



- Defence and Deterrence
- Memorial Day Ceremony at the American Cemetery & Memorial, Margraten
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RX 350 AWD	SUV	15	Starfire Pearl	Parchment	\$50,890	\$47,225	\$ 3,665	\$ 3,000	\$ 6,665
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COMMAND GROUP CORNER

By Major General Scott F. Smith, USAF Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) JFC Brunssum

Congratulations JFC Brunssum! Arriving just over a month ago, I have been impressed with the professionalism and dedication across this headquarters. That is a testament to each of you as exceptional Officers, NCOs and Civilians who understand the serious mission we have in support of our great Alliance. So thank you for the individual and team efforts you put forth each and every day.

I come to you most recently as the Inspector General at the US Air Force's Air Mobility Command (AMC) HQ in Illinois, USA. In that duty, my team and I were responsible for assessing operational capabilities and effectiveness of the Active Duty, Reserve and Air National Guard units executing air mobility, aeromedical evacuation, aerial refueling and contingency response operations around the globe. The men and women of AMC conduct these missions every day with superior effect, so my expectation for operational excellence is high. The staff of JFC Brunssum should indeed take pride in the fact that I see in you the same level of expertise as I have in AMC. While this is my first NATO posting, I have had the privilege of working in support of NATO operations and alongside many of your nations' forces for many years. I have flown with Dutch, British, Canadian, German, French, Spanish and Italian Airmen; worked logistical problems with Portuguese and Turkish units; and attended schools with Hungarian, Croatian, Danish and Romanian officers, just to name a few. So while I am new to NATO, the perspectives and capabilities of NATO members are deeply rooted in my experiences. Yet I am excited at the opportunity to broaden my NATO understanding by working closely with all member nation forces.

This is a critical point for our Alliance, and indeed JFC Brunssum. We face a new set of challenges that are arguably more dynamic and complicated than at any other point in history. Many unknowns are now part of our daily calculus, and we must apply intellectual flexibility to a multitude of operational settings. Indeed, never was our requirement greater to aggressively develop operationally innovative approaches to evolving strategic challenges. NATO leadership looks to JFC Brunssum to lead in many of these endeavors, and we will deliver.

Foremost among our tasks is providing RESOLUTE SUPPORT with the full range of assistance necessary. Nothing exceeds the importance of ensuring NATO's fielded forces receive the full weight of this HQ's capabilities. I will look to draw on your collective experience and ingenuity to keep the Afghanistan



Major General Scott F. Smith

efforts vibrant and shape the path towards a new phase of operations in the year ahead. While there is clarity in many aspects of the RS mission, the need remains for tremendous energy and creativity to mold and guide NATO's future path. I encourage you to reflect on this opportunity, because it is uncommon to have the chance to directly affect the strategic direction of an organization—and this is precisely what is in front of all of us.

But Afghanistan is by no means the only opportunity we embrace. The recent actions of some external forces have provided NATO with a clear reminder of the Alliance's critical role in ensuring stability and peace on this continent as well as the near-abroad. So we will work relentlessly to develop and provide assurance measures for our Allies and Partners. Further, with SHAPE's guidance,

we will help develop the sustainment of these measures and the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan.

While we develop these concepts, we will continue to hone our skills as an operational HQ through exercises. Chief among these is TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2015. Many of you have been working hard on this already, and I look to join your efforts as we march toward execution this Fall.

I am excited to be a part of JFC Brunssum, and eager to learn from all of you. Incredible skills and ideas are resident at every level here, and I promise an "open door" to everyone's contribution. Congratulations again, JFC Brunssum—now let's get to work!

Colophon

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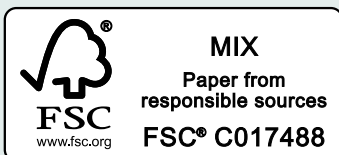
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About the Cover



HMS OCEAN in the foreground leads the rest of the BALTOPs Fleet, opening BALTOPs with potentially one of the trickiest manoeuvres of the series. It involved bringing together ships from 17 nations – some less than 200 yards (182 metres) apart – and then moving them through a series of complex formations that tested their communications and navigational expertise.

But after weeks of planning it was executed with amazing skill by the Bridge team of the Royal Navy Flagship HMS OCEAN.

BALTOPs is an annually recurring multinational exercise designed to enhance flexibility and interoperability, as well as demonstrate resolve of allied and partner forces to defend the Baltic region. LPhot Luron Wright/Crown Copyright.

HMS OCEAN will also be the UK MARFOR Flagship for exercise Trident Juncture 2015.

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Third Gripen user exercise held at Čáslav Air Base in the Czech Republic

Story by HQ AIRCOM PA Office based on information provided by Čáslav Air Base PA Office

From 11 to 24 May 2015, exercise Lion Effort 2015 took place at 21st Tactical Air Force Base Čáslav in the Czech Republic. During Lion Effort 2015, Gripen user nations and several other NATO members conducted live flying training together with Czech Air Force fighters, helicopters and transport aircraft as well as an anti-aircraft missile regiment.



A ground crew member looks as a Portuguese F-16 aircraft is maintained at the Romanian air base of Campia Turzii.

Photo by J.CARVALHO

Lion Effort is an exercise series organised by Gripen user nations. In 2009 and 2012 it took place in Hungary and in Sweden, respectively.

The JAS-39 Gripen aircraft flying during Lion Effort were from NATO Allies Hungary and the Czech Republic and NATO Partner Sweden. The Czech Republic also contributed L-159 light

fighter aircraft, CASA transport aircraft as well as Mi-24 attack helicopters and Mi-171 transport helicopters to the event. All these assets were deployed at Čáslav for the exercise. Germany Typhoon Eurofighter jets and Polish F-16s fighters supported Lion Effort flying from their respective home bases. A NATO Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) platform performed command and control operating over

Poland. Thailand, whose air forces also operate Gripen sent observers to this year's event.

During Lion Effort 15 participating aircraft flew Composite Air Operations so-called COMAOs in two waves – one in the morning and a second so-called shadow wave in the evening reserved for basic fighter manoeuvring. Packages of jets conducted air-to-air training of



A Hungarian Air Force An-26 transport bringing personnel and materiel in support of exercise Lion Effort 2015 at Čáslav 21st Tactical Air Force Base. Photo courtesy CZE AF

Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures that allowed them to practice cooperation and to operate alongside each other.

“It is an honour for the Czech Air Force to host this year’s Lion Effort which also marks ten years of flying the JAS-39 Gripen in our air forces,” said Brigadier General Libor Štefánik, the Commander of the Czech Air Force. “Having NATO Allies and Partner Nations flying together is a great opportunity. The air and ground crews were able to learn from each other and further improve their interoperability.”

