



FALKLAND ISLANDS MEMORIAL CHAPEL NEWSLETTER

40TH ANNIVERSARY

2022

FALKLANDS WAR



The Airborne Forces Riders visit the Chapel (page 3)

Chairman's letter

It is with some relief that I write to you this year in 'nearer normal' circumstances. As the Nation emerges from what has been a difficult period, I am pleased to be able to inform you that the Chapel is again open to visitors; indeed, since September, the Chapel has hosted a Remembrance Sunday Service, a memorial service and a funeral, in addition to acting as the Chapel for the College and its community. The Trustees are now concentrating on the preparations for the Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving on 12th June 2022 to mark the 40th anniversary of the cessation of hostilities in the Falkland Islands.

The essence of this newsletter, therefore, is '40 years on', and you will notice that it is larger than usual, befitting of another milestone year. Through its pages, we hear from members

of our core community; these include founder members of the former Falkland Families Association (FFA), reflections of veterans who are also Chapel Trustees, and contributions from our friends in the Falkland Islands about their achievements in the 40 years since the liberation and their plans for the future. Our book reviewer, Robin Brodhurst, has an expanded section, and we also report on the 2021 'virtual' annual June Service, which this year included 'live' singers and Lesson Readers.

Two Trustees have been particularly busy in recent months: Dick Melly has been managing a plethora of orders for commemorative plaques for the Memorial Garden; and Sukey Cameron and her committee have been beavering away to fund the extra facilities needed for the 40th Anniversary commemorations at the Chapel

on Sunday 12th June (full details page 12). Through her inside knowledge, Sukey has managed to garner considerable support from companies operating in the Falkland Islands who have been most generous and to whom we are indebted.

We shall look forward to seeing you all again on 12th June next year; please book in as soon as you can, as you will need tickets for the event due to the large numbers expected. As always, we shall make sure our families and disabled visitors have priority seating, and we will do our best to accommodate other special requests. You will appreciate, however, that the event is a considerable feat of organisation, and, as ever, we will be grateful for your patience and understanding! With best wishes to you and your families.

Major General Jeff Mason
Chairman of the Trustees

The Trustees would like to thank the following organisations for supporting their 40th Anniversary Appeal:

Consolidated
Fisheries Ltd

Stanley Services Ltd

Sullivan Shipping Ltd

Fortuna Ltd

Beauchene Fishing Ltd

RSK Falkland
Islands Ltd

Argos Group Ltd

BAM Nuttall Ltd

Rigby Group Ltd

Howland & Partners

The Drapers' Company

The Fishmongers'
Company

Colonial Equipment
Finance

Annual Service 2021

In March 2021, it became clear that the scourge of Covid 19 had no intention of abating, and the Chapel Trustees had to make an unpopular decision. As a result, the Secretary had to contact the 444 supporters who had already booked in to the Annual Service, scheduled for Sunday 13th June, to tell them the disappointing news that yet another Service was cancelled and would be replaced by a virtual one. The Government's 'roadmap' out of the pandemic did not allow for similarly large events until 21st June, and, if a Service were to go ahead 'live' on 13th June, only a third of the congregation would have been allowed to attend, there could be no singing or mass catering, and who would want to come under such circumstances? Thanks to the generosity of the Falkland Islands Government, which had awarded the Chapel Trustees a grant of £5,000 towards the cost of the Service, the Trustees were able to commission a professional film company to record a short Service for subsequent broadcast; on this occasion, the film benefitted from the participants being recorded in the Chapel during the weeks leading up to the Service being broadcast. In addition, the Chapel website publicised the link to the recording and provided a copy of the Order of Service to download. The words to each hymn were cleverly put on the screen, so that everyone could sing along at home if they wished, a popular touch for groups and reunion gatherings.

The Service was led by the Chaplain, Reverend Neil

Jeffers, and the Lessons were read by veteran and Chapel Trustee Robert Mason, Welsh Guards 1982, and by Dr Cathy Dent, widow of Captain Christopher Dent, 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment. There followed the Act of Remembrance, aptly carried out at the Cairn by Lieutenant General Sir Hew Pike KCB DSO MBE, 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment 1982. The Address, by Abbot Hugh Allan O.Praem, Apostolic Administrator of the Prefecture of the Falkland Islands, who generously travelled all the way from Essex, was both inspirational and excellent. The Abbot drew a parallel between the late Captain Sir Tom Moore and Prince Phillip, and the 'brave souls' who lost their lives in the Falklands in 1982, as being shining examples of Christians demonstrating 'service, valour, commitment, friendship, good humour and above all, love, which always win the day'. Quoting St Augustine, he said that 'God made us to make the times, not the times to make us'. In a way, those 'brave souls' who went to liberate the people of the Falkland Islands, were doing exactly what St Augustine was talking about.

If anyone would like to read the full script of Father Hugh's Homily for 13th June 2021, please contact the Secretary for a copy.

During the Falklands Hymn, the filmmaker scanned the Names of the Fallen on the foyer wall, and later, at the end of the Service, they were scrolled in full, a detail much appreciated by the bereaved families. Footage from the



Lt. General Sir Hew Pike KCB DSO MBE



Dr Cathy Dent



Trustee Robert Mason



Abbot Hugh Allan



Falklands and from the 1982 War was interspersed appropriately within the live action.

Many thanks to some 1,200 of you who 'clicked the link' to our virtual Service and to those who

wrote to us afterwards to express their gratitude. So many of you enjoyed the 'emotional roll call' of photos from Services past at the end of the film – we all looked younger then!



On the day of the cancelled Annual Service, Falklands Government Representative Richard Hyslop laid a wreath at the Cairn with Rev. Neil Jeffers

Old Pangbournians Reunite



Rear Admiral Jeremy Sanders CB OBE

A weekend reunion event was held in Portsmouth in October to remember the contribution that some 50 former students of Pangbourne had made during the Falklands War in 1982.

The programme, masterminded by Old Pangbournian (OP) Robin Paine and a group of Falklands veterans, included a film/slide presentation in the Princess Royal Gallery of the Historic Dockyard given by former Chapel Trust Chairman, Rear Admiral Jeremy Sanders CB OBE, (Staff Officer Operations to the commander of the Task Force Battle Group in '82), and Colonel Ivar Hellberg OBE (who led the Royal Marines Commando Logistic Regiment in '82). The weekend activities also included a tour of the Mary Rose Museum and a black-tie dinner.

The extent of OP involvement in 1982 can be seen in Robin Brodhurst's review of 'LEADERS' in this newsletter on page 11

A Mission of Remembrance

On 10th August and post lockdown, the previously deserted campus at Pangbourne became a hive of activity. It was day eleven of the Airborne Forces Riders' 'Falklands Ride of Respect' in aid of SAMA 82. The Airborne Forces Riders' 'Fab Four': Major Paul Moore 9 Para Sqn RE, Andrew 'Charlie' McColgan 9 Para Sqn RE, Tony McKie 1st Battalion the Parachute Regiment & Phil Damant RAF, plus a notable phalanx of around 20 riders in support, rode into Pangbourne on some impressive motor bikes and parked up beside our blessed Memorial Chapel. Deservedly they were welcomed by 'top brass' including Chapel Trust Chairman, Major General Jeff Mason and Trustee Rear Admiral Dick Melly, SAMA'82 Chairman Tom Herring and his wife Gen, and Falklands Government representative Richard Hyslop. The welcome party also included Angela and Jim Perry and Thomas and Alex Garnier who took photographs of the occasion, and veteran Joe Erskine with wife Paddy and their wee grandson Logan. There followed a formal gathering at the Cairn led by Major Paul, who outlined their mission of 'Remembrance-Respect-Awareness-Support', and Chaplain, Reverend Neil Jeffers who prayed with the

veterans and performed the Act of Remembrance. Then a collective tour of the Chapel orchestrated by Dick Melly and some 'down time' before the visitors set off again to Tidworth Military Cemetery and another five days of hard riding! The Falklands Ride of Respect began on 31st July and concluded on 15th August, covering some 3,000 miles. We talked to organiser Major Paul Moore after the dust had settled and this is what he told us: "We had a really good run this year, nothing went wrong and the weather was generally kind but the best thing of all was that we had aimed to raise £5,000 for SAMA 82 and ended up with £13,000+; people were just so generous!"

