



Sub

Rosa

Newsletter of the

FRIENDS OF THE INTELLIGENCE CORPS MUSEUM

www.intelligencemuseum.org

E Newsletter 12 - Winter 2015

WELCOME TO *SUB ROSA* IN THE WINTER!

This edition has an attractive mix of the historical, recollections and reviews, with strong encouragement to make more use of our website. Many admirable contributions are put there for simple reasons of limited space in the newsletter. On the back page, read about next year's fascinating Lunch with Lectures on Borneo and BRIXMIS. September saw a well-supported open-day lunch and trustees' meeting, followed by an interesting talk from the Legion of Frontiersmen. René Dee has been FICM's observer at the museum trustees' meetings, keeping both trusts abreast of each other's activities. Another highlight has been our large donation to the Corps' archive for its computer upgrade – just what the Friends are for! Thank you to our own donors, and thank you for the articles and letters – keep them coming!

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all! Ed.

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BIG I.T. IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ARCHIVE by Joyce Hutton

Just over four months ago the archive consisted of four separate computers with different operating systems and software, three separate printers and one scanner. We are now the proud possessor of an internal LAN consisting of a small server, four networked computers, two networked printers, one scanner and a laptop docking station all of which was made possible by the generosity of the Friends.

It is hard for those that have not lived with the previous system to comprehend how frustrating and time-consuming it could be. The simplest task, such as saving to a disc in order to transfer information would depend on whether a particular computer would accept the particular format or not! Whilst the museum database, MODES, could be accessed by two operators thanks to a bit of computer magic by Mike Cooksey, it could be a particularly slow and painful business for the second operator. Now those days are well and truly gone. The network enables files to be accessed from any of the four computers and for printing from either of the two printers. All the computers now have the same software capability with an SD card reader attached; we even have a separate floppy disc drive donated by David Cooper of M.A.S.S. Computers who set up the system. The MODES database is stored on the server so is much quicker and easier for both operators to access at the same time – with the capacity to expand to additional operators. *(Continued on page 3.)*



The new server

Photo: CIGY

DISTRIBUTION GUIDANCE

While this newsletter does not include 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!

BOOK/FILM REVIEW

An Air Recce First? by Lester Hillman

Following magazine serialisation over the summer of 1915 *The Thirty-Nine Steps* came out as a book in October with a print run of 24,000. The next year, 1916, John Buchan was gazetted into the Intelligence Corps where he spent the rest of the war, rising to the rank of colonel. In the century since 1915 *The Thirty-Nine Steps* has sold more than a million copies. Alfred Hitchcock's film, with Robert Donat as Richard Hannay, offered a much altered plot, but in 2004 a survey of best British films rated it at 21. Since the 1935 film there have been at least three remakes, all widely different to the book. Hitchcock's *North By North West* is said to have been inspired by *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. In the theatre it has played to full houses with the latest nine-year run at the Criterion Theatre in London's West End closing on 5 September 2015. A Medmenham review of the 39 Steps phenomenon, including the air dimension, may be appropriate and timely.

Sunday Service

Written in 1914 and running to barely a hundred pages it is said to have been written by Buchan in a Broadstairs nursing home as he recovered from ulcers. It has something of the Margate/Ramsgate placing, climaxing on 15 June 1914, with cliff-top villas, steps near the Ruff and Bradgate. The writing maintains pace but shows haste. Surprisingly for Buchan, who in 1933 became Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and who was the son of a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, most of the key action seems to take place on the Sabbath. On Ascension Sunday at 6.46 a.m., the doorstep milk delivery is late and Hannay sprints to catch the 7.10 a.m. train from St Pancras. Bound for Dumfries and Galloway, the train thunders up west of Chicksands and today's Medmenham Collection. Three weeks later on Sunday, 14 June 1914 Hannay starts a punch-up in Jermyn Street and is chased by the police past St James's Palace. The early hours of the next morning see him speeding through Kentish lanes to the final and triumphal conclusion. Even if the recent theatre adaptation is not faithful to the book it seems somehow right that the Criterion's stage door is actually onto Jermyn Street. The fictional Hannay had Sunday dinner in a Jermyn Street restaurant, leaving several courses untouched but polishing off the best part of a bottle of Burgundy.

