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NORTHERN STAR

Magazine for HQ JFC Brunssum – December 2014 - January 2015



- The New Bundeswehr
- 13 Years ISAF Mission
- Hungarian Revolution and Independence War in 1956
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COMMAND GROUP CORNER

By General Hans-Lothar Domröse

'Time flies by' as the saying goes and I cannot quite believe I have been commander here at Brunssum for 2 years. During that time I have witnessed a transformation in this headquarters, not only in terms of its strength and its output, but also in terms of the tasks it has been required to undertake. As I write this we are seeing the final days of NATO's ISAF mission and the transition to Resolute Support. This does not mark the end of our headquarters' involvement in Afghanistan; far from it. We will however see a notable shift as the focus will be to train, to advise and to assist. Whatever the future holds in Afghanistan over the coming months, we can be sure we will have an important role to play as we continue to support those deployed in theatre.

In my last article for the Northern Star in June, I reflected on how the situation in Ukraine had impacted on NATO and brought its relevance sharply into focus again. As I look back over the 6 months since I wrote that, I see no change to our increased level of importance. The work Brunssum personnel have been undertaking throughout the countries on NATO's eastern borders has been high-profile and very well received locally and I would like to pay tribute to all those involved. In particular I would like to recognise the sensitive and thoughtful approach adopted by the teams, establishing excellent relationships with their hosts and cementing the trust they have built during their deployments. I have met frequently with the CHODs from the countries concerned and to a man they have praised the support they have received.

As I look ahead to next year, I see no change in the pace of work. In Exercise Trident Juncture 2015 we will be running the biggest NATO exercise for many years, as well as preparing for NRF 16 and our declaration as having achieved FOC. The level of ambition for the exercise is considerable. My aim has always been to showcase NATO at its best, demonstrating deployability, interoperability, joint capability and a comprehensive approach. The involvement of some IOs and NGOs during our recent Exercise Trident Joust has provided us with the mechanism to integrate external agencies fully into the exercise planning process and I look to our IO/NGO conference in mid-December to kick-start their involvement full-time.

Work for Exercise Trident Juncture has been on-going for over a year and, operations aside, it is my absolute priority. Not only is the exercise planning important, but also the training and preparation of new members of staff who arrived during



General Hans-Lothar Domröse

the 'summer churn'. With some 30% of our strength changing every year, we have a constant requirement to integrate new people into our headquarters. We did just that during Exercise Trident Joust in Bydgoszcz, but we will have another considerable churn in summer 2015, shortly before we depart on the exercise. Now is the time to get ahead of the game so we have the capacity to bring on the new people quickly and efficiently when they arrive next summer.

With the 'summer churn' in mind, I would like to welcome everybody who has arrived at the headquarters since my last article and thank those who have left or are leaving. One such group whose departure is imminent is the people who arrived to bolster our strength as a response to the crisis in Ukraine. By Christmas they will have served their 6 month attachment and be replaced. Given the upheaval

they experienced over the summer, with their rapid force generation to join our headquarters, we should recognise the part they have played and thank them for their hard work and commitment.

I appreciate there is much work being undertaken in the headquarters that I have not mentioned, purely because it would not be appropriate to do so in this forum. Nevertheless, I recognise and pay tribute to everybody's hard work and commitment, whatever your role may be, and want you to realise it is appreciated and is having a real impact. It remains for me to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Take the opportunity to rest and recuperate so you all come back to work in January refreshed and ready for the onslaught. We will be busy!

Colophon

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Submissions to the Northern Star can be made to room F 1.21, Bldg. H 106 or e-mailed to pao@jfcbs.nato.int. Articles should be in Microsoft Word format and, whenever possible, should be no longer than 300 words. Photographs should be at least 9x6 centimetres and 300 dpi. The Northern Star is published monthly and is available around the first Friday of each month.

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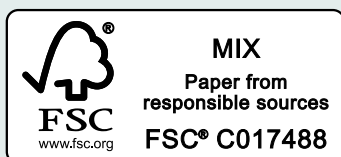
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About the Cover



The Big Band of the German Armed Forces played a charity concert at the Heerlen Rabozaal Theatre 17 November; all ticket money (circa 4500 Euros) being donated to two Dutch charities, both with a military connection. General Hans-Lothar Domröse (Commander JFC Brunssum) and Governor Theo Bovens (Limburg Province Governor) topped a significant VIP list containing a plethora of local military and civic dignitaries. Because of the charitable nature of the event the Theatre Director (Mr Bas Schoonderwoerd) kindly allowed the use of his beautiful venue at a reduced fee. Enabling costs were split 50/50 between JFC Brunssum and the Governor's Office.

The Band were magnificent. With a broad repertoire of swing, jazz, and big orchestral numbers they seized the opportunity to demonstrate their immense professionalism and musical talent. Bandleader, Lieutenant Colonel Christian Weiper, led his band through an array of musical arrangements, including Motown, and ensured his singer – the richly talented Zambian singer, Bwalya – was ably supported as she sang such classics as 'Goldfinger' made famous, of course, by Dame Shirley Bassey.

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“NATO Alliance Continues 24/7 Baltic Air Policing Rotation”

Story by HQ AIRCOM Public Affairs Office

Since September 2014, Portugal has been the Baltic Air Policing (BAP) lead nation with four F-16s at Šiauliai, Lithuania. The Royal Canadian Air Force has four CF-188 Hornets there as well to further augment the NATO mission. Finally, Germany and the Netherlands have augmented the mission by flying Eurofighters out of Ämari, Estonia, and F-16s out of Malbork, Poland, respectively.



A Portuguese Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon takes off at Šiauliai Air Base, Lithuania. Until the end of this year, Portugal is the lead nation for NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission; it is augmented by fighters by the air forces of Canada, Germany and the Netherlands.

Photo by Mr. Gölz, courtesy Portuguese Air Force

In April 2014 the North Atlantic Council (NAC) invited Allies to contribute to an enhanced Air Policing posture on the eastern border of the Alliance. This is the second rotation of the enhanced BAP mission.

The following statements are a summary of what the four detachment commanders have to say at half-way point of the 36th BAP rotation since the NATO air policing mission began in September of 2004:

“The Portuguese Air Force is honoured to participate in NATO's BAP mission for the second time,” said Lieutenant-Colonel Carlos Lourenco, Commander of the Portuguese Air Force detachment at Šiauliai. “This collective effort is a good example that demonstrates alliance commitment to the harmony and security of Europe. Has

been a truly genuine pleasure to work and share experiences in the BAP mission with other allied countries, having in mind that through training and working together, we will be able to reach interoperability and communality and sustain our combat capability; there is no other way of making it effectively than side-by-side.”

“We're honoured to participate in NATO Baltic Air Policing, which demonstrates NATO's assurance and commitment to safeguarding peace and security in the Baltic region,” said Lieutenant-Colonel David Pletz, Commander of the Canadian Air Task Force (ATF) Lithuania. “Enhanced air policing is NATO's air interoperability at its finest. It means air protection to our Allies is readily available around the clock.”

“This is the sixth time the German Air Force has deployed to take part in the NATO Air

Policing in the Baltic region. However, it's the first time we have deployed to Estonia and have the Eurofighters operate from the Estonian Air Force Base at Ämari. Therefore, members of the German Detachment together with the servicemen and women from the Estonian Air Force successfully formed a team to conduct NATO Air Policing from Estonia,” said Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Schnitger, Commander of the German Detachment. “Together with our NATO allies from Canada, the Netherlands and Portugal, German Eurofighters will conduct Air Policing until the beginning of January 2015 when the Spanish Air Force are scheduled to take over, operating from Ämari Air Base.”

“The Dutch Air Policing Task Force is deployed to Malbork AB, Poland, with four



A Portuguese Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon breaks as another F-16 and a Canadian Air Force CF-188 Hornet fly over Lithuania on 15 September 2014 conducting air-to-air manoeuvres for the NATO Baltic Air Policing Block 36 during Operation REASSURANCE.

Photo: Cpl Gabrielle DesRochers

F-16 fighter aircraft to contribute to NATO's demonstration of unity and commitment for collective defence in the Baltic region," says Major Johan, the Royal Netherlands Air Force Detachment Commander. "Besides that, we train together with the Polish Air Force and allied armed forces to improve the capabilities and combat readiness of our fighter pilots, which has proven useful during cooperation in air combat situations in past conflicts and is, and will be, during current and future operations."