You can support the Airborne Riders' 40th Anniversary 2022 initiative which runs from 2nd to 16th May as follows:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/falklandsrideofrespect2022

You can also follow their progress at:

www.facebook.com/Falklands-War-SAMA-Ride-of-Respect-2022-369572600436147/

The money raised will help Falklands veterans and the families of the fallen to visit the islands and will provide welfare relief if needed.

The Memorial Garden Grows

The Trustees are delighted at the response to their 40th Anniversary Memorial Garden Project, which has produced a steady flow of organisations wishing to sponsor a Memorial Plaque. The plan to transform the interior of the rather stark circular garden into a more comforting and peaceful place is already taking shape, as our photographs show. A total of 22 plaques have now been commissioned, with the great majority of them already

installed. Whilst the plaques are intended to commemorate an organisation's involvement in the Falkland Islands conflict, at the suggestion of a veteran and Friend of the Chapel, one of the plaques commemorates the part played by the Islanders in securing their freedom. With the brickwork of the Memorial Garden recently cleaned and the surrounding flowerbeds re-planted, it is now truly a restful and secluded place for quiet contemplation.



The following units have been recognised with a sponsored plaque
(listed in the order that the plaques were agreed):

The Scots Guards	3 Cdo Brigade Air Squadron	The Army Air Corps
HMS ARDENT	The Royal Military Police	The RAF Regiment
The SAS	HMS GLAMORGAN	16 Field Ambulance RAMC
SS UGANDA	HMS YARMOUTH	The Royal Engineers
HMS FEARLESS	The Falkland Islanders	The SBS
The Welsh Guards	The Parachute Regiment & Airborne Forces	The Old Pangbournian Society
HMS INVINCIBLE	The Gurkhas	The Figgard Association
		The Royal Army Pay Corps



PRAYER FOR THE YEAR by Reverend Neil Jeffers



Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy in this time of uncertainty and distress. Sustain and support the anxious and fearful, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may rejoice in your comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

VETERANS REFLECT 40 YEARS ON

Chapel Trustees Reflections.....40 Years on

The Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees of which a number served in the Falklands in 1982. Forty years on from their life changing experiences in the South Atlantic, some of them have generously agreed to share their personal thoughts and reflections with us.

Reminiscences of a young Royal Marines Lieutenant by Major General Jeff Mason MBE, Chairman of the Chapel Trustees



Nearly 40 years ago there are still abiding memories that stand out in that turbulent and life changing 3-4 months. I had been reappointed to HMS INTREPID, having left her three months before, reassuming my appointment as

second in command of the RM Assault Squadron and as a primary bridge watch-keeper.

I was on the bridge when one of communications ratings reported that they had just heard on the BBC World Service that HMS SHEFFIELD had been sunk – I think we all now realised that the ‘phoney war’ was over and we were going to fight. It was also interesting that this calamitous news had been received from the BBC and not from the Task Group. Our personal communications routes back to the UK were rudimentary. The much loved ‘bluey’ was the only way of communication and letters could only be received by ships joining the task force or by air drop into the sea. Letters arrived out of sequence and up to 4-6 weeks after having been written.

During the pre-landing phase, probably around the 19th May, I

recall looking out from the bridge and seeing this vast armada of ships stretching across the horizon wondering why the Argentinians could not find us – the mist then closed in and we were hidden once more. Watching the air raids come into San Carlos Water and the escorts being targeted before the troop ships – even I as a youngster realised they were targeting the wrong vessels. Seeing HMS ANTELOPE blow up is a vivid and sobering memory as was taking a small landing craft to West Falkland to attempt to pick up a SAS patrol and being intercepted by the Sound guard ship, I believe HMS ARROW, who did not know we were there and lit us up with a searchlight.

And post the 14th June moving 40 Cdo to West Falkland by LCU to take the surrender at Port Howard and Fox Bay and having to turn back because of bad weather in the sound – arriving at Port Howard



Some FIMCT Trustees

later in the day I realised that the jetty had been mined – arriving in the darkness pre-dawn it could have been a catastrophe. At Fox Bay assisting in prisoner handling and looking at the difference between the Argentinian style of command and our own. Their officers, who spoke excellent English with a significant proportion with English surnames, looked well fed, wore a different rig to their soldiers and were aloof and arrogant – they appeared to struggle to understand our type of leadership.

Some reflections only come with the passing of time, growing up, and greater military experience. It was a close run thing – and senior commanders must have had huge pressures on them. Our training and sheer Albion stubbornness and spirit shone through. Dominating the enemy physically, mentally and morally was crucial to success as was the ruthlessness in maintaining the main effort. But being compassionate and fair to the defeated enemy is also extremely important in maintaining the moral high ground. Finally the old adage – they also serve who only stand and wait – our families – who due to poor communications from the front and an interesting reporting process on the news, were put under huge emotional pressures must never be forgotten.

Rear Admiral Dick Melly



On my return to the UK from a two-week skiing holiday, I was confronted at Gatwick Airport with posters directing all Servicemen to contact their units. Somewhat surprised by what had occurred in my absence, I immediately re-joined my ship – and did not step ashore again for 109 days!

As the Senior Watchkeeper (Engineering) on board HMS HERMES, I had a number of

responsibilities. Whilst the foremost of these was the care of the ship's fuel, oil and water, particularly pertinent to the forthcoming deployment was my position as the ship's Damage Control Engineer Officer. Understandably, on the trip South, our preparations for action damage were rigorously revisited.

As the Task Force's flagship, HMS HERMES was, at least initially, the focus of much of the attention. The two carriers, HERMES and INVINCIBLE, were essential to the success of the mission, and as such they were generally well-protected and kept out of harm's way. I therefore did not experience, first hand, the trauma of the violence of the enemy. Nevertheless, with an action station in the bowels of a very large ship, the prospect of coping with the aftermath of a successful attack concentrated the mind! Indeed, the early loss of HMS SHEFFIELD brought home the very real risks that were being daily endured by the men of the



Task Force. Worse was, of course, to follow. I vividly remember visiting the flight deck, following one attack, and seeing the huge ATLANTIC CONVEYOR nearby – ablaze following an Exocet attack, illuminated by searchlights and with helicopters hovering overhead.

