCO, although doing little interpretation, was, with the draughtsman, producing vital maps from aerial photography, and the security NCO covered Bde HQ and units. The real breakthrough was the Corps providing field intelligence officers (FIOs) deployed to military bases on the border. As such, they were seconded to the Malaysian Special Branch so worked in plain clothes, albeit in forward army locations. I believe the FIO appointments could be filled by junior officers of any arm but with intelligence appointments not seen as career enhancing, volunteers were not forthcoming. The performance of Corps NCOs was recognised as a “great success” in the official FARELF operational report.

**JDL, May 2015**

# POTSDAM REVISITED



Former "Mission House", Potsdam

Photo: TH

A BBC programme described it as "Berlin's most beautiful suburb" – and few who know the area would dispute this – but Potsdam's legacy to the Corps and to the wider intelligence community has little to do with its appearance and everything to do with its position just to the south-west of Berlin, coupled with its Cold War role spanning several decades.

Recently, FICM Secretary Chris Yates and I visited Potsdam. I was first there in the 1970s, and Chris spent part of his childhood not far away in Kladow, just inside West Berlin, before later serving with the Corps in Germany.

The Potsdam of those days has virtually disappeared, though. The grey drabness of the Russian occupation years has been replaced by pedestrian precincts and pavement cafes.

Historical buildings have been restored, and the only landmark I recognised immediately from the days of the German Democratic Republic was the skyscraper Hotel Mercure, which used to be the Inter Hotel where only hard currency from the West was welcomed by the barman, and you were never sure

which rooms were bugged. The only safe assumption was that the whole place was wired for sound.

What Potsdam offers today is a short walk through a slice of Cold War history. On the edge of the town stands the Glienicke Bridge – the so-called Bridge of Spies – where the East–West border was marked by checkpoints half-way across. Today, we found a simple metal line set into the pavement as a reminder. But anyone on the bridge on 10 February 1962 would have seen Colonel Rudolf Abel, a veteran Russian intelligence officer arrested by the FBI in 1957, approach from the West. At the same moment from the East, came U2 pilot Francis Gary Powers, shot down over Sverdlovsk in 1960. This first successful exchange of prisoners across the Glienicke Bridge led to further swaps. In 1964, British businessman and MI6 courier Greville Wynne was freed from prison in Moscow and exchanged for Konon Molody, who under the name Gordon Lonsdale had run the Portland Spy Ring until his arrest in 1961. The last exchange took place in 1986, three years before the opening of the Berlin Wall and the

lifting of the barriers on the bridge itself. Now, a small display at the eastern end of the bridge serves as a reminder of its pivotal role between East and West.

Leaving the bridge, Chris and I walked a couple of kilometres along the banks of the Havel, turning left into Böcklinstrasse and then Seestrasse, home from 1959 to 1990 to the Brixmis Mission House. The large white building on the right-hand side, with its lawn running down to the edge of the Heiliger See, replaced an earlier Brixmis complex in Potsdam that had been attacked in an officially inspired demonstration in 1958, ostensibly against British policy in the Middle East.

The new building came with a history of its own. In 1944 it was the home of German diplomat Ulrich von Max Drechsel, executed by the Nazis for his part in the July Plot to assassinate Hitler. When the Russians handed over the building – along with £1,200 in cash – as compensation for the loss of the original complex, it came with a permanent guard posted in the otherwise quiet, leafy street. If anything though, security is actually tighter today. A thick hedge and a border of trees shield the building, and a solid electronic gate topped with spikes discourages the curious, while banks of CCTV cameras monitor every external inch of the property – though we did manage to get one decent photograph without triggering any hostile reaction.

Who occupies the Mission House – now called the Villa Wunderkind – that needs such security? The building is currently home to a large fashion company and a connected public relations firm. The secrets of next year's Spring Collection are clearly worth protecting.

TH, June 2015

*You can see more about the British Military Mission in the museum's permanent BRIXMIS display. Ed.*

## INDEX OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Dating from 2004, the index will be kept up to date, and we hope it will be of interest to you.

Copies prior to 2012 can be viewed only in the archive.

What follows is a sample. (Ed.)