On a regular basis, NATO detachments conduct many training flights under the control of Allied Air Command and the subordinate control units. These "Training Scrambles" ensure that all alert pilots and ground controllers are ready to respond and know the Air Policing procedures by heart. The flights prepare the NATO pilots for their real-world "Alpha Scrambles" missions to identify aircraft and resolve unclear air situations within the Baltic States airspace. Since September, during the first half of the current BAP rotation, the four NATO allies conducting the BAP mission have executed almost 30 'Alpha' scrambles.

These missions also become necessary when civilian airliners fail to maintain radio

contact with Air Traffic Controllers (ATCs) along determined flight plans or when aircraft deviate from expected headings. NATO also routinely scramble aircraft to intercept unidentified aircraft that have not filed a flight plan and do not use on-board transponders to assist air traffic controllers with identifying aircraft. These situations are dangerous for civilian air traffic since the civilian ATC cannot see these aircraft on their control screens and cannot separate flight paths. In recent weeks several incidents and scrambles were required to locate and identify Russian aircraft operating over the Baltic Sea and across NATO airspace.

"NATO has been improving our standing air policing mission for over a decade and we intend to continue advancing our ability to safeguard NATO airspace," said General Frank Gorenc, Commander of Allied Air Command, at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. "Today's Baltic Air Policing mission requires both high readiness and interoperability. AIRCOM together with Allied nations, the CAOC at Uedem, Germany, and the CRC at Karmelava, Lithuania, have once again proven that our NATO interceptors are able to rapidly execute their mission on a 24/7 basis."

The four nations currently conducting

BAP will be relieved by other Allies in early 2015. Italian Eurofighters will replace the Portuguese F-16s in their BAP lead role at Šiauliai. Augmenting nations Poland and Spain will deploy MiG-29s and Eurofighters to Šiauliai, Lithuania, and Ämari, Estonia, respectively.



A CF-188 Hornet from the Canadian Air Task Force Lithuania flies with a Portuguese F16 Fighting Falcon over Lithuania on 15 September 2014 for the NATO Baltic Air Policing Block 36 during Operation REASSURANCE.

Photo: Cpl Gabrielle DesRocher

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The New Bundeswehr - An Instrument of German Foreign and Security Policy

Story Maj.Uwe Srp, Pictures by Bundeswehr



The international security landscape has changed dramatically in the past 15 years. Conflicts have become more varied and require a corresponding response from Germany's armed forces. Currently about 3.500 German soldiers are involved in stabilisation operations in the Balkans, in armed conflicts such as in Afghanistan or in securing the sea lines of communication around the Horn of Africa. Germany developed a new strategic culture, relaxed its stance on the use of force and put its interests forth in a more self-confident way. The adaptation to the new security environment and the development of new ambitions is reflected in a far-reaching reform of the German armed forces. As an instrument of a comprehensive and proactive security and defence policy, the Bundeswehr:

- guarantees the capacity for action in the field of foreign policy
- contributes to European and global stability
- maintains national security and defence
- provides assistance in the defence of our allies and fosters multinational cooperation and integration.

An efficient Bundeswehr is indispensable for a German security and defence policy that plays an active and shaping role.

Values, Objectives and Interests

Being the strongest economy in Europe and one of the world's major export nations Germany is highly dependent on the stability of the international system. Therefore, Germany's foreign policy includes the entire spectrum of political, diplomatic, financial and economic

measures and the application of military force, with force based on mandates from the UN Security Council and the approval of the German Bundestag and implemented within the framework of a NATO, EU, or UN operation. German security policy is invariably committed to the values and principles of the free and democratic order of the German constitution and international law. Ensuring security therefore means first of all to keep crises and conflicts at arm's length, to actively prevent them or contain



their effects. Germany's security interest therefore grows to include not only regional European security, but also international security. Defending Germany against external military threats is and remains the Bundeswehr's core function, as provided for by the country's constitution. The defence of Alliance partners in the event of attacks and the rendering of assistance in crises and conflicts are in addition very important tasks.

Three milestones: 1949, 1989 and 1994

For a better understanding of the Bundeswehr it is necessary to look back into recent history. In 1949 the German Basic Law was adopted, the Federal Republic of Germany was founded and became a free and democratic state that was fast integrated into the Western community of states. Regaining its national sovereignty step by step, the Federal Republic joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 1955 and soon afterwards started to establish its own armed forces. Against the backdrop of historical experience, parliament assumed a special responsibility for the Bundeswehr right from the start: from legislation through budgeting to the institution of a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces as an auxiliary body of the German Bundestag. Forty years later, 1989 and the years thereafter saw a fundamental change in the security environment that has dramatically transformed the both mission and structure of the Bundeswehr. The security challenges have become more complex and diverse. In 1994, the German Federal Constitutional Court clarified through its judgement that the German Armed Forces may, in addition to national and Alliance defence, be deployed on international operations in the

context of, and according to the rules of mutual collective security systems. For the first time, the Bundestag as the German Parliament voted on an armed mission of the Bundeswehr. This parliamentary mandate for an armed mission to enforce the UN embargo against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and monitor the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina marked the beginning of a new era for the Bundeswehr as an "Army on Operations". The decision as to whether the Bundeswehr takes part in operations is primarily a responsibility of the Federal Government. Armed operations undertaken by German Armed Forces always require the constitutional stamp of approval from parliament beforehand.

Germany prepares its military for the 21st century

The ongoing reform of the German military is the most radical overhaul of the Bundeswehr in its history. The decision was made to close 31 military sites by 2017 and reduce the size of a further 90. Military projects will be cut by billions of euros. But the biggest savings will be made in personnel. Reducing the high of 500,000 soldiers during the Cold War to a maximum of no more than 185,000 is the current objective). Since Germany suspended conscription in July 2011, the armed forces have been made up only of volunteers. Although this is a very challenging process, the national level of ambition for the Bundeswehr still is:

- To provide a joint set of forces for collective defence that is able to respond multi-nationally in a fast and effective manner for a limited period of time.
- To ensure the German contribution to the NATO Response Force and EU battle groups for a quick response

within the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union.

- To provide joint forces as part of the UN Standby Arrangements System for UN peacekeeping based on available capacities, and to make available an adequate number of personnel for monitoring missions.
- To ensure permanent capabilities for rescue, evacuation and hostage rescue operations abroad as part of national crisis prevention, and a permanent provision of capabilities for surveillance and policing of German airspace and maritime waters as well as for search and rescue. About 10,000 soldiers will continue to be able to respond quickly, flexibly and for lengthy periods in multiple areas of crisis and conflict.

Germany's defence minister plans to equip the Bundeswehr with better childcare, more attractive barracks and Internet access — giving it a face-lift as the Bundeswehr competes with business for new recruits in a humming economy. Ursula von der Leyen, who became Germany's first female defence minister in December, set out plans to put 100 million euros (\$136 million) over the next five years into dusting off the Bundeswehr's starchy image. Projects include more day-care facilities for children, new furniture and Internet access for all in military barracks, more flexible working hours for some, extra computers and easing the practice of regularly moving civil and military personnel.

The German military is undergoing significant reform with the aim to be prepared for the future and fulfil the German Armed Forces motto: We serve Germany!



Headquarters Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum - Visits and Activities

Prepared by Adjutant Edwin Tromp, photos by PAO JFCBS

Headquarters Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum major activities are depicted along five lines of effort within the Brunssum Campaign Plan. Each of these activities requires an ambitious level of attention and effort. Beside routine staff work we plan and conduct special activities in the form of visits and training, as well as, social events on a regular basis. We would like to provide you an overview of those activities.

October 2014



Ground Pepper 2014 Comes to an End

Exercise GROUND PEPPER 14, a joint multinational NATO-aligned defense exercise in Slovakia, began on 13 October. It included ground, air and special operations forces from the four Visegrád Group (V4) nations of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Slovak Republic, plus the United States. In support of these five NATO nations, Allied Joint Force Command (JFC) Brunssum sent a team of exercise planning subject matter experts to Slovakia's Training Centre Lešt' to observe and gather lessons learned to set the conditions for future NATO exercises and optimize the effectiveness of Assurance Measures in the region.