For me, at the age of just 28, it was the adventure of a lifetime. Other than marriage, no other event has had such an impact upon my life. The experience changed the trajectory of the remainder

of my career in the Service and also impacted upon much that happened subsequently, not least as a Trustee of the Chapel. Whilst I served in many ships during my career, it was only the shared excitement of the South Atlantic which led to enduring friendships being formed – indeed, I am still regularly in touch with my fellow engineer officers of that time, and I am honoured to have been asked to be the UK President of the Hermes Association.

As we approach the 40th Commemorations of the Falklands War, I feel proud to have been involved and grateful for the subsequent years.

VETERANS REFLECT 40 YEARS ON

Air Chief Marshal Sir Andrew Pulford GCB CBE

'Well have a good time in Scotland and give me a call when you get back!', the words spoken by my fiancée, Nicky, in early April 1982, in response to my call to tell her not to travel down to Yeovilton for the weekend, as I was deploying to the Falkland Islands. 'It's not like that in the movies' were my initial thoughts but of course, within minutes she returned my call as she recognised the reality of the situation. And so began a phase of my life that was to introduce a dramatic mix of emotions and senses: adventure, horror, uncertainty, anger, homesickness and, ultimately, great pride.

In 1982 I was an RAF exchange helicopter pilot with the Royal Navy's Commando Helicopter Force, and I was planned to get married in the August of that year.

There is no need for me to narrate the events of what followed but, as for many, it was eventful and life-changing. The adventure of a rapid deployment to Ascension by air with our aircraft then embarking in RFA TIDESPRING to join the South Georgia Task Group. The reality and risk of live operations with the loss of our aircraft, but thankfully no lives, following

crashes on Fortuna Glacier. Three weeks guarding and transporting the Argentine garrison to Ascension before yet another sail south, this time with the Task Force for company. Exocet attacks, bomb alley and the exacting flying during the push to Stanley. The Casevac and Medevac flights that provided stark exposure to the true realities, and cost, of war. And finally the elation and relief of victory and peace.

Those hectic, traumatic weeks live on in my memory as if yesterday but it is the people that had the greatest impact. The friends on my Flight, the professionalism of the various ships companies in which we embarked, and, of course, the grit, determination and sheer courage of those who fought the war on the ground. I have nothing but admiration for them all.

I returned from the Falklands older and a little wiser but also determined to live life to the full; there were many who did not return and we owe it to them to both remember and to make the most of what we have.

Finally, I did indeed get back in time for my wedding, with 10 days to spare.

Captain Martin Reed RD*



Of all the strange and unusual roles CANBERRA had to play in 1982, perhaps the most odd was becoming a floating Prisoner of War Camp!

From our first day of action on May 21st in San Carlos Water we had been picking up Argentine wounded. By the end we had treated 90 in our hospital complex and still had 20 on board.

When the surrender was announced we received a flash signal to proceed 'with all despatch' to the Islands as there were some nine

thousand prisoners being herded on to Stanley Airfield with little or no cover in the Austral winter. All the tentage and barbed wire for a prisoner compound was at the bottom of the ocean, still in ATLANTIC CONVEYOR.

We picked up one thousand PoW's from San Carlos with fifty Welsh Guards to oversee them, together with a Red Cross official with his copy of the Geneva Convention. I had my team fabricate large canvas sheets hung on both sides of the hull and on the upper deck painted with "PoW" and "P de G" in black to indicate our status. ("Prisioneros de Guerra")

At Stanley we took on C Company from 3 Para and kept loading cold, wet, hungry, and frightened prisoners until we were full. All the cabins had been stripped of their mattresses and received two thousand, one hundred bodies, the remaining two thousand were set out in rows in the Public Rooms.

Robert Mason (Welsh Guards 1982)



June 8th 1982 was a beautiful, calm, sunny day in the Falklands – unusual for winter. It was also a very bleak one for the Welsh Guards, who lost 42 men, including attached personnel, when the RFA SIR GALAHAD was bombed at anchor in Fitzroy harbour.

What was a troop-carrying vessel doing at anchor there, in plain view of the enemy-occupied hills? Well, it was the result of many little things that go wrong in warfare, which I won't go into here in detail, but they included various loading and unloading delays; failure of small boats to rendezvous due to bad weather; a broken stern ramp; ground air defence systems not bedded in; a new UK Government policy not to deploy capital ships too far forward; very poor radio communications (a common feature throughout the campaign) and some poor decision-making by a number of different people of different rank and Service. All these things led to the War's greatest loss of life – and let us not forget a very brave Argentinian pilot who, flying at low level very fast and under considerable ground fire, dropped a bomb through a hatch into a hold and onto a pile of explosive ammunition where our mortar platoon were; the pilot did not get home either that day. 42 of our dead; and serious burns for more than 150, some of whom are still suffering from them today, let alone those who suffer from PTSD and related mental

We had become used to helping the Argentine wounded but soon found that many of the Prisoners coming on board were also in need, of shelter, warmth, and food.

Feeding was done in batches and we were taken to task by Hugo from the Red Cross for not conforming to the Convention. We should have fed the prisoners three meals a day, however it took us from seven to eleven hours to feed them all so we could only give them two!

To help in translation we found a school teacher in the ranks of the prisoners called Milton Rhys, from Trelew in Patagonia where he taught English and Welsh! He and

conditions. Many things were to blame, but in retrospect no person or group of people could ever be held to account; such events are usually, and probably always will be, down to the "fog of war."

But I will never forget that day: The noise of machines and the calmness of men; the fortitude of the wounded and the agony of their burns; the bravery of so many of our men and others in getting disabled men off a ship wracked with explosions, fire and smoke; the camaraderie shown by everyone, everywhere; the wonderful help of 2 Para and others, billeted nearby; the awful realisation as the death toll mounted as units reformed and rolls were called. Also, a little later, the grim resolve of those of us spared the bombing as we turned and marched towards Stanley.

At the time I personally wondered if this, and the deaths of the other 216 who lost their lives 40 years ago, was a price worth paying for returning the Islands to the people who are - and still want to be - as British as the Isle of Wight, or Pontypridd. They think it was worth it, and so did the people of Britain who stopped going out in the evenings so they could listen to the news bulletin, who cheered us all on our return and who welcomed us wherever we went.

This struck home to me forcibly when I revisited the Islands in March 2017. We got a huge welcome from schoolchildren to the elderly alike - I have never before been hugged by a complete stranger. And it was wonderful to see the islands again, so pristine and beautiful. Above all it was great to see a people who have made such a success of their economy and the natural resources available to them. The whole place is buzzing with increasing activity and new prosperity.

The 1982 campaign was often bleak, as on the day we lost so many. But it was most definitely worth it.

I am still in touch. When they left us after another strange voyage to Argentina as a Cartel vessel, we found that all over the ship they had left cards, menu sheets, notepaper and any scrap they could find, all saying "Thank you". Many named their specific guards and crew who had been good to them.

The story is, I suppose, that beneath the uniforms we all were human, with the same needs and necessities. Only the politics and a language separated us.

Their simple gratitude and the good that we could do for them has stayed imprinted on me ever since.

VETERANS REFLECT 40 YEARS ON

Reflections: Brigadier Charles Page MBE, Scots Guards in 1982



It is fair to say that without the Falklands' Campaign I almost certainly would not have remained in the Army for a full career. The 19-year-old Second Lieutenant, commanding 8 Platoon, G Company, Second Battalion Scots Guards, was there to get something out of his system before moving into the wider world and getting a 'proper' job. However, what I saw in the Falklands, and in particular on Mount Tumbledown, made me realise that I would be hard pressed to replicate the challenge, sense of purpose and above all, comradeship elsewhere.

