



Sub Rosa

Newsletter of the

FRIENDS OF THE INTELLIGENCE CORPS MUSEUM

www.intelligencemuseum.org

No.17, Summer 2017

Four Heroes of the Intelligence Corps

By Harry Fecitt

'Volunteers with nerves of steel'

During World War II, around 10,000 Germans and Austrians, many of them Jewish refugees, volunteered to serve with the British forces. Most were employed in the so-called Alien Companies of The Pioneer Corps and some then volunteered for more hazardous duties such as with 51 (Middle East) Commando, where their German language skills were sometimes used in dangerous situations. In Europe, around 300 of these 'Alien' pioneers were employed by SOE.



Supplement No. 37536



SUPPLEMENT TO The London Gazette

War Office - 18th April 1946

Published by Authority

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The KING had been graciously pleased to approve the publication of the names of the undermentioned as having posthumously been granted King's Commendations for brave conduct:

No. 13053511 Sergeant (local) Frederick Benson, Intelligence Corps.
No. 13053592 Sergeant (local) Peter John Morton, Intelligence Corps.
No. 13041720 Corporal August Jacques Warndorfer, Intelligence Corps.

No. 13053350 Sergeant (local) Peter Weisz, Intelligence Corps. All the above four were of the Jewish faith, and German or Austrian extraction. They were employed by the Special Operations Executive (SOE) to work behind enemy lines in World War II Europe. All are mentioned in Peter Leighton-Langer's excellent history *The King's Own Loyal Enemy Aliens: German and Austrian Refugees in Britain's Armed Forces, 1939-45* (2003), which has these details.

Becker, Fritz, later Benson, Frederick, 13053511; born Rhineland 1921 or 1922, parents taken to Poland, from where they did not return; by Kindertransport to UK 1938 or 1939; in hostel in Sutton, Surrey, March 1939-June 1940; then interned; popular as imitator of Prussian military manners; sergeant in Pioneer Corps; transferred to SOE, Intelligence Corps; parachuted into Poland three times in SS uniform, trick was to visit a dentist in a German military camp and spend the night there; on his third trip, 1944 into Pinsk or possibly Warsaw, was supposed to liberate Polish resistance leader, for which purpose he was to command group of Polish partisans, also in German uniform, but mission unsuccessful; it is thought he perished on this occasion; however, there is a record which says he was killed in Western Europe 29 October 1944; posthumous King's Commendation for Brave Conduct. [Leighton-Langer states that after the war Becker's military documents were destroyed but the reason for that action is not known.]

Meyer, Peter, alias Morton, Peter John, 13053592, German born 1920 or 1921; enlisted from Surrey; sergeant in Pioneer Corps; later on Intelligence Corps Extra Regimental list; killed in action Western Europe 10 March 1945, posthumous King's Commendation for Brave Conduct.

(continued on p. 2)

A day for your diary

Pimm's on the Terrace The late summer event for the Friends will be on 12 September at Chicksands to combine with an ICA Eastern Region event. It is hoped that Deputy Chief of Defence Intelligence Paul Rimmer will give a talk in the museum at midday, then we decamp to The Priory for a buffet lunch and

Pimm's on the Terrace. In addition to Corps Secretary Sam Southam, we are inviting Corps HQ staff, many of whom will be new in post. More details to follow by email. *Mike Cooksey*

What's inside?

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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.

Lawrence had 'a genius for backing into the limelight'

On Thursday 30 March 2017 at 10.00 a.m., the National Army Museum (NAM) reopened its doors to the public. It is not every day that a major military museum opens and this is one with exceptional linkages to the Corps. Amongst the 15 or so waiting at the doors was *Sub Rosa's* ace reporter. The makeover has cost £23.75m and taken three years. There are five permanent galleries. At the outset of this project there had been consultations with opportunities to comment on the plans. It has also been possible to support events held offsite during the works. Prior to the remodelling, members of the Corps and FICM offered active support. Brigadier (retd) Brian Parritt, Hon. President of FICM, gave a presentation to a capacity audience, including three Chelsea Pensioners and a field marshal, in NAM's former art gallery.

T. E. Lawrence

The new displays shine a light on Lawrence of Arabia. His robes, a £100,000 acquisition, are prominently displayed and have featured strongly in the launch publicity. John Buchan, a member of the Intelligence Corps, played a key part in creating the legend. He helped get American journalist Lowell Thomas and his cameraman Harry Chase plus half a ton of equipment out to the Middle East, to focus on what 'Heretofore was obscure struggle ... Do everything to help this young man' (Buchan telegram). The dynamic between Lawrence and Lowell Thomas was explored in the 1962 David Lean film. Lowell Thomas memorably described Lawrence as having 'a genius for backing into the limelight', and this year marks the centenary of his campaign reaching its height. Following the Great War, Lawrence maintained a correspondence with John Buchan. In 1935, six weeks before he was to die from a motor cycle accident he wrote congratulating Buchan on his governor generalship of Canada: 'Can't call you colonel any more, I used to be one ... May you be happy in Canada'.