NATO Air Policing Fighters Intercept Russian Aircraft over the Baltic Sea

MONS, Belgium – NATO radars detected and tracked one unidentified aircraft flying in the vicinity of Allied airspace in the Baltic Sea on Tuesday, 21 October at approximately 9 a.m. CET. Fighter jets from NATO Ally Denmark (F-16) were scrambled, as were Portuguese F-16 aircraft from NATO's Baltic Air Policing Mission in order to identify the aircraft and maintain the security of Allied air space. Non-NATO fighters from Sweden were also involved in the intercept.



Exercise Trident Joust 2014 Draws to a Close

Bydgoszcz, 23 October: After 11 days of intensive training Joint Force Command (JFC) Brunssum has completed Exercise Trident Joust 2014. 400 personnel from 23 NATO member and partner nations exercised a full-blown defensive operation on the Alliance territory. Trident Joust 2014 started 13 October with a staff deployment from JFC Brunssum's headquarters, in the Netherlands, to the Joint Forces Training Centre at Bydgoszcz, Poland. The JFCBS personnel, with support of augmentees, quickly established a Joint Task Force Headquarters and were challenged by a complex security scenario that rapidly increased in tempo.



LANDCOM Deputy Commander Visits JFC Brunssum

Lieutenant General Ed Davis, Deputy Commander Allied Land Command, visited JFC Brunssum Monday 27 October 2014. In a focused session he was briefed on the role and responsibilities of the headquarters with particular emphasis on current NATO operations, the NATO Response Force, Regional Focus and the conduct of Assurance Measures in response to the crisis in the Ukraine.



The Royal Netherlands Society "ONS LEGER" visit JFC Brunssum, 29 October

The Society was established on 30th March 1912 by Dutch people who were worried about the future of the Netherlands Armed Forces. Even today "ONS LEGER" stimulates and promotes contact between the Dutch Armed Forces and the people of the Netherlands. This year "ONS LEGER" celebrated its 102nd year with a visit to JFC Brunssum.



Chief of Staff UK Joint Forces Command Visits JFC Brunssum

Rear Admiral Paul Bennett, Chief of Staff of the UK Joint Forces Command (Northwood), visited JFC Brunssum 30/31 Oct. He is responsible for all British Armed Forces Personnel deployed overseas. During the visit he held discussions with senior JFC Brunssum leadership and attended a Trafalgar Night Dinner, hosted by the British Officers Community.



Sittard Service of Remembrance

Sunday 09 November the annual Remembrance Service was conducted at St Peter's Church, Sittard, and the Sittard War Cemetery, Ophoven. Yesterday's stunning event was the result of extensive planning by the Sittard War Graves Committee, provincial leadership and British military personnel serving at the local NATO Headquarters, JFC Brunssum. VIPs in attendance included Governor Bovens (Governor of Limburg), Mayor Cox (Mayor of Sittard-Geleen), the Deputy Commander JFC Brunssum, Air Marshal Stacey, and the senior Dutch officer serving at JFC Brunssum, Major General van Griensven.



Service of Remembrance at British War Cemetery Brunssum

11 November British, Canadian, Dutch and US military colleagues of JFC Brunssum joined the townspeople of Brunssum in a Service of Remembrance at the British War Cemetery. Those who gave their lives in two world wars, in numerous conflicts since then, and conflicts that continue today were honored.



Exercise Red Knight - Riga, Latvia

Exercise Red Knight, a map exercise, commenced Monday 03 November under the leadership of Commander Danish Division, Major General Michael Lollesgaard, supported by a Joint Force Command Brunssum Training Team, headed by Colonel Michael Uhrig; it will end Thursday 06 November. The Training Audience comprises brigade staffs from the 1st Estonian Infantry Brigade, 1st Latvian Landforces Brigade, the Lithuanian Iron Wolves Brigade, and 1st the and 2nd Danish Brigades. JFC Brunssum's engagement is part of a concerted NATO effort to increase cooperation and operational information sharing among Allied nations. This increased awareness and information sharing will enhance Alliance integration, interoperability and overall responsiveness to the challenges posed by the Ukraine crisis and the ever-changing security environment.



Exercise IRON SWORD 2014 Weaponry and Equipment Display Day

09 November 2014 (Molėtai & Pabradė, Lithuania) – Members of the Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS) NATO Forward Integration Team (NFIT) visited the Exercise IRON SWORD 2014 (IS14) Weaponry and Equipment Display 'Social' Day where they witnessed an impressive display of personnel, equipment, armament and vehicles. The event, which was open to the public, generated an overwhelmingly positive response and allowed the public to interact with members of the 9 participating nations and the JFCBS NFIT team members, handle the equipment and inspect the vehicles.



Leudal International Remembrance Service

Thursday 13 November Lieutenant General Adamczak (Chief of Staff JFC Brunssum) and Group Captain Cummins RAF formally represented Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum at the annual Leudal International Service of Remembrance. They joined a host of other dignitaries including Mr Bovens (Limburg Governor) and Mr Verhoeven (Leudal Municipality Mayor).

December 2014

HQ JFC Brunssum Conducts NCO Leadership Training in Armenia

Story and photo by Master Warrant Officer Mike Vollick, J9 MilPart Staff Assistant and NCO JMTT Coordinator



The instructors with the Armenian students

HQ Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum has recently completed a Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Joint Mobile Training Team (JMTT) mission to Yerevan, Armenia. This event was conducted from October 25 – 01 November, 2014. Yerevan is the capital of Armenia and the home to their Peace-Keeping Brigade. The training arose following a request by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia. This was HQ JFCBS' fourth NCO training mission this year and the first such mission to Armenia. One of the main objectives of the JMTT is to travel to Partnership for Peace countries and demonstrate how NCOs from various NATO member countries train and work in their respective militaries and within NATO. An additional objective is to assist in the transformation and professionalization of host nations NCO systems. This program is under the guidance and supervision of the JFC Brunssum Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL), Chief Warrant Officer Joe Ramsay.

Armenia is a country with a long history. The land has been inhabited since 4000 BC and Armenia is generally considered to have come into 'modern' use around 2492 BC. Armenia was the first country in the world to adopt Christianity as an official religion in the early 4th Century (301 AD). It also has its' very own unique alphabet that shares no similarities with the rest of the world. The capital city, Yerevan, is also the oldest city in the world. Its exact day of founding

is recorded in 782 BC inscribed in cuneiform on a large stone. The country is landlocked in the South Caucasus's between the Black and Caspian Seas. It is bordered between Turkey and Iran to the West and South and Georgia / Azerbaijan to the North and East. It was into this ancient land that the NCOs of HQ JFC Brunssum landed to provide leadership training to the NCOs of the Armenian Peace-Keeping Brigade.

The JMTT was comprised of five NCOs and one officer. Sergeant Mark Frisby of the United Kingdom, Sergeant Tatjana Koster of the Netherlands, Adjutant Hans Goos of Belgium, Master-Sergeant Heiko Kamenz of Germany and, team leader, Master Warrant Officer Eric Vollick of Canada. Danish Major, Mark Winther, was the officer in overall charge of this mission.

Inter alia, specific topics briefed included the history of NATO and JFCBS, Principles of NCO Leadership, Effective Communications and Delegation, Motivation, Cultural Awareness, IEDs, Convoy Operations, Battlefield CAS Drills and, of course, the ever popular NATO Military Map Symbols for Land Operations. The instructors also gave briefings about their home Nations and how the NCOs of their respective militaries operate. This proved highly interesting to the students who were all from a very different cultural perspective. All classes were well received by the Armenian candidates and many interesting questions and discussions

ensued. The JMTT NCOs were able to demonstrate how NATO NCOs can operate effectively as a team and integrate seamlessly with each other to achieve a desired outcome.

During the week the team also had the opportunity to visit some unique Armenian cultural sites under the escort of Captain Hovhannes (Hovo) Hovnikyan of the Peace-keeping Brigade. Sites visited included the ancient Temple of Garni from 1 AD, and the 4 AD monastery of Geghard in the mountains of the Azat river gorge. Unfortunately for the team the weather was uncooperative and Mount Ararat was completely hidden whilst a visit was made to the spectacular monastery of Khor Virap built in 642 AD.