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Hannay Hikes

In between lunches at the Savoy and theatreland dinners Buchan has Hannay take a walk through north London. The Intelligence Corps Association, Surrey, London and Middlesex (SLAM) stalwarts found themselves in May 2015 on a centennial tracing of Hannay's likely route down the course of the buried River Fleet from Highgate to Kentish Town. It followed clues offered in the book and may have been the first such recreation of what Buchan perhaps had in mind. In 2014 the Medmenham Club, including retired and serving personnel, traced more of Hannay's movements exploring St Pancras Station and King's Cross (see Spring Events Report - Medmenham Newsletter Autumn 2014 pp. 29-30).



Lester Hillman

Photo: CIGY

An Air Recce First?

Can *The Thirty-Nine Steps* claim a first for fiction about reconnaissance from an aircraft platform? In his slim volume, Buchan offers a plot featuring sustained airborne reconnaissance and co-ordination with ground personnel. The air drama is spread over nearly forty pages and Buchan even manages to lob in a hint of maritime reconnaissance capability and the discovery of a covert air operations centre!

The air drama begins halfway through the book. Having jumped off a train near a river culvert in order to hide, Hannay takes stock of his situation: 'I did not like this espionage from the air, and I began to think less well of the countryside I had chosen for a refuge ... I heard from far off the beat of an engine.

There silhouetted against the dusky west was my friend, the monoplane'. The next day the hide-and-seek drama continues, Hannay having now acquired a car: 'I was at the aeroplane's mercy ... my only chance was to get to the leafy cover of the valley'. The car lost and a bicycle procured, the evasion saga picks up the following morning: 'Then I saw an aeroplane coming up from the east ... Now it was flying very low, and now the observer on board caught sight of me. I could see one of the two occupants examining me through glasses ... My enemies had located me ...'

The air intelligence on Hannay's whereabouts successfully delivered, Hannay later observes his pursuers methodically searching for him on foot, 'quartering the hillside'.

Buchan Bleriot?

The monoplane, a two-seater, offers clues as to what Buchan may have envisaged. Hannay's Boche pursuers may have longed for a Rumpler Taube Dove – one piloted by Leutnant von Hiddesen actually bombed Paris on 30 August 1914. However, circling Cairnsmore of Fleet in Dumfries and Galloway, a Bleriot XI might be more likely to head the shortlist for an Eindecker. Variants and improvements of Louis Bleriot's 25 July 1909 Channel-crossing plane reached the Great War with the RFC, and around 25 of them were with the Royal Naval Air Service until 1915.

Hannay escaped his pursuers but not before he identified a covert air operations centre. Buchan describes it thus. '... The wood was not solid, but only a ring, and inside was an oval of green turf ... It didn't take long to guess what it was. It was an aerodrome, and a secret one'.

Hannay at a Hundred

So there you have it, in popular English fiction could this be the first, multi-faceted, sustained, reference to offensive air reconnaissance? It encompasses dedicated, tasked air-missions, target acquisition, timely intelligence, close co-operation with a ground force and, to cap it all, covert airfields and maritime operations planning!

In closing, an invitation is extended. Any references in fiction before 1914 featuring tasked reconnaissance from an aircraft platform would be gratefully received. ■

BOOK REVIEW

The Cracking of Linear B by Chris Yates

The Man who Deciphered Linear B: The Story of Michael Ventris, Andrew Robinson, Thames & Hudson, 2012, 168 pp., pb.

Michael Ventris (1922–1956) deciphered Linear B so reintroducing to the world the lost language of Mycenaean Greek. It is 'linear' not because anything necessarily is in sequence, but because it is not three-dimensional, for example like Egyptian hieroglyphics, and it is not an alphabet in the English language sense. Previous study of Linear B often fell into the trap of the 'pictographic fallacy', i.e. that indecipherable signs represent something in the world, or refer to Platonic ideal forms. Linear B, on the other hand, represents language phonetically, a syllabary language such as Japanese, compared with the alphabets of English or Hebrew most of whose individual letters must take their first steps into syllables.