My last day in uniform was 13th September 2017 and, between 1982 and then I saw plenty of operational service, including in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq, with short visits to other trouble spots thrown in for good measure. The Army also gave me the opportunity to try my hand at a variety of roles including Training, Intelligence, Planning and even Recruitment Advertising and being

a member of the Royal Household. To top it, the Army gave me the opportunity to achieve two masters' degrees, having left school with the same number of A Levels! I feel that I was very fortunate indeed.

So, reflections... Well, there is no doubt that the Falklands had a profound impact in shaping me at an early stage of my professional life, alongside all those other influences that shape us including our families and friends, and life's inevitable ups and downs. I think I can sense what is important as I have seen decisions made that literally meant life or death, so I tend not to get overly concerned with issues that are important to many but fall way below that threshold for me. I saw people do the most extraordinary things, particularly the Guardsmen who took on Argentinean Marines at close quarters on Tumbledown, so taking this strategically important mountain by first light. The battle gave me a healthy respect for our opponents that night, a respect I do not have for many of the opponents I encountered later in my career.

It is difficult to believe that forty years have gone by as so much of the War remains vivid in my memory. All of us, of course, will keep the memory of those who did not return fresh in our minds; 'they shall not grow old...' as inevitably, after forty years, the remainder of us are beginning to realise that we are not quite as fit and agile as we were in 1982.

Reverend David Cooper



Rev. David Cooper, Chaplain to the 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment in 1982 was 'Mentioned in Dispatches' for his outstanding couragehe reflects as follows:

Let's call him Pte Valdez, for we have to ensure that we don't embarrass him overtly. He was a member of 2 Para and was dug in quite close to me on Sussex Mountain after we had landed.

If you make a man dress in a uniform the same as those amongst whom he lives he will then find a different way of expressing his individuality-Sometimes it can be quite quirky.

I once knew a guards WO2, many years ago, who collected cuckoo clocks. In itself you might think, not too odd. He collected them so that, when the cuckoo appeared, on the hour, he could shoot it! A bit disconcerting if you happened to be seated under the clock in question at the time.

Still, our Pte Valdez wasn't that quirky. No, his interest was Ambrosia creamed rice. No, he didn't shoot it either. But he did love it above the price of rubies, and certainly in preference to the standard army ration pack of that day.

You need to know, by the way, that in those days the food in a ration pack mainly consisted of tinned food that soldiers used to heat by

placing it in their aluminium mug, together with water and brought to a boil after which the food was eaten and the water in which it was boiled used to make tea.

But to return to my story. Soon after our landings we came under air attack, during the course of which we could do little but stay in our dugouts and watch the Navy being attacked in San Carlos Water.

One such attack came in quite late in the afternoon and during the course of it, whilst we optimistically fired at the aircraft with our rifles, there came a dull, but impressive, 'thud' from Pte?'s dugout. Fearing the worst we ran to give him assistance.

It was a terrible sight, matched only by the time when my repair on my mother's pressure cooker that I had effected to the safety valve, gave way and sprayed the entire kitchen with vaporised rice.

Pte Valdez, his dugout and his entire kit was covered in Ambrosia creamed rice. He'd been boiling it when the air raid began, forgotten it and had been reminded when the tin exploded. A tin he had brought ashore for his personal use.

There were many, truly appalling experiences over the course of the next few weeks, but those of us who were witnesses to Valdez and his rice found that humour isn't absent from the battlefield and, in a curious way, enables one to continue the fight. Since then I have never underestimated the benefit of a sense of humour and proportion.

Gratitude to their Captain – Never Forgotten

On 7 May 1982, HMS EXETER left her guardship duties in the Caribbean to join the task force in the South Atlantic, replacing her sister ship HMS SHEFFIELD who had just been sunk. The time taken on the trip South was used by Captain Hugh Balfour to ensure that his ship's company were trained and ready for action. The ship arrived in theatre on the day that the troops were landed to begin the ground battle to regain the Falklands.

The recent training was soon put into practice, as air raids became a daily occurrence. On 30 May, a group of contacts appeared on radar at just over 30 miles. The speed of the subsequent action was remarkable, but our Sea Dart missile system proved its capability, with two of the three targets fired upon destroyed in the space of 1½ minutes.

But as we were the hunter, so we were the prey. In the busy Ops Room, it was almost like another exercise, but for the rest of the ship, closed up at their action stations, these were the most terrifying minutes. On one occasion, there was a sudden warning call from Captain Balfour "Exocet locked on - 9 seconds from impact - hit the deck"! He then calmly continued to take evasive action and we waited. The whole action lasted just seven minutes, and for the first time in the conflict, a ship had come off best in an Exocet attack.

To this day, each and every man on board HMS EXETER recognises that, if it was not for the calm and assured way that the attack was handled, then many of us would not have survived. That unforgettable day, and the shared experiences in the South Atlantic, created a bond amongst the crew that

has strengthened as we meet each year to share a toast to our hero - Captain Hugh Balfour.

As a small token, the poem on page 12 is dedicated to the EXETER crew of 1982 and, in particular, to Hugh Balfour.

Dougie Leask



I was very honoured to receive one of the lovely crocheted Scarves for Falklands Veterans sent to me by my friend Dave 'Charlie' Brown with the following message: *Angela, this scarf is sent to you from Me and all vets of '82!* There was also a nice message from the stitcher Tina Haley! Thank you both. I love it!

This is a remarkable project which has now given scarves to over 4,500 Falklands veterans. Congratulations to its founder Rachel Simons and her team of volunteer stitchers. See the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/1263590410655591

THE FAMILIES - A PILGRIMAGE IN 1983

Chapel Trustee Sara Jones is the widow of Lt. Colonel 'H' Jones VC OBE and, together with a group of other bereaved relatives, formed the Falkland Families Association (FFA) following a Pilgrimage to the Islands in 1983. Sara acted as the group's Chairman until it was disbanded in 2015. This feature includes the reflections from that Pilgrimage of two of her colleagues who also lost their loved ones: Ray Poole, father of Gareth Wyn Poole WG and Stuart Leeming, brother of Robert Leeming RM

It goes without saying that my life changed out of all recognition when my husband was killed at Goose Green in 1982. I went from being an Army wife supporting two sons at boarding school to a widow of the most senior person killed in the conflict and thus the centre of media attention. David and Rupert aged 16 and 13 were at home on half term when we received the awful news and, when they returned to school would be sitting exams. Forty years ago the perception was that life had to carry on regardless of such a loss and so, after the week end, they returned to school and I

tried to pick up the threads of my life. The press were ever present and I felt I had to be strong for others, in 2 Para, who had lost their husbands. One of the most pressing problems was that I had to find a home for us as we had been living in an Army quarter. Thankfully, due to the circumstances, we were given a year to search for a house. I am eternally grateful to family and friends who supported me throughout.

Looking at it now, except for the fact that we had lost someone we loved, I realise how comparatively lucky the Falklands Families were, because the war was short and ended

in success and we had the support of the country plus the friendship of others who had experienced similar loss. This is in stark contrast to families who have lost a loved one in conflicts since.

In 1983 we journeyed to the Islands on the Government organised pilgrimage. I believe there were 540 of us and I have to say, looking back, it was beautifully and sensitively organised.