At the end of the week's training all students were awarded JFC Brunssum certificates and deserving candidates received coins on behalf of the CSEL. Major Winther also presented the JFCBS Crest to the Peace-keeping Brigade as a token of Partnership and Friendship between NATO and Armenia. As tokens of appreciation, the instructors were given the Peace-Keeping Brigades' unit patch and, for HQ JFCBS, a hand carved eagle/Mt Ararat wooden sculpture which was much appreciated by all the team.

This was a very successful mission and example of the overall effectiveness of NATO's NCOs working together.

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Exercise Red Knight *Riga, Latvia 3rd to 7th of November 2014*

Story and photos by Colonel Micheal Uhrig and Lieutenant Colonel Jens Lindvig

Fierce fighting during Exercise TRIDENT JOUST may well have weakened the Bothnians, but they were not beaten! After reorganising and resupplying their forces they mounted yet another assault – and this time successfully managed to cross the Gulf of Finland with vast land forces.



Division Danish Division, MG Michael Lollesgaard, during his daily Commander's Huddle



Brigade Trainer, Col Ingolf Marks in dialogue with the Chief of Staff of the 1st Latvian Landforces Brigade, Lieutenant Colonel Kaspars Pudans

This is the scenario that met the Danish Division in the area around Riga in Latvia. And even worse; Bothnian land forces consisting of three mobile divisions in the first Operational Echelon and two heavy divisions in the second Operational Echelon in a battle field with air superiority advanced with the intention of taking all three Baltic States in a swift southward move. But little did they know their enemy. Danish Division with 1st Estonian Infantry Brigade, 1st Latvian Landforces Brigade, Lithuanian Iron Wolves Brigade and 1st and 2nd Danish Brigade were ready to intercept their offensive using formation level mobile defence – a specialty of the Danish Division. Division Commander, Major General Michael Lollesgaard, who was both Brigade Commander for the 2nd Danish Brigade and instructor in Tactics and Land Operations at the Danish General Staff Course, had a clear idea of how to

stop the enemy's offensive: Employing a withdrawal in contact to wear down the enemy and for the air component to regain control of the airspace while preparing for a final counter attack south of Riga to finally defeat the enemy before he could enter Lithuania.

Exercise RED KNIGHT was a map exercise in the KNIGHT-series building on a modified Skolkan Scenario. The exercise took place

Command Structure with previous brigade-level experience. Apart from the four senior mentors: Colonel Michael Uhrig (Team Leader, JFCBS), Brigadier General Dominique Laugel (Rapid Reaction Corps-France), Colonel Ingolf Marks (1st German-Netherlands Corps), and Colonel Marian Matoszka (JFCBS) the team also consisted of Subject Matter Experts: Lieutenant Colonel Jean-Marie Lhermenier (J4) Lieutenant Colonel Leonardo Tato (JMED), and Major Francisco Cañete (JENG).

in a phased, highly mobile battle and taking Host Nation issues like Internally Displaced Persons, critical infrastructure etc. into consideration. Understanding the Division Commander's intent was paramount for a successful plan to meet his high expectations. All brigades succeeded in accomplishing the mission, but also all received valuable input in alternate ways of solving a task, traps in the planning process, and they got more experience preparing them for the



Commander Danish Division, MG Michael Lollesgaard, explains his intent to the Brigade Commanders

in Riga, Latvia from the 3rd to the 7th of November 2014 with the training audience drawn from the Brigade staffs of 1st Estonian Infantry Brigade, 1st Latvian Landforces Brigade, Lithuanian Iron Wolves Brigade and 1st and 2nd Danish Brigade. The exercise was conducted by the staff of the Danish Division under the command of Major General Michael Lollesgaard. It is a reoccurring exercise that has been executed for more than 10 years, but this year for the first time conducted under the umbrella of NATO's Immediate Assurance Measures. Another change from previous iterations of this exercise was the request to Commander Joint Force Command Headquarters Brunssum, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, to support with a NATO Training Team. The purpose of this Training Team was on one hand to support the commander by acting as his "ears and eyes" within the five brigade staffs and on the other hand to add a new perspective by using experienced OF-5/6 officers from the NATO

Outside the exercise ACCI supported with real life Counter Intelligence in co-ordination with the Host Nation, and since nothing works without proper coordination, the NATO Training Team was supported by Lieutenant Colonel Christoph Huys (Rapid Reaction Corps-France) and Lieutenant Colonel Jens Lindvig (JFCBS).

The brigade staffs were exercised in the Operational Planning Process utilising their own Standard Operation Procedures and Standard Operation Instructions. Focus was on training each brigade in its decision making ability and according to their respective order of battle. The final event was the brigades' orders brief to a critical audience of Danish Division Staff members under the leadership of Chief of Staff, Colonel Claus Wessel-Tolvig and brigade trainers of the NATO Training Team. The training offered many challenges and training opportunities – not least related to an immense requirement for coordination

next coming event. Finally it provided an opportunity to adjust and optimise Standard Operation Procedures and Standard Operation Instructions.

Needless to say that the exercise was a resounding success, however the brilliant plan has yet to be executed. Should the manoeuvre units encounter unforeseen incidents that cause the enemy to successfully reach the Lithuanian border, then it is likely that the units will fall back to the area surrounding Vilnius and prepare for the final "Battle of the Baltics". This could well be the STARTEX situation for Exercise SABER KNIGHT (a combination of exercises YELLOW KNIGHT and SABER STRIKE) in June 2015.



Gender Perspective in Afghanistan

Gender Perspective is the terminology under which NATO undertakes and implements UNSCR 1325 (2000) as it relates to Women, Peace and Security, recognizing their especially vulnerable position during armed conflict and their contribution to conflict resolution and lasting peace. In the framework of what is known as a comprehensive approach for resolving conflicts Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum's Gender Advisor has had a key role.

NATO recognises that women, girls and boys are potentially more vulnerable to threats, intimidation and assault during armed conflict than others. This includes sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. In addition, sexual violence can be used as a strategic weapon of war, wherein rape, enforced prostitution, sexual enslavement, forced sterilisation, mutilation and other forms of sexual violence serve to terrorise, displace and, in extremis, ethnically cleanse a population. Gender perspective is a tool to increase operational effectiveness. By identifying an often overlooked populace, recognising their specific needs, and

providing the appropriate comprehensive response, the operational environment is positively influenced.

JFC Brunssum's Gender Advisor contributes Gender Perspective advice/input to the education, training and exercises undertaken by military staff, developing initiatives and supporting mission pre-deployment training. He actively contributes to promote Gender Perspective within NATO missions and operations.

Gender Perspective has been developed and included as an integral part of JFC Brunssum's decision making process, covering the areas of reporting, assessing, planning and training, for the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan and NRF commitments.

Initiatives have been undertaken to further develop Gender Perspective in keeping with UNSCR 1820 (2008) - conflict-related sexual violence as a tactic of war. This topic is part of Gender Focal Point training, and has been included in JFC Brunssum's 2014-15 Gender Action and Comprehensive Approach Action Plans.



...vs to a close, this December 2014 edition of the Northern Star
...by staff at JFC Brunssum throughout the mission.



Weather Forecast Specialist in the Netherlands Working for Soldiers in Afghanistan

During the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum's meteorological and oceanographic section (METOC) played a prominent role in the sustainment of in-theatre meteorological capabilities ensuring troops on the ground could move safely and effectively to execute their mission.

During the first phase of the operation most effort was made to establish/ensure interconnectivity between national units, mostly in Provincial Reconstruction Teams and the NATO METOC Force Structure. This exchange of scarce and high quality information throughout the mission area made the planning and execution of operations more effective and safer.

In order to facilitate the weather watch, Weather Observations systems were acquired for the two NATO airfields. JFC Brunssum purchased radio sounding systems including their day-to-day consumables. These Upper Air Observations not only improved air safety (e.g. observing and detecting wind shear) but also contributed to the World Meteorological Organization World Wide Observation network. Because of the availability of this scarce and valuable information, nations were able to improve forecasting models which, in turn, improved weather forecasts.

The JFC Brunssum METOC section was also responsible for the maintenance and calibration of weather observation equipment throughout the duration of the ISAF mission.