Templer

NAM owes its existence to Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer. At lower ground floor level, the Templer Study Centre, a feature of the previous museum, has returned. The 100,000-item archive can be accessed



Brigadier (retd) Brian Parritt's presentation on the Korean War 28th February 2013

with staff members Robert Fleming and new Librarian Sarah Hume, who joined in November 2016, on hand to assist. The image shows the entrance area nearing completion of fit out. There is space for display material to capture the interest of casual visitors along with enhanced computer access facilities. The area lends itself to informal events including a scheduling of monthly evening book clubs. The Templer Study Centre has dedicated study facilities for material retrieved from the holdings and the Museum is Wi-Fi enabled.



Templer Study Centre – The flooring picks up on medal ribbon colours and links to an atrium display at the main entrance

The Study Centre is supported by a team of about ten volunteers; two were on hand on the opening day and the museum's wider network of volunteers bring specialist military knowledge or language skills, ideal for the free scheduled guided tours of the museum. The Society Of The Friends Of The National Army Museum brings fundraising and other support dimensions. All these would seem natural communities for a briefing on the MIM or even a visit.

Sliding into command

During discussions on opening day with museum staff, the opportunities for FICM were touched upon. A FICM visit and guided tour, with a chance to see the closed stacks and items related to Sir Gerald Templer, might be of interest. Templer was born 11 September 1898; perhaps next year a visit could be scheduled for 'Templer Day'. A modest heritage walk might be possible, exploring further Corps links in the area; next door to the museum there are a couple of cap-badged Royal Hospital In-Pensioners.

Fascinating material is held by the museum, sadly not all readily accessible. Personally I would love to see

Accession No. 1982 03 69, the field marshal's slide rule. Templer's well-used wooden device, believed to be of WWII vintage, tells you how long it takes to move a Corps, calculating marching and assembling times for troops and vehicles. To my mind 'Every corporal should have one in their knapsack', as Napoleon did not say. ■

Photos: Lester Hillman

FOUR HEROES OF THE INTELLIGENCE CORPS (CONTINUED)

Warndorfer, August Jacques, 13041720, a nephew of Admiral Lord Cunningham, whose sister had married an Austrian before 1914; born Austria 1899 or 1900, officer cadet in Austrian Navy in WWI; enlisted from Inverness; served as private in 220 Company Pioneer Corps, where he excelled at handling the axe; transferred to SOE, Intelligence Corps Extra Regimental List, it is thought he was used on mission in Austria; missing, believed killed in action on or after 14 October 1944, posthumous King's Commendation for Brave Conduct.

Weiss, also Weisz, Peter, Austrian, 13053350, sergeant in Intelligence Corps, 3 Coy Int Corps Depot, volunteered from Liverpool; parachuted into Germany, arrested and taken to Dachau, executed April 1945, posthumous King's Commendation for Brave Conduct.

These four brave men are not featured in the Corps history, *Forearmed, a History of the Intelligence Corps* by Anthony Clayton, but their achievements as non-commissioned officers are as remarkable as the risks that they voluntarily took in the service of Britain and her Allies. All four are commemorated in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Groesbeek Canadian War Cemetery, Netherlands.

Next time we pay tribute to those who fell on active service in our wars, let us silently remember these volunteer heroes with their nerves of steel, whose sufferings before their deaths can only be imagined. ■

by Harry Feccit

HISTORICAL NOTE

Lieutenant Pierre Le Chêne

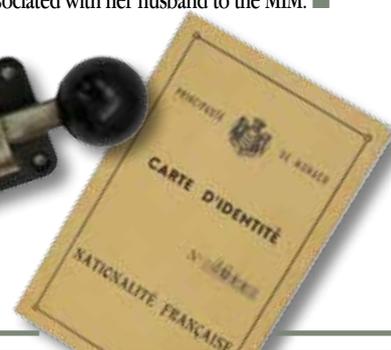
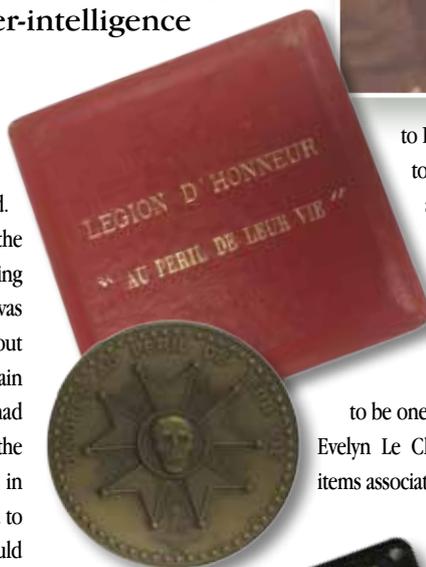
'Interrogated by the notorious SS-Captain Klaus Barbie'

'refused to betray anyone'

by Nick van der Bijl

Lieutenant Pierre Le Chêne, a bilingual French-speaking Briton, joined the SOE French Section, in October 1941. In early May 1942, aged 42, he was parachuted into Central France as a wireless operator for the leader of SOE's SPRUCE network in Lyon, during a period when Vichy French–German inspired counter-intelligence operations were disrupting the Resistance.