During the exercise, the Czech Air Force conducted a spotters’ day on 14 May for interested aircraft photographers. On 21 May a Distinguished Visitors Day took place which was attended by the Czech and Hungarian Air Chiefs as well as a representative of the Swedish

Air Chief and other military and civilian representatives.

A special celebration occurred on 22 May as the Czech Air Force celebrated ten years of operating the JAS-39 Gripen in their inventory. Finally, on 23 May, an

Open Day event was organised and 21st Tactical Air Force Base Čáslav received the interested population for an Air Show.

The third Gripen user nation exercise Lion Effort 2015 concluded on 24 May as all external participants redeployed to their home bases.

During Lion Effort 2015, 18 aircraft will be operating together at 21st Tactical Air Force Base Čáslav

Participating Aircraft:

6 x CZE JAS-39 fighter aircraft

8 x CZE L-159 light fighter aircraft

1 x CZE Mi-171 transport helicopter

2 x CZE Mi-24 attack helicopters

1 x CZE CASA transport aircraft

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Defence and Deterrence

by Maj Gen Miroslaw Rozanski, General Commander of the Polish Armed Forces

The Polish Armed Forces (PAF) have been undergoing a thorough transition for the last 25 years. Its speedup is noticeable from the beginning of the process of professionalization of the armed forces. The transformations are very comprehensive and include mainly change of command and control system, modifications in the area of training and preparation of troops and last but not least technical modernization.



Maj Gen Miroslaw Rozanski (photo 17 WBZ)

After the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, PAF entered into the new reality equipped with the armament which was mainly produced in the former eastern bloc. Poland's joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and changed both the polarity of security guarantees and the hitherto concept of collective defense. It also created necessity to make a review of the PAF's equipment which naturally grew older. The reason for replacement of the armament was based on the main objective namely to achieve compatibility with the equipment used by other NATO members. In the meantime two major occurrences confirmed the rightness of our approach. Those were the second war in the Persian Gulf and the Allied Forces engagement in Afghanistan. Polish troops significantly engaged in both operations and deployed a few thousand boots on the ground. Our participation in these missions was a driving force for modernization process. It forced the purchase of new weapon systems and equipment to enhance our capabilities in areas



Polish Leopard II during live fire exercise (photo R. Mniedto)

such as firepower, force protection, survivability on the battlefield, communications, transportation and ability to perform reconnaissance missions. It also proved to be a turning point in our strategic military policy.

After the withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan Poland significantly reduced the number of its troops in expeditionary operations, focusing efforts primarily on the building of Polish capacity to defend

its own territory and strengthening allied relations, actions reflected by the Polish increased contribution to NATO collective defense. Polish technical modernization plan envisages the replacement of not perspective equipment with modern military weapon systems. We want to build the national capacity to ensure the production, servicing, maintenance of the equipment which in turn will allow us to become less dependent from foreign suppliers and will stimulate the development



EC-725 Caracal, possibly the new Polish Armed Forces helicopter (photo R.Siemaszko/DKS MON) and the project of new minehunter Kormoran II (visualisation Remontowa Shipbuilding S.A.)

of national economy and science. Directions of technical modernization of the Polish Armed Forces encompass 14 operational programs that include for instance: medium and short-range air defense systems, vast stock of the UAVs included CUAVs, tube and rocket long-range artillery systems, tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, warships and helicopters.

With the outbreak of the “Ukrainian Spring”, the Polish Ministry of National Defense has analyzed its modernization plan. Threats associated with the deterioration of the security environment within our region have led to changes in the armament acquisition priorities. We decided to accelerate the process of building our offensive capability in order to strengthen our deterrence potential. “Polish Fangs” stand for weapon systems of ranges and combat effectiveness exceeding the currently possessed systems. MoD expedited the organization of the second costal missile squadron equipped with modern and efficient Naval Strike Missiles. Poland has just started the process of acquisition of the MLRS with ranges of up to 300km. We also decided to equip our new submarines with long range cruise missiles. Government signed a contract to arm our F-16 with AGM-158 JASSM and we speed up our attack helicopter program.

We shall rely on the Polish defense industry in cases when we are sure that

the industry has potential, technology and know-how needed to provide PAF with required, modern equipment. Such an approach was adopted in cases of armored personnel carrier Wolverine, MANPADS missiles Grom, a wide range of different types of ammunition, reconnaissance UAVs, warships, small arms and personal equipment. We have significant production potential, which is concentrated in the Polish Armaments Group. So far our defense industry has been dispersed what caused major obstacles in realization of more advanced armament programs. Now, after the consolidation of the Polish defense industry it is much easier for us to negotiate potential contracts or associate with foreign partners in procedures for procurement of the most complex systems.

Weapon systems that are beyond capabilities of our domestic industry will be outsourced from foreign suppliers but always taking into account assurance of the essential security interests of our country. We want to use the offset as the backbone for development and building national capacity for servicing and maintenance of equipment during its whole life cycle. We are committed to cooperation between foreign entities and Polish defense industry companies.

If we decide that a development of a product can bring very tangible benefits for the Polish science, industry and defense domains we initiate an

R&D project dedicated to creation of that particular sort of product. As an example to illustrate this approach let it serve the R&D project for a new infantry fighting vehicle that was commissioned to be designed using financial means allocated by the National Research and Development Centre. Poland needs more than 1,000 pieces of that equipment, which in the future will be refurbished, serviced or exported. In Europe and all around the world there are many countries that already use old BMPs-1, vehicles which have their best days long over. Thus offering a possible replacement for this obsolete vehicle is a great opportunity for our defense industry.

2015 is a crucial year for Poland’s modernization process. It is the year when we will take the most important decisions that will shape our military potential for decades. Accomplishment of this ambitious program will allow the Polish Armed Forces to fulfill a constitutional duty to defend our country, and place Poland in the front row of countries ready to perform collective defense activities within the NATO.

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From 2016 Poland will increase the defence budget from 1,95 % to 2 % GDP

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.

May 2015



Danish Chief of Defence, General Peter Bartram, Calls Into JFC Brunssum

13 May, General Peter Bartram, the Danish Chief of Defence Staff (CHOD), accompanied by Lieutenant General Per Pugholm Olsen, Denmark's Military Representative to NATO, visited JFC Brunssum. The

distinguished visitors met with the Commander, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, receive briefings on the roles and responsibilities of the headquarters, participated in a round-table discussion and held discussions with Danish personnel serving here.