Author	Name of Article	Subject	Website	Sub Rosa
Cash, Tony	An Aularian Double Agent	Recollection	01/03/2015	
Clark, Frank	We were Brother in Arms by Frank Clark	Book review	12/12/2013	
Cole, Andy	Handcuffs Used on Nazi War Criminals	Museum exhibit		Winter 2014
Cole, Andy	General Theodor Eicke's Sword of Honour	Museum exhibit		Summer 2014
Condon, John	Exercise Green Century	News		Winter 2013

# A RAMBLE THROUGH BLETCHLEY PARK

The recent release of the film *The Imitation Game* about Bletchley Park, Enigma and Alan Turing has aroused a renewed interest on what went on there from 1938 until 1945. Amusing though it may be, unfortunately it bears little resemblance to the actuality and, more importantly, in addition to leaving out large amounts of history it is also wrong on a number of counts too numerous to describe in this article: characters have been invented and taken out of context, facts conveniently altered.

As an aficionado of SIGINT history I found many of the events depicted in the film irritating and totally unnecessary. The creation of a love interest as a carriage for a glamorous star was ridiculous, from her introduction to the end. Yes! There was a Joan Clarke and, yes, they were engaged briefly (not the first homosexual to try married life) until Turing broke it off. With the best will in the world and the magic of modern photography, the real Joan Clarke could never have been considered glamorous. The episode where she was chosen because of her crossword skills was also a travesty of the truth. A mathematics double first at Cambridge, she was recruited by Gordon Welchman based on her undoubted mathematical abilities. Crossword skills played no part in her selection. They were never a standard selection procedure for B.P except, perhaps, in the very early days.

Turing and B.P are so often wrongly credited with successes. Take the breaking of Enigma. The Poles first did this in December 1932 and continued to do so even after the defeat of Poland in 1939 in conjunction with the French. It brought the imminent fear of war to bring about a meeting of the three parties. Some at B.P saw the solution of Enigma merely as an intellectual problem somewhat akin to solving the Rosetta Stone, and hoped that it would carry with it similar academic kudos.

The Enigma that “Dilly” Knox was credited with breaking was used not by the Germans but by the Spanish Nationalists – a far simpler machine. When he visited Poland as part of a delegation he was acutely embarrassed by his comparative lack of success. Until the Poles and the French handed over details of their discoveries and a reconstruction of an Enigma machine, B.P were floundering, to put it mildly. However, almost certainly the British cryptologists would have succeeded eventually by themselves. Peter Twinn who would be the last survivor of the pre-Bletchley period wrote “in July 1939 (i.e. before the meeting with the Poles) we did

have the information in our possession – in fact, in our office – that was sufficient to have begun to read Enigma messages if only we had made what in retrospect seemed a very obvious guess”. On the other hand, former Bletchley Park mathematician–cryptologist Gordon Welchman wrote: “Ultra would never have gotten off the ground if we had not learned from the Poles, in the nick of time, the details both of the German military Enigma machine and of the operating procedures that were in use”.

Putting it simply, up until 1939, the Polish contribution to the solution of Enigma consisted of advanced mathematics, science and technology; the French, purely intelligence work (without which the Poles would have struggled); and the British contribution, indeed until the spring of 1940, could be fairly described as being “of a technological nature”.



Enigma machine: MIM Chicksands

Photo: JQ

There are several myths attached to the ULTRA story (this being the name for the intelligence and anything to do with it gleaned from the successful interception and decryption of Enigma). As everyone knows, British activities in the field of cryptanalysis and cryptology – nowadays demeaned by being described as codebreaking - remained a secret officially until the publication of Winterbotham’s book, *The Ultra Secret* in 1974.

Some information about Enigma decryption did get out earlier however. In 1967, Polish military historian Wladyslaw Kozaczuk in his book *Bitwa o tajemnice, Battle for Secrets*, (2012) first revealed that Enigma had been broken by Polish cryptologists before World War II. The same year, David Kahn in *The Codebreakers* described the 1944 capture of a naval Enigma machine from the U-boat *U505*

and noted, somewhat in passing that naval Enigma messages were already being read. Writer and broadcaster Malcolm Muggeridge, who served in the Corps (so should have known better), was responsible for some leaks but which had, at worst, a negligible effect. David Kahn made reference to it in *The Codebreakers* in 1967 but, being initially published in New York, attracted far less attention since the story had already been broken in the USA in the late 1940s during a Congressional hearing, but not picked up in the UK. The head of the French SIGINT unit, General Gustave Bertrand, wrote his story in 1973 a year before Winterbotham was published, entitled *Enigma ou la plus grande énigme de la guerre 1939–1945*. After writing his book he handed over to the French authorities excellent documents which had been in his possession and they are now inaccessible. Unlike Winterbotham’s book, Bertrand’s passed almost unnoticed. It was not an easy book, lacking any charm in either composition or style, with the use of pseudonyms making some pages difficult to understand. It is believed that Bertrand was galvanised into action by the publication of a book by Colonel Michel Gardner, *La Guerre secrète des services spéciaux Français*, in 1967. As far as can be ascertained, Bertrand’s book was never translated or published in England although there is reason to believe that Hugh Skillen, who served in the Corps did translate part or all for his own benefit. He was, after all, fluent in French and the author of several books on the Y Service.