Communications Information Systems (CIS) Out of Theatre Support to ISAF

In the context of NATO's Afghanistan mission the main effort for JFC Brunssum, besides being the Out-of-Theatre Operational Headquarters, is to provide continuity and reach back capacity; this is especially important because of the high turnover in ISAF staff positions. This ensures the best use of funding granted to NATO by the 28 nations and maximizes effectiveness.

Out of theatre support provided by JFC Brunssum's Communications Branch (J6) has mainly been within the following areas: Military Budget Management; Budget Holder for ISAF CIS; and work undertaken to manage Operations and Maintenance funds. Essentially, JFC Brunssum J6 has led the development of the annual ISAF (and now Resolute Support) CIS budget and has supported/ monitored NATO CIS Projects in ISAF.

When a new CIS requirement is identified in-theatre it is forwarded

to JFC Brunssum for consideration where an assessment is made to determine if the solution meets the minimum military requirement and if it is eligible of common funding. Up to 60 projects of all sizes have been developed recently, supporting both static Headquarters and mobile units.

JFC Brunssum J6 has also supported ISAF with spectrum management i.e. the process of identification and efficient use of the available Radio Frequency (RF) electromagnetic spectrum.

Other areas where we have assisted include: Manning, Training and Staff Assistance visits. Over recent years J6 has deployed 7 officers for 6 months each and several for shorter periods. During pre-deployment training J6 has regularly supported the Joint Warfare Centre with officers who have ISAF experience.

JFC Brunssum Influencing the Information Environment in Afghanistan

Conceived and structured to identify effects, mainly influencing the information environment and the cognitive domain, the Effects and Influence Branch of Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS) has been directly involved in multiple aspects of ISAF during the 13 years of its mission.

Effects and Influence support to ISAF has been developed along three main "lines of effort": courses for NATO nations and NATO Force structure personnel designated to serve in the communication domain; coordination of planning with in-theatre actors; and JFCBS staff officers covering positions in ISAF and IJC HQs.

Within the Joint Functional Area Training Program, the Branch organized and led a number of one-week immersions into the ISAF Communication and Information environment. These pre-deployment courses were aimed at providing NATO countries and NATO Force Structures HQs personnel with the required competences and updates necessary to cover the positions they had been selected to fill. The training, based on theatre-upcoming events together with the ISAF experience of the instructors, allowed smooth rotations of personnel and the establishment of contacts that proved invaluable throughout the mission.

During periodical reviews of ISAF reference documents, Branch staff

officers actively supported the entire planning process, contributing to the Comprehensive Preparation of the Operational Environment. No less remarkable, especially in terms of personal commitment, was the deployment of effect and influence officers within the allied headquarters in Afghanistan, which created, enlarged, and up-dated ISAF expertise among the sections.

Finally, support provided by the Branch to the Afghan Information Dissemination Operations Course is worthy of mention. In the overall NATO effort to increase the competencies and expertise of Afghan National Security Forces, last winter the NATO School in Oberammergau (Germany) hosted a course for Afghan students covering, in their organization, posts related to the Information and Communications domain. One officer of the Branch was sent as an instructor/mentor. The two-week course was a unique experience of knowledge sharing with people daily involved in the effort to build a better country. But it was not only about sharing knowledge. It was, in particular, about sharing emotions and hope with people that could enjoy two weeks relief from their daily struggle. They could appreciate a European example of the benefit of a peaceful and quiet life in the beautiful mountain village Oberammergau.



How the JFC Brunssum Political Adviser Supported the NATO Mission in Afghanistan

Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum's Political Adviser's Office (POLAD) regularly supported HQ ISAF throughout the 13 year mission by providing timely political analysis to the commander in Brunssum and by focusing direct support to pre-deployment training for ISAF senior leaders.

The Office of the Political Advisor to the Commander of JFC Brunssum conducted key leader training for the ISAF Regional Command senior

staffs in theatre, with a focus on the political dynamics at play within Afghanistan and extant NATO political direction and guidance. The JFC Brunssum POLAD also augmented and supported the SHAPE Strategic and International Affairs Advisor during key leader training. In previous years, the JFC Brunssum POLAD also provided direct political analysis and support to the Political Advisor to Commander ISAF.





JFC Brunssum - The Heart of the Preparation for Personnel Deployed to ISAF

During the 13 year ISAF mission in Afghanistan NATO-led troops supported the Afghan government in their struggle to establish peace and freedom for everybody in their country. One of Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum's (JFCBS) roles as the out-of-theatre operational headquarters was to provide pre-deployment training to personnel before their departure to Afghanistan.

JFC Brunssum's Training and Exercise Branch is responsible for coordinating all efforts to organize NATO sponsored pre-deployment training events. This necessitated close coordination with ISAF, the troop contributing Nations and the training providers; and the sourcing of subject matter experts to support specific training events, either coming from theatre or from those who had been recently redeployed. Additionally, this included the coordination of national requests that had to be aligned with NATO aims and objectives.

Regardless of where their capstone training took place, all training started within each troop contributing Nation, with participants being provided a basic background knowledge on Afghanistan, based on national resources/sources.

Next, their preparation continued on the internet, when assigned personnel undertook the Joint Advanced Distributed Learning (JADL) courses, provided by the Allied Command Transformation-sponsored web portal. After successful completion of these courses, NATO provided pre-deployment training.

The final step was actual deployment to Afghanistan and the taking over assigned positions in ISAF, whilst receiving in-theatre training as a concluding training step.

To conclude, the JFC Brunssum Training and Exercise Branch was, throughout the 13 year ISAF mission, the very heart of preparation for all forces that were deployed.

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER (J8)

The financial resource implications of ISAF operational requirements are all developed at JFC Brunssum in close coordination with inputs from Theatre. These resource requirements are then fed through the NATO financial process and, once approved by the NATO Council, they will be used to execute contracts, ensure supplies and services are in place and, where necessary, ensure contractors/civilian personnel are paid for their services.

JFC Brunssum financial personnel are the key players in ensuring that financial resources are available to meet operational requirements; NATO Council approved financial ceilings are not exceeded; and budgets are managed in accordance with financial rules and regulations. This includes the eligibility assessment of proposed expenditures necessary to meet changing operational requirements. Contract support necessary for supplies and/or services in Theatre are executed through JFC Brunssum contracting personnel, NATO Agencies, or local contracting personnel. The contracting strategy and oversight is developed by JFC Brunssum Contracts Branch. JFC Brunssum contracting personnel also

manage Real Life Support requirements and, in some cases, contracts that deliver services to Troop Contributing Nations, such as fuel.

Expenditures must be recorded in the accounting system to meet NATO Financial rules and regulations and meet accepted international accounting standards. This work is carried out by JFC Brunssum Finance and Accounting personnel but supported by Theatre Finance and Accounting personnel. The overall aim is to ensure that expenditures are correctly executed and in accordance with established policies and procedures.

The Financial Controller is the only individual authorized to enter into financial obligations on behalf of NATO. He must ensure a coordinated and cohesive relationship between all Branches that constitute J8 and ensure his branch serves the needs of the operational requirement holders within JFC Brunssum and in Theatre. Additionally, a robust budgetary Reach Back support capacity must be available at all times to make certain critical financial resources are not a road block to successful mission execution.



Hungarian Revolution and Independence War in 1956

Story by Lt Col Czosz, Senior Hungarian Officer



The revolutionary flag, with the communist coat of arms cut out from the centre

Background:

Following Stalin's death in 1953 the Soviet block started to gradually lessen the terror. Mátyás Rákosi, Hungary's leader, resigned after having been criticized by Moscow, but he stayed active in the background.

Imre Nagy became the national leader. He immediately started a program of reforms, increased standards of living and lessened the burdens that had been placed upon the farming community. A review of the cases of those illegally condemned started. People felt instinctively that with Imre Nagy a positive change in the political order had begun.

Members of the previous leadership, however, feared the loss of their privileges and that they would be held to account for their unjust deeds. As a result of behind-the-scenes pressure exerted by Rákosi and Moscow, Imre Nagy was removed from his post and excluded from the party. The new political leadership led by Ernő Gerő - a former second in command of Rákosi - didn't want any reforms although more and more people demanded radical changes.