Visiting the Islands gave us a better understanding of what our men had fought for. On the journey home the Falkland Families Association

was formed. My involvement with it was always a pleasure as has been my appointment as a Trustee of the Falkland Island Memorial Chapel which means a great deal to us all. It has been a balm to the soul and place to meet and rekindle friendships with families and veterans. Visiting the Islands over the years has been a privilege and increases my pride in what our troops, and my husband H, achieved. 40 years on this pride is undimmed.



Sara Jones, proudly wearing her 'Scarf for Veterans', reflects...

My Memories by Stuart Leeming



Stuart with Kay at the Chapel

On the Pilgrimage to the Falklands Islands where my brother was killed, I was accompanied by Margaret, my brother's wife, their son Mark, and my sister Elizabeth. As we left the hotel in London on 5th April there was almost a festive atmosphere and much interest from the press. We knew in our hearts that this would be a very emotional journey to a place that, prior to 1982, few had heard about, and many had questioned, the decision to go to war over. But, as the date for arrival at our destination approached the mood amongst those on the pilgrimage became very sombre.

Saturday 9th April we awoke to a beautiful, calm and sunny day. We had arrived and were met by our escorts HMS Cardiff and a frigate. We passed Pebble Island and held commemorations for Coventry and Ardent after which we entered Falkland sound coming to anchor off San Carlos. We felt very privileged to be there. Field Marshall Lord Bramall and Sir Rex Hunt came on board to wish us well.

That afternoon the families of those buried at Blue Beach cemetery disembarked to visit the graves of their loved ones. It proved to be an extremely emotional experience and many tears were shed. We all remained ashore for some time and

thought the cemetery to be a fitting resting place and memorial for all the others lost in the war.

On Sunday 10th April the sun rose on a beautiful and tranquil San Carlos water. All the families on board would come ashore for a full Memorial Service at 11.45 with us. It was a fine tribute to those who had lost their lives and when it was over the Army gave us all a good lunch. It was a very emotional day.

On the 11th we weighed anchor at 0915 and made passage along Falkland sound for the main service at sea as we sailed towards Port Stanley. Our ship hove to for services at each location where ships were lost at sea.

Tuesday 12th was scheduled to be a very busy day for all the families. Helicopter flights were organised to let families see the locations of the battles where their loved ones fell. We flew low over Two Sisters and could see many pieces of debris untouched since the war. Onwards then to Mount Kent where 45 Commando were camped and then to Estancia where there was a temporary grave for these who fell in the final battles.

On occasion during our stay, we were hosted by Islanders and it was very moving to hear that they never doubted that they would be liberated and that they had to show that it was all worthwhile.

On Wednesday 12th April 1983 we bade farewell to Port Stanley and the Islands and set passage for Montevideo which would take 2 days. It was during this passage that the idea of forming an Association of bereaved families was born.

Ray Poole: A Brief Recollection



Ray Poole (with Sara Jones)

It was Tuesday 5th April 1983 and the start of a very significant journey to the Falkland Islands, to visit the battle sites, graves and memorials, where our son Gareth, a proud 20 year old Welsh Guardsman, had died on the RFA Sir Galahad during the Falklands War in 1982. British Airways, for whom I worked at the time, flew 540 of us bereaved family members from LHR to Montevideo on two aircraft. We landed at our destination about 11pm that night, boarded coaches, and were astonished by the high speed journey with military outriders through the city to the harbour, where we were ushered again speedily by armed guards to the cruise ship "Cunard Countess".

During the following 3 days we were organised into our Regimental/Unit/Ship groups by the respective Families Officers, and spent time renewing acquaintances and getting to know other families; South Wales is a very populated and community minded area.

On Saturday, the "Countess" entered San Carlos Water and a few families who had relatives buried in the San Carlos cemetery went ashore for a private Service. All the other families went ashore on Sunday 10th April for a full Memorial Service to their loved ones, a most moving ceremony where they all went forward and laid their own tributes.

Monday was the day on which we sailed towards Port Stanley, and the Service for those lost on the RFA Sir Galahad

took place at 9.45pm at the nearest location possible to where it now lies. Taking place on deck in total darkness and silence in the vast expanse of the South Atlantic it was a very emotional occasion, passionately officiated by Welsh Guards' Padre Peter Brooke and closing with an arousing rendition of the Welsh National anthem.

Note -- Padre Brooke shared our table at mealtimes during the voyage and we became great friends, but sadly he lost his life in a tragic accident just 3 weeks after returning home.

After lunch on the next day we flew by Chinook helicopter to near Fitzroy for a Service at the WG's Memorial Cross, which had been constructed from a 'liberated' telegraph pole by some of the Guardsmen after war's end. With just the sound of the perpetual wind in our ears in that rather desolate location it was hard to imagine the tragedy that took place just 10 months earlier, but the view out past the headland revived the vivid memory of the Sir Galahad burning fiercely and the survivors clambering ashore. Peter Brooke again officiated, and poppy wreaths and crosses were placed around a large leek, fashioned out of white painted stones laid on the ground at the foot of the Cross. It was a never to be forgotten memory, a mainly Welsh congregation passionately and unashamedly singing hymns and the Welsh National Anthem at 'top note' to this barren landscape.

Our departure from the Falklands that evening commenced with a flypast of aircraft and a sail pass of HMS CARDIFF and ACTIVE with crews cheering and waving, and all the Pilgrimage replying, with every other ship at anchor blasting their sirens -- and all under a fantastic sunset -- unforgettable.

40 YEARS OF FALKLANDS CONSERVATION

Four Decades of Wildlife Conservation by Falklands Conservation

Over the past 40 years, Falklands Conservation has worked hard with the local community and with businesses to protect and conserve the Falkland Islands' natural environment. Set up as the Falkland Islands Foundation in 1979 and formally launched by Sir David Attenborough as Falklands Conservation in 1991, the organisation has, through community outreach, practical conservation, research and delivery, made significant strides in its work.

One of the highlights has been the success of the seabird monitoring programme. In 1989/90, the project was set up to provide annual estimates on breeding numbers and success. We now regularly maintain 50+ sites and have seen black-browed albatross moved off the IUCN 'Endangered' list to 'Least Concern', as well as the Gentoo Penguin downgraded from 'Near-Threatened'. This project helped to identify the threats to seabirds posed by the fishing industry, and the introduction of mitigation measures on fishing vessels has meant that, today, there are hardly any mortalities recorded.

Another success in the seabird world was the completion of the oiled seabird rehabilitation centre in 2015 in Stanley, to help clean and support wildlife caught up in spills.

Our work with the community has also been a proud achievement. In 1999, a local youth group, the Watch Group, was established and now enjoys the membership of 40-60 children a year, all learning about their local environment and how best to

protect it. There has also been a marked growth in interest from landowners and other members of the community, encouraged by the setup of the Small Grants scheme in 2004.

This growing interest in habitat restoration work and site management drove Falklands Conservation to merge with the New Island Conservation Trust in 2020, to oversee management of New Island and continue the fantastic work since it was set up as a nature reserve in 1972.

Finally, in a major milestone in the ongoing work for marine management, Falkland Islands waters up to 100m were recognised as a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) for the endangered sei whales in 2021. Not only was this the first KBA for the Falklands, but the first KBA for sei whales in the world.

Over the past four decades, the Falkland Islands have achieved considerable success in the protection of its natural environment and is well-placed for the next 40 years of conservation ambition and action.