Perhaps the greatest literary puzzle is why was Winterbotham chosen or allowed to write the first, then definitive, book on Ultra. As his book sadly reveals, he was poorly informed about most of the technical side and yet made a lot of money which should have gone to others (who would eventually go into print). He had been responsible for the distribution and security of the intelligence material which was extracted from the Enigma intercepts.

Peter Calvocoressi, who served at B.P whilst an RAF officer and wrote his own book, *Top Secret Ultra* (1980), described the secrecy surrounding it as being “a phenomenon that may well be unparalleled in history”. Probably true!

Oh, by the way, Churchill never gave the order to destroy all the Colossi machines; they were too valuable both for their abilities but also for the components. There is a story that one was still working somewhere in Cheltenham at GCHQ well into the 1950s.

PWC, May 2015

# BOOK REVIEW

Looking Down the Corridors: Allied Aerial Espionage Operations over East Germany and Berlin, 1945-90 by Kevin Wright and Peter Jefferies, foreword by Air Vice-Marshal (retd.) Mike Jackson, The History Press, 2015. 224 pp.

## LOOKING DOWN THE CORRIDORS

ALLIED AERIAL ESPIONAGE OVER EAST GERMANY AND BERLIN 1945-1990



KEVIN WRIGHT AND PETER JEFFERIES  
FOREWORD BY AIR VICE-MARSHAL MIKE JACKSON RAF

### Forty-Five Years of Corridor Spying

“Persistent ... imaginative ... successful” is how Mike Jackson describes this forty-five year intelligence operation. One could apply the same to the book. Persistent in its aim to have the reader in the cockpit or behind the stereoscope, imaginative in its analysis of three-country geo-politics, and successful in a highly coherent presentation.

When I had finished reading I felt as if I had learnt an awful lot about things I didn't know; I also had been through the wringer of masses of technical terms grafted onto German, European and global history – or was is the other way round? What were these corridors? Why were they important to the nations of Europe, the Soviet Union, and the United States of America? What's in it for a

follower of British military intelligence? Well, to answer these and many other questions, you will have to read the book, and here's why I think you ought to.

The first two chapters set the scene. We are taken through airborne intelligence gathering in the Cold War as a whole, touching on the Special Relationship and reminding us how warlike it was with the shooting down of Gary Powers in May 1960, and the partly forgotten downing of a USAF RB-47H, which took off from Brize Norton, and its loss of crew to death, and internment. Intelligence reporting is reflected well in the clean, cool and evidence-based style of writing. Why were the corridors so important?: The Cold War was played out around all the Soviet Union's areas of interest but it was Germany that “provided the respective intelligence communities with a unique window on the other's military forces and activities”. We are helped through the setting up of a divided Germany and partitioned Berlin whose access via ground and air corridors provided the opportunities for aerial intelligence. We are reminded of extreme views among the former Allies: US Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau actually urged the dismemberment of Germany.

The middle chapters show in detail the part played by three of the wartime Allies, the US, the UK and France, who used the Berlin air corridors, The Americans flew by far the most missions, over 10,000, and the authors make the interesting point that although the British at government level were sometimes exercised by the much lesser part played in intelligence sharing while in receipt of the

lion's share that the American generated, the Americans were really not that that bothered. The special relationship seems to have never worked better than in what was gleaned from the corridors. Primarily gathering SIGINT, the French were the “ears” of the Allies, “hoovering up signals in the GDR”. The authors are at their best, understandably, with the RAF and the British Army, less so with the American and French for obvious reasons of access.

The authors spare little detail about aircraft types, technical photography and signals collection. When we get to photographic interpretation, we are in the hands former Corps member Peter Jefferies who analysed and disseminated photo imagery during these times. Despite the sometimes relentless parade of technical terms abbreviations, initialisms and acronyms, relief can be gained in the very readable, speculative chapter 8: “Was it Worth All the Effort?” Right at the end are some interesting thoughts on why the Soviets didn't try too hard to hide a lot of their highly photographic ground facilities.

The History Press has provided excellent editing and the reader is helped mightily to combat the deluge of technical terms with an eleven-page (!) glossary.

Engaging, well written and a thoroughly recommended addition to the genre.