Although HQ SOE did its best to forge accurate ID documents, they often contained errors, and in common with other agents, Le Chêne persuaded a friend employed in the office of the mayor of Monte Carlo to produce a genuine ID card. When the Allies landed in North Africa in Operation Torch on 8 November, and the tension escalated as the Germans prepared to occupy Vichy, eighty direction finding vans moved into Lyon to pinpoint clandestine wirelesses. Next day, Le Chêne was captured while transmitting to London after his lookout failed to warn him about a van. He was the first British officer to be interrogated by the notorious SS-Captain Klaus Barbie, the head of the Gestapo in Lyons. He later admitted that he had failed to persuade Le Chêne to betray anyone. Le Chêne was sent by Barbie to the *Sicherheitsdienst*, (SD: the Nazi Party intelligence organisation), in Paris where, in spite of brutal torture that left him with a limp and no fingernails, he still refused to betray anyone. He later said 'Each time, when they came at me and I knew what would happen, I told myself stay with it just this once more'. After spending 10 months in solitary in Fresnes Prison, he was transferred to Mauthausen Concentration Camp and sent to its notorious work sub-camp of Gusen. When US forces liberated the camp in late April 1945, Le Chêne weighed six stone and was seriously ill with typhoid. Meanwhile, US forces had found a box in Sachsenhausen containing his property, including the Morse key, ID papers and a file of his interrogation in Lyons and handed it



Photos: Museum

to British Military Intelligence. In addition to the MBE, Croix de Guerre avec Palme and MID, Le Chêne was awarded the Legion d'Honneur Décorés au Pêril de Leur Vie (Decorated at Peril of Their life), the French equivalent to the VC. Its award to a foreigner is extremely rare. Le Chêne is thought to be one of two Britons to receive the DPV Mrs Evelyn Le Chêne subsequently presented several items associated with her husband to the MIM. ■

SECRET SOLDIERS UPDATE *by Jim Beach and Joyce Hutton*

Digging for intelligence

Project 'Secret Soldiers: The Intelligence Corps in the First World War' is now underway. There are sixteen volunteers undertaking a variety of activities, some explained here.

The genealogical main effort is currently an analysis of the 'Intelligence (B) Association' membership lists. This club was formed after the First World War by those who worked in espionage and counter-espionage. Three copies of their nominal rolls have been found, dating from the interwar period. A team of volunteers are currently munching their way through over 400 names! This work is a test bed for the project's working practices and data management, and valuable lessons have already been learned.

Another task has been with the museum's correspondence on the First World War, an important supplement to the archival holdings on the war. Two volunteers have been working their way through the old files looking for fresh

leads. This has two benefits for the project: first, a better understanding of how the Corps investigated its heritage; second, throwing up leads on individuals. Because some men served in the Corps in both world wars, some digging into the holdings on WWII will also be undertaken.

Parallel with this, a small group has been taking a sideways run at the officers' records. Interwar, the War Office created an index to officers' personal files. These were in 21 manuscript ledgers totalling over 13,000 pages. Normally, when tracing an officer one looks up the name and then uses the information to see if his file has survived. Volunteers have now almost completed the task of combing through the registers to harvest names that may be Intelligence Corps. Already we have hits on many previously unknown individuals.

Finally, two volunteers have thrown themselves into



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHAMPTON



an examination of the Intelligence Corps in Egypt and Palestine. Starting initially with a staff directory, they expanded their research into documents held by the National Archives and the Imperial War Museum. For example, by digging into otherwise unremarkable intelligence files, it has been possible to pick up traces of Corps personnel in 1917 and 1918.

So, in summary, the project is moving on steadily and we are very grateful for the involvement of the Friends. ■

George Lowther Steer

by Neal Fearn

Extract from 'Special Duties and the Intelligence Corps'

George Lowther Steer was born on 22 November 1909 in South Africa, the son of a newspaper manager. He was educated at Winchester College and Christ Church, Oxford before taking up journalism, initially in South Africa and then back in the UK for the *Yorkshire Post*. He specialised in reporting from war zones, in particular the Spanish Civil War and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, when he became friendly with Emperor Haile Selassie who was later the godfather to Steer's son. Steer accompanied Haile Selassie back to Ethiopia on 6 June 1940 to help restore him to power.

On 25 June 1940 he was appointed to an emergency commission on the General List and transferred to the Intelligence Corps on 15 July 1940. Although not yet a member of SO(1)

[SOE's covert propaganda department], he was attached by Brigadier Clayton to Haile Selassie as propaganda officer. He used Richard Dimbleby's BBC van to play recordings of messages from the Emperor to Ethiopian levies, appealing to them to join the Allied cause. He was an effective propagandist and revealed the Italian use of poison gas and attacks on American Red Cross units. A Middle East Intelligence Centre 'INTSUM' stated: 'Senior officers among Italian prisoners have blamed our propaganda for the wholesale desertions of native troops who are seldom reliable now. The credit for this is due to Steer and Fellowes [who focused on subversive propaganda against the Italians in Abyssinia] who have done excellent work throughout the campaign'.

