



Sub Rosa

Newsletter of the Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum

f t Linked in No.33, Winter 2022

NEW TRUSTEE'S BUSY START!

By Colin Wright, Membership



A year or so ago I was introduced to Mike Palmer, FICM's chair, and as Chris Yates and I live quite close

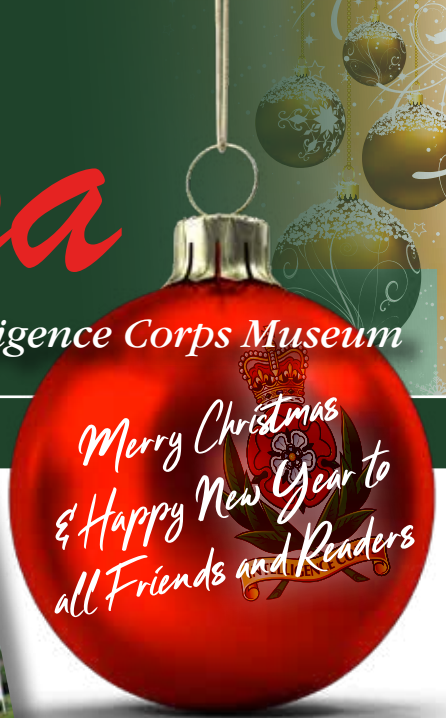
to each other we first met at Chris's home. On my arrival, we shook hands and Mike said that it was great to have a volunteer. Shocked I replied 'Volunteer?!' I thought you said come round for a beer!' As a consequence of that meeting, I now find myself one of two new 2022 intake of FICM trustees.

Since that initial meeting, Mike and I have had numerous face-to-face, Skype and telephone conversations regarding where and in what ways he thought I could help in enlisting new members.

During those meetings our discussions always and easily veered off on many tangents looking at many ways to ensure FICM's future. The main issue is the uncertainty the prospect of a new, offsite Military Intelligence Museum places on the Intelligence Corps Museum, Chicksands. Mike and I discussed a number of strategies and consequently and very kindly, he told me to 'Get on with it. then'. I thanked him. Honestly, I thanked him.

Thus, here I am and while still finding my way around FICM and the museum, I find myself in a role not just trying to increase FICM membership, but also trying to strategise on behalf of FICM.

Current leaflet used by the museum



As a starter for ten, in trying to promote FICM, it came to pass that we have one FICM leaflet, and this is it, front and back. It has been around for many years and the board believes it needs a refresh. What do you think? Can you do better?

So, over to you, if you have any great ideas with regards to a new leaflet, how to increase our membership or anything else for the good and benefit of FICM, then let me know at enrollmentficm@gmail.com – Note the spelling. I promise that I will always take all ideas forward to the chair as we love a good laugh! ■

TEASER

What Greek general said?

'One's sense of honour is the only thing that does not grow old'

(Answer on p.4)

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!

FICM Lunch with Lectures 2023

We are pleased to announce Lunch with Lectures on Thursday 20 April at the Victory Services Club, London. It's a return to previous years with a speaker either side of the quality three-course lunch with wine, costing £55.

SPEAKERS



Dr Helen Fry. FICM trustee and author of *The Walls Have Ears* and *The London Cage* about information-gathering during WWII.

Col (ret'd) Nick Fox. Deputy Col Comdt of the Intelligence Corps, whose interests include the UK's Special Operations Executive of WW2 and the ensuing Cold War.



Whilst FICM has absorbed some increased costs, we are hoping for a small subsidy from ICA for those of its members who attend, otherwise we must pass on some of the increase. Trustees are keen to protect this annual event, continually reviewing the venue and dining charge. Speakers receive no fee or expenses.

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'THE MUSEUM AT THE HEART OF FICM'S RESOLVE'

By Mike Palmer, Chair

I am one of those Intelligence Corps veterans who can just about remember the time before the Corps had a dedicated museum. My squad passed out in 1969, one week before Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer officially opened a collection of Intelligence Corps memorabilia in Ashford barracks. Very different to what exists now and poles apart from what is currently planned.

During the ensuing fifty years, much has changed. What was once one of the youngest and smallest Corps in the British Army has more than doubled in size in a shrinking military environment. Its roles and responsibilities have adapted to more technological and sophisticated threats, and the skills of Intelligence Corps personnel have become increasingly valued.