The Revolution:

The tension reached its peak in October 1956. On the evening of 22nd October 1956 students of the University of Technology in Budapest started to

demonstrate. The crux of their protest was articulated in 16 demands that included: withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary; free elections; liberty of speech and press; abolishment of the surrendering of goods; Imre Nagy to be appointed prime minister; removal of the Stalin statue.

On 23rd October 1956 hundreds of thousands demonstrated on the streets of Budapest: they went to the parliament and demanded Imre Nagy to deliver a speech. After his calming words the masses that had gathered on Kossuth Square broke up. But, by that time, other demonstrations had started in a number of other parts of the city. Significantly, the hated Stalin statue was toppled down on Heroes' Square.

The headquarters of Hungarian Radio became the focal point protest events. Soon the shooting started and, by nightfall, the freedom fighters had seized control of the Radio building and some other important areas of Budapest.

On 24th October Imre Nagy was appointed prime minister. Soviet tanks appeared on the streets of the city trying to topple the revolution. On 25th October 1956 on Kossuth Square the Russians started to randomly shoot into the peacefully demonstrating crowds. The demonstrators tried to seek refuge in the Ministry of Agriculture building but they weren't allowed in. Around 800 died on that day; a day that has become known as "Bloody Thursday".

After the massacre on Kossuth Square the revolution was unstoppable. Imre Nagy announced that a multi-party system was to replace the communist single-party dictatorship. The government declared its intent to withdraw from Warsaw Pact and form a neutral state. The freedom fighters unified their forces in National Guard units, confiscated weapons and ammunition from the disbanded State Security Police and from the army, and liberated the political prisoners. Smaller units of the Hungarian Army joined the freedom fighters, others handed over their weapons. After the initial fight Soviet troops withdrew from Budapest by 28 October.

By the beginning of November the Soviet leadership realized that the West would not provide on-the-ground assistance to the new Hungarian democracy. Thus Moscow ordered Marshal Konev, commanding more than 2000 armored vehicles and hundreds of thousands of mechanized infantry, to oppress the revolution. Hungary appealed for UN assistance against Soviet invasion, but only received verbal help.

The emotional speech PM Nagy gave on national radio on November 4th, 1956, informed his people that Soviet forces had entered Budapest with orders to put down the revolt. "At dawn today, Soviet

forces began an attack on our capital, obviously with the aim of toppling the legal, democratic, Hungarian government. Our troops are fighting. The government is in place. I am making this fact known to our people and the whole world."

The Hungarian National Guard fought bravely but without any hope against the overwhelming Soviet force. In an unequal fight thousands of Hungarian fighters died and hundreds of Soviet tanks were destroyed on the streets of Budapest. The last resistance ended on 11th November.

Retaliation and Consequences:

Russian retaliation soon began. Hungarian fighters who had survived were executed (hundreds) or sentenced to forced labor or long term imprisonment (tens of thousands). Hundreds of thousands fled the country fearing for their lives and emigrated to Western Europe, the USA, Canada and Australia creating Hungarian communities that remain today (the generation of 56ers).

The political leaders Imre Nagy (PM), Pál Maléter (MoD) and Miklós Gimes were

arrested and executed on 16th June in 1958 and buried in the prison courtyard. Later their bodies were moved to an unmarked grave in a faraway part of the Municipal Cemetery of Budapest (the famous No. 301 slot). In the following years of communism it was strictly forbidden to speak about the '56 revolution. After their rehabilitation the remains were exhumed and reburied on 16th June, 1989, with the participation of hundreds of thousands people in the funeral. This was considered to be the key event for the political changes in 1989.

Finally the Hungarian Republic was proclaimed, on 23rd October 1989 (same day as the 1956 Revolution started), from the same balcony that Imre Nagy delivered his speech 33 years before, indicating that the new democracy was based on the legacy of '56.

Every year, on 23rd October, all Hungarians commemorate their national heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight for freedom and democracy.



Occupying a Soviet tank

Geilenkirchen Site Recognized for Outstanding Educational Services

Story and Photo by Valerie Haas

The University of Oklahoma Advanced Programs (Oklahoma, USA) recently named Valerie Lyn Peterson-Borro as 2014 Outstanding Site Director Worldwide. Serving the NATO community for 11 years, Ms. Peterson-Borro credits her students with the award. "The strength of OU's program in GK is the caliber of students it attracts, providing lively discussions on international issues," states Peterson-Borro with pride.



Ms. Peterson-Borro

University of Oklahoma (OU) students stationed at NATO Airbase Geilenkirchen and JFC Brunssum hold Ms. Peterson-Borro in high regard, as evidenced by student feedback submitted upon each course completion. "She is always...helpful when I have met any problem during my term in this program," says Master

Sergeant Serter Kokbudak (OR-8, TUR A), a seasoned OU student finishing up his M.A. in International Relations.

Lt Jessica Trawick (OF-1, USAF) recently began taking courses in August 2014. "From the very beginning, Valerie has ensured that I know exactly what to expect from the course and from

the University of Oklahoma. She has welcomed me...and helped with the transition from an undergraduate course to a master's program."

As the first inaugural award of its kind, the Education Center at NATO Airbase Geilenkirchen especially recognizes Ms. Peterson-Borro's accomplishments. "It is a pleasure to work with Valerie," acknowledges Education Services Officer Randy Phelan. "It is not one bit of a surprise that the University of Oklahoma has recognized her outstanding performance. Valerie is a key team player who has always gone above and beyond for her students."

Based on student feedback and excellent customer service, the Outstanding Site Director Award reflects Peterson-Borro's dedication to the NATO community and international military education.

The University of Oklahoma Geilenkirchen Site offers a Master of Arts in International Relations and is open to all US and NATO I.D. card holders. Kokbudak describes the class format as "very student-friendly, especially if you are a full-time worker." For more information, visit site director Valerie Lyn Peterson-Borro in building 104 on NATO Airbase Geilenkirchen. +49 (0) 245 163 2208; apgeilenkirchen@ou.edu



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History of The Poppy Appeal

Story and pictures by Flt Sgt Kenny McIntosh GBR F

The first official “British Legion” Poppy Day was held in Britain on 11 November 1921, inspired by the poem *In Flanders’ Fields* written by John McCrae. Since then the Poppy Appeal has been a key annual event in the United Kingdom’s calendar.



How It All Began

The Flanders Poppy was first described as the “Flower of Remembrance” by Colonel John McCrae who, before the First World War, was a well known Professor of Medicine at McGill University in Montreal.

He had previously served as a gunner in the South African War, and at the outbreak of the First World War decided to join the fighting ranks. However, the powers-that-be decided that his abilities could be used to better advantage, and so he landed in France as a Medical Officer with the first Canadian Army

contingent.

At the second battle of Ypres in 1915, when in charge of a small first-aid post and during a lull in the action, he wrote, in pencil, on a page torn from his dispatch book, the following verses:

*In Flanders’ fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie*

In Flanders’ fields.

*Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies
grow In Flanders’ Fields.*

The verses were sent anonymously to “Punch” magazine and published under the title “In Flanders’ Fields”

In May 1918 Colonel McCrae was brought as a stretcher case to one of the big hospitals on the channel coast of France. On the third evening he was

wheeled to the balcony of his room to look over the sea towards the cliffs of Dover. The verses were obviously in his mind, for he told the doctor who was in charge of his case:

*"Tell them this,
If ye break faith with us who die,
we shall not sleep".*

The same night Colonel McCrae died. He was interred in a beautiful cemetery on rising ground above Wimereux, from where the cliffs of Dover are easily visible on sunny days.

The First World War finally came to an end in November 1918, when an Armistice was declared, so that peace terms could be arranged. At 11am on November 11th, the last shot of the war was fired. For many years afterwards Armistice Day was observed on the 11th November, but now it is known as Remembrance Sunday, and is held always on the second Sunday in November.

An American lady, Miss Moina Michael, had read the poem and was greatly impressed, particularly by the last verse. The wearing of a poppy appeared to her to be the way to keep faith, and she wrote the reply:

"THE VICTORY EMBLEM"

*Oh! You who sleep in Flanders' fields,
Sleep sweet - to arise anew;
We caught the torch you threw,
And holding high we kept
The faith with those who died.
We cherish too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led,
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies,
But lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms
above the dead
In Flanders' fields.
And now the torch and poppy red
Wear in honour of our dead.
Fear not that ye have died for naught:
We've learned the lesson that ye taught
In Flanders' fields.*

On November 9th 1918, only two days before the Armistice was signed, Miss Michael was presented with a small gift of money by some of the overseas War Secretaries of the YMCA for whom she worked, and whose Conference was being held at her house. She told them about the two poems, and announced that she was going to buy 25 red poppies with the money. This she did; she wore one herself, and each Secretary there bought one from her. It is claimed, probably rightly, that this

was the first group selling of poppies.