Primarily an architect who pursued Linear B as a hobby, Ventris was not interested in classical literature or languages, but he did like a puzzle. After years of analysis, his great discovery came when he made a non-analytical 'leap to firmer ground': the presumption that Linear B was describing Cretan towns. Robinson offers interesting similarities between architecture and decoding: both are problem-based, one trying to fit function and form into a known space and the other trying to fit language into

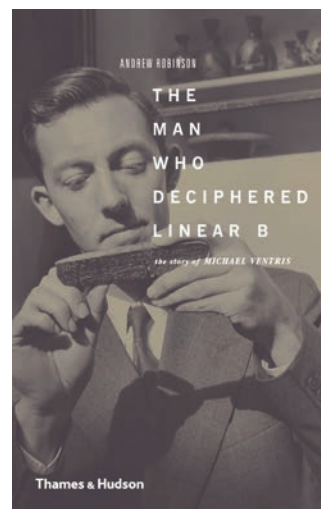
known linguistic spaces, e.g. the Indo-European heritage. Both architecture and decoding, Robinson writes: are highly functional and not 'art for art's sake'; benefit from collaborative work; need mental manipulation of large amount of visual and written data; recognise the significance of pattern and relationship of elements to a framework; search for order in confusion.

This is a shortish, delicately written biography about a sensitive man. He joined the wartime RAF, was trained as a pilot but was drawn to navigation, more suited to his natural aversion to the limelight. After the war he was sent to Plön to analyse the Gestapo structure in Kiel, then returned to architecture and (for him) the heady post-war days of promised social change. Fluent in French, German and Greek, he once taught himself Swedish in a matter of weeks. Of particular interest to our readers is Ventris's productive relationship with John Chadwick, wartime code-breaker at Bletchley Park, and breaker of encrypted Japanese naval messages sent from Tokyo to Berlin.

Despite the author's tidily stacked detail, interesting discussion and speculation we are left with the question: Why do it? The cracking of Linear B revealed 'no great battles, great thoughts or great poetry', it simply is of itself – the puzzle is solved but the result 'disappointing'. On the 25 June

1953, a Times leader spoke of Ventris's breakthrough in muted terms; adjacent to the piece was Edmund Hilary's account of climbing a certain mountain. Characteristically, Ventris did not take to the inevitable tabloidisation of his achievement such as the 'Everest of Greek archaeology'.

First published in 2012 with over 40 black and white illustrations, including the excellently reproduced grids from Ventris's papers, the book is a worthwhile addition to the museum library. Only the occasional spelling and punctuation errors are unworthy of the punctiliousness of the biography's subject, otherwise we have absorbing non-fiction. ■



I.T. IMPROVEMENTS (*continued*)

From the very start the process went smoothly. Once the Friends had agreed the contract, two company engineers installed the necessary wiring and port points, with the equipment arriving shortly afterwards. David Cooper then installed and connected all the equipment, ensuring that the software and different elements performed as they should. We were then left to play around with the new set-up, so identifying a few areas in need of tweaking and these were speedily addressed. Because we have no Internet access we are unable to download updates for these systems, but the company have offered to provide update-discs on an ad hoc basis which will keep the software and security up to date.

I would like to end with a personal thank you to the Friends. The archive has been the recipient of the tremendous gift of £8,932.80 which has not only fundamentally improved working practices but one that also will continue to benefit staff and volunteers for years to come. ■



Men at work

Photo: JH

NEW ARTICLES ON THE WEBSITE

A Sad Defection by Paul Croxson

There is a new article on the website telling the slightly odd story of Corporal (or should we say Sergeant?*) Brian Patchett's disappearance into East Germany in the 1960s. Due to its timing and the security implications of his role in the Corps as a Russian linguist working in Berlin, his disappearance aroused considerable interest and concern at the highest levels of government both here and in the USA – totally disproportionate to his seeming importance.

