

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross for services during the operations in the South Atlantic.

*Distinguished Flying Cross*

Wing Commander Peter Ted SQUIRE AFC 608512, Royal Air Force.

Six GR3 Harriers from 1(F) Squadron embarked on HMS HERMES on 18th May 1982, and a further four replacement aircraft were flown direct from Ascension Island to HMS HERMES' deck 3,500 miles away. During the re-invasion phase of the Falkland Islands operations, 1(F) Squadron flew from the ship in a wide variety of bombing, PR and rocket attacks on targets ashore in the Falkland Islands in support of ground forces, usually at low level against defended targets. Wing Commander Squire led his Squadron with great courage from the front flying 24 attack sorties. He flew many daring missions, but of particular note was an attack at low level with rockets on targets at Port Stanley Airfield in the face of heavy anti-aircraft fire when both he and his wing man returned damaged. Also a bombing attack on an HQ position when, on approach, a bullet passed through his cockpit which temporarily distracted him, but he quickly found an alternative target and bombed that instead. During overshoot Wing Commander Squire's aircraft suffered engine failure and was damaged during crash landing at the forward operating base ashore on 9th June 1982, but he continued flying after his return to the ship with unabated zeal. Wing Commander Squire has shown outstanding valour and steadiness under enemy fire, and has led by brave example.

Squadron Leader Richard Ulric LANGWORTHY AFC 3516433, Royal Air Force.

Squadron Leader Langworthy was on board MV NORLAND and latterly HMS FEARLESS anchored in San Carlos Water during the period 21st-26th May 1982. On 25th May, MV ATLANTIC CONVEYOR was hit and destroyed by an enemy attack. All of No 18 Squadron's assets, less one Chinook helicopter, were destroyed. This remaining aircraft ZA 718 was flown to San Carlos Water. A small detachment under the command of Squadron Leader Langworthy was put ashore on 27th May to operate this one aircraft in support of land and sea operations. The Detachment possessed no field deployment equipment and operated initially from "fox holes". Permanent accommodation and messing were subsequently established at Port San Carlos Settlement. Despite a total lack of aircraft spares, ZA 718 was flown continuously in support of the battle from 27th May until the cease fire. On 30th May, Squadron Leader Langworthy was briefed to move 3 x 105 mm light guns (two internal plus one external), 85 men and 22 tonnes of ammunition to Mount Kent. The move was to take place at night using Passive Night Goggles Techniques. The intelligence briefing was vague, but it was assessed that the enemy was in position on Mount Kent and additionally had Company positions at Estancia House. The first load of 3 x 105 mm light guns plus 22 men took 2½ hours to load. The transit proved uneventful despite severe snow showers in the area. The drop point briefed as a flat plateau, proved to be a sloping rock river with flattish areas and adjacent deep gullies. Full operation of the rear cabin ramp proved difficult over such terrain and the off-loading took 40 minutes. This was achieved without lights and further complicated by intercom failure on the aircraft. While not directly engaged by enemy fire, the general area in which the aircraft had landed was subject to fire. On completion of the off-loading the aircraft was recovered in appalling weather conditions of heavy snow. The aircraft radio altimeter failed and the aircraft struck the sea causing some minor damage. Squadron Leader Langworthy recovered the situation and the aircraft was recovered to its operating base without further mishap.

Squadron Leader Calum Neil McDUGALL 3144488, Royal Air Force.

When the Falkland Islands crisis arose Squadron Leader McDougall and his crew were earmarked for special training for operations in the South Atlantic but could not be fully converted immediately because of a shortage of in-flight refuelling aircraft. While awaiting conversion Squadron Leader McDougall made a significant contribution to the enhancement of the Vulcan's capability when he captained the aircraft test flying new external weapons mountings and flew the first firing of the anti-radiation Martel missile. Shortly afterwards his crew deployed to Ascension and on both 31st May and 3rd June 1982 he flew operational sorties against targets in East Falkland armed with the Shrike anti-radiation missile. The first sortie took the crew well beyond their previous experience in long distance flight and it was the first live missile firing by a Vulcan in a combat environment. To achieve accurate delivery of the weapon Squadron Leader McDougall had to fly his aircraft with great precision in a complex night manoeuvre. Because of the speed with which the missile was brought into service, the crew had had no previous practice but