CIGY, July 2015

## NOT THE NEWSLETTER!

News item in an Intelligence Corps Newsletter, issue no. 44, December 1988, p.2.

### Green Beret Soldier-Hero Records Terrorist Attack!

#### “My Chinagraph wasn't Loaded”

Armed only with a chinagraph and three different coloured leads (red, green and grey appropriately) an alert sentry successfully beat off a murderous attack by the outlawed

terrorist group NICA (Not the Intelligence Corps Association). Whilst on prowler duty at DISS (Department of Indifference, Sycophancy and Serialisation) his slumber was disturbed by intruders at the Ossified Library. Setting his lumocoulour to aromatic, he successfully recorded the terrorists' position on a fabloned map and updated his orbat. Diving for cover beneath his latest intrep he was able to maintain his int assessment until the arrival of real soldiers with guns, who without the benefit of G2

input were able to shoot the terrorists, whose attention had been temporarily diverted by a plethora of paperwork.

For his quick thinking, courage and timely action, our Intelligence Corps hero has been awarded the Staff Recognition Medal Class I (Complete Indifference).

(Source: Intelligence Corps Museum Archives, Accession no. 2988.)

# PLANNED EVENTS

## 10 September 2015 - Open FICM Trustees Meeting and Museum Open Day, Chicksands

Although this event is free of charge, registration will be needed to ensure access to Chicksands! Contact Deputy Chair René Dee on [rene.dee@talk21.com](mailto:rene.dee@talk21.com) or post to him at the address bottom of this page; provide full name and address; registration number, make and model of your car; and bring with you photo ID such as driving licence or passport.

11.00-12.25 **Open Trustees' Meeting** (including routine business) in room 3 of the museum, open to those who wish to attend to listen and/or ask questions.

12.25-12.30 **Lester Hillman** a life member of the Friends will say a few words about the centenary of the publication of *The 39 Steps*, by former Corps member John Buchan. Copies of the book will be available in the shop.

12.30 **Buffet Lunch** available in room 1 – museum fully open for browsing FICM visitors and their guests.

## 14.00-15.00 Frontiersmen and the Early Years of Intelligence Gathering.

Hosted by Deputy Chair René Dee.

A talk by WO2 QMSI Nick Gibson, Countess Mountbatten's Own Legion of Frontiersmen, City of London and Colour Squadron. Nick will focus on the years from the end of the Boer War to 1905 when many early frontiersmen gained their insights into field intelligence, and the Legion's formation to the start of WWI when the principal usage and focus of the Legion changed subtly to a more actively combatant stance. Time permitting, Nick will cover generally the work of the Legion today.

(To be held in room 3. The rest of museum will still be open to FICM and guests)

15.00-16.00 **Museum open in full browsing mode.**

16.00 **Disperse.**

## April 2016 FICM Lunch with Lectures, Special Forces Club, London

Date and details of speakers and topics (possibly on Borneo and Northern Ireland) will be published in the winter issue and on the website, at the beginning of December.

# WELCOME TO YOUR NEW EDITOR

The formation of FICM in the closing months of 2011 and the early weeks of 2012 inevitably involved much paperwork. A trust deed had to be drawn up; the nice folk at HM Revenue & Customs had to be convinced that FICM was a genuine charity worthy of tax perks; a bank account had to be opened; and there were leaflets to be printed.

But the most valuable piece of paperwork was undoubtedly issue one of *Sub Rosa*, which appeared in spring 2012. Just four pages in length, it rapidly proved to be the glue that often holds the organisation together.

With a scattered membership, not all of whom are able to get to Corps Day or to FICM's lunches at the Special Forces Club, or to the autumn Open Days at the museum, it is *Sub Rosa* that has been the permanent point of contact for many. It

quickly doubled in size and began to include a wide selection of articles giving the history and background of museum exhibits, as well as insiders' recollections of intelligence operations.

The guiding hand behind all this work has been the tireless John Quenby, only recently retired as FICM chairman. John now stands down as editor of *Sub Rosa*, having seen ten issues through from start to finish. He has our best wishes and our gratitude for all his work, and for his legacy of an effective and well-produced newsletter.

The editor's baton (well, quill pen perhaps) now passes to Chris Yates, who has been shadowing John. He has a hard act to follow, but Chris is already proving an effective editor, having bullied (sorry, persuaded) me into writing more for this issue than ever before.

**TH, July 2015**



Chris Yates

Photo: SMY

**FICM WEBSITE**  
[www.intelligencemuseum.org](http://www.intelligencemuseum.org)