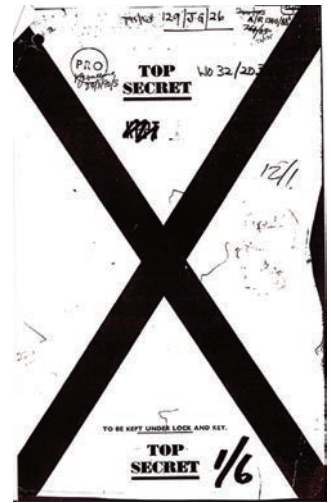
It is a sad story and we will never know what Brian's real motivation was: were the official inquiry's findings correct? And it is doubtful whether we ever find out for sure his fate. There is a suggestion that the British Services Security Organisation (Germany) felt his

collar when the Berlin Wall came down and he tried to come home. Finding nothing of any significance or interest, it seems it was suggested that he should return from whence he came, rather than consider returning to the United Kingdom.

The article goes on to tell of others who crossed the line for various reasons and of the sometimes extremely unpleasant life that they led in East Germany. A number of soldiers, mostly American, disappeared in Korea in those early days of the Cold War. Amongst them was Sergeant Hill, another member of the Corps whose disappearance to this day is a mystery. His story, as far as it is known, is also told here. The United Nations, whose war it was, recorded the deaths of 686 killed in action and a further 1,102 either missing in action or prisoners of war.

* Doubt about his rank will become obvious as you read the article. ■

(Full text on the website.)



Reflections of an I Corps Boy Soldier by René Dee

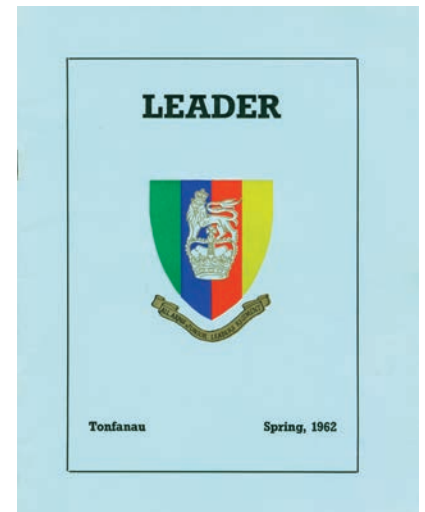
It was May 1962 when this young teenager found himself at Tonfanau Halt in what was then called Merionethshire. Scores of boys of my age between 15 and 17 disgorged from the train onto a platform that was singularly bare and uninviting. At the end stood an equally uninviting sergeant major who looked at his motley and long-haired new intake with as much scorn and disbelief as he could muster.

Welcome to the All Arms Junior Leaders' Regiment (AAJLR), where 800 boys at a time spent around 18 months learning to become a soldier before entering 'man's service', in the corps or regiment that they had chosen to serve. I had joined the Intelligence Corps on 17 April 1962 in Northampton with thoughts of cloak and dagger training and James Bond

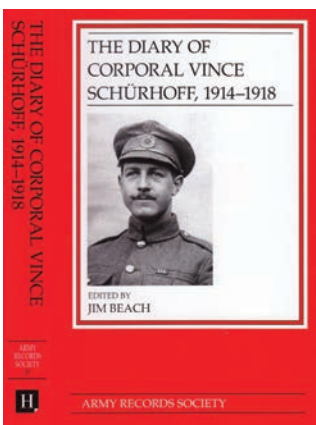
tactics (the mind is pretty fertile at that age) but limited intelligence training, instruction or introduction was given during the entire period I spent at AAJLR. The primary emphasis was on soldiering and turning you into a disciplined one who could deal with charging the enemy (in the form of a bale of hay) screaming at the top of your voice with rifle and fixed bayonet. As important were enduring cold showers at 6 a.m. (Reveille); learning to clean and iron your kit; drill, drill and more drill, sport, adventure training, driver training and further education. It didn't matter if you were in the Intelligence Corps, the Durham Light Infantry, The Black Watch, the 17th/21st Lancers, REME, or the Royal Artillery, you all went through the same routine. Boy soldiers were also incentivised during by being promoted from junior lance corporal to junior RSM, and learnt to manage their troops as those in man's service did.