The French Secretary, Madame Guerin, had a practical and useful idea. She visited various parts of the world to suggest that artificial poppies should be made and sold to help ex-Servicemen and their dependants in need.

As a result the first ever Poppy Day was held in Britain on November 11th 1921. The poppies were obtained from a French organisation, which used the profits to help children in the War devastated areas.

At that time, Field Marshal Earl Haig (who had been Commander-in-Chief in France) had become the Founder-President of the newly formed British Legion ("The Royal" prefix was not conferred until 1971).

The Legion's purpose was then - as it remains today - in time of need to give practical help to all men and women who have served in the Forces, and to their widows and dependants.

Earl Haig used to say that the provision of work for disabled ex-Servicemen was as important as raising money. He always took the greatest personal interest in the Legion's Poppy Factory. This Factory started its activities in 1922 with five disabled ex-Servicemen working in a room over a shop in Bermondsey in South London.

Today, The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory Ltd carries on the same work in modern premises in Richmond, Surrey, where 50 disabled ex-Servicemen are employed all year round in the manufacture of the 30 million Poppies, 115,000 Wreaths and 800,000 Remembrance Crosses for the current Appeal. This year's Appeal aims to raise 40 million pounds to allow the Royal British Legion to continue to support The Armed Forces Community.





FAMILY SUPPORT MORALE & WELFARE

WHEN YOU WORK, WE WORK
WHEN YOU PLAY, WE WORK HARDER

	05 DEC 2014 FRI THE PYRAMID Ashley Hinshaw James Buckley 89 min 1900		19 DEC 2014 FRI ANNIE Cameron Diaz Jamie Foxx 118 min 1900
	06 DEC 2014 SAT THE BEST OF ME Michelle Monaghan James Marsden 117 min 1600		20 DEC 2014 SAT NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: SECRET OF THE TOMB Ben Stiller Robin Williams 1600
	06 DEC 2014 SAT JOHN WICK Keanu Reeves Michael Nyqvist 96 min 1900		20 DEC 2014 SAT THE HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES Martin Freeman Richard Armitage 1900
	12 DEC 2014 FRI EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS Christian Bale Joel Edgerton 142 min 1900		27 DEC 2014 SAT INTO THE WOODS Johnny Depp Meryl Streep 124 min 1600
	13 DEC 2014 SAT BIG HERO 6 Scott Adsit Ryan Potter 102 min 1600		27 DEC 2014 SAT UNBROKEN Jack O'Connell Domhnall Gleeson 1900
	13 DEC 2014 SAT FURY Brad Pitt Shia LaBeouf 139 min 1900		

Country	: Greece
Formal Name of State	: Hellenic Republic
Capital	: Athens
Head of State	: President Karolos Papoulias
Head of Government	: Prime Minister Antonis Samaras
Land Area	: 131,957 km ²
Land Boundary	: 1,160 km
Coastline	: 13,780 km
Population	: 10,816,286 (2011 census)
GDP	: GDP (PPP) \$271 billion (2014 IMF estimate)
Import/export	: \$47.5 billion / \$27.57 billion (2012 data)
Currency	: Euro (€)
Economic structure:	Services 80.6%, industry 16%, agriculture 3.4%.

Main industries:

Tourism, merchant shipping (ranked 1st of the world's total capacity at 15.17% and 4th in total ship ownership at 7.84%), food products, textiles, chemicals, metal products, mining and petroleum products.

Main import goods:

Crude petroleum, electrical & electronic equipment, pharmaceutical products, machinery, automobiles & parts, plastic articles.

Main export goods:

Petroleum refined products, aluminum articles, electronic equipment, pharmaceuticals, agricultural products, building & construction materials.

Geography and climate:

Greece is located in Southeast Europe at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa. The country consists of a mountainous peninsular mainland expanding southwards into the sea from the southern tip of the Balkans, ending at the Peloponnese peninsula, and has land borders with Albania, FYROM, Bulgaria and Turkey. Due to its highly fractal-shaped coastline and numerous islands, Greece has the 11th longest coastline in the world. Greece has been an independent, sovereign state after the War of Independence from the Ottoman Empire, reaching the current territorial status in 1947. Greece was a founding member of the United Nations back in 1945, a NATO member since 1952, and a member of the European Union since 1981. The dominant climate at all coastal locations and parts of the central continental region is featuring mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The Pindus mountain range strongly affects the climate of the country, making areas to the west of the range considerably wetter on average than areas lying to the east of the range, while the mountainous areas feature an alpine climate.



When did you arrive in the Netherlands and which position have you taken?

I arrived in the Netherlands in late December 2013 and assumed a position as the Theatre Ballistic Missile Defense (TBMD) Subject Matter Expert (SME) in the Targeting Section of J3/5 Branch.

Tell us about your military career.

I joined the Hellenic Military Academy in 1994 and graduated after 4 years, joining the Field Artillery, with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. Until 2002, my appointments were related to Field Artillery. After 2002, I joined the Air Defense Branch while being posted in an Air Defense/Missile Defense unit (HAWK Phase III). For the next ten years, I managed to get to know Air Defense in depth - my rank and experience evolved in numerous positions from Platoon Leader to HAWK Battery Commander or Operations Officer. In 2012, I joined the Hellenic Staff College and then posted at NRDC-GR, as a Staff Officer in G1. In my career, I graduated from all my military training schools and, additionally, I graduated from the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course at FT Sill, OK (2001) and Air Defense Captain Career Course at FT Bliss, TX (2007).

Tell us about your job in JFCBS and the challenges you are facing.

The TBMD position is quite similar to my previous posts in Air Defense but, at the same time, presents some aspects that are different. As a TBMD SME, I am involved in planning the TBMD aspects of a mission at the operational level in close cooperation with AIRCOM. The procedures of planning and finally executing TBMD come through all levels of NATO including the NAC, so my job to coordinate tactical level needs, operational level desires, strategic level requirements in alignment with political guidance is a real challenge.

What are your hobbies?

I love basketball, so I try to be every Tuesday at the gym (basketball day) to play with other basketball fans. Here also, I started playing squash and now I feel like it will be my second hobby (sports wise).

What are your future plans?

My tour in Brunssum finishes at December 2016 and it is not easy to predict my next steps. The sure thing is that for a year after my end of tour, I will join the Hellenic Joint War College. After that new challenges will reveal themselves in my career path.

Did you know? Giants of the Ice Age

Composed by Ed Frieser - Taken from the website of Amsterdam Expo



Looking for excitement during the Holiday Season then this might be the perfect tour for you and your family. See Amsterdam, and while there visit the largest traveling exhibition exploring the ice age. It is exhibited in the Amsterdam Expo, proclaimed by international colleagues, venues and promoters as the most groundbreaking, leading and innovative exhibition space in Europe offering many international exhibitions of world-class. It has an exhibition surface of nearly 3000m².

Come face-to-face with the giant mammoth and the deadly sabre-toothed tiger. This winter let Amsterdam EXPO take you on a fascinating journey through prehistory as it brings Giants of the Ice Age, the largest traveling exhibition exploring the ice age ever created, to the Netherlands. Don't miss this larger-than-life exhibition as it touches down for just thirteen weeks from 27 November 2014 to 1 March 2015.

Fossils from the North Sea

At the request of Amsterdam Expo, Naturalis Biodiversity Centre Leiden has also contributed a large gallery about the Netherlands during the ice age. Naturalis is the Dutch National Centre of Expertise on biodiversity and the ice age as one of their areas of expertise. During the ice age the Netherlands formed a true wilderness. The rugged lowland steppe was inhabited with large mammals such as mammoths, sabre-toothed tigers, and woolly rhino's. Fishermen

brought and still bring countless remains and fossils to the surface from the bottom of the North Sea, since this sea used to be land during the ice age. Most of these remains and fossils are taken to Naturalis in Leiden. From its collection of 37 million objects the most significant and original artifacts of 'the Netherlands in the ice age' are selected to complete the exhibition in the Amsterdam Expo. Naturalis added skulls of the aurochs, the woolly rhinoceros, an antler of the giant elk and even the droppings of a hyena!