He was promoted to captain on 1 April 1941 and, a short time later, he was at the head of troops accompanying Haile Selassie back down the eucalyptus-lined road into his capital. Early in 1943, the director of military intelligence, India, asked the India Mission [SOE] to form an 'Indian Field Broadcasting Unit' (IFBU) to carry out 'combat propaganda'. An experimental unit operated in Burma from February until

April 1943, using powerful loudspeakers to tell Japanese forces that their situation was hopeless and scattering propaganda leaflets in Burmese and Japanese. Major Steer commanded that unit. By mid-1944 there were five IFBUs in the field. General William Slim thought they had considerable intelligence and operational value and, despite strong opposition from 11th Army Group, they survived to the end of the war. The IFBUs were organised on the pattern created so successfully by Steer during the Abyssinian campaign. There was nothing particularly clandestine about them, but it seemed Force 136 was the only unit that had the organisational ability to handle such unconventional tactics.

During the Spanish Civil War he filed a famous despatch on the bombing of Guernica which appeared in *The Times* on 28 April 1937. Peter Kemp ran into him during the Spanish Civil War and in his book, *Thorns of Memory* (1990), recalled: 'Among the British journalists was George Steer, whom I had already met in England, a truly adventurous man of great initiative and charm, but a natural rebel whose utter contempt for authority and the pomposity that often went with it was bound to land him in trouble'.

On 25 December 1944, Steer was killed in a road traffic accident in Burma. During his service he had been mentioned in dispatches three times. He had already been decorated in 1936 by Haile Selassie as a Commander of the Order of the Holy Trinity. In Bilbao, Spain, there is even a street named after him. ■

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Memorial to George Steer in Guernica, Spain.

Photo: Zatterman

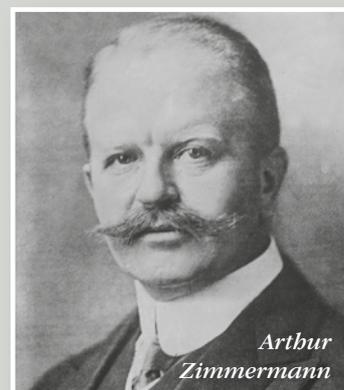


Bilbao Street Sign



Ethiopian Order of the Holy Trinity

The Zimmermann Telegram



By 1917 WWI had long been in stalemate, and both sides looked for a game-changer. The Allies wanted America to enter the war on their side before they became bankrupt and forced to accept aid on American terms, which would likely include having to start peace talks.

British codebreaking efforts would reap dividends however with the intercept of a telegram from Arthur Zimmermann, the German foreign minister, to his ambassador in Mexico (via Washington) offering an alliance with Mexico to help it recover lost territory from the US and with Japan. US relations with Mexico had always been problematic, to say the least. From the annexation of much of Mexico's territory as a result of the 1846 war, to difficult relations with successive regimes, it is a story of distrust and dislike. The proposal to involve Japan was not too surprising: there had been trade relations between the two going back to when Mexico was a part of the Spanish Empire.

The problem was how to tell the Americans about the telegram without it being condemned as just a British trick. The head of the codebreakers, Room 40 at the Admiralty, Admiral 'Blinker' Hall, devised a way of doing this such that the authenticity and credibility of the message were accepted by the US Government.

Almost uniquely, however, the British were helped by Zimmermann himself, who, when asked to deny the telegram said 'I cannot deny it. It is true'. The subsequent uproar played a considerable part in America entering the war on the Allied side. The telegram itself was directly referred to by President Wilson when he asked Congress to declare war.

The story of how British codebreaking was able to read the telegram and the German reaction to its revelations makes extremely interesting reading. For instance, a combination, supposedly protecting the code in Washington, had not been changed in 15 years! It can reasonably be postulated that the breaking and exploitation of the Zimmermann telegram ranks as the greatest cryptological feat of World War I. ■

(This is a synopsis of an excellent, longer article now on the website.)

Code Warriors: NSA's Codebreakers and the Secret Intelligence War against the Soviet Union

by Stephen Budiansky
Penguin, 2016, 416 pp.

Budiansky is the author of 17 books on military history, intelligence and espionage. The book starts in 1943, when US codebreakers together with GC & CS (the precursor of GCHQ) were solving several important Axis cryptosystems (such as the German Enigma, Geheimschreiber and the Japanese PURPLE cipher machines). At the time, Soviet diplomatic traffic was being collected – certainly by the Americans – but it was only sorted not actively attacked. During the year a small group was formed to study this material and make an attempt at a solution.

The story is well known. In theory the Soviet authorities used codebooks enciphered with one-time pads which meant that their messages should have been unbreakable. However the 'Russian problem' group was able to make a stunning discovery. It turned out that there were cases of additive pad reuse, which meant that some messages could be decoded.

This was the start of the famous Venona project and thanks to the decoded messages of the Soviet intelligence agencies, it was possible to identify a large number of Soviet agents and communist sympathisers, and led to the identifying of the 'Cambridge Five'.

NSA and GCHQ continued to solve important Soviet systems in 1945-48, such as the cipher machines Coleridge, Longfellow, Pagoda and a modified version of the Hagelin B-211. They were also able to intercept the Soviet civilian network thanks to German equipment and its operators handed over at the end of the War as described in the 'TICOM story' [article FICM website].