Some of the junior RSMs were far more scary than the real thing! ■

(Full text on the website.)



NOW AVAILABLE - THE DIARY OF CORPORAL VINCE SCHÜRHOFF, 1914-1918



Last April's Lunch with Lectures saw Jim Beach presenting 'The Everyday Life of the Intelligence Soldier' from his forthcoming book. Now published by the Army Records Society, you can obtain the book only through Archivist Joyce Hutton for £20. As a reminder, the book is about: Corporal Vince Schürhoff, who came from a Birmingham business family that was German on his father's side. He joined the British army in 1914 and served with 16/Warwicks until 1916. He was then seconded to signals intelligence work and later transferred to the Royal Engineers (Signal Service). Employed in a variety of intelligence roles, he was awarded the Military Medal in 1918. His diary provides an excellent window into the physical and mental worlds of a middle-class junior NCO on the Western Front, recording the nuances of life in the trenches and behind the lines. He also offers a rare contemporaneous account of grassroots intelligence work during the First World War. ■

Watch out in the next issue/on the website for Paul Croxson's review of this book. Ed.

FROM THE ARCHIVE by Richard Harper



CWGC, Plymouth

Photo: MIM

Detective Work in the Archive

When the editor asked me to prepare a piece for Sub Rosa, how could I possibly refuse? I was particularly touched as he had just allowed me, very generously, to buy him a glass of ale. So what would I write about? Clearly, any text would have to be relevant to the Intelligence Corps Museum, so perhaps you, the reader, might allow me to tell you about some of the projects in which I have been involved under the firm and guiding hand of Joyce and, to some extent, Sally Ann.

When I first arrived at Building 251 many moons ago to start serious work, I was sat down with boxes and boxes of photographs. These covered almost every conceivable subject: pictures of ordinance, to gatherings of smiling participants at some celebratory dinner or other, photographs used to for interrogation training, early aerial shots of trench systems and operations in the Middle and Far East to name just a few of the subjects. I found very often that these pictures had no captions relating to date, indication of geographical place or indeed names of the people shown. Some detective work had to be undertaken and frequently Alan Edwards, Joyce or one of the other volunteers was able to assist with identification and thus proper categorisation. Quite by chance, when looking through photographs of various training courses undertaken during World War II, I came upon one which included a great friend of my father in the line-up.

Following training with Chris Yates I was let loose on boxes of documents related to several geographical areas of operation, and then documents related to the first and second world wars. In each case it was necessary to check that any previous accessioning (archiving) on the MODES system was correct, and that the artefact or document description was in accordance with

current practice. My day in the gulag, sorry, archive is a Thursday, which coincides with Chris's. His help with Intelligence Corps questions and many other related topics has been invaluable.

My most recent task is related to the large amount of material that we have amassed regarding the Corps' war graves. Once again, there have been many photographs, which happily have found homes in the personal files of fallen members of the Corps. There are also books of remembrance and other similar documents. Rather poignantly I happened upon a list of those officers killed between 1940 and 1957. Of the 92, 38 were killed in action, nine died or were executed as POWs, 23 died of natural causes and 12 died in traffic accidents. I found this final statistic rather shocking. Also, one poor unfortunate was shot by a sentry whilst returning his girlfriend to a college in Cambridge. The subsequent inquiry found that neither man was at fault.

Every week I turn up something new and interesting. Building 251 is a fascinating place.

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT by Dave Farrell

Friends will be pleased to learn that our bankers, Holt's/RBS, signed the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant, a promise between the nation, government and the armed forces to treat serving personnel, veterans and their families with fairness and respect. This was done at a ceremony at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall in September. The covenant was countersigned by Mark Lancaster TD MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans.

By signing the covenant Holt's will endeavour in their business dealings to uphold the key principles of the covenant, which are:

- No members of the armed forces community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services, compared with any other citizen.
- In some circumstances special consideration may be appropriate, especially for the injured or bereaved.

These also apply to those members of the bank's staff or their partners who are serving personnel. ■



CANAL ZONE RECOLLECTION by Allan Spence

Are You Entitled to an Egypt or Cyprus Medal?