For more information on Falklands Conservation, visit <https://falklandsconservation.com/> or email info@conservation.org.fk



Volunteers



Seabird monitoring



Oiled Penguins in Stanley's rehab centre



Members of the community Watch Group (and above left)



The endangered sei whale

**A HUGE THANK YOU
TO A MYSTERY
DONOR!**

Someone wonderful has put over £1,000 into the Chapel bank account with the 'tag' MUCH LOVED.

Please get in touch so we can thank you!

40TH ANNIVERSARY IN THE FALKLANDS

Looking Forward at Forty

Chapel Trustee Sukey Cameron OBE carried out this interview with Falkland Islander Mrs Phyl Rendell MBE who is Chair of the 40th Anniversary Committee in the Islands. She writes...

The 40th Anniversary of the Falklands War will be marked by a number of events, both in the UK and in the Islands. In September 2019 a Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Phyl Rendell MBE, was formed in the Islands to organise the programme of events there.

Phyl is well qualified to undertake the task; born in the Islands, she was Director of Education from 1988 until 1995 when she was appointed the Islands' first Director of Mineral Resources. She retired in 2012 and was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 2013 and served until 2017. In 2013 Phyl was awarded an MBE for services to Falkland Islands interests.

In her second retirement, she and her husband Mike (a former Royal Marine) bought Bleaker Island, in East Falkland, where they farm and run a very successful tourism business, along with their son Nick.

Sukey Cameron OBE at her investiture by HRH The Duke of Cambridge at Windsor Castle on 9th November 2021. Sukey, herself a Falkland Islander, and for 29 years the representative of the Falklands Government in the UK, is the Chapel's Trustee 'link to the Islands'



Q1: I began by asking Phyl what the remit of the Committee was:

As planning for the 40th Anniversary falls over two Assemblies, Elected Members said that they wanted a framework for what would be a year-long programme of celebration and commemoration in 2022. They envisaged a Committee that ensures that events and activities are coordinated and that everyone across the Falkland Islands – as well as friends overseas – can contribute.

Q2: Will the events be solely focussed around Liberation Day, 14th June?

By working with organisations and individuals here in the Falklands, events occurring throughout the year will have a 40th Anniversary theme. Things will start with the annual raft race held on 1st January and the last events will no doubt be Falklands Battle Day on 8 December and the Christmas Sports, with lots of events in between. Of course the key dates from the War will be special events.

Q3: In the expectation that travel restrictions will be lifted, has the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) invited any guests to join in the commemorations?



Yes, the Committee has agreed to be optimistic and plan for no quarantine requirements by April and we are also hopeful that flights from Chile will resume, taking pressure off the Airbridge. A number of senior veterans have been invited to travel out for key events including Landing Day, Liberation Day and Remembrance Sunday. Family members of some of the casualties are also invited to visit during the year and we expect a number of SAMA veterans to travel out as well.

Q4: With the spotlight on the Islands during the year, will the Committee be taking the opportunity to highlight the progress in the Islands since 1982 and future development plans, if so, how will it be done?

At its first meeting the Committee agreed that as well as commemorating the sacrifice of those who won our freedom, we would showcase the modern Falklands and involve our young people in events to demonstrate what has been achieved over the last 40 years. A new DVD is being commissioned to illustrate the Falklands as it is and the media and guests will have an opportunity to see for themselves the investment in infrastructure around the Islands, talk to people young and old, to hear how life has changed and what aspirations there are for the future. The Committee's strap line "Looking Forward at Forty" encapsulates our aims.

Q5: Given that Her Majesty the Queen is celebrating her Platinum Jubilee this year, is your Committee involved in any plans to mark this milestone in the Islands?

Members of the Legislative Assembly have asked our Committee to plan



events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and we are pleased that they have declared a four day weekend, as in UK and other Overseas Territories. Of course it's winter here in June so street parties may not be on the cards but already people have stepped forward to organise a Ball and children's parties and we will light beacons along the harbour.

Q6: Finally, the question that one is always asked, "where were you in 82"? What are your personal recollections of that time?

Mike and I were in UK and with Nick being born in March that year. Mike volunteered to re-join the Royal Marines but was told he was too old! He, like others, provided MOD with photographs of potential landing sites and features in the Islands and was interviewed a few times, especially about trench foot. We read every paper we could get our hands on and returned to the Falklands in October 1982 to help rebuild and develop the Islands.

Many thanks to Phyl
for this interview
and good wishes
for 2022!

Phyl with the Bleaker Island settlement in the background



COMMEMORATIONS IN THE FALKLANDS

Commemorating the Fallen in the Falklands

Remembrance Sunday is past and yet the Season of Remembrance in the Falklands is only just beginning! 107 silhouette Tommies were in place this year, marching up to the Cross of Sacrifice and keeping guard outside the Cathedral. Their number will be doubled for 2022, when we mark the 40th anniversary of liberation...

December 2, Battle Day, sees a large gathering round the First World War Memorial up beyond Government House to commemorate the British naval victory in the Battle of the Falklands. We hope to follow this in January with an open-air service in the Memorial Wood at the opposite end of Stanley to mark the start of what promises not only to be a year of memories but also a time for looking forward.

It is only a short step from January to the first of the 1982 memorial services which takes place on 1 April, when visiting Welsh Guards pay tribute to their fallen comrades at the Fitzroy Memorial. Often this is a bittersweet moment, as retired servicemen remember being mobilised to the Falkland Islands as raw teenagers – some not to return.

Because of strong Australian and New Zealand connections, Anzac Day is marked next with a poignant ceremony in the grey dawn of a cold, dark early morning on 25 April.

In the Falklands, of course, it is now winter and it is not unknown for snow to be on the ground as we trek out to Goose Green for the first of the 1982 commemorations on 4 May, when Lt. Nick Taylor, 800 Naval Air Squadron, HMS HERMES, Royal Navy, was the first to die in action.

A few short days later, on 21 May, we move to San Carlos to commemorate Landing Day and the start of a military campaign that eventually would see the recapture of Stanley and the return of 'British' rule. This is

a big military affair, with troops lining the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery and multiple wreaths laid at the impressive memorial.

There's hardly time to draw breath before we remember the tragic sinking of the Atlantic Conveyor on 25 May, round a very striking memorial in the shape of a huge ship's propeller.

For local residents, the Liberation of Goose Green on 29 May, a dramatic event that cost 21 lives but released 111 Falkland Islander prisoners, marks a turning point in the campaign. It is always a moving 'family' occasion, as young children and adults who were not even born at the time of the Conflict remember the cost of their freedom.

Commemorations at Fitzroy for the Welsh Guards, RAMC, RFA and 5 Infantry Brigade follow on 8 June, when we remember the bombing of the RFA SIR GALAHAD and SIR TRISTRAM, occasionally hear the Lord's Prayer said in lilting Welsh and listen to the Last Post echoing across Fitzroy Settlement.

The sad end of HMS GLAMORGAN in the dying days of the Conflict is commemorated on 12 June at Hooker's Point, near Stanley, where a great many local residents make it a point of honour to remember the debt owed to those who served.

Finally, the season draws to a triumphant close with the service for Liberation Day in Christ Church Cathedral, followed at 11.00am by an Act of Remembrance at the Liberation Monument in the centre of town. Now, more than ever, forty years on, we reflect on the human cost of freedom and the continuing command of Jesus to love our neighbours as ourselves.

