

National Memorial Arboretum Corps Annual Commemoration Service

Yesterday, 9 Jun 22, saw the Corps Annual Commemoration Service held at the NMA in Staffordshire. After last year's event had restricted attendance due to COVID, it was great to see around 80 members of our Corps family in attendance this year. This spanned serving personnel, Regular and Reserve, from LCpl - Colonel, veterans and family members. The service was led superbly by the Corps Padre, Clive Larrett, and I would also like to thank CO 1 MI Bn, Lt Col Chris Dobson, for conducting a reading. A special mention must also go to Raymond Pearce, a retired Sgt from the Corps and the oldest person on parade, who laid a wreath on behalf of veterans and the wider Corps - to put this in perspective, Ray served under the then General Templer in the Malaya campaign in the 1950s!

Below is the text of the address given by the Corps Col, Mike Peebles – it hoists the mark perfectly.

This day of reflection and remembrance is one of the most important events in the Corps calendar. It gives serving personnel, veterans and families of the Intelligence Corps an opportunity to come together, not at the home of the Corps, not at the field of Remembrance or the Cenotaph at the time of national remembrance, but here in the peaceful surroundings of the National Memorial Arboretum, in front of our memorial stone for our own purpose, giving us our own personal and intimate focus time. Given the recent terrible events in Eastern Europe, for many of us, focus time has been hard to come by, so it is good to see a fair number of our serving personnel here today and so many of our veterans and family members. Thank you to the Regimental Secretary Sam Southam, the ICA team, the Regional Secretaries and of course the Corps Padre for making this day possible.

So far 2022 has been tumultuous, troubling and tragic from whichever angle you wish to look at the world. While there is much to rejoice in us beating the pandemic for now at least, we have lost many an old friend from the Corps to other illnesses, including two of our former Directors, and a number of those who were taken from us well before their prime including a former Adjutant in her early forties and of course we remember, in particular, a serving soldier, Lance Corporal Kayde Kumar, who we lost on the 28th of January to a road collision.

The loss of a loved one, friend, or colleague causes immense grief, guilt, pain and sometimes anger. Yet it is our duty to remember, to honour the dead, to give tribute to their sacrifice and all that they did in service of our Corps, even if it causes some of these emotions to re-surface. We choose to share our feelings, thoughts and recollections of the people we knew in the company of our brothers and sisters, because whether you knew them or not, we are all connected by the same bonds. As soldiers in the British Army and members of the Intelligence Corps, we have a shared and common experience, whether you were serving in 1960 or in 2020. We are all connected by being of one Corps family.

Our last operational loss was Lance Corporal Oli Thomas, he was 26 years old when he was killed in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan in 2014, along with four others and he was one of my soldiers, when I was the CO of 3 MI Battalion. Many of us still serving will remember those we lost in our most recent campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan: Major Matt Bacon (34), 2Lt Joanne Yorke-Dyer (24), SSgt Sharron Elliott (34), Cpl Sarah Bryant (26), LCpl Habron Hashmi (24) and LCpl Jay Brynin (22). There are veterans and serving personnel (probably Late Entry officers) who will remember those who died in the Balkans and Northern Ireland.

In just 5 days' time, it will be the 40th Anniversary of the end of the Falklands War, a campaign that saw the death of 255 British military personnel, 649 Argentinian servicemen and 3 female civilian islanders. As a Corps we were fortunate not to have lost a single officer or soldier, just as in the first

Gulf War. But that does not negate the sense of loss for those veterans and family members who remember those from other Corps and Services who never returned home.

We could not stand here today without thinking of the immense suffering of the Ukrainian people and the heavy toll being imposed upon their armed forces and civilian population. The events in Eastern Europe serve as a terrible reminder of the cost of modern warfare fought using the full arsenal of modern weaponry. The scale of loss is almost incomprehensible by comparison to the campaigns we have fought in recent times; only a veteran of a World War could really appreciate the cost of a fight for national survival. As intelligeners we are inclined, indeed required, to focus on the adversary, and we should not overlook the incredible losses that the Russians are suffering. Many soldiers, young conscripts dying for a cause they neither understand nor believe in. Many families feeling the pain of loss or denied the truth of what has happened to their loved ones. We need to remain open-minded, morally and ethically balanced and not succumb to demonising rhetoric, when we consider the ultimate cost of war; following such a path would lead inevitably to a degradation of our own values.

Whatever the future holds for us, whatever challenges the Corps faces we pray that our moral compass holds true, that our values and teachings guide us, that we learn the lessons from the sacrifices of the past and use our acumen to navigate the challenges of the future. We pray that God protects us and guards our strong Corps family and we will always remember those who gave their lives in service of our nation and our Corps.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Congratulations go to all the members of the Corps detailed below who have received the following awards in the Queen's Birthday Honour List 22:

Member of the British Empire

- Lieutenant Colonel Nigel Simon Francis
- Lieutenant Joshua Jamal Bell

Chief of the General Staff Commendation

- Sergeant B P Harwood
- Lance Corporal D S Lambert
- Corporal M J Price

HQ 5 MI Receive their QPJM's

On a slightly overcast morning in late May, HQ 5MI Bn were presented with Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medals by the Governor of Edinburgh Castle Maj Gen Alistair Bruce. Maj Gen Bruce serves as Honorary Colonel of 5 MI Bn and regularly attends their training events. 5 MI is headquartered in Edinburgh Castle and has detachments throughout Scotland and the north of England and is soon to take on Northern Ireland too.



Carol Green
Regional Secretary, ICA West Midlands