I enlisted into the Intelligence Corps at Lincoln on 7 December 1953 as a Regular, with the object of 'breaking the apron strings' after dropping out of Leeds University medical school, and to avoid family pressure to take up law as an alternative. After training at Maresfield on No. 71 ORs Field Security Course I was assigned to duties on active service in the Canal Zone, Egypt, joining 251 FSS in Moascar (Ismailia) on 26 May 1954 where the Corps shared a compound with the Royal Army Medical Corps.

By late 1955, I had progressed from private to sergeant and been through an air photo reading course. This coincided with national service phasing out, and British forces withdrawing from the Canal Zone. In the evacuation of the Canal Zone in 1955, there was a general exodus and some chaos, with the result that I found myself one of the last members of the Int Corps left in Port Said awaiting transfer to Cyprus – and badgered by the armoury to take charge of numerous weapons confiscated from Egyptians over the years. With my destination being Cyprus and the ongoing EOKA crisis, I did not fancy taking a miscellany of weapons with me, so I had them all put through a heavy-duty press to buckle the breeches beyond repair, and was then ceremonially rowed out into the middle of the Canal and they were dropped overboard.

At much the same time I was contacted by the staff at 50 Military Corrective Establishment to say that they were still detaining some Egyptian nationals on behalf of the Corps and wanting to know what to do with them. Since those who had committed them were no longer in the Canal Zone, the only solution was to inform the Egyptian police that we had prisoners to hand over. Much to my amazement they were duly collected by the Egyptian police and marched off in leg irons instead of being immediately released.

Upon transfer to Cyprus, I was posted to field security duties in Episcopi, and was stationed there during the preparation for the invasion of the Suez Canal by French and British forces in 1956 – eventually finding myself landing in Port Said accompanying the army records amassed during the previous years in the Canal Zone, and adding to these records

by incorporating documents captured from the Egyptian police and army. At this stage the Corps headquarters was at Navy House, close by where I had disposed of the weapons into the Canal in 1955. British and French forces were scouring everywhere for abandoned weapons, including frogmen searching the Canal, and my concern can be imagined in case what I had dumped on leaving the Canal Zone should come to light. Most of the weapons found abandoned were piled outside the Corps office at the entrance to Navy House, and were ultimately shipped back to the UK, but there was no sign of my destroyed weapons – a great relief.



GSM 1918-62 with clasps

Photo: AS

Following the intervention of the UN in the hitherto successful invasion of the Canal Zone we awaited our turn for evacuation out of Port Said by boat to Malta, and final airlift out of Luqa airport to the UK, by which time my three-year service had expired, so a hasty journey to Maresfield was made and return to civilian life rapidly followed. After four years in the army reserve I completed seven years service and was discharged.

In a somewhat hilarious follow-up, on 20 November 1992 I wrote to the Army Medal Office to enquire if I had qualified for any medals for my period on active service in Egypt, Cyprus or the Suez invasion, only to be informed that there was a six-month delay at the Army Records Office, but I would hear in due course. A letter dated 14 September 1993 from the Medal Office informed me that asbestos dust had been found in the Army Record Centre and that further delays were inevitable. In November 1994, I was informed that I was qualified for the General Service Medal GSM 1918 with the Cyprus

clasp, and this arrived with the edge inscription 22978425 Sgt J.A. Spence Int Corps.

Hearing of the authorisation of the General Service Medal 1918 to those involved in the Suez invasion in November 2006, I wrote to the MOD Medal Office to enquire of my entitlement, and by return post heard of long delays, but later that month the assessment was complete and I was told I was entitled to the clasp Canal Zone – but asking that I return the medal in my possession, as in July 1954 I was a private, and that the rank at the time of the first award of the medal must be inscribed on the rim, the replacement to read 22978425 Sgt J.A. Spence Int Corps. This failed to resolve the issue about the Suez invasion, and I pointed this out to the Medal Office, but nevertheless I sent back my medal with the Cyprus clasp. Finally I received my General Service Medal 1918 in December 2006 duly inscribed to me as a private – but now with three clasps: Canal Zone, Cyprus and Near East. I must be honest and admit that I wished I had not pressed the matter of multiple awards of the same medal, and kept my one with just the Cyprus clasp and my rank of sergeant.