Legal Workshop for Eastern Border NATO Members on RAP Assurance and Adaptation

19-20 May, JFC Brunssum's Office of the Legal Advisor hosted a two-day Workshop for "Northern Family" NATO Member Nations on Readiness Action Plan (RAP)

Assurance and Adaptation Measures. 35 delegates participated representing: Norway, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, EUCOM / USAREUR, NATO International Staff, International Military Staff, SHAPE, JWC, JFTC and MNC NE. The Workshop's objective was to enhance understanding of the Readiness Action Plan, Assurance and Adaptation Measures, and State Emergency Law. It also provided a most useful forum for dialogue within the NATO Legal Community.



Resolute Support Key Leader Training

Key leader training for NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan is a biannual event organised by JFC Brunssum. These serials aim to provide military and civilian officials nominated to assume key positions in Resolute Support with

current strategic, geo-strategic and operational insight to the mission. In the first key leader training event of 2015 – 18 to 26 May inclusive – 35 personnel from 16 nations are participating.



Evacuation Exercise Conducted at JFC Brunssum

May 27, being ready and prepared is part of a soldier's life. Regular training to keep perishable skills sharp prepares individuals for unforeseen situations, and/or crisis, as well as fostering interoperability

between military and civilian stakeholders. With this in mind today's task was to exercise standing evacuation procedures from the communications tower on the JFC Brunssum site. Challenged to evacuate personnel by all routes – inside the construction as well as outside – JFC Brunssum first responders, supported by Fire Brigades from the town of Brunssum, other locations throughout Limburg and the city of Aachen worked together to achieve the aim. Pleasingly the serial was a resounding success but further drills are planned for the future so as to maintain the skill levels achieved.

General Domröse Visits Afghanistan

As the out-of-theatre commander for NATO's the Resolute Support (RS) mission, General Hans-Lothar Domröse (Commander JFC Brunssum) conducts regular trips to Afghanistan to meet with senior military and civilian personnel (NATO and Afghan) in order to apprise himself of the status of the mission. His most recent trip, 17 – 20 May, has just concluded and a whirlwind schedule saw him meet with, and exchange views, with a number of military commanders – including Commander Resolute Support, General John F. Campbell – and civilian officials.



Hungarian National Staff College Visits JFC Brunssum

May 20, the JFC Brunssum Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Janusz Adamczak (Polish Army), welcomed a group of students and staff from the Hungarian National Staff College. The group were visiting to enhance their understanding of current NATO operational-level processes, activities and challenges.



Finland's Chief of Defence Staff Calls Into JFC Brunssum

21 May, General Jarmo Lindberg (Chief of Defence Finland) was accompanied by Major General Markku Nikkilä (Military Representative of Finland to the EU and NATO) on a visit to JFC Brunssum.

Warmly hosted by Commander JFC Brunssum, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, briefings were provided on the status of NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan, the NATO Response Force and Regional Focus. General Lindberg took the opportunity to provide a comprehensive briefing on the status of his nation's armed forces and give an insight into Northern European security issues from the Finnish perspective.



JFCBS Intensifies Preparations for NATO Response Force 2016

03 June. As Trident Juncture 2015 approaches this Autumn, Headquarters Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS) is intensifying training and preparations for its large-scale NATO

Response Force certification exercise. After training events for the Observation Liaison & Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) earlier this year with deployments up to Stavanger, Norway and an Exercise Week for the follow-on personnel of that team (the Forward Coordination Team, or FCE) in May, now the personal and equipment readiness for the Initial Command Element (ICE) is being checked and certified.





General Domröse Addresses Staff

04 June, Commander JFC Brunssum, General Hans-Lothar Domröse, outlined the status of ongoing tasks and seized the opportunity to present 23 Commendations during a well-orchestrated staff address.

In his remarks the Commander emphasized

JFC Brunssum comprises one team and our success is the outcome of the dedication and hard work of the entire civilian/military workforce. The result is that, over recent months, our performance and responsiveness has been enhanced. Summarizing the first half of 2015, General Domröse concluded that the headquarters is on the right track and we will collectively keep moving forward together so as to achieve our goals with professionalism and esprit de corps as our mantra.



Visit by Belgian Defence College to JFC Brunssum

8 June; 33 students and staff from the Belgian Defence College visited JFC Brunssum to further their comprehension of NATO's operational level of command.

Warmly welcomed by the Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Janusz Adamczak, visitors received a number of briefings that, amongst other things, articulated: JFC Brunssum's position and role within the NATO Command Structure; outlined the HQs' primary tasks – the Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan, the NATO Response Force and Regional Focus; and provided a roundup of ongoing tasks such as the status of SACEUR's Assurance Measures in the wake of the Russia/Ukraine crisis, the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force and the rollout of NATO Force Integration Units.

A highlight of the visit was a lively question and answer session with the JFC Brunssum Deputy Commander, Air Marshal Graham Stacey.



Exercise Brilliant Bonus II

Over 200 planners, staff officers and subject matter experts participated in Battle Staff Training 09 and 10 June, at JFC Brunssum, as the tempo continues to build in preparation for NATO's high visibility exercise –

Trident Juncture 2015 (TRJE15) – that will be held in Canada, Italy, Portugal and Spain towards the end of the year, with more than 25 000 military personnel participating. The primary purpose of TRJE15 is to certify the command and control elements of NATO Response Force 2016 – of which, JFC Brunssum will be the Standby Command.

Exercise Brilliant Bonus II is a training serial designed to prepare JFC Brunssum's staff for the challenges they will be confronted by as they form a deployed Combined Joint Task Force HQs, in a complex exercise scenario, with a deliberately fast-moving battle rhythm.



NATO Force Integration Unit Inauguration in Estonia

15 June; Deputy Commander JFC Brunssum, Air Marshal Graham Stacey, attended the inauguration ceremony of the NATO Force Integration Unit in Estonia. In his remarks the

Air Marshal underlined the key role these units will play in Europe's contemporary security architecture.

As part of the Readiness Action Plan (RAP), agreed to at the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, the Military Committee recommended (November 2014) that NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs) be established on the territories of requesting Eastern European Allies. Their primary purpose being to facilitate the rapid deployment of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) and additional high readiness elements in order to enhance Alliance responsiveness.

Estonian Parliamentary Delegation Visits JFC Brunssum

5 June; Air Marshal Graham Stacey, Deputy Commander, hosted a delegation of Estonian parliamentarians to JFC Brunssum. The visit comprised three elements: a welcome address by the Air Marshal; several presentations depicting the status of ongoing work in the HQs; followed by a question and answer session in which Air Marshal Stacey deliberately focussed his remarks on security issues of importance to Estonia. The concluding session fostered a lively debate amongst HQs staff and delegation members from the Estonian Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees



Manfred Wörner Seminar Visits JFC Brunssum

The Seminar, named in honour of the former NATO Secretary General and Defence Minister of West Germany who died in 1994, brings together young German and US delegates to broaden comprehension of US, German and European security interests.