*Ian Faulds
Rector of the Falkland Islands*



Captain Chris Locke, chairman of the Falklands RBL lays a wreath at the RFA Memorial at Fitzroy, marking the loss of the RFA Sir Gallahad and the RFA Sir Tristram



Memorial for Lieutenant Nick Taylor RN, 800 Sq FAA, HMS Hermes



Paras in the snow at Goose Green



A detachment of Paras at the Memorial in the San Carlos cemetery



Rector of the Falkland Islands, the Revd. Ian Faulds talks to Brig. Nick Sawyer and Revd (Flight Lieutenant) Alice McDermott



Headstones in the San Carlos cemetery



Liberation Day Service in Christ Church Cathedral, Stanley



HMS Glamorgan memorial



Christ Church Cathedral, Stanley



Liberation Day



An Act of Remembrance at the Liberation Monument

FALKLANDS BOOKS

The 40th anniversary of the Falklands War has produced a plethora of volumes, and these three are just representative of these. All three have been presented to the Chapel Library by the authors, and we are deeply grateful to them for their generosity. It is a privilege to read and review them.

Pride of place must go to Lord Ashcroft. Amazingly this is his 22nd book, and follows in his 'Heroes' series behind such volumes as Victoria Cross Heroes (2 volumes), Special Forces Heroes, and Heroes of the Skies. Readers of these notes probably need no reminding that Lord Ashcroft owns the world's largest collection of Victoria Crosses (on display at the Imperial War Museum) and so one of the stories in this book is about Ian McKay. Simon Weston has written a moving foreword, and then there is a short introductory essay setting the background. Possibly I am a cynical old schoolmaster, but I was expecting a potpourri of various award citations from The London Gazette, with possibly a few explanations added. I was delighted to be proved wrong – and how! Ashcroft tells 36 stories. Of those 36, 5 are officers and 31 Other Ranks (all the Land Forces stories are Other Ranks), 22 were awarded gallantry medals, six were mentioned in despatches and eight received no award (4 of whom were serving in the SAS). Two stories, those of Andrew Legg and Henry Gow, concern the highly controversial SAS raid into Argentina, for which Legg, unlike all the other heroes, declined to be interviewed. Ashcroft combines personal interviews, quotations from many books, the original citations and excellent photographs.

The volume follows a broadly chronological approach, service by service, and while there are plenty of medal recipients' stories, there is so much more. As an example, in the section on the Royal Navy there is a full description of Graham Libby's astounding bravery in disentangling an aerial wire which had become wrapped around HMS Conqueror's propeller shaft. Not only does the account use the official citation, but also interviews with Libby, and also Stuart Prebble's volume on Conqueror. Ashcroft puts her operations in the conflict into perspective and concludes with what happened to Libby after the war. There are accounts of sailors and nurses who received no medal or award at all, but were nevertheless outstandingly brave, such as Able Seaman Messenger of HMS Sheffield, and Senior Naval Nurse Jeune Hendy serving as an operating nurse on board the SS Uganda. Most inspiring of all in this section I found was the story of Chiu Yiu Nam, awarded the George Medal for quite outstanding bravery in rescuing men on board RFA Sir Galahad. He told nobody about his actions, and nobody knew who the man in the hooded asbestos suit was. It was eventually Lt. Col. Johnny Ricketts who when interviewing his men eventually managed to identify him. Even then he was reluctant to discuss his role,



by Robin Brodhurst
Chapel Librarian

Falklands War Heroes; Extraordinary True Stories of Bravery in the South Atlantic by Michael Ashcroft

Published by Biteback Publishing £25 386 pages, 54 photos

Falklands Gunner; a Day-by-Day Personal Account of the Royal Artillery in the Falklands War by Tom Martin

Published by Frontline Books £25 288 pages, 176 photos

A Falklands Family at War: Diaries of the 1982 Conflict by Neville Bennett and Valerie Bennett

Published by Pen & Sword Military £25 256 pages, 30 photos

Leaders: Profiles in Courage and Bravery in War and Peace by Robin Knight

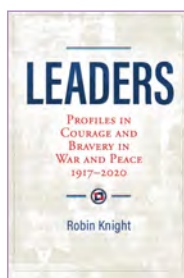
Published by Unicorn Publishing £25 240 pages

or to be recognised. Truly this man was a hero.

Then there are chapters on Special Forces (two chapters: reconnaissance and offensive action), the Air War, Darwin and Goose Green, and finally The Battle for the Mountains (again two chapters: Mount Harriet and Mount Longdon and then Two Sisters, Tumbledown and Wireless Ridge). In each of them there are some of the expected heroes, but a multiplicity of unsung and, often unknown, heroes. All of the stories are inspiring, and all, unfailingly, are modest in the extreme. One of the truest comments is made by Sergeant (later Captain) Gordon Mather, SAS, awarded an MM for a 28-day reconnaissance patrol on East Falklands, when he says:

The reason we were successful was that at the end of the day we were better than the enemy. We were the best trained Army in the world, supported by the finest Navy, Air Force and Merchant Fleet in the world, without whom Operation Corporate could not have succeeded. We were better than them because we got the basics right. Great leadership from the most senior to the most junior rank – we had leaders, mostly very junior leaders, who led from the front. Add to this, outstanding acts of courage and self-sacrifice from men who have been rightly decorated for their actions. But there were hundreds of members of the Task Force on land, sea and in the air, including Falkland Islanders, who performed extraordinary deeds under fire, whose brave actions will never be formally recognised. It was a privilege to serve alongside such men and women.

I suspect, and hope, that such sentiments are echoed by everybody who served in the Task Force, and who simply watched from home. Lord Ashcroft's volume is superb and deserves to be in the collection of all those who remember the campaign.



Supporting this volume are two more contrasting books recently received. We have had many memoirs from combatants in the Falklands War, but very rarely have we seen anything by the civilian population of the Islands. Neville and Valerie Bennett were long term islanders. He was in charge of the local fire brigade, while she was Matron at the hospital. Both led busy and full lives, with their two young daughters. It is one of these daughters, Rachel (now Rachel Simons) who has edited their diaries. Valerie's diary is more matter of fact, noting the weather each day and being limited to 6-7 lines usually; in contrast, Neville's is much fuller and more descriptive, giving a much fuller depiction of their lives. He had considerable dealings with the Argentinians due to his position, and depicts them unsparingly. He finds many deeply offensive, but is equally honest when finding some of them decent human beings. As in any conscript army, the Argentinian army reflected

their society, both the good and the bad. Most memorable is the depiction of the surrender and its aftermath. Like any diary it is often the mundane and normal detail that is most telling. These were ordinary people just getting on with their lives in extraordinary times.

Tom Martin's volume is a junior officer's view of the war from an artillery point of view. He was a subaltern in 29 (Corunna) Battery, part of 4th Field Regiment R.A. Their normal role was in support of 2 Para, and as such they deployed to the Falklands, although they were also deployed alongside 29 (Commando) Field Regiment. For any non-Gunner this volume is an education: much time is taken up with explaining how artillery support works, and there are numerous acronyms employed. Importantly,

the author has included many of his personally collected mementoes, such as pages from his operational notebook, copies of the training programme from the voyage out, and many photos taken during the campaign. These are often matched to produce a before and after pair. Many of the latter come from a visit he made in 2017, when four members of his battery had a reunion in Stanley and walked over the battlefields. Certainly, this is a worms' eye view, and none the worse for that. Life at 'The Guns' was relentless, and just the same as reading memoirs from the Peninsula War, the Boer War, and both World Wars, it is notable how food becomes an abiding passion. The Arctic Rations supplied became monotonous, and as he says 'It was ten years before I could eat lamb or mutton again.' Published in 2017, this is well worth pursuing.