There must be numerous Int Corps veterans entitled to the General Service Medal 1918 for active service in Egypt or Cyprus, who have not applied for or been aware of the entitlement, many being national servicemen. Perhaps this will encourage them to apply. ■



Reproduced by kind permission of Richard Woolley

LETTERS RECEIVED

Have Other Ranks' Eyebrows Moved?

To The Editor,

Watching the Remembrance Sunday Parade reminded me of a bizarre incident some years ago. As a member of the Royal Naval Club in Portsmouth I had reciprocal rights at the In & Out and had arranged to meet an old friend, also a member, there for lunch. After a long journey I was in need of the cloakroom and on going in was faced with the extraordinary sight of what must have been hundreds of bowler hats all neatly laid out on hooks and tables; a sight possibly not seen since the heyday of the Stock Exchange. There had been a rehearsal for some royal occasion or other. A mischievous side of my nature dearly wanted to run down the row of hooks swapping them around. To my eternal regret I did not do so.

On the subject of bowlers, is it not time to do away with officers wearing them on parade with the Legion now that the majority of members are no longer ex-servicemen and women? I notice also that as we have aged, we other ranks seem to have lost the art of wearing a beret (or have our eyebrows really moved that much)?

Paul Croxson
November 2015

Old Story from a New Friend

To The Editor,

I was serving in the Intelligence Corps in Trieste security office in 1953. Many of us at TSO got a military driving licence and on my return to London I showed it at the driving licence office in County Hall and on payment of half a crown I was given a civilian licence. A couple of weeks later I bought for £5 a 1928 Standard 8 h.p. saloon for which I paid £9 5s. for insurance. A few weeks later one Saturday afternoon, I was driving two friends from our homes near Waterloo Station to go swimming in the Serpentine in Hyde Park. As we went past Buckingham Palace, the car broke down. We pushed it to the kerb right outside the palace and explained to a policeman that the car had broken down and that we would be back in a couple of hours with another car to tow it home. He said that the car would be safe enough where it was and off we went. I had only one other friend with a car, but found he was away for the day, so we did not get back to my car until Sunday morning. There outside the palace was my car safe and sound having been watched over and guarded by the Metropolitan Police and HM the Queen's Grenadier Guards. Those were the days!

William Shortland
June 2015

William, who became a Friend in November 2015, has campaigned successfully for more recognition in the museum for national servicemen who made up a great many of the personnel in the Corps in the early 1950s. Ed.

FAREWELL DAN, HELLO BILL!

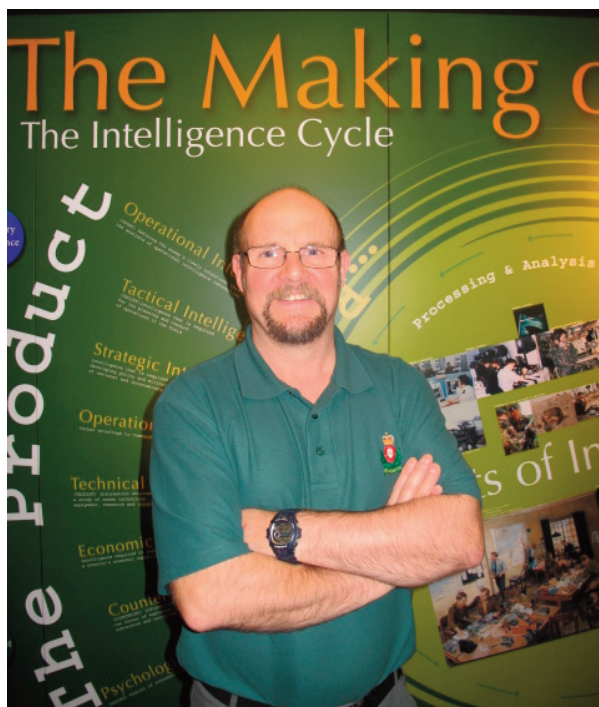
by Sally Ann Reed

New Member of Staff with a Passion for Tanks!

