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Owen Wyn Jones, Networker of the Year winner; and Martin Davies, of sponsor NRG.



Lord Jones receives his award from Harj Sandher

→ **COMING UP IN POST PEOPLE:** Chinese New Year at the Oriental Bar Restaurant

Midlands Business Awards

Wolverhampton businessman Owen Wyn Jones, of business website The Best of Wolverhampton, has been officially recognised as the region's top networker in the 2009 Midlands Business Awards.

Owen took the Networker of the Year title at a gala dinner in the presence of Digby, Lord Jones of Birmingham, at the NEC Metropole hotel in Birmingham.

Lord Jones, a former director-general of the CBI and minister for trade and investment, himself received an award for his lifetime contribution to Midlands business.

Organiser Harj Sandher, of UK Special Events, said this year's competition had attracted a large number of high quality entrants.

Pictures by David Morphey



Networking Group of the Year – Ian Vickers and Sam Thiara with sponsors Icon Business Solutions and members of BRX Birmingham North.



Sam Thiara, Michael Stern and Ian Vickers.



Pamela Howe and Geoff Roberts.

john
bright

Carried away by emotions of the battlefield

Lord Jones of Birmingham has been going all misty-eyed over his recent visit to the Falklands.

But his good wife, Lady Pat, has as usual been bringing him back to reality.

Seems that Digby, rather like Bright's vicar on earth, John Duckers, former business editor of this great newspaper, can't pass a battlefield site without the urge to tour round it.

He writes: "As you know I am rather a sad lad when it comes to battlefields.

"I am so intrigued with the judgment calls, the amazing stories of courage by unremarkable people, and the decisions made under fire in a split second upon which continents shift.

"Pat and I did a South American cruise. From Rio to Valparaisovia Montevideo, Buenos Aires and the Falklands.

"She enjoyed it all, except the yomp over the Goose Green battlefield. Three hours it took us - 2 Para took 36 hours of brave fighting.

"It was mid-summer, mid-day and two degrees above freezing!

"As we scaled the gully and ridge where H Jones posthumously won the VC, I turned to a rather windswept, footsore, very cold Lady Pat and fulminated on the enormity of what these guys achieved and how lucky we were to be able to stand there and share in their glory ... across the winds and rains of the South Atlantic."

To which her response was: "Digs ... get a life!"

Wonderful.

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Digby and Pat were not the only Brummies signed up for the cruise.

Also aboard were Ian Mackay and his wife Sheila - Ian is a director of BTG Tax, part of the Begbies Traynor group, in Birmingham.

Except, when they flew out to join up with the vessel, neither couple knew the other was on the trip.

"I heard this booming voice at Sao Paulo airport," Ian notes. "I said, 'I know that voice', and sure enough it was Digby.

"I thought, 'blow me, it's a small world!'"

Yep, that Digby is pretty distinctive wherever he is.

Cunningly, Ian didn't do the yomp. It seems the delights of the Globe Tavern in Port Stanley proved more attractive.

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And Digby is on holiday again soon - skiing in Zermatt in March.

Old chum Roman McAlindon and a host of others are going on their annual Arse First Club trip.

They've been all over the world down the years.

Digby writes: "We're not renting a car from the airport in Switzerland, but catching a train ... eek!"

"It's the AFC's acknowledgement to the recession, I am told.

"I don't plan these things - the accountants in our group are doing it. Sign of the times!"

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