Air Marshal Graham Stacey, Deputy Commander JFC Brunssum, welcomed the group and explained the responsibilities of the HQs with a particular focus on the evolving international security environment. A topic that drew particular attention among the audience was how to cope with new threats such as the so-called 'hybrid warfare'. This new challenge requires NATO commanders to find new ways to solve problems; "it is rather the new role of military power than a revolution of military thinking," the Air Marshal said. Indeed, the battlespace and context are broader than before, including diplomacy and economic considerations as well as social media.



Commander JFC Brunssum Conducts Lightning Tour

1 June; this week General Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander JFC Brunssum, made a lightning tour of Poland, where he had discussions with the Polish Chief of Defence Staff and the great honor to be awarded a medal; the ongoing maritime 'BALTOPS 15' exercise underway in the Baltic Sea; and Latvia where he attended the Exercise Saber Strike 15 Distinguished Visitors Day held at Adazi Military Camp, near Riga. Whilst at Adazi he made the following speech:

"I am very pleased to be here today at ADAZI Camp to see your achievements made during Exercise Saber Strike.

As your NATO Commander, I want to communicate how important this exercise is for our Alliance.

With more than 6,000 participants from 13 countries, Saber Strike is of major importance for the readiness of the NATO Response Force. This exercise is a stepping stone for NRF 2016 certification that enhances joint operational capability, command and control, and interoperability with regional partners to support multinational contingency operations.



AFNORTH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL'S 47TH INTERNATIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Tuesday, 09 June 2015

By Rose Wehrens and Dr Uwe Bettscheider, Director AIS, Photos by Erie ten Doesschate

Student Masters of Ceremonies, Valentina Parise and Christopher Kolosky, welcomed distinguished guests, parents and teachers to a ceremony and reception in honour of the AFNORTH International School's most outstanding secondary students. The criteria for selecting the award-winning students is based not only on academic excellence, but a high degree of personal involvement in extra-curricular activities, student and social functions, as well as contributions to the international ethos within the school and in the community. Students must show self-discipline, self-direction and leadership abilities.



The Graf von Kielmansegg award presented to Claudius Karich by MGEN Hans van Griensven

One important part of the mission of AIS is to foster internationalism and to try to ensure that the students and the international community in Brunssum benefit from the advantages and manifold possibilities of international diversity. For this reason, only students who have contributed to the international goals of AIS can obtain the school's highest awards.

The ceremony began with JROTC cadets' presentation of colours. During the ceremony, attendees enjoyed wonderful and high quality musical performances given by the AIS Band and Choir, Sophia and Verena Essrich, and the Middle School Honour Choir. Music teacher Mr Jon Hodge presented the award for excellence in music to Maurie Mueller. Eliska Volencova was awarded for her dedication and excellence in art by U.S. Section Head - Dr Mary Zimmerman-Bayer.

Philip Werth, Natasha Snider, Luke Bonenclark, and Benjamin Helwig were recognized for their voluntary service outside school hours to the student body, the school in general and the community. The "Student Service Awards" were presented by Dr Mary Zimmerman-Bayer, Canadian Section

Head – Mr Erich Remisch, German Section Acting Deputy Head - Ms Verena Essrich and Assistant Director - Mr Rob Bindels.

The Commander Base Support Group JFC HQ Brunssum– Col Michael Lamb, the Deputy Commander Canadian Delegation JFC HQ Brunssum – Lt Col Andrew Penney, AIS Director - Dr Uwe Bettscheider, and Acting German Section Head - Eckhard Kaufmann presented “The Director’s Awards” to Amelie Essrich, Gabrielle Le, Sebastien Desouza and Grace Phillips. These young people were recognized for academic excellence and significant contributions to their national sections and the school in general.

As the “Governmental Simulations” are a very important part of the international activities at AFNORTH International School, Mr Bindels and Mr Kuehn, our committed Directors of the Government Simulation programs,

used this opportunity to present the student certificates for participation in these international events. During an unplanned “disturbance” of the accustomed procedure, the group of simulation students presented Mr Bindels and Mr Kuehn with chocolates in thanks.

Mr Peter Berlinghof, German Representative AIS Board of Governors presented the Jean Elder Award for outstanding participation and leadership demonstrated in the student government simulation program to Sophia Essrich.

The award presented to the top female and top male athletes in memory of David Newell, who died in an accident while his father was Head of the British Section of AIS, was presented to Caitlyn Helwig and Logan Harless by Group Captain Anthony Beasant, Director Joint Operations Centre, JFC HQ Brunssum.

Major General Andrew Mueller,

Commander NAEW&CF E3A Component, presented the European Council of International Schools Award to Alberto Loken in public recognition as the student who best exemplified the principles of good international citizenship.

The most prestigious school award is as old as NATO’s presence in Brunssum. It was initiated by General Johann Graf von Kielmansegg who was the first CINCENT in 1967. The Graf von Kielmansegg award is presented for distinguished contributions to the international goals of AFNORTH International School. This year we recognized Claudius Karich. The award was presented by Major General Hans van Griensven, Deputy Chief of Staff (Plans), Allied Force Command Brunssum.

Congratulations to the above mentioned students and special thanks to their teachers and parents for supporting them.



Attendees enjoy wonderful and high quality musical performances given by the AIS Band and Choir

JFC Brunssum awarded the prestigious Ken Jago Trophy

Article by CPL Zoe Fowler (RAF, JFCBS BSG Coord Cell)), photo by CPO Henk van der Velde (RNLN, JFCBS PAO)

In September 2014, the Royal Air Forces Association Liaison Committee at NATO Joint Force Command Brunssum in the Netherlands organised a mixture of events in support of the annual RAFA Wings Appeal. As well as positioning collection tins with trays of pin badges and wristbands in various locations, a cake sale and raffle took place too. In all, the events raised a total of € 1011,49.



Joint Force Command Brunssum Royal Air Force Association Liaison Committee members, and the Senior RAF Officer, with the Ken Jago Trophy and Award. Cpl Rosbotham, Gp Capt O'Connor, Cpl Morris, Cpl Fowler & Flt Lt Shaw

In recognition for achieving the highest net collection for Wings Appeal per head of personnel employed in the Unit during 2014, Joint Force Command Brunssum were formally presented the Ken Jago trophy by Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller at

the Royal Air Force Association Annual Conference, held in Eastbourne on Saturday 16th May 2015.

A massive thank you to all who supported the 2014 RAFA Wings Appeal, and

therefore your contribution to Brunssum winning the Ken Jago Trophy. Our aim now is to make this year's even bigger and better and retain the Trophy.