With the focus increasingly only on the here and now, past achievements of Corps members and their contribution to the security of our nation might be lost. We should be grateful to that small band of intelligencers who fought to establish the first museum in Ashford and then delivered a suitable location at Chicksands in 1995. Where would the exhibition of Corps heritage and history be without their endeavours?

The struggle to establish a museum in Chicksands produced the Friends organisation and over the past ten years FICM has supported the museum trustees so that the Corps' rich and proud story is preserved and exhibited to serving personnel and the general public. The annual subscriptions of Friends and other generous donations have not only enabled FICM to financially support the museum but also raised its profile through the staging of events and the distribution of a regular newsletter.

As a serving soldier I paid little heed to Corps history and probably little regard to the Corps' contribution to world stability. Only in my later years have I stood back to take stock of what is preserved in the museum and to appreciate how fortunate I was to take part in the activity of the Intelligence Corps.



It is important that the Corps' heritage is protected and FICM will continue to work alongside the museum trustees, ICA and Corps personnel so that the story of the Corps reaches the widest audience. FICM is greatly valued by the museum's trustees and its curatorial team, and the celebration of Sub Rosa's tenth anniversary is a fitting time to acknowledge and thank all Friends, home and overseas, subscriber and volunteer. You should be in no doubt that you contribute greatly to how FICM supports the museum. It is at the heart of FICM's resolve to preserve the history and heritage of the Intelligence Corps. ■

THE ALAN EDWARDS AWARD 2022



For General Data Protection Regulation reasons at the time, we could not publish the full photo of the winners of this year's award in the summer issue. Now we are pleased to do so.

*Left to right 2Lts Hughes, Burden, [Chris Yates] Noble and Summers.
Photo ICA*

Sergeant N.A. Croucher BEM Serving in 5 (East African) Field Security Section During the British Advance into Burma, October 1944

By Harry Fecitt MBE TD



From *The King's African Rifles* by Lt Col H. Moyse-Bartlett: 'By the end of September the first stage in the advance down the Kabaw Valley had been completed. So far, opposition had been slight; until the last few days the enemy had not been met in well-defended positions. But progress had only been made at the cost of unremitting labour and constant patrolling in most difficult country at the height of the monsoon. Soaked and hungry, with supplies always precarious and their kit reduced to a mosquito net and a ground sheet, the Askaris worked cheerfully at their exhausting tasks of repairing the tracks, building deviations, clearing zones for airdrops and collecting supplies. Perhaps only African troops could have achieved such results in such conditions'.

East African soldiers in the World War II Burma Campaign.

British East and Central Africa provided the 11th East African Division and two independently employed brigades for operations in Burma from 1944 to 1945. The Askari (soldiers) were volunteers recruited from Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika Territory (Tanzania), Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). The officers and some senior ranks were European, generally coming from East Africa and usually possessing relevant language skills; however a system of using African platoon warrant officers as platoon commanders succeeded well on operations.

The Askari were a success in the Burmese jungle as their physique, philosophical

approach and temperament allowed them to deal with the hardships of jungle life, especially during the monsoon periods when air resupply and casualty evacuation flights could be seriously delayed, and everything was totally wet. Their latent tribal warrior instincts also made them efficient at dealing with the Japanese enemy; once the Askari discovered that the Japanese bayoneted to death captured wounded soldiers, they were disinclined to take prisoners themselves unless one of their officers was on the spot.

26 (East African) Brigade was part of 11th (East African) Division which was tasked to advance down the remote and rugged Kabaw Valley in the monsoon. The King's African Rifles (KAR) infantry battalions in the brigade were: 22nd (Nyasaland) KAR; 36th (Tanganyika Territory) KAR; and 44th

(Uganda) KAR. The brigade also contained No. 5 (East African) Field Security Section, and 4625038 Sgt Norbert Albert Croucher, Intelligence Corps, was a detachment commander in the section.

In early October 1944, after a month being employed on 'corduroying' (felling, trimming and laying large logs) on the one and only extremely muddy, land supply route, 26 (EA) Brigade moved forward to take over the lead down the valley. Initial inexperience led to casualties; one European company sergeant major being killed whilst examining a Japanese who feigned death. But the Askari learned quickly and kept their machetes sharp.