Baby mammoth Lyuba

The exhibition features the original skeleton of a woolly mammoth exhibited for the first time in Europe and a variety of remains and fossils dating back tens of thousands of years. It also reveals the sad story of baby mammoth Lyuba, who was trapped in a muddy riverbank and left behind by her herd. As the best-preserved mammoth ever found, she has provided scientists with a treasure trove of information. An exact replica of Lyuba is on display as part of the exhibition.

You're 2% Neanderthal

Let Amsterdam EXPO transport you 30,000 years back in time. Discover the world of early Homo Sapiens – our ancestors – and the stronger, more robust Neanderthals, with whom we share more in common than we thought. Recent studies have now traced around 2% of our DNA back to this sturdier species. What was life like for these ice age hunters and gatherers? Giants of the Ice Age reveals how they hunted, what tools

they used, and the mysterious cave art they created. It's just like being in the famous caves of Lascaux.

An experience for all ages

See 'the Big Five' of the ice age - the mammoth, sabre-toothed tiger, woolly rhinoceros, cave bear and cave lion – right here in the Netherlands. For 30,000 years, these giants roamed the country's prehistoric wilderness. Now they're returning to Amsterdam. The adventure is almost here! Giants of the Ice Age is an experience for all ages. All visitors to the exhibition receive a free audio guide. Especially available is a children-friendly audio guide, a fun scavenger hunt and a Play Zone, where children can explore as junior archaeologists.

You can buy tickets for Giants of the Ice Age via: www.amsterdamexpo.nl.

Directions

Amsterdam EXPO
Next to Station Amsterdam Zuid (South)
Gustav Mahlerlaan 24
1082 MC Amsterdam
T. 0900-8411(45cpm)
E. contact@amsterdamexpo.nl

Opening hours:

Monday till Sunday inclusive from 09.00 – 18.00 hrs, Fridays until 21.00 hrs. Entrance until 1 hr. before closing time. Adjusted opening hours during the Christmas Holidays.



The Most Convivial Christmas Market in Europe!!



The 29th Christmas market will be held from November 14, 2014 to 23 December 2014. The Gemeentegrot (municipality cave), with its passages that reach for tens of kilometers, will again be the center of the Christmas Market 'Gemeentegrot'. At the foot of the Cauberg - a world famous mountain in Valkenburg - you will find the entrance to the Gemeentegrot.

The people of Valkenburg claim this is the oldest underground Christmas Market in Europe. This may or may not be true. But you will find a unique underground cave system here with a history dating back more than 2000 years. From November 14 the silence of the underground passages will again be disturbed to provide an unusual venue where you can enjoy the caves and purchase Christmas gifts.

The organizers of the Christmas Market also have an eye for the disabled. Wheelchair access has been considered such that the aisles are at least 2.5 meters wide and ramps will be put in place where necessary. Wheelchairs are also available to borrow.

If, following your visit to the Gemeentegrot, you still have energy for more shopping you might also visit the Fluweelengrot (Velvet Cave) Christmas market which is located approximately 300 meters away.

Where:

Valkenburg, The Netherlands

Places to visit:

Community Cave (Christmas Market) / Kerstmarkt Gemeentegrot

Opening Days/Hours:

14 November till 23 December 2014
 Monday-Friday 11:00-20:00 hrs
 Saturday-Sunday 10:00-21:00 hrs
 Tuesday 23 December 11:00-18:00 hrs

Admission:

Adults € 5,00
 Children < 12 Year € 3,00
 Children > 5 Year € 0,00

Parking:

Near the cave (approx. 200-700m)

Distance from Brunssum:

Approx. 17 km

How to Drive:

Take the road N597, Emmaweg, N581, and N298 (Randweg) in the direction of Nuth. At Nuth drive on the main road i.e. stay on N298. This road will take you to Valkenburg. When you are there, turn right at the T shaped intersection to Geneindestraat and then left to Koningin Julianallaan. Then turn left to Oranjestraat and right to Wilhelminalaan. Finally, take the N590 to Cauberg.

Web Address:

www.valkenburgkerstmarkt.nl
 Telephone: 0031 (0) 43 601 3060
 Address: Community Cave,
 Cauberg 4, Valkenburg, NL



Win Tickets for The Most Convivial Christmas Market in Europe!!

- We have 3 x 2 tickets for the Christmas Market
- In order to win the tickets, please answer the following question:
- **Quiz Question: How old is the underground cave system?**
Fill in this coupon and send it to PAO, or send an e-mail to pao@jfcbs.nato.int, before 15 December 2014
- For NATO ID card holders only
- The winners will be announced in the next edition of the Northern Star

Answer:

Division:

Full name:

Extension:



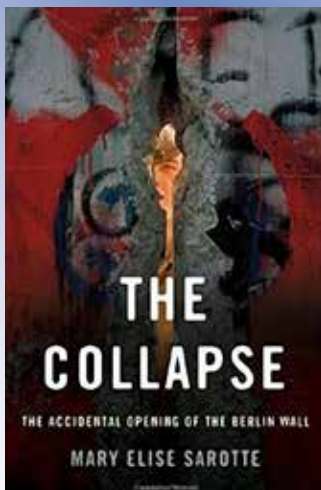
Winners I was 20 in 14

The Northern Star congratulates the lucky winner of the last contest.

Tickets won by:

Karol Geppert	JFCBS J4
Lorraine Huffakker	AFNORTH School
David Rey Miñambres	JFCBS DOM BSG

Book Review



The Collapse: The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall

By Mary Elise Sarotte

On the night of November 9, 1989, massive crowds surged toward the Berlin Wall, drawn by an announcement that caught the world by surprise: East Germans could now move freely to the West. The Wall—infamous symbol of divided Cold War Europe—seemed to be falling. But the opening of the gates that night was not planned by the East German ruling regime—nor was it the result of a bargain between either Ronald Reagan or George H.W. Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

It was an accident.

In *The Collapse*, prize-winning historian Mary Elise Sarotte reveals how a perfect storm of decisions made by daring underground revolutionaries, disgruntled Stasi officers, and dictatorial party bosses sparked an unexpected series of events culminating in the chaotic fall of the Wall. With a novelist's eye for character

and detail, she brings to vivid life a story that sweeps across Budapest, Prague, Dresden, and Leipzig and up to the armed checkpoints in Berlin.

We meet the revolutionaries Roland Jahn, Aram Radomski, and Siggie Schefke, risking it all to smuggle the truth across the Iron Curtain; the hapless Politburo member Günter Schabowski, mistakenly suggesting that the Wall is open to a press conference full of foreign journalists, including NBC's Tom Brokaw; and Stasi officer Harald Jäger, holding the fort at the crucial border crossing that night. Soon, Brokaw starts broadcasting live from Berlin's Brandenburg Gate, where the crowds are exulting in the euphoria of newfound freedom—and the dictators are plotting to restore control.

Drawing on new archival sources and dozens of interviews, *The Collapse* offers the definitive account of the night that brought down the Berlin Wall.

Café, Restaurant & Partyservice *Haus Hamacher* 52538 Gangelt Am Freibad 10

On January 5th 2014, we start our "USA-weeks" where we will serve American specialties.

The 27th, 28th of February and the 1st of March, we will offer you our "USA-buffet". All you can eat!

Enjoy your coffee with cake or one of our ice specialties in our Panorama Pavilion with view on the canoe lake. You can also dine German style in our hunting room. Afterwards you can play a game of bowling or minigolf or go for a nice walk in the woods nearby.

We are open all year, 7 days a week.
The Hamacher-Wollenweber Family and its team look forward to your visit!

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Fax: 0049-2454-939301

Mail: haus.hamacher@t-online.de

Site: www.Haus-Hamacher.de

f: /HausHamacher

We wish you a Merry Christmas



Ecolog international provides tailor-made logistical and service solutions to armed forces and organizations in crisis regions worldwide.

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ISO 9001:2008 | ISO 14001:2009 | OHSAS 18001:2007

¹ the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

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