Operations came to an abrupt standstill in 1948 when, after being warned by one of their agents, William Weisband, the Soviets introduced new secure cipher procedures. From then on NSA would continue its efforts against Soviet high-level cryptosystems, but with little to no success other than from Venona and this despite devoting most of its resources to the Soviet problem.

The author looks into the efforts of the NSA to solve Soviet high-level cryptosystems, the investments in new technologies such as high-speed computers, the crisis resulting from repeated failures and the huge resources devoted to the Soviet problem (at the expense of other targets). In the end, the failure to solve Soviet ciphers using the 'standard' methods

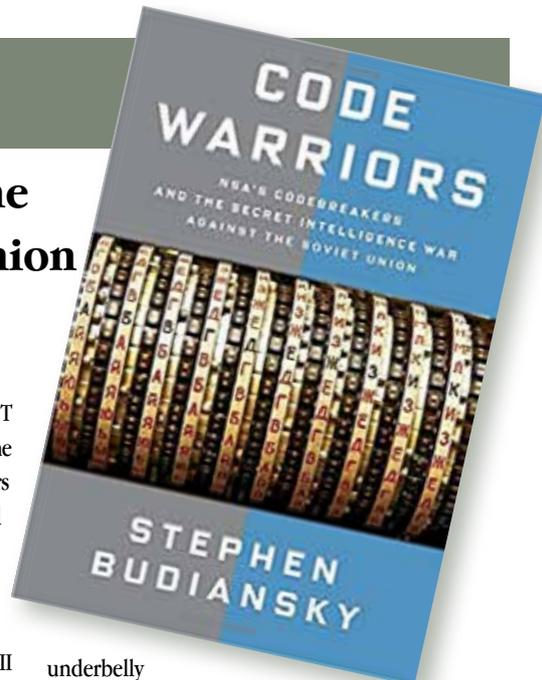
meant that more resources had to be directed to ELINT satellites, 'bugs' and traffic analysis. It was only in the late 1970s that a combination of new supercomputers (built by the Cray corporation) and mathematical research (from the Institute for Defense Analyses) that allowed the NSA to solve Soviet high-level ciphers.

Overall, the book covers NSA operations from WWII till the end of the Cold War. It looks into all aspects of the agency's work, their codebreaking successes, the relationship with the CIA, their investment into high-speed computers, operations in Korea and Vietnam and even the organisational and security problems of running an organisation of such size.

Despite the reluctance of GCHQ to release any information on their efforts over this period, much of this has been covered by Richard Aldrich, *GCHQ* (2011), Christopher Andrew, *Defence of the Realm: The Authorised History of MI5* (2010) and The Venona Project.

Featuring a series of appendices that explain the technical details of Soviet codes and how they were broken, this is a rich and riveting history of the

'A rich and riveting history of the underbelly of the Cold War'.



underbelly of the Cold War, and an essential and timely read for all who seek to understand the origins of the modern NSA and GCHQ. While Budiansky doesn't come out and admit it, it does seem clear that most of his material is drawn from the NSA's failures during the Cold War, because those are the only public NSA records available.

This is a book that covers the early years of NSA in a level of detail I had not seen in other books published on the subject. *The Puzzle Palace* by James Bamford (1982) provides a comprehensive history of the same period, but was somewhat light in technical details. *Code Warriors* strikes a good balance between the coverage of political and organisational history of the NSA and the cryptographic/technological achievements of the period. ■