NATO International Club Brunssum

By Christoph Leader, Chairman JFCBS International Charity Club, photos by CPO Henk van der Verde (RNLN, JFCBS PAO)



The Cheque Recipients

Wives and Partners of the International Club hosted a final coffee morning as part of their 2014/15 programme, Tuesday 9th June, at the NATO Sports Centre in Brunssum. Organised by our Baltic state delegations, including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the theme was a 'Mid-Summer Day' and Club members were informed of the Baltic traditions of celebrating the longest day of the year, with the symbolic lighting of a fire and dancing, followed by some excellent Baltic state cuisine!

Importantly, as it was the last coffee morning of the year, Club representatives also presented cheques to the individual nominated country charities. The Club raised 16,600 Euros during the year which meant each charity received 1480 Euros, a fantastic way to end the season.

The Club wishes all its members and their families leaving the Brunssum area this summer their very best wishes for the future. They also thank everyone for their support and contribution to the Club and Community over the past year and look forward to welcoming new members when events start again in September.

Countries & Charities Nominated

Canadian / True Patriot Love

Providing ex-military personnel with a range of supporting facilities in the community once leaving service.

Czech Republic / HAIMA CZ

A charity supporting children and families to cope with a family member suffering from a terminal illness.

Estonia / Estonian Society of Wounded Soldiers

Voluntary social care for wounded soldiers and their families (economic, social and legal support).

France / Un bouchon pour un Voyage

Money to finance social activities for disabled children.

Italy / CADMI

A women's charity dedicated to supporting and helping women recover from domestic violence.

Norway / Stine Sofies Foundation

A charity that works to prevent and disclose violence and sexual abuse against children and youth. It also attends to victims as well as advocating for the strengthening of the legal system with regard to the victims and their families.

Poland / Foundation of Ewa Blaszyk "And Who"

A charity for children with traumatic brain injuries.

Turkey / Alta Nokta Korler Dernegi (Six Dots Blind)

A charity giving assistance to the blind and partially sighted allowing them to participate in all aspects of social and economic life.

United Kingdom / Veterans Aid

A charity supporting ex-Military men and women who have been made homeless.

United States of America / Battle Buddies

A charity providing new homes to service dogs directly to veterans (helps with training the dogs to move into their new environment).

Memorial Day Ceremony at the American Cemetery & Memorial, Margraten, the Netherlands

Story by Barry Mellor, Public Affairs JFC Brunssum, Photos by Edwin Tromp, Public Affairs JFC Brunssum

24 May, on a beautiful warm and sunny afternoon the good people of the American Battle Monuments Commission, the Superintendent and staff of the Netherlands American Cemetery, a host of local and regional officials but, most importantly, the Dutch people turned out in their thousands to pay tribute to the soldiers who fought for their freedom.

Dignitaries in attendance included: Major General J. A. van der Louw (Adjutant General to His Majesty the King and Chief of the Military Household); the Honorable Mark Rutte (Prime Minister of the Netherlands); The Honorable Timothy M Broas (Ambassador of the United States of America); Th. J. F. M. Bovens (King's Commissioner, Province of Limburg); The Honorable Connie Morella (Commissioner, American Battle Monuments Commission); General Philip M. Breedlove (Supreme Allied Commander Europe); and, Air Marshal Graham Stacey (Deputy Commander JFC Brunssum) who laid a wreath on behalf of the headquarters.

Many moving tributes were made but, perhaps the most moving, was that by Mr Arthur Chotin, son of Staff Sergeant Max Chotin who is laid to rest in the cemetery. The personal connection made through these words and the heartfelt thanks passed to the people of Limburg for adopting each and every grave made great impact. So much so that, at the end, all present rose to their feet and applauded.



Netherlands' Prime Minister Mark Rutte addresses the attendance.

The Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial is the only American military cemetery in the Netherlands. The cemetery site has a rich historical background, lying near the famous Cologne-Boulogne highway built by the Romans and used by Caesar during his campaign in that area. The highway was also used by Charlemagne, Charles V, Napoleon, and Kaiser Wilhelm II. In May 1940 Hitler's legions advanced over the route of the old Roman highway, overwhelming the Low Countries. In September 1944, German troops once more used the highway for their withdrawal from the countries occupied for four years.

the cemetery's tall memorial tower can be seen before reaching the 65.5 acre site. From the cemetery entrance visitors are led to the Court of Honor with its pool reflecting the tower. At the base of the tower facing the reflecting pool is a statue representing a mother grieving her lost son. To the right and left, respectively, are the visitor building and the map room containing three large, engraved operations maps with texts depicting the military operations of the American armed forces.

Stretching along the sides of the court are Tablets of the Missing on which are recorded 1,722 names. Rosettes mark the names of those since recovered and identified.

Within the tower is a chapel. The light fixture in the chapel and the altar candelabra and flower bowl were presented by the government of the Netherlands and by the local provincial administration. Beyond the tower is a burial area divided into 16 plots, where rest 8,301 of our military dead, their headstones set in long curves. A wide, tree-lined mall leads to the flagstaff that crowns the crest.



General Philip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander Europe makes a speech.



Air Marshal Graham Stacey, Deputy Commander JFC Brunssum, salutes after laying a wreath.



US and Dutch military personnel prepare the laying of wreaths.

Reenlistment of SSG Marcus Lindquist

Story by Katrin Galeano, Photo Credit: Jennifer Lindquist



Two coins presented to SSG Lindquist and his family as a small token of appreciation for his continued service.

On Friday, June 12, 2015, place at the tripoint where the Posey in Germany, and MAJ Rick Alpha Company, AFNORTH three countries meet. All parties Galeano who administered the Battalion conducted a re-enlistment involved were in different countries oath in Belgium. SSG Lindquist's ceremony for SSG Marcus Lindquist simultaneously: SSG Lindquist stood wife Jennifer and their daughter at the three-country border in in the Netherlands, the American received flowers and a coin as a Vaalserberg, the Netherlands. This flag was held by Commander CPT token of appreciation for the family's event was unique, because it took David Sonney and SGT Phillip continued service.



SSG Marcus Lindquist's reenlistment at the three-country border in Vaalserberg, the Netherlands, on Friday, June 12, 2015.

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Country: Latvia
Capital: Riga
Location: North-Eastern Europe
Land Boundaries: 1,382 km
Coastline: 531 km
Population Latvia: 1,997,500
Area: Total 64,589 km², 1,57 % water (1,014 km²)

Location:

Latvia lies on the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea on the level northwestern part of the rising East European platform, between Estonia and Lithuania. About 98% of the country lies under 200 m (656 ft) elevation. With the exception of the coastal plains, the ice age divided Latvia into three main regions: the morainic Western and Eastern uplands and the Middle lowlands. Latvia holds over 12,000 rivers, only 17 of which are longer than 97 km (60 miles), and over 3,000 small lakes, most of which are eutrophic. The major rivers include the Daugava, the Lielupe, the Gauja, the Venta and the Salaca. Woodlands, more than half of which are pine woods, cover around 41% of the country. Other than peat, dolomite, and limestone, natural resources are scarce. Latvia has 531 km (330 mi) of sandy coastline, and the ports of Liepāja and Ventspils provide important warm-water harbors for the Baltic coast.