Squadron Leader McDougall's exceptional skill and determination ensured complete accuracy in performing this manoeuvre and the radar shut down shortly thereafter, consistent with a successful hit. On the second sortie, the enemy thwarted Squadron Leader McDougall's initial attacks by turning off the target radar whenever he approached. Despite his very long range from base and the fact that his fuel reserves were critical, Squadron Leader McDougall persisted for more than 25 minutes in his attempts to acquire a target by descending the aircraft towards the enemy defences. Eventually, he succeeded in provoking the enemy into switching on a radar which was briefed as the secondary target and he was then able to fire his missiles successfully at the target. The crew then made a successful rendezvous with the Victor tanker on the return journey to Ascension Island but the refuelling probe of Squadron Leader McDougall's aircraft broke as he was making contact, so preventing the transfer of any fuel. There was no alternative but to divert the aircraft to Brazil and Squadron Leader McDougall showed courage and calmness of the highest order in preparing his aircraft and crew for the landing at an unplanned foreign airbase. Throughout this period of the flight, his aircraft captaincy was faultless and he showed the ability to make instant decisions in the first emergency of this kind during the South Atlantic hostilities. He was thus largely responsible for the eventual safe return of his aircraft and crew. Throughout his involvement in the South Atlantic Operations Squadron Leader McDougall displayed qualities of leadership and coolness which were a magnificent example to others. His fearlessness under operational conditions, and his zeal and dogged determination through long hours of a most demanding flight in a potentially dangerous environment are thoroughly deserving of significant recognition.

Squadron Leader Jeremy John Pook 608507, Royal Air Force.

Squadron Leader Pook of 1(F) Squadron had been nominated mission leader throughout the invasion phase, conducting 23 attack sorties. He led missions on 21st and 27th May 1982 which destroyed probably four Argentinian helicopters, Squadron Leader Pook personally destroying probably two Pumas on the ground despite SA and SAM defences. He also led two successful attacks on Goose Green in the face of very heavy anti-aircraft fire, the second against a large calibre gun which was destroyed causing heavy casualties; this helped 2 Para Regt obtain the surrender of the troops in that area. On 30th May 1982, Squadron Leader Pook's Harrier was hit while attacking a gun position on Mount Harriet. He nevertheless pressed home his attack but, as a result of system damage to his aircraft, he had to eject over the sea 30 NM from HMS HERMES when returning. His determination was undiminished by the experience and he has continued to display considerable courage and great professionalism.

Flight Lieutenant William Francis Martin WITHERS 2607689, Royal Air Force.

On 30th April 1982, two Vulcan B2 aircraft were prepared to fly from Ascension Island on the first bombing mission against Port Stanley airfield in the Falkland Islands. At 2253 hours, Flight Lieutenant Withers, Captain of the reserve aircraft took off last in a stream of two Vulcans and ten Victors. Within minutes, the primary Vulcan became unserviceable, leaving Flight Lieutenant Withers' aircraft to conduct the mission. Throughout the 3400 mile outward leg of this unique operation, the formation encountered severe weather conditions which, combined with a major failure in one of the tanker aircraft, made night air-to-air refuelling particularly difficult, and resulted in the Vulcan approaching the target area with less fuel than planned. Although knowing that he had insufficient fuel for any diversion should his home-bound rendezvous with a tanker fail, Flight Lieutenant Withers continued his descent to the target area. Major problems were then experienced with the aircraft radar which, if not resolved, would have resulted in aborting the attack since precise bombing was required to achieve success and avoid civilian casualties. After overcoming these problems, successfully jamming the enemy radar and confusing the defences, all the bombs were released and the runway and airfield facilities severely damaged. During the return flight fuel reserves became very low allowing no margin for error on the part of Flight Lieutenant Withers or any member of his crew. Nevertheless, despite having been airborne for over 12 hours the refuelling contact with the tanker was successfully carried out and the aircraft recovered safely to Ascension Island. This was the longest in-flight refuelled bombing operation ever carried out by a Royal Air Force aircraft and covered a distance of 6800 miles and lasted over 16 hours. Throughout, both captain and crew were faced with several serious problems and difficult decisions affecting the success of the operation which they overcame with skill, courage and resolve. In so doing, Flight Lieutenant Withers displayed qualities of leadership, determination and presence of mind which were an inspiration to his crew. Moreover, through his exemplary airmanship and skill the use of Port Stanley airfield was temporarily denied to the enemy.