If I have an overall comment, it is that here are three wholly different volumes. All three are worth reading in their different ways, and all are worthy of their place in any Falkland's Chapel War library.

Leaders: Profiles in Courage and Bravery in War and Peace, written by the indefatigable Robin Knight, is about those Old Pangbournians who have shown courage and bravery both in peace and war since the College was founded. While the majority come from the generation of World War 2, Robin has widened the scope of 'courage and bravery' to include sporting heroes and some who acted above and beyond the call of duty during the ongoing Covid crisis.

For readers of this magazine the most fascinating chapter concerns those Old Pangbournians who fought in the Falklands War. Fifty-one were involved in one form or another, and thirteen were decorated. Four were on ships sunk by enemy action, although mercifully not one was killed. Thirty-one were officers in the Royal Navy, six were in the Royal Marines, four in the Merchant Navy and two in the Army. Of those 31 Royal Naval officers, seven went on to achieve flag rank. Here are the stories of Ewen Southby-Tailyour, reasonably well known already, but also those of Dennis Scott-Masson, master of the SS Canberra, less well known, and, almost unheard of, Mike Griffith, the son of a civilian farmer on West Falkland, who had arrived for his gap year just before the Argentinians invaded. Submarine and destroyer captains, logistic commandos, and commando gunners, marine engineers, operations officers, naval liaison officers, all are given their space, ably summarised with a quotation from Southby-Tailyour: "The war, once inevitable, was not, in my view, an 'unnecessary war' as has so often been portrayed. It was a vital war that not only cleared the air of much muddled FCO thinking (in the manner of a thoroughly good thunderstorm) but it showed to the world Britain's practical commitment to peace and freedom among so many timid governments. International law was upheld and a dictator put back in his box." As always, Ewen, spot on!

40TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICE 2022

40th Anniversary Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving Sunday 12th June 2022

The 2022 Anniversary Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving will be held at the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne on Sunday 12th June at 12.00. The Trustees will make special provision of a tented nave on the Chapel forecourt and a substantial lunch marquee to accommodate everyone who wishes to attend.

As always we look forward to welcoming you all again – families, veterans, reunion groups, serving personnel and supporters. Ground floor seating priority will be given to bereaved families and disabled individuals. We do our best to make sure that seating is allocated fairly and would ask you to be understanding of the logistical problems that can arise. Coffee will be available on arrival and after the Service, lunch will be served in the refreshments tent on Devitt Lawn.

Everyone wishing to attend will be required to have a ticket this year and if you haven't already sent a booking form please complete the Invitation Reply form in this package and return to the Secretary at the address below. (If you have already applied and had an acknowledgment of receipt, please do not apply again). Tickets will be issued at the end of March. If your plans change and you no longer need your tickets, please return them for someone else to use. As usual there will be a train collection service from Reading station at 11.00 so if you need this service

please 'tick' the box on the form. Thank you!

The Trustees would like to thank all the generous Falkland Islands companies, organisations and the Falkland Islands Government for providing the funds to make it possible to organise this anniversary event.

NEED A HELPING HAND WITH YOUR TRAVEL COSTS?

The Trustees would like to hear from any family members or veterans who would like to attend but are unable to do so due to financial hardship or inability to travel distances unaccompanied. They are aware of the rising costs of petrol, train travel and necessary accommodation and keep a fund in order to help in these special circumstances. Anyone who finds themselves unable to attend due to the high cost of travel etc, please telephone or write to the Secretary to ask for assistance. All such contact will be treated with the utmost confidence.

CONTACT FIMCT:

Mrs Angela Perry, MBE
Secretary to the Trustees,
FIMCT, c/o Pangbourne
College, Pangbourne,
Reading, Berks RG8 8LA

Tel: 01295 738123

Email: angelaep@aol.com

FIMCT Web site:
www.falklands-chapel.org.uk

Falklands War 40th Anniversary Memorial Ride



On Sunday 12th June at 0930 veteran Gus Hales and his team will ride onto the Chapel campus and head for the Cairn for a short Service of Prayer and Remembrance led by Rev. David Cooper. The team are taking part in an 8 day ride visiting memorials and landmarks which will culminate in Aldershot at the statue of the Airborne Soldier and Aldershot Military Cemetery and the Falkland Graves.

"The plan is to have a core group of about two groups of ten riders and to be joined each day with anyone who wishes to ride with us, for either the whole of the day, part of the day or just to support us." Says Gus Hales.

For further details to join in or support the ride, they can be contacted through their Facebook page *Falklands 40th Anniversary Bike Ride*

www.facebook.com/groups/1281660615600633

New Chapel Friends leaflet

Over the years the number of Chapel Friends who have elected to donate to the Chapel on a regular basis have contributed to the cost of much of the refurbishment and repair work that has had to be done. This has been made possible because regular giving from Friends is helpful predictable income. For this the Trustees remain hugely grateful. Readers will see that the Friends enrolment leaflet enclosed in this newsletter has been re-designed and Trustees hope to attract new Friends from it. They would however like to make it clear that existing Friends

will not be expected to 'upgrade' to the new suggested minimum annual donation of £50, particularly since so many of you have been loyal to the Chapel over a long period of time. They reiterate their thanks to all those who have supported the Chapel through the Friendship scheme.



An invitation to join the family of Friends of the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne

HMS EXETER - Falklands Remembered

by Dougie Leask

I've been asked to talk of the 82 Crew,
And tell you of things that we went through.
A crew of young men, who became a team,
Whilst going through a time, you don't want to dream.

We were in the Caribbean having a ball,
When news came in, we'd got the call.
A ship's been hit, it's now a race,
You're needed now to take its place.

So off we sailed, suntanned and under prepared,
With trepidation, and a little bit scared.

Two weeks we had to get fighting fit,
And join with the task force to do our bit.

Her Blue Hull shining on the sea, Exeter stood out from the Fleet,
With Battle Honours that did her proud, she never knew defeat.
The River Plate Crew from Thirty Nine
Had sailed this course... it was now our time.

Through troubled times she held us tight,
But we always knew... we'd be alright.
The aircraft came, they sent their best
But we chased some home and laid some to rest

They brought their exocets out to play
But we stood our ground and won our day,
We lived to know the smell of fear and how it gets to you
We also learned that being a team works best to see it through
We'd played our part, the war was won,
The Falklands saved, that job was done.
But before we sailed we had one thing to do,
We were asked ashore, and Old Exeters, we remembered you!

Now through those days we made a bond,
we'll never cast aside,
The old girl meant so much to all who walked her decks with pride.

She served us well, protecting all with honour and with valour,
To serve on board our Blue Hulled ship, it was our finest hour.

Semper Fidelis, Always Faithful, of that we still abide,
And when we meet, we raise a glass as we stand there, side by side.
We toast to all who sailed in her, and to all the Exeter crews,
But special thanks goes to the man, who saw that we got through,
The calmest man, you ever saw, who cared for all his Men,
He'll always be our hero, Captain Hugh Balfour... (RIP Sir), Amen.