A further quote from Moyse-Bartlett's regimental history is appropriate as it affected the activities of Sgt Croucher: '44 KAR moved to a point on the west bank of the Neyinzaya Chaung [watercourse] opposite Kangyi during the night of 22nd and 23rd October. At first light, A Company crossed the Chaung with the aid of a few boats and established a bridgehead. C Company passed through and made a box at Point 427, near Thayagon. Seven Japanese were found hiding in a dug-out at Kangyi and killed'.

Later, Sgt Croucher was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) with the citation: 'During the period under review, 16 August to 15 November 1944, this non-commissioned officer has worked exceedingly hard continuously in forward areas with 26 (East African) Infantry Brigade, escorting prisoners of war, searching enemy dumps, searching dead bodies and investigating suspects. He has led his detachment particularly well, especially during the time when 44 King's African Rifles was at Kangyi village on 24 October when he volunteered to return to the village at considerable personal risk from Japanese patrols known to have been in the area, to collect Japanese uniforms at that time urgently required by higher authority. Throughout the period he has given untiring energy and zeal to his work which has been of inestimable benefit to the work of the division. (Recommended by Capt E.L. Peel, Officer Commanding 5th (East African) Field Security Section on 6 December 1944)'.

This citation is basically a job description for a detachment commander in a field security section at the sharp end of the war in the Burmese jungle. Well done Norbert Croucher, jungle frontline soldier and successful intelligence specialist. ■

ONE OF OURS? A SHORT CANTER THROUGH MUSEUM VAGARIES

By Bill Steadman, Curator



'Who were you, P.Zwart?'

Museums are full of objects about which a great deal is known, often because the donor has provided provenance and a degree of research has taken place. But they are also repositories for objects about which staff and volunteers are, at best, uncertain. Identifying what an object is rarely stumps the team but establishing the ownership status can sometimes be tricky; does it belong to the museum trustees or is it on loan? Occasionally, something that was originally a loan is later donated (an easy fix), but sometimes the museum loses contact with a lender, a situation that becomes less easy to resolve as time marches on.

In our museum, for a number of objects we have little or no background data whatsoever, or perhaps we simply have yet to unearth the morsel of information that will solve the object's riddle. Numerous museum moves over the years and changing standards have not helped us keep the collection 100 per cent under control, a situation that we continue to improve.

Take for instance a Mauser Model 1896 carbine that has been with us since August 2000. It dates to the Second Boer War of 1899-1902 with 'P. Zwart' inlaid in thin metal letters in the wooded stock. Mausers such as this were supplied in large number to the Boers by Germany and, although we cannot say for certain, this weapon could have been used in action against British forces, so it is a significant item of worth to the museum. The weapon was originally handed to the museum by a Mr James ap John. The handwritten accession register of the time recorded it as a loan, whereas a letter written by Corps Historian Alan Edwards one year later, thanks Mr John for the donation. So, is it one or the other? It cannot be both. Ideally, loaned items should stay with a museum for no longer than the museum intends to use the object for a display.

Since 2018 we have sought to find Mr John in order to clarify his intentions, sadly, to no avail. This raises the question: What is an object's ownership status once sufficient time has passed for the lender also to potentially or actually have passed? The technical



answer is that the loan object then belongs to the deceased's estate. But what if we have no contact with the lender, his family or the estate or the object is not explicitly covered in the Will? This is one reason why museums are not keen to accept loans, especially those often described as being of a long-term nature. In our case, 22 years is more than a little overdue.

Museums are also repositories of apparently random documents of uncertain use or value. Trawling through them is a long process but occasionally nuggets are discovered. In 2020, a postcard from Mr John, enigmatically dated 14th/11, was discovered in a separate pile of randomness, confirming that the previously loaned item was indeed a donation. At last, and despite having no recent contact with Mr John, we can add the object formally to our collection in the knowledge that Mr John intended that we own it.

The weapon had not been deactivated so, being live and the museum not having a firearms licence, it has resided in the camp armoury, being duly checked, week in and week out, year in and year out by the orderly officer during his or her rounds. We could not legally display it or make any other use of it. One bonus, however, was that it has been stored in perfect conditions and had been cleaned periodically by the armourer, so was in excellent condition.