Economy:

GDP: \$51.058 billion (2015 estimate)
GDP per Capita: \$25,195 (2014)
GDP per sector: agriculture: 4.4%;
industry: 26.3%;
services: 69.3% (2012 est.)

Budget

Revenues: € 7.523.942.233 (2015 est.)
Expenses: € 7 471 315 445 (2015 est.)
Currency: Euro (€)

Main Industries: processed foods, processed wood products, textiles, processed metals, pharmaceuticals, railroad cars, synthetic fibers, electronics
Exports: € 10.2287 billion (2014)
Export goods: food products, wood and wood products, metals, machinery and equipment, textiles

Main Export partners: Russia 18.3%; Lithuania 15.0%; Estonia 12.0%; Germany 7.2%; Poland 5.6%; Sweden 4.8% (2012 est.)

Imports: \$15.92 billion (2012 est.)

Import goods: machinery and equipment, consumer goods, chemicals, fuels, vehicles

Main Import partners: Lithuania 18.9%; Germany 11.5%; Russia 9.3%; Poland 8.1%; Estonia 7.5%; Italy 4.6%; Finland 4.4% (2012 est.)



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

I arrived with family in the Netherlands in August 2014 and was posted as a Land planner in the J5 Planning team. Our team is responsible for the long-term planning process including Campaign Plans, Operations Plans and Contingency Plans, and when necessary, Supporting Plans, Branch Plans and Sequels for Joint Operations and Exercises.

Tell us about your military career.

I started military service 26 years ago when I was enlisted for conscript service in the Soviet army, but it was nothing for my career. My actual military career started after Latvia declared the restoration of its de facto independence in 1991. I joined the new-born Special Force unit under Latvian Home Defence forces. It was a difficult time for the newly inaugurated Latvia and its Armed forces. My first combat experience was earned against civilian bandits.

The next chapter in my career was when I graduated the National Defence Academy and was assigned a platoon of conscripts under my command. We didn't have any Standing Operations Procedures or Manuals depicting how to lead recruits at that time, but all commanders had Soviet army experience and our motto was: "We don't know exactly – how it should be, but we know exactly – how it shouldn't be."

After graduation from the Defence Academy and later Defence College I became a staff officer and my career continued as an operations planner. For the last five years I served in the JHQ and, from there, I was assigned to JFC Brunssum. If I were to summarize my career I would say that I was lucky, indeed privileged, to be one of the pioneers in our new-born Armed Forces and to serve in a number of assignments where we started from the scratch. This theme continued in the Infantry Training Center (later NCO School), the first Infantry Brigade and my deployment to Afghanistan with the first Latvian contingent where I was the first National Contingent commander.

What are your hobbies?

I have many interests and could name hobbies that continue decades. However, ever since I was a boy I was diligent in martial arts. Wrestling, karate and kickboxing were my favorite sports. At the same time I nurtured a love for motorbikes; I joined a workshop for youngsters to build a motorbike at the age of 8. Under this category of life hobbies I should also declare my passion for folk dancing as I have participated in this for 28 years now. In this sphere I have been president of a folk dance group and enjoyed the opportunity to deal with non-military management issues.

Serving in the JFC, with the exception of motor biking (I often ride to work), my hobbies are mainly left behind in Latvia. But, on other hand, my family is a winner – as we spend more time together and that is a real bonus.

Did you
know



The 'Hollandic Waterline'

How water has defended the Netherlands

Composed by Ed Frieser. Sources: Wikipedia, The National Waterline Museum

The Dutch have always struggled with the sea and water, since approximately 60% of the Netherlands lies below sea level. But not always! It could also be used favourably to defend territory against enemy attacks by inundating large areas of land.

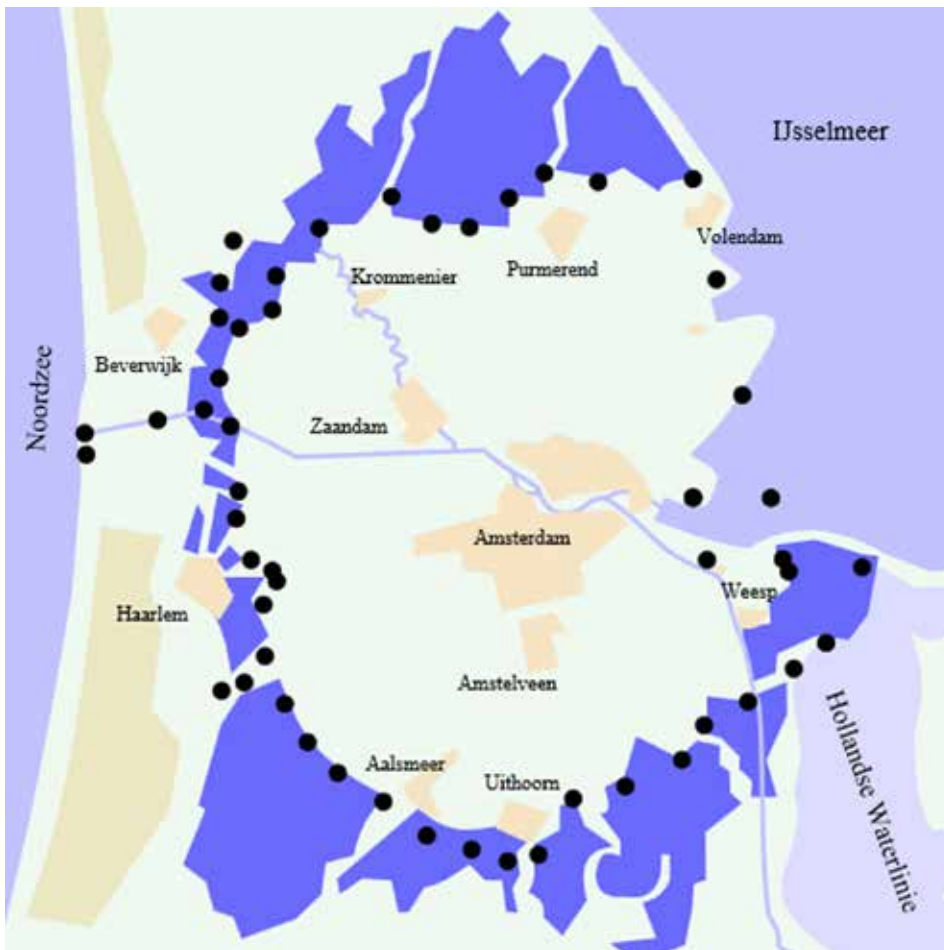


Naarden is one of the five fortified cities in the New Hollandic Waterline. Photo Amsterdam Archive.