Former Museum Assistant Dan Francis enjoyed the education support side of his role so much that he decided to train as a full-time primary school teacher, and left us in August to start his training and school placement. In one particularly memorable lesson it was a joy to watch him dressed up as an SOE agent explaining to seven- and eight-year-olds about sending messages in code, and codebreaking. The children were enthralled, and I am sure he has a great future ahead as a teacher.

Which brings me nicely to introduce our new Museum Assistant Mr Justin Steadman, known as Bill. Bill joined the museum team at the end of October and brings with him a lifelong passion for history and a background in intelligence and adult education, all of which should help him make his mark on the many and varied tasks required of the museum assistant. Bill's especial interest is in the human stories behind the artefacts, and anything to do with tanks! Whilst we are somewhat short of the latter we should be able to provide plenty of characters to satisfy his interest in the former.

We wish both well. ■



Bill

Photo: SAR

PLANNED EVENTS

Lunch with Lectures 2016

Next year's event at the Special Forces Club, Knightsbridge will be held on 7 April 2016. Open to all FICM members who may bring one guest. Previous years have always seen a full house, so best to get your name down now!

The day begins with tea/coffee on arrival at 11.00, the first talk from 11.30 to 12.30, when we adjourn to the SFC bar. There is then a three-course lunch including wine, followed by the second talk. Questions are encouraged.

Geoff Greaves of the BRIXMIS Association is the first presenter. Officially known as the British Commanders'-in-Chief Mission to the Soviet Forces in Germany, BRIXMIS operated within Russian-occupied East Germany throughout the Cold War. With a base in Berlin and a Mission House inside the Russian Zone at Potsdam, the ostensible role of furthering good relations allowed for intelligence gathering on a large scale, with some notable successes.

After lunch, *John Landolt will outline the Borneo Confrontation and the role of the Corps*. John says that at time many senior army officers saw the Corps as an unnecessary addition to the order of battle. [Intelligence was regarded as a general staff function, supported by a few specialists such as photo interpreters and linguists.] 'Borneo was a turning point,' he explains, 'because Malaysian Police Special Branch needed military support. A number of field intelligence officer posts were authorised but there was no rush of volunteers, so the task fell to NCOs from the Corps, who proved hugely successful.' [After John sets the scene,] one of those FIOs, Peter Mobbs, will talk about his experience on the ground.

Registering

Please send your expression of interest to Treasurer Dave Farrell at farrelld49@yahoo.com or by post to him at FICM Chicksands. We have not yet arrived at the cost per head, but expect that soon in a FICM email broadcast.

Summer Event 2016

We intend to offer another of the popular social events with a Chicksands museum visit and informal Q & A with your trustees. Please watch out for more by email and in the spring issue of *Sub Rosa*.

IN REMEMBRANCE

The Rain (Korea 1950)

The rain obscuring distant hills.
The blinding rain that soaks you through, and kills
The cooking-fires at birth.

The rain that trickles slowly down your neck.
The pouring rain, the sodden kit, and mud that wrecks
A fighting-man's morale.

The rain that soaks the soldier's bed.
The living rain that patters gently on the dead,
And fills their eyes with tears.

The rain that rusts the tanks and guns.
The steady rain that drips off tangled wire, and runs
In rivers down the trench.

The rain obliterating guardian flares.
The midnight rain that makes the watchful sentry stare
At silent shifting shadows.

The rain never will you e'er forget.
The streaming rain that foiled each hoarded cigarette
And blurred the precious mail.

The rain beats now on cosy cottage walls.
The friendly rain that makes each one of us recall ...
But they who share the hearth know not.

Ian E. Kaye
Ex-Sergeant
The Black Watch.

From *Pick and Shovel Poems*, Stockwell, Ilfracombe, 1960.

FRIEND REMEMBERED

With sadness we note the death of the following Friend in 2015

Harry Beckhough – March

Obituaries are published in *The Rose and the Laurel*