The Programme

By Sir Andrew Motion

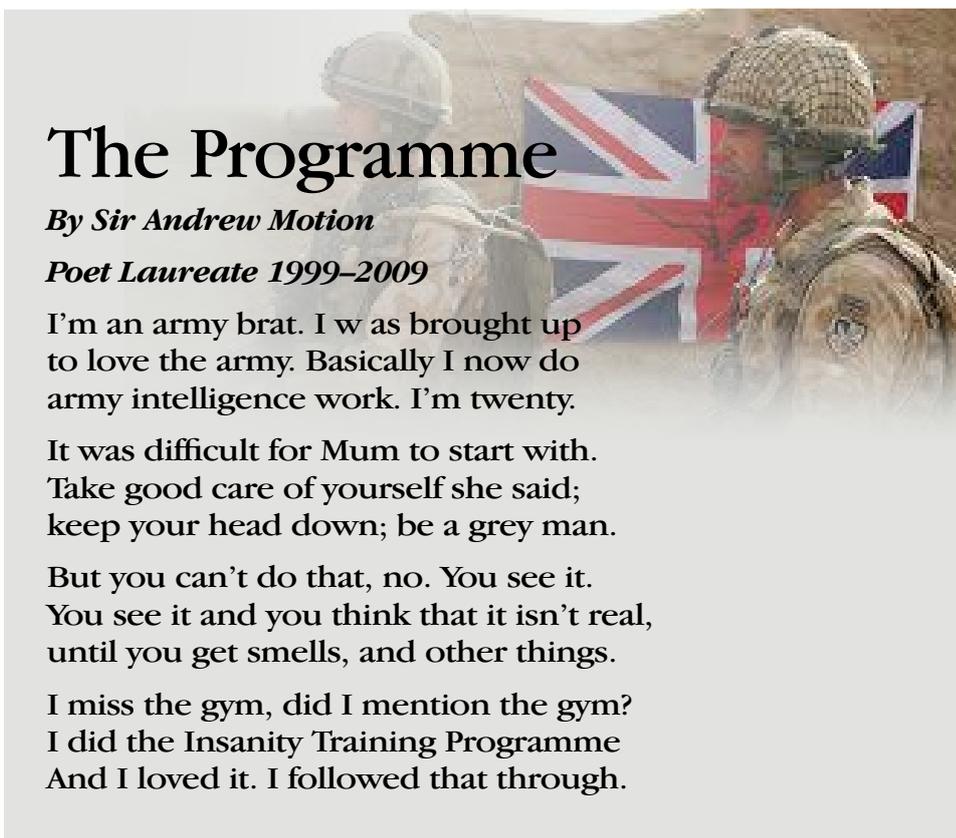
Poet Laureate 1999–2009

I'm an army brat. I was brought up to love the army. Basically I now do army intelligence work. I'm twenty.

It was difficult for Mum to start with. Take good care of yourself she said; keep your head down; be a grey man.

But you can't do that, no. You see it. You see it and you think that it isn't real, until you get smells, and other things.

I miss the gym, did I mention the gym? I did the Insanity Training Programme And I loved it. I followed that through.



Dissidents on the Lower Deck: The Cuxhaven Mutinies

A Tale of National Service

by Tony Cash

Keelhauling and the cat o' nine tails were long gone, but in 1954 the Royal Navy still had plenty of unpleasant deterrents to unruly behaviour and disaffection. All the more surprising, then, that a bunch of national service sailors should have conspired to provoke naval authority in acts that could be deemed at best insubordinate, at worst mutinous.

That year around 60 leading coder specials – equivalent in rank to army corporals – were sent to Cuxhaven on Germany's North Sea coast, at the mouth of the Elbe, 75 miles north-west of Hamburg. They had completed 15-months' intensive training in the Russian language and in radio intercept techniques. Having sworn a solemn oath not to breathe a word about it, they were now qualified to monitor Soviet military traffic. Their written and tape-recorded intercepts of voice communications between Soviet ships and land bases would be transmitted to GCHQ in Cheltenham for analysis: the Government needed to be kept informed of any unusual activity or movements that might herald a Russian act of aggression. This was the height of the Cold War; Stalin had died only the previous year.

Cuxhaven had a population of roughly 40,000 inhabitants, many dependent on the fishing industry for a living. The strongest enduring memory of Cuxhaven is the pungent, all-pervading, 24/7 reek of fish being processed into fishmeal for animal feed. That aside, we should have had little to complain about. Food was certainly better than on the army and RAF establishments where we had trained. But we were conscripts in a navy, 95 per cent of whose manpower were volunteers, their lives committed to the sea. Nearly all of us could flaunt at least two or three A Levels and were going on to university on demob; some already had degrees – unheard of in the mid-20th century Royal Navy. A few were congenitally bolshie; most were disinclined to accept authority at face value.

They call the Navy the Andrew

Learning Russian had been a rewarding experience allowing contact with Russia's marvellous literature and rich folksong tradition. By contrast, listening for Soviet call signs, pilots seeking permission to land, or seamen reciting long number sequences, could be extremely tedious. Ways to relieve the monotony had to be found. On one occasion a fellow leading coder used a Ferrograph to make a looped tape bearing a simple, provocative message, delivered in a ludicrously exaggerated, plummy, public-school accent: **THEY CALL THE NAVY THE ANDREW BECAUSE IT GIVES YOU THE SHITS.** Neatly, even poetically, he had contrived to combine in one-word references to both a notorious press gang lieutenant of the eighteenth century and the

name of a widely advertised 1950s proprietary laxative Liver Salts. Over several days, whenever the midshipman in charge of the watch was absent, there was a strong chance the tape would be played. It invariably produced hysteria.

Kicking over the traces could take a more serious turn. We had been told that we were doing an important job, effectively defending the realm from possible commie invasion; we had the equivalent rank of corporal; we were in the last six months of our service, yet at Cuxhaven we were often treated like raw recruits. Part of the problem was that we had to 'clean ship' first thing in the morning, regardless of the hours worked

that year was the creation of a phantom sailor. It was common for leading coders, when they were not required for regular watches, to work in various offices around the base. We were, after all, eminently equipped to do most clerical jobs the navy could throw at us. This fact, coupled with a strong sense of solidarity among a large group of men who had been together day and night for a year and a half, made it possible for us to wind up our superiors in a way few other national servicemen could have dreamed of.

On one occasion a petty officer reprimanded my friend Malcolm Brown for some apparent infraction, and bellowed, 'I want to know your name.' The reply, 'What for?' was misheard as **FORD**, so Leading Coder Ford was born. It was relatively easy to give this figment a more or less convincing identity. His name appeared in the master-at-arms office on a list of those entitled to have a pet on base; a telegram was received congratulating him on the birth of twins back home in England; he was even on the payroll. He had a bed and a locker in 16 Mess in School Block. Finally, before one watch went on 48-hour leave, a station card in his name was created and left one Friday evening in the master-at-arms office, as per Queen's Regulations. The following Monday morning, when leave-takers returned and collected their station cards, Leading Coder Ford's was conspicuous by its presence, an hour or so after he should have been back in base. Increasingly threatening tannoy calls for Ford to 'muster at the double' to the master-at-arms office produced no result.

The following day a petty officer came round our messes to enquire about the missing sailor. We told him that to the best of our knowledge he'd taken his bedding to the watch room to kip down there. I suspect that the truth could not have been long in dawning: certainly, it would not have been hard to confirm that there was no Leading Coder Ford. The last most of us heard of the affair was that the lieutenant commander in charge of pay at Cuxhaven had received a terrible bollocking from his seniors, for trying illegitimately to augment the moneys paid to his outfit. ■



Cuxhaven Memorial

Photo: Web



Tony leaving for France on his holidays

during the night watch. An inevitable result was that the authorities had to find jobs for us, like bulling the place or cutting grass with nail scissors. Resentment was rife and led to a more or less unspoken decision to 'strike' – a refusal to hear or latch onto any Russian military conversations long enough to record or log them. Of course, nothing was said to our superiors. Rumour had it that the commanding officer of the base was for a time worried that the Soviets must be planning some aggressive act, since they seemed to have initiated radio silence, generally understood to be a precursor to the launching of hostilities.

Easily the most imaginatively subversive act at Cuxhaven

MUSEUM MOVES?

by David Burrill,
Chairman MIM Board

The Military Intelligence Museum (MIM) trustees, with professional advice, are considering moving to the site of the WWII Political Warfare establishment at Milton Bryan, Bedfordshire. An informal structural survey suggests that the site could be suitable and an informal visit by representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has indicated that the venture could be one of 'national importance'. (The project team is being led by Project Trustee Julian Barnard.)

The MIM trustees will next meet on 1 August. If we continue the project, full surveys, assessments and formal representation to the HLF will take at least a year.

We need to raise large sums of money to combine with HLF funding. Without HLF funding, the project is almost certainly a non-starter. With substantial HLF and major donor funding, the best estimate for project completion is currently 2023. There are many hurdles to be crossed before we can have confidence and then assurance of a relocation to Milton Bryan.

We are acutely conscious of the interest and rumour in this venture, and will keep the Friends and other stakeholders informed. What we do not want though difficult to avoid, is to cause speculation, distracting from the major focus.

The museum trustees are committed to there being a 'footprint' wherever HQ Int and Corps training may be located. Recent benchmarking shows that this is a benefit shared by only a few other cap badges; spot on as far as I am concerned. Exactly what a 'footprint' is cannot be decided yet, though the trustees will engage with stakeholders, including the Friends. I can be precise that whatever is decided will be compliant with the requirements of the army and the Charities Commission. ■

CORRESPONDANCE RECEIVED

On British soil in New York

To the Editor,

I much enjoyed your article on the trans-Atlantic Air Race of 1969 and the part played by 'RAF St Pancras'. Following the RAF success, at post-race celebrations in New York, many eyebrows were raised when a senior British representative observed that the RAF Harrier had taken off from British soil in London and six hours later landed again on British soil in New York. How could this be and were the Brits over-stepping the mark?

A brief explanation showed that this was indeed the case. During the Battle of the Atlantic many hundreds of crossings were made by Liberty ships bringing vital supplies from the United States to England. To keep the ships in balance for the return journey back to the USA, a load of ballast was taken on board each ship to hold the otherwise empty vessel, in air force terms, 'straight and level'. Once back in New York, the ballast was off-loaded and over many months this part of New York harbour was covered in several tons of British soil – appropriate diplomatic calm was soon restored. (2,710 Liberty ships were built and more than 2,400 survived the war).

Richard Bates - May 2017

Group Captain (ret'd) Richard is a Friend, and formerly Deputy Chief BRIXMIS. Ed

Corps church has new priest

To the Editor,

The new priest at St James Garlickhythe, City of London was announced on 2 July 2017. It is Revd Tim Handley, presently at St Luke's, Shepherd's Bush. Ordained in 1996, he has had a full and parallel career in journalism and at the BBC. He edits BBC One 1 O'clock News. With two children he likes reading, walking, cooking.

Lester Hillman - July 2017

Lester has supported Corps links to its church since the 1980s



Typewriter liberated from The Gestapo

To the Editor,

Yet another new member! Well I never!! (as the saying goes). Hardly had I become a member of Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum than I found that someone I have known for years had a father who was in the Corps during WWII. David Brammer's father was Danish born but became a British citizen in November 1939. Bi-lingual in German, he was a natural for the newly recreated Intelligence Corps and was to have an interesting career within it. Hon. Major Brammer was one of the team that was repulsed when trying to secure a beachhead in Norway. He went on to be sent to investigate events in the newly liberated Belsen concentration camp and became a member of the Control Commission in defeated Germany. In 1947, Major George Brammer was gazetted as awarded the King Christian X Liberty Medal. A prize acquisition left by his father is a Remington portable typewriter that Major Brammer retrieved from a Gestapo office ...

In early April 2017 David will be one of a group visiting the museum when, he tells me, he will be joining up to our band of Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum.

Evelyn Le Chêne - 27 March 2017.

And join he did! Ed.

The curator's roadshow!

To the Editor,

We have just had the Merc G Wagen returned to us after a fairly chunky refurb. As well as looking very smart it has been properly fettled and is now road legal (pending number plates) and we intend to take it to shows to advertise the museum.

Bill Steadman - June 2017

*Like what you are reading?
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Go to www.intelligencemuseum.org
for an application form

NOTICES AND NOTES FOR MEMBERS

Trustee Matters

- Your trustees met at Chicksands on 2 May 2017
- Next meeting October 2017
- Trustee responsibilities: Hon. President Brian Parritt; Chair: Tony Hetherington; Secretary Frances Maynard; Treasurer Dave Farrell*; Membership/MIM Board Observer Mike Palmer*; Events Mike Cooksey*; Editor Sub Rosa/website Chris Yates*.

* Also a museum volunteer

Changes to FICM's Website

Established in 2012, FICM's member pages presence on the website are accessed regularly by only a quarter of members and half have never accessed it all. In addition, the practice of splitting articles between the newsletter and the website has enticed only one quarter of readers to the website, to continue reading. That is considerable website underuse to consider against cost and volunteer time.

Consequently, we are moving to a public access-only website, that is, you will no longer need to log in. Articles will be available to anyone. *Sub Rosa*, however, will not be available until one year after its publication, so that you will not lose the immediate exclusivity of the newsletter.

We look forward to greater website use, and with greater access to the public we believe we shall attract more members. Your new site will be available in the coming weeks. ■

The Sub Rosa Award

Last winter's issue reported the establishment of the *Sub Rosa* award. It is for a serving individual or group who creates a work of Corps history/heritage that can be displayed in the museum or archive. Chair Tony Hetherington will present the inaugural award at Corps Day lunch. Because we go to press too late to report full details, please watch this space in the winter issue. ■

LUNCH WITH LECTURES



Photos: Web

- The Rt Hon. Ann Widdecombe, DSG
- Mrs Evelyn Le Chêne

The date for your diary is 24 April 2018

EDITORIAL - ON QUANTITY

Robert Silvers (1929–2017) was the legendary, long-time editor and founder of the *New York Review of Books*. Upon being rightfully lauded for his editorship, he declared that a publication is defined not by its editor but by the quality of his or her writers. *Sub Rosa* can claim such quality because of its own fine contributors, from the occasional to the regular. This summer issue contains fascinating and well-written Corps- and intelligence-related articles on heroes and history, in research and reviews. Not to speak of a sobering poem by Sir Andrew Motion. All in fine quality. All making for a fine quality publication. Thank you, contributors all, and keep the good copy coming. ■

LUNCH WITH LECTURES 2017 by John Quenby

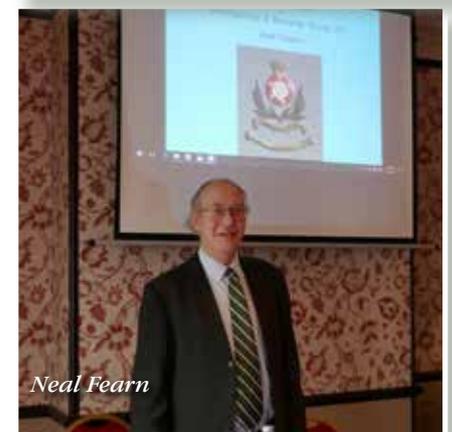
This year was the fifth in this popular series of FICM events. Following four successful editions at the Special Forces Club, it was decided to ring the changes with the venue to the more centrally located Civil Service Club. This change clearly suited a good number of our members as more than 30 Friends and guests were in attendance.

Following FICM Chairman Tony Hetherington's introduction, members were treated to a first-hand account by Geoffrey Van Orden covering his eventful years on deployment in Northern Ireland as MIO based in Newry, Co. Armagh. Pitched into an already tense situation in 1969, Geoffrey (then a 26-year-old Int Corps captain) found himself seriously under-resourced and needing very quickly to gain the confidence, trust and respect of the RUC, our own troops and other agencies. The following testing years are still very clear in Geoffrey's memory, and his vivid descriptions of some of the very live and dangerous situations that he found himself in right through 1972 (internment) were presented with riveting clarity.

Following an excellent and convivial lunch, the members were treated to a highly informative talk covering the history and often changing roles of the TA, in particular Int Corps Volunteers. Neal Fearn noted that 1 April this year marked the 50th anniversary of 3 MI Bn. During that 50 years, developments from port and travel security through Cold War strategy, then the nuclear threat and Middle Eastern wars, led to frequent changes of focus, strategy, hence, structure. It seemed to the uninitiated that the TA has enjoyed or endured more reorganisations than the NHS! The role of the Army Reserve however remains as important as ever, with a steady flow of reservists into the regular army; and the reverse as regulars turn to the reserve a little later in their careers. This excellent mix ensures that the TA and Int Corps Volunteers continue to offer a broad range of skills and experience in readiness for deployment when needed. ■



Geoffrey Van Orden,
MIO Newry, C. Armagh



Neal Fearn

Photos: JQ