Dikes would be opened and inundate enormous area's of land with some 30 – 60 cm's of water. The water level in the flooded areas was carefully maintained at a level deep enough to make an advance on foot precarious and shallow enough to rule out effective use of boats (other than the flat bottomed gun barges used by the Dutch defenders). In the latter half of the war against the Spaniards, when the province of Holland had been freed of Spanish troops, Prince Maurice of Nassau, son of Prince William of Orange, planned to defend it with a line of flooded land protected by fortresses that ran from Muiden near the Zuiderzee (present IJsselmeer) via

Woerden and Goejanverwellesluis down to the river Waal, near Gorinchem. In 1629, his half-brother Prince Frederick Henry started the execution of this water defence line plan. Sluices were constructed in dikes and fortresses and fortified towns were created at strategic points along the line with guns covering especially the dikes that traversed the water line. During the Spanish war (1568-1648) areas around Alkmaar (1573), Leiden (1574) and Utrecht (1629) had already been inundated to effectively defend these cities against the Spaniards. In 1672 the Hollandic Water Line proved its value less than forty years after its construction during the Franco-Dutch War (or Third Anglo-Dutch War) (1672), when

it stopped the armies of Louis XIV from conquering the provinces of North- and South Holland, the economic and political heart of the Netherlands. Utrecht in the centre of the Netherlands could not be included in this waterline defence because French forces had already conquered the city of Utrecht and the population feared a siege of the city and refused to be included in the Waterline. Although the freezing over of the waterline came close to rendering it useless. Some 9000 French soldiers could pass the frozen water line. After looting the city of Zwammerdam the French had to withdraw because the water line started to thaw again.



“Stelling van Amsterdam” built between 1880-1914. Included by UNESCO in the list ‘World Heritage Site’ since 1996. This defensive line was never used and became obsolete after the invention of the aeroplane.

Permanent character

The Dutch decided to give this waterline a more permanent character. The defence line was named The ‘Hollandse Waterlinie’ (the Hollandic Waterline). Additionally, the access points were reinforced with fortresses, artillery batteries and other defence works. The waterline was adjusted several times, however the city of Utrecht was never included until 1815 when King William I decided to initiate a complete new defence line. This new water defence line was simply named the Nieuwe Hollandse Waterlinie, ‘New Hollandic Water Line’, to distinguish itself from its earlier version, the ‘Old Hollandic Water Line’. This time the New Water Line should also include the city of Utrecht with new fortresses: het Hemeltje, Vechten, Rijnauwen, Hoofddijk, Ruigenhoek and the Gagel. It was a defence line of 85 km’s long and 3 to 5 kilometres wide, with sluices, fortresses, other defence works and 46 fortresses. The water line ran from the island Pampus in lake IJssel until the estuary, the Biesbosch, southeast of Rotterdam. It also included ‘Stelling Amsterdam’, a water defence line around Amsterdam. In addition it included 5 fortified cities Muiden, Weesp, Naarden, Gorinchem and Woudrichem.

Construction

Its construction lasted from 1815 until 1870. The fortresses however were under constant reinforcement because of developments in modern artillery weapon technology. Like the invention of high-

explosive grenades. It appeared that the defence line offered insufficient protection against these types of grenades. The waterline reconstructions lasted until 1939 shortly before the outbreak of WWII. The new Waterline was several times partly mobilised during the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, World War I and in 1939, but never attacked. But since the use of aircraft, the defence works became obsolete. The fortresses were of course the most visible defence works in the new Hollandic Waterline. However, the major part of its effectiveness was the coordinated working of all these sluices, dikes and waterways to regulate the inundation.

Today

Today many of the Waterline fortresses are still more or less intact. There is renewed interest in the waterline for its natural beauty. Bike tours and hiking paths are organised with the line as theme. Some of the fortresses are open for bikers and hikers to stay the night. The Utrecht University houses its botanical garden in Fortress Hoofddijk. A new Waterline Museum has opened its doors recently in the Fortress near Vechten. Here you can see how the waterline functions with a 50 meters long open-air mock up. Inside the museum, using virtual reality goggles, you can fly over the Waterline and see the inundated land. The architect furthermore reconstructed, over a stretch of 80 meters wide, the fortress as it was in 1880, a robust and magnificent piece of defence work.



King Willem I unfolded his plan to increase the New Hollandic Waterline in 1815.

UNESCO World Heritage

The New Hollandic Waterline is selected to be added to the UNESCO World Heritage list. This year on 22 May the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences announced its plan. This largest National Monument is proposed as an extension of the Amsterdam Stelling or Amsterdam Waterline, which is already included in the World Heritage list since 1996. In January 2018 the Minister of Education Culture and Sciences will submit a proposal to UNESCO. In 2019 it will be announced if the UNESCO will grant its inclusion in the World Heritage list. As Provincial Minister Mariëtte Pennarts of the Utrecht Province stated on behalf of the Waterline Committee: “...We consider a (UNESCO) recognition as a reward of what has been done so far, a crown on the present Waterline and a perpetuation of the initiated development. Such a status will have a positive effect on the number of foreign visitors to the Waterline and will contribute to the international exposure of water land, the Netherlands. Besides, its recognition will be an impulse for innovative entrepreneurs and volunteers with a cultural historic spirit, who on a daily basis contribute to its preservation and the development of the New Hollandic Waterline.”



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04 JUL 2015 SAT

INSIDE OUT

Diane Lane
Amy Poehler

102 min

1600



18 JUL 2015 SAT

MINIONS

Michael Keaton
Sandra Bullock

104 min

1600



04 JUL 2015 SAT

MAGIC MIKE XXL

Channing Tatum
Matt Bomer

115 min

1900



18 JUL 2015 SAT

TRAINWRECK

Amy Schumer
Bill Hader

122 min

1900



10 JUL 2015 FRI

POLTERGEIST

Sam Rockwell
Rosemarie DeWitt

93 min

1900



24 JUL 2015 FRI

TERMINATOR GENISYS

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Emilia Clarke

125 min

1900



11 JUL 2015 SAT

MINIONS

Michael Keaton
Sandra Bullock

104 min

1600



25 JUL 2015 SAT

PIXELS

Adam Sandler
Kevin James

-- min

1600



11 JUL 2015 SAT

THE GALLOWES

Cassidy Gifford
Pfeifer Brown

-- min

1900



25 JUL 2015 SAT

ANT-MAN

Paul Rudd
Evangeline Lilly

115 min

1900



17 JUN 2015 FRI

ANT-MAN

Paul Rudd
Evangeline Lilly

115 min

1900



31 JUL 2015 FRI

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE -
ROGUE NATION

Tom Cruise
Jeremy Renner

-- min

1900



Admission: Adults €4,00, kids <12 Years €1,00
Parking: limited
Webaddress: www.nederlandsminmuseum.eu
Telephone: +31 45 5713707
Address: Mijnmuseumpad 2, 6412 EX Heerlen

