

August 2012

The Royal Armouries

Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, has appointed Mark Urban as a Trustee of the Royal Armouries, for a term of four years starting on 3 September 2012.

Mark Urban

Mark Urban is a journalist, author and broadcaster. He was Defence correspondent for The Independent newspaper from 1986-90, covering the end of the Cold War and the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, before joining the BBC as a reporter. He has been Diplomatic Editor for BBC Two's Newsnight since 1995.

His major stories have included: the 1990 invasion of Iraq and subsequent Desert Storm campaign; the collapse of the Soviet Union; the Oslo peace process in the Middle East; the wars that broke out in the former Yugoslavia in the mid-1990s as well as the diplomacy that stopped them; the Second Palestinian Intifada; the attack on the World Trade Center in New York and its aftermath; the Coalition campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq (where he often worked as an embedded reporter); and the Arab Spring.

He has written several books on military matters, both current and historical. Soviet Land Power appeared in 1985, followed by War in Afghanistan in 1987. He has written about Napoleon's campaign in the Iberian Peninsula, the American War of Independence, and the role of the SAS in more recent conflicts in Northern Ireland and Iraq. His military history titles such as 'The Man Who Broke Napoleon's Codes', 'Rifles', and 'Generals' have been best sellers.

Mark read International Relations at the London School of Economics. He held a Short Service Limited Commission with the Royal Tank Regiment during his gap year, and subsequently served four years in the Territorial Army. He holds no other public appointments.

Background

The Royal Armouries holds the national collections of Arms and Armour, including the National Artillery Collection and the National Firearms Collection of contemporary weapons. It is also the keeper of the history of the Tower of London. It is Britain's oldest museum and one of the oldest museums in the world.

Trustees of the Royal Armouries are unpaid, although reasonable expenses are reimbursed. All appointments are made on merit, and political activity plays no part in selection or reappointment processes. In accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for political activity in the United Kingdom in the past five years to be made public. Mr Urban has declared no political activity.