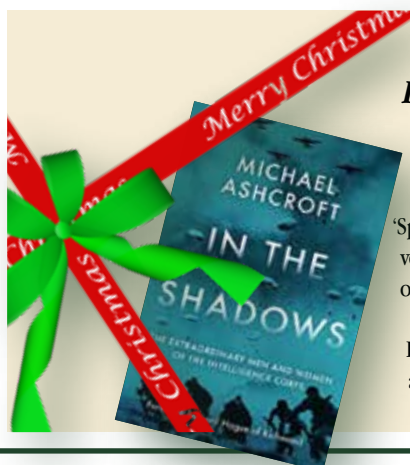
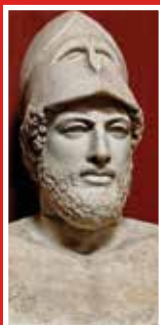
This instance, and other cases of the museum being offered or gifted weapons that were either not deactivated, or had been deactivated to old standards, has led us to solve the issue at source by obtaining a museum firearms licence. As well as making curatorial sense, it makes financial sense, as to deactivate a single weapon will cost upwards of £200 whereas a five-year licence covering any number of weapons costs the same. This licence allows us to obtain and legally hold, and not need to deactivate, almost any weapon that comes our way – all within the licence conditions, of course.

So, after 20 years of unwitting 'ownership' we finally discovered that the Mauser belongs to the museum and that, now we have a licence, we can display it. If you feel that you would like to help us sleuth through our certainties and uncertainties as a volunteer, please get in touch. Finally – Just who were you, P. Zwart? ■

Answer to Teaser

Pericles

(495-429 BC) in his funeral oration to the Athenian dead, 431 BC. In *The Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides.



JUST PUBLISHED

In the Shadows: The extraordinary men and women of the Intelligence Corps

By Michael Ashcroft (2022), Biteback Publishing

'Spanning the First World War to the present day, Ashcroft's gripping volume brings together jaw-dropping true stories from the history of the British Armed Forces' top-secret Intelligence Corps with the narrative pull and pace of a thriller' (Waterstones)

It's in the ICA shop at www.roseandlaurel.uk/Corps-Shop, priced at £15 for the hardback. Lord Ashcroft is donating all royalties to military charities.

BOOK REVIEW

by Paul Crosson

The Secret Listeners: How the Y Service Intercepted the German Codes for Bletchley Park (2012)

By Sinclair McKay

The Y Service, which McKay calls the Listening Service, was just as secret an organisation as Bletchley Park (B.P.) to whom it fed its product – wireless messages that had been intercepted and logged from some of the most unexpected places. Without it, B.P. could not have functioned and would have been unable to provide the priceless intelligence that was said to have shortened the war. This is in some ways a follow-up of his book *The Secret Life of Bletchley Park: the History of the Wartime Codebreaking Centre by the Men and Women Who Were There* (2011).

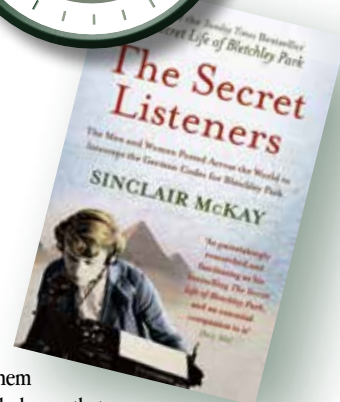
I must confess that I was slightly irritated by this book before even starting to read it. We are provided with a map showing the location of the 'Y Service principal listening stations' as the frontispiece to the book. Mr McKay, with the help of his publisher, has managed to move Heliopolis, the headquarters of an Intelligence School and CBME from the outskirts of Cairo to the outskirts of Algiers. Rommel would have been delighted to have found it there!

Not a good start and again, when I started writing this review, I found myself being somewhat nit-picking. That was unkind, the book deserves more than that. Much of it is made up of the personal reminiscences of those who had served 60 or more years ago, and our memories – as I know only too well – do fade and get very selective, often influenced by what has already been written. The

author retells stories that have been written of elsewhere and credit for this, for the most part, is freely given in the notes. A better bibliography might have been useful too. What would have been of enormous help to me would have been a clearer indication as to which of the Special Operators had served whilst still civilians, and who had served as service men and women as I was reading it, although the chapter 'The End and the Beginning' goes a long way to redressing this. Several of the events his contributors relate I found fascinating, and I would love to investigate further. It is not a history; vast areas of the Y Service are left untouched, but I enjoyed reading it, nevertheless. There are many slipshod little errors almost certainly mostly arising from the telling which I as a pedant (when it comes to this subject) found annoying, but these won't worry the casual reader who is just interested in the people who were involved in the service. The book

serves them well, particularly that redoubtable band of Wrens, so many of whom still survive, whose stories get a wonderful airing. As contributors, once again they seem to have come up trumps.

It should be pointed out that the Y Service did not end with the war and the closing of B.P.; indeed it was active throughout the whole of the Cold War and the Falklands War. Like much of the intelligence world, it was found lacking at the start of the Korean conflict. With the end of the use of Morse code by nearly all military forces, their role changed. How? We might find out in another 60 years, but in the meantime may I recommend to you the websites of Langeleben and Birgelen, two of the Cold War intercept stations? ■



RESEARCHING THE HUSH WAACS

by Jim Beach

In 2016 I was invited to write a piece for the GCHQ website on the Hush WAACs, the small group of women who, in 1917 and 1918, worked in I(e)C. Located at Saint Omer, this small organisation was the British Expeditionary Force's cryptanalysis office, focusing on breaking German communications on the Western Front.

The Hush WAACs had popped up in many previous histories of intelligence or women in the First World War, but they tended to be touched upon rather than properly explored. Although two memoirs, written immediately after the war, are available to researchers, they are (unsurprisingly) rather coy about the work undertaken in I(e)C. Other sources are also available, but tend to be rather dry and organisational, such as the Intelligence Corps Establishment Tables.

I was incredibly fortunate that Archivist Joyce Hutton and Jock Bruce offered to assist me with digging into these stories. Both are experienced genealogists and Jock had, for many years, been investigating two Hush WAACs who went on to work for MI1(b). And with me looking through a range of rather dull material accumulated during an earlier book project, we made a start.

Our key breakthrough came in March 2017 when we found the war diary of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps 'Area Controller' in Saint Omer. Although the Hush WAACs were affiliated to the Intelligence Corps, this source confirmed the memoir accounts that indicated they were administered on a day-to-day basis by the local WAAC hierarchy. Luckily the war diary's author was incredibly diligent in recording the comings and goings of her charges.

On 29 September 1917 she noted '2.30 pm 6 Assistant Administrators Mrs Caborne the Misses Osbourne, Peel, Robertson, Thring, & Watkins arrived at St Omer for special cypher work with GHQ

Intelligence'. Up until April 1918 when I(e)C was relocated to the coast, she continued to record the arrival of additional women and their affiliation with 'Intelligence E', as she called it.

These names opened the door to further research into medal rolls but, sadly, none of the women's service records had survived the 1940 bombing of the War Office archive. However, armed with full names from the medal rolls, Joyce and Jock began rummaging furiously in the 1911 Census and other family history sources. Although three women eluded them, they were able to build up decent profiles of the other fourteen.

Another interesting find came from a search of American newspapers on the chroniclingamerica website. It turned out that a couple of months after they started work at Saint Omer, one of the women's male superiors let slip their existence to a visiting newspaper correspondent!

Finally, with a few weeks to go before the centenary of their arrival at Saint Omer, by sheer coincidence, Ian Hendley, one of the Secret Soldiers project volunteers, found a woman listed within an online roll of honour who fitted the profile of a Hush WAAC. Urgent enquiries were made and, just three hours before GCHQ posted the piece on their website, the archive holding her papers was able to confirm that she had actually served as a translator in London. ■

See more at <https://www.gchq.gov.uk/features/hush-waacs>



BOOK REVIEW
'BETTER READ THAN DEAD'
by Chris Yates

*The Stasi Poetry Circle:
The Creative Writing Class that
Tried to Win the Cold War*

By Philip Oltermann (2022)

Oltermann's book is a fascinating story of how the German Democratic Republic's (GDR) *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* was set up, initially to suppress and spy on former Nazis and gather intelligence on the West, but which then infamously became an intelligence-gathering organ against its own citizens. Another term for the organisation is the 'secret police' and we know them better as the Stasi. The book ends with the intelligence organisation's shambolic break-up but not before it singles out how poetry was added to the intelligence armoury of the citizens' spies.

Seven years before the Wall came down in 1989, the Stasi set up a writers' group, training their own poets to fight against suspected subversive messages in the country's literature. The book's chapters are headed according to various terms of poetry such as Sonnet, Bathos, Metaphor, and Epitaph. (If you are a little daunted by a book about poetry, don't be, since there is very little verse on the



pages.) But the book is more than that, it is a well-researched and entertaining story of the GDR since freeing itself from one totalitarian rule, Nazism, to another, socialist one and eventual reunification with its enemy, West Germany.

Born in Schleswig-Holstein, the author studied German and English Literature at British universities. Now a journalist, he lives in Berlin as bureau chief for the Guardian. He has gone through the famously shredded Stasi files, tracked down and interviewed surviving members of the poetry group who spied on fellow writers and camouflaged infiltrators.

He writes that the Stasi's 'institutionalised paranoia' extended to keeping a close watch on their own people and their families: 'special spies, so-called UMA's or "unknown collaborators" were secretly trained to keep a close covert watch of family members of Stasi employees'. One UMA was Uwe Berger, a well-known East German writer whose report on

one Stasi NCO: 'although talented' (at poetry) was 'worryingly sceptical, self-controlled'; Berger wanted to 'discover what is really behind the mask, at the bottom of his soul'. A fellow GDR poet, Gerd Knauer, told Oltermann that Berger wanted every poem to sound like the Internationale, rather than soulful 'birdsong'. To be fair, Oltermann, while showing that the GDR used 'art as a weapon', reminds us of the CIA's

funding not only of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, but indirectly also of intellectuals such as Jackson Pollock, Stephen Spender and Heinrich Böll.

The Stasi's paranoia knowing no bounds, in 1987 it started to censor Russian publications that reflected in their view, Gorbachev's *uskorineye*, or the acceleration of restructuring the Russian economy, something that the GDR was not keen on. Nevertheless, it was their own end that was speeding up, and with it the poetry circle.

Oltermann accomplishes all this in 182 entertaining pages with the good journalist's knack of getting you to sit down with it longer than you planned. Sources are well documented and the index thorough. Oltermann's book, however, sometimes can be irritating with many paragraphs scarred with ungrammatical colons. Despite this, I thoroughly commend the book to you. ■

*Maj Christopher
Hedley Harmer,
Intelligence Corps, MI5*

By Fred Judge

Fortunately we know quite a lot about Christopher Harmer's service record. The internet also returned a couple of hits and his name, unsurprisingly, also appears in that ubiquitous follower of the intelligence establishment, the *Lobster*. He was commissioned into the Royal Artillery in January 1941, transferred to the Intelligence Corps in July 1942, and by the end of the war had risen to temporary major.



He was employed with MI5 almost from the start and joined B1A Division which was responsible for the interrogation of returning SOE agents and double agents, including those who might have come under suspicion. One of his best-known cases involved two Norwegians, Mutt (real name, John Moe) and Jeff, (real name, Tor Glad) who had been recruited by the Germans and landed by seaplane off the Scottish coast in April 1941. They were promptly captured and turned by MI5. Jeff proved to be unreliable and spent the rest of the war in Camp WX on the Isle of Man. Mutt, however, was more successful and to boost his credibility with the Germans, approval was given for the 'sabotage' of a food store in Wealdstone, Middlesex. Although two incendiary devices were planted by Sgt Cole, of field security, the device was spotted by the guards and the fire brigade put out the fire before it had gained in strength. Later, the Germans dropped supplies for their two supposed agents and Harmer was surprised to find that the explosives, time pencils and other equipment nearly all came from SOE stores seized by the Abwehr on the continent.

Harmer was later the case officer for Brutus, a Polish Air Force officer (real name Roman Garby-Czerniawski) who was said to have built up an intelligence network in France. He turned up in Madrid claiming that he had escaped from prison in Fresnes, but the Poles, who interrogated him first, were suspicious of his story and just before he was due to be questioned by British officials, he admitted that he had been given a brief by the German Abwehr. Harmer, by this time a member of the Double Cross Committee, produced a detailed report and believed that Brutus would be a good agent. He eventually had his way and Brutus went on to play an important part in Op Fortitude, part of the D-Day deception strategy.

In February 1944, Harmer took over as the B1A case officer for Sniper, a Belgian Air Force sergeant who had also been recruited by the Germans (as agent *Komet*). He had been targeted against RAF night-fighter systems, but also agreed to work for MI5 as a double agent. He proved to be a valuable asset. Christopher Harmer continued to run successful double-agent operations throughout the war. In 1944 he joined 104 Special Counter Intelligence Unit (SCIU) attached to HQ SHAEF and later commanded 106 SCIU operating out of Paris.

His US Bronze Star Medal (see above) was awarded in October 1946, possibly for services in connection with the D-Day deception plan. A citation has not been found.

After the war he entered the legal profession where his forte seems to have been the liquidation of commercial companies, an apt profession for a former intelligence officer. ■

POEMS *By a former member of the Corps*

CAMOUFLAGE

Because the paint is not the spread of branches
But dies like a fish on the concrete in the sun's glare,
Leaving the mechanical outline bare
To fool only the plane's mechanical glances.

Because this bonhomie is a skinny false
Mask on the iron skeleton of constraint
And freedom in newsprint only a smear of paint
Across the ancient menace, 'Believe, or else ...'

Therefore if I must choose, I prefer to sing
The tommy-gun, the clean functional things,
The single-hander, deadly to the rigid line,
Good at a job it doesn't attempt to conceal.

Give me time only to teach this hate of mine
The patience and integrity of the steel.

Poems from the Forces (1941)

CHRISTMAS AT THE OFFICERS' MESS

(Anniversary of the First Australian Republic)

If I consort with you, I say, beware
Of coming closer, that's my one condition;
For common ground implies a common mission
And I've my own and yours is over there.

Handle my nationality with care,
I give you warning it is not your pidgin;
Speak of it as you speak of a religion
Of someone else's one you do not share.

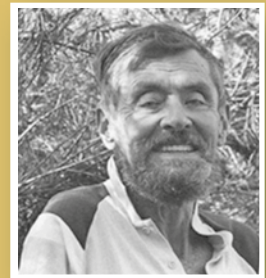
This is your night for sanctity and booze
And mine for mourning, but no right debars
My turning aside and roasting what I choose;

Here is my glass, I'll fill it to the brim
And drink my service to the Flag of Stars
Hull-down but lifting on the horizon rim.

More Poems from the Forces (1953)

John Manifold

Lieutenant John Streeter Manifold AM (1915–85) poet and musicologist, was born in Melbourne and with his degree in modern languages (French and German) in the 1930s he worked in Germany as an editor-translator. With the outbreak of the Second World War, he served in the Intelligence Corps in the Middle East, Africa and France. On his return to Australia with his English wife in 1949, he settled in Brisbane and became active in the cultural and political life of the Communist Party of Australia. In the second poem, he alludes to the Eureka Rebellion, an armed civilian uprising against the colonial government of Victoria in 1854.



What Does the Treasurer Do? By Dave Farrell

The treasurer just collects the money and pays the bills. Everyone knows that, but, as is often the case, there is a little more to it if FICM is to meet its aims and responsibilities. For example, there are the monthly reports I make to FICM's trustees of our income against known outgoings, and the forward look of what is coming in revenue and expenditure commitments over the next few months or by the end of year – or even into the next year in the case of major items or events such as our Lunch with Lectures.

Then there is Gift Aid. As many of our subscribers kindly allow us to collect Gift Aid on their payments, I aggregate them each financial year, list them and send it to HMRC to

scrutinise for our refund of 25 per cent of eligible payments. Over the years this has given FICM another £500 to £600 per annum (although this year, thanks to the generosity of our members, we received a rebate of just over £1,000).

Lastly, there is our support for the museum which, after all, is our raison d'être as a charity. Here we focus on funding essential ancillaries, for example, our purchase this year of a tent and accessories for the curator's outreach work, leaving the museum trustees to focus on and fund acquisitions. That said, we are always happy to collaborate with the museum trustees with the purchase of key items of Corps history and heritage. ■



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NOTICES AND NOTES FOR MEMBERS

Trustee Matters

*Meeting dates for 2023:
17 January, 20 June and
17 October*

- Chris Yates resigned as trustee, July
- A donation to the museum of £1,123 for an exhibition tent was approved.
- Former Int Corps Andy Harrison appointed trustee, November.