Netherlands Mine Museum Heerlen

Oranje Nassau 1 former Mineshaft Tower transferred into museum

It was once called the Black Gold. Charcoal was taken out of the South-Limburg soil, sometimes as deep as 1000 meters. These mines belonged to the most modern mines in Europe. However on 17 December 1965 the then Minister of Economic Affairs, the late mr. Joop den Uyl, on behalf of the Dutch Government, held his historic speech in the Heerlen Theatre (Stadsschouwburg) to announce the closure of the Limburg coalmines. A day

considered by many Limburgers as a Black Day. The decision to close the mines was unavoidable and was taken as result of the vast reserves of natural gas

found in the northern province of Groningen. The highly subsidized coal mines produced coal at too high costs. Following the Government's decision gradually all Limburg mines were closed. The first mine that was closed was the Maurits mine in Geleen in 1965. The last coal that was brought to the surface on 31 December 1974 came from the Oranje Nassau Mine 1 in Heerlen. Headquarters AFCENT had already taken over the Hendrik State Mine in 1966. An era of 75 years came to an end during which some 568.261.000 tons of charcoal was produced. A period during which ten thousands of miners contributed to the Dutch Economy, sometimes even with their lives. Within a relative short period some 70,000 miners and civil servants became unemployed. An economic disaster.

Following a period of some 20 years, Limburg underwent a drastic change over. An investment of 120 million Euros annually was needed to help Limburg overcome the economic disaster. The operation from black to green took place to create a new living and working environment. The former Eastern Mining area as it was called and comprising cities like Brunssum, Heerlen, Hoensbroek, Kerkrade, en Landgraaf (formerly named Schaesberg) gradually changed from a black area into a green zone. The Eastern Mining area is now called Parkstad

Limburg with many parks and ample space for new industrial and business activities. Still in some pockets and Brunssum is one of them one can still feel the consequences of the mine closure.

All this and many of the mining tools are well displayed in the national Mine Museum. Take your family and explore Limburgs mine industry and visit the last mine towers taken out of service. Learn how coal was formed, and later taken out of the ground. The museum is set up in the former shaft tower of the Oranje Nassau 1 mine in Heerlen and officially opened on 17 December 2005 by the former Minister of Economic Affairs Mrs Maria van der Hoeven, a Limburger herself by birth.

Question:

We have made a special arrangement for you to visit this museum displaying such an important part of the Limburg history. A special English speaking guide can be booked for small groups on Wednesdays and Fridays. But the museum is opened daily from 10.30 – 16.00 hrs, Saturdays from 10.30 – 14.00 hrs. Films are shown at 11.00 and 13.30 hrs. A ticket will cost €4,00 for an adult and €1,00 for a child. We have 5x2 tickets for a visit to the Mine Museum. If you know the answer to the question: "What was the name of the first mine to be closed in Limburg and where was it located?" then you make a chance to receive two tickets.



Win Tickets for Netherlands Mine Museum Heerlen

- We have 5 x 2 tickets for the Netherlands Mine Museum Heerlen
- In order to win the tickets, please answer the following question:
- **Quiz Question: What was the name of the first mine to be closed in Limburg and where was it located?**
Fill in this coupon and send it to PAO, or send an e-mail to pao@jfcbs.nato.int, before 24 August 2015
- 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

Eva Cassidy Tribute at the Open Air Theatre

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

Tickets won by:

Chad DeNaughel	HQIM
Jan Tomko	J5 Plans
Saskia Stassen	BWVst NL
Uwe Meyer	NAPMA HR Office

Movie Review



Entourage

As the gaggle of celebrity exposés on American TV can attest, the Caligulan decadence of Hollywood excess makes for compulsive viewing. It was as part-parody, part-exploit of this that Doug Ellin wrote 2004's *Entourage* for HBO, a half-hour series about a vacuous A-list movie star and his close-knit circle of friends-cum-hangers-on. The Player cut with a line of *Swingers* and snorted through a rolled up *Playboy*.

The show ran for eight years but there's little catching up required. Box office darling Vincent Chase (Grenier) (we're reminded by a smug Piers Morgan), spends time off-camera with less successful older brother, Drama (Dillon); driver, Turtle (Ferrara); and manager, E. (Connolly), all of whom hail from his hometown of Queens. That established and the finale's resolutions hastily unpicked, the film slips effortlessly back into the familiar medley of celebrity worship, bacchanalia and languid drives through LA traffic.

All of which is gravy for long-time viewers, whose reunion with Vince, E. and the gang is a welcome one, recapturing some of the energy lacking in later seasons. Vince is as flakey and vapid as ever, cluelessly stepping on his own career while trying to throw a leg over *Gone Girl*'s Emily Ratajkowski. E. juggles casual sex with impending fatherhood and a newly svelte Turtle has his heart stolen (and head pounded) by UFC star Ronda Rousey. Throw in some Drama drama and it's like we never left. The actors have been at this long

enough to know their marks and hit them well, using the all-but-incidental story to tie their absurd antics together. Piven is, no surprise, the standout, Ari Gold having lost none of his irascible appeal in the move from role-wrangler to corporate bigwig. His vein-throbbing tirades and withering put-downs make up the movie's undisputed high points.

Of course, one of the reasons *Entourage* works so well is the characters are just as superficial and morally ambivalent as the world they inhabit; resistant to change, betterment or anything approaching actual growth. For newcomers, however, they're a quartet of grade-A douchebags. Ellin makes some effort to smooth the twat pack's rougher edges and Haley Joel Osment's redneck financier provides a more flattering contrast, but they're still far from sympathetic. Add to that a reliance on familiarity for many of the gags to land and newcomers will struggle to stay on side.

None of that will be a problem for stalwarts, for whom the sight of E. wandering through a party with a Viagra-induced erection or Drama masturbating furiously over Skype will prompt fond guffaws instead of awkward cringes. What will disappoint, however, is the lack of ambition. Yes there are cameos galore (albeit many of them recycled) and the final send-off is more fitting than the televised conclusion but there's nothing here we haven't seen before. Even *Entourage* on autopilot holds its own, but for a show about making movies to not capitalise on doing just that is an embarrassing oversight.



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

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