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

*Sadly, we report
the deaths of these members
in 2022*

Donald Beets
Michael Humme
Angus Southwood
Michael Warner

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

First of All, to Our Readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In this issue we hear from Colin Wright, a new trustee who is working on growing FICM through increased membership. We read of FICM's chair endorsing Corps history and heritage, the curator's puzzling 126-year-old firearm and a goodbye from Fred Judge. Historically, Harry Fecitt brings us Sgt Norbert Croucher's intelligence work in wartime Burma, an undercover Maj Harmer from Fred and two thoughtful poems by Lt John Manifold. Not least, and as an end-of year tribute to Sub Rosa's tenth year, two articles from ten and five years ago: Paul Croxson, a co-founder of this version of the Friends, now sadly passed on, gives us a book review; Jim Beach's research reminds us of what the Corps owes women who did so much for military intelligence, but were often unremarked.

Judith Durham, who died too young recently, was a favourite of mine in the juke box at the NAAFI in Maresfield in

the early 60s. In fact, so often I played the Seekers that I think my fellow squad members got fed up listening to her. But my sixpence was as good as anybody's. The other evening, at the end of a day that included a long, Zoomed FICM trustee meeting which I attended as an associate member, I sat and listened to her heart-rending 'It's Hard to Leave'. While she took me back to more serious life events than those in the NAAFI, I did also reflect on my difficult decision this year to resign as a Friends trustee after almost ten years. Although I'll be staying as your editor for a while yet, there is a poignancy that such love songs bring on, giving rise to questions like: Why did I do it? Sometimes there is no answer to what faces you, no logic, no reason, just a feeling it's time to move on. Overall, I count my lucky stars that I am still of this world, unlike the sweet Judith of my youth. ■

Contact the editor at editor:ficm@gmail.com

THE CORPS HISTORIAN RETIRES CHEERIO THE CORPS

By Fred Judge

The rapidity with which time moves has been seen to increase exponentially, as the doors to the lift taking one up or down to the next level of eternity appear to move ever closer. Tempus has fugited very rapidly indeed since 16 September 1954, when a grubby little teenager put his equally grubby signature to a piece of paper agreeing to give his all in the defence of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors and anybody else whom the then War Office wanted him to protect. Where have those years gone?

I completed 27 years in the army, 16 of them in the Corps, and then moved to the Civil Service. That same Civil Service then decided to kick me out in 1999 when they discovered, to their horror, that Judge was about to turn 60. Far too old for him to be of any use in the brave new post-Cold War era. Luckily, old hands in the Corps spotted a suitable candidate to be roped in as an unpaid, unloved, but possibly useful minion in clearing the dust from the VR, GVR, GVIR and EIIR brown envelopes in the Corps Archive. In those days, the Corps Archive was a broom cupboard with a 6 x 3 container, a couple of shelves, some emergency loo paper, a kettle and a wizened, former major in the shape of the late Alan Edwards of blessed memory. He greeted me with glee, pointed to the container, the shelves, the kettle, but not his monogrammed loo paper and said, 'Make yourself useful.' So I did, and after nearly a quarter of a century, I've only just managed to escape.



On a more serious note, I hope I have managed to add a bit to the history of the Corps, enlightened those who were unaware of what their granddads might have done during the war, and helped to improve the image of the Corps during the years that I had the privilege of reading all your long-forgotten reports – and some of mine. The archive is now much bigger with many more 6 x 3 containers, several more shelves, a modern kettle and its own supply of loo paper. It's also had its own delightful Corps Archivist for quite some time now, and we happen to be saying cheerio to the Corps at the same time.

I am not going far – well, not yet anyway. I shall still be up the road for anybody seeking a wad and a cuppa. Our successor knows only too well that outgoing individuals always have that bloody annoying habit of coming back every now and then, just to make sure that said successor is doing the job properly. I might just do that.

Anyway, as I hand in my camp and car passes, may I wish all Corps members the very best of luck in this decidedly unlucky world and remind said successor of the many ways in which I can be contacted if he finds the going gets a bit tough.

Cheerio